Contrasting and Comparing Calvinist and Arminian Baptist Attitudes Toward Hard Work, Poverty, Church Charity, and Governmental Monetary Aid Programs in Central Appalachia

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This thesis titled
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ABSTRACT
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Appalachia has a persistent problem. It is the problem of poverty. Why are the poor getting poorer? Appalachians themselves address the problem of poverty in various ways. Some support and maintain church charities. Others vote for candidates who will be in favor of governmental monetary aid programs. For many religious Appalachians theological belief informs believers of who they are in relation to others. Some theological beliefs mold the ways Church congregants view themselves and Appalachia’s poor. These beliefs affect one’s willingness to give aid to the poor through church charity or governmental monetary aid programs. Using the Protestant Work Ethic scale developed by Mirels and Garrett in 1971 and a semi-structured interview, attitudes toward hard work, leisure, poverty, church charity, and governmental monetary aid programs are compared and contrasted between Arminian and Calvinist Baptists.

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INTRODUCTION

America’s citizens have historically believed that in America everyone can become economically prosperous if they work hard enough (Csabi 2001). Yet American history shows us that many Americans work hard just to earn enough money to feed their families and survive. For example, one such historic group to face economic hardship were the Scotch-Irish Puritans who migrated from New England to Appalachia. When Scotch-Irish farmers confronted Appalachia’s harsh mountainous terrain they faced starvation and poverty (McCauley 1995).

Many of the Appalachian descendents of the Scotch-Irish today still struggle with economic hardship even though various good intentioned policy makers like President Lyndon Baines Johnson have developed various interventions to help them (Asen 2001). At least 12 states in the Eastern half of the U.S. have Appalachian areas. Appalachians make up 9% of the U.S. population, but yet they make only 81.6% of the mean per capita income of individuals in other areas in the United States. One out of three Appalachian families has a yearly family income below the national poverty line (Baumann 2006).

Appalachians still struggle with poverty for various reasons. However, one contributing cause to Appalachian poverty seems to be a great unwillingness on the part of wealthier Americans to either help the poor through charity or by supporting welfare policies that would give fiscal assistance to the poor. The root of unwillingness on the part of middle-class Americans to support the poor by voting for and enacting welfare programs seems to be the belief that the poor are lazy and do not want to work for a living. Historian Robert Asen documents American hostility to the poor. He reports that
in 1964, 65% of Americans in broader society attributed poverty at least in part to laziness. In 1969, 71% of respondents actually believed that individuals were lying about their economic condition to get monetary aid assistance (Asen 2001). Although, Americans in general are beginning to have more favorable impressions of the poor, a strong minority of Americans still believe that the poor are poor because they are too lazy to work for a living. Just recently, C. A. Larsen (2008) found that 39% of Americans in her study attributed poverty to laziness.

As sociologist George Herbert Mead implies negative attitudes toward whole groups of people do not materialize out of thin air. Mead suggests that the attitudes we have toward others are produced by the group beliefs about ourselves that we develop through symbolic interaction. He argues that through our associations with others we develop a sense of pride (Mead 1939). If Mead is correct some negative attitudes toward the poor found in Appalachia arise in particular group identities in Appalachia that emphasize the hardworking virtues of the middle-class in contrast to the laziness of the poor. Ultimately, if sociologists can determine what group identities perpetuate perceptions of the poor as lazy then policy makers can use such research to develop more popular and effective welfare programs to aid the poor of Appalachia.

The present study focuses most of its attention on one particular religious group identity in Appalachia. Specifically it investigates Appalachian Baptist attitudes toward governmental monetary aid and those persons receiving monetary aid. The primary research question asks whether or not Calvinist and non-Calvinist Baptists have differing attitudes toward hard work, leisure, poverty, church charity, and governmental monetary
aid. It asks if such differences are associated with having differing conceptions of what it means to be a good Christian.

The study primarily uses semi-structured interview data and the Protestant Work Ethic Scale by Mirels and Garrett in 1971 to assess if various theological beliefs and attitudes toward hard work found in a particular Calvinist Baptist congregation could influence the way the poor of Appalachia are perceived, what types of monetary aid policies Calvinist Baptists support, and the types of church charity to help the poor Calvinist Baptists support and engage in. Although the study did not find that Baptist/Calvinist group identity influenced congregants to support particular types of welfare policies, it did influence the types of church charities Calvinist Baptists engaged in and encouraged congregants in Calvinist congregations to see poverty on the part of the poor as a moral failing. The results demonstrate that the group identities and images of self developed through social interaction mold the expression of certain social and political behaviors. Such beliefs about ourselves may influence us to treat others inequitably or more equitably.

Conceptually, the current study has a variety of goals ranging from small to large. The primary goal of the present study is to assess whether or not Calvinist Baptist group identity affects support for monetary aid policies and church charities to aid the poor, but the study also conceptually challenges the way sociologists in America understand inequality. Rather than perceiving class inequalities as merely inequitable distributions of wealth and capital the study asks inequality researchers to question whether or not the group identities and beliefs of those in power effect the social mobility of the poor and in
essence produce concretely observable inequitable distributions of wealth between the rich and poor.

Chapter One of the thesis explains the theoretical and sociological benefits of studying inequality and class subjectively rather than objectively alone. It makes the argument that before we can understand inequitable distributions of wealth and capital between the rich and the poor, we need to understand how these distributions are perpetuated by the class and group identities of those in power. It demonstrates how middle class conceptions of self and others encourage middle class persons to support political campaigns in opposition to welfare for the poor.

Chapter Two of the thesis is much more focused on the research question asked. It defines what Calvinism is, how Calvinists have historically defined themselves, who the Calvinists in Appalachia are, and who the Baptist Calvinists in the study are. Chapter Two continues with a discussion of how Baptist Calvinist identities shape responses to welfare programs aiding the poor and private church charities. Chapter Three explains the methodology, measures, and results of the study found. It explains the results in reference to the Calvinist religious identities observed through the quantitative and qualitative measures used. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of how the results of the present exploratory study contribute to our understandings of inequality, and how a more effective study may be designed in the future.
CHAPTER ONE: SUBJECTIVE FORMS OF CLASS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

What is inequality? Sociologists who study inequality find themselves asking perplexing questions about the nature of inequality itself. On one hand the term inequality is a value free term simply denoting a socially observable difference between people, groups, or things. When we speak of social inequalities we may simply mean that various groups of people have differing amounts of income, prestige, or engage in differing social behaviors. A university professor may have much more money than someone who has only completed a high school diploma. A medical doctor may have different daily routine than a corporate executive. These are just a few examples of inequalities we might observe.

Sometimes it is more important to understand inequality as a value laden term. Thus the term inequality is paradoxical, containing within itself both objective and subjective meanings. Subjectively social inequality may also refer to the discriminating ways in which various groups of people are treated by those in power. Not only can differences in the values, beliefs, and incomes be viewed among groups, but we can also observe the social disadvantages and advantages of membership in certain groups. These disadvantages and advantages may be associated with other less subjective group differences such as income, race, and gender. For example, poor children may not be able to attend private schools with lots of educational resources because they cannot afford the tuition to go to such schools. Members of various minority groups may also receive poor service at restaurants and retailers by prejudiced servers. A school may have a hockey team for boys to play on, but not have a hockey team for girls because the school board
may not believe that girls are physically capable or are too delicate by virtue of their sex to play hockey. Nevertheless it appears that these two types of inequality are related because subjective and objective inequalities cannot appear independent of one another. The nature of inequality itself compels us to study it subjectively as well as objectively.

There are many types of social disadvantages, but they seem to spring from one social psychological root. The persons particularly experiencing social disadvantages are often viewed by those in power as somehow different or unique compared to their own selves. Such perceived differences are often the justification for treating the socially disadvantaged in certain discriminate ways. Before sociologists can combat economic, racial, or gender inequality we must learn why inequalities exist in the first place and how they are subjectively justified. The present thesis argues that social disadvantages and economic inequalities are perpetuated by the cognitive maps used by people in power to understand themselves and others.

Nevertheless, before we can understand how cognitive maps shape social and political behaviors we need to understand how these cognitive maps of self may develop. The study uses George Herbert Mead’s definition of how group identities develop, even though there may be other theoretically valid ways to explain how self develops, because in this case it allows us to show how the doctrines of Calvinism, a group of language symbols, lead to the development of the Calvinist self.

People in power often use their own sense of self to distinguish themselves from others to justify the inequitable treatment of others. In fact this idea is not in any way a novel idea. In 1934 pioneering sociologist George Herbert Mead pointed out that a
person’s distinguishing characteristic from the lower animal was his/her ability to analyze. Mead believed that man’s ability to analyze came from his ability to symbol. His ability to communicate with other human beings through language allowed him to understand his motives and the motives of other humans. Hence Mead argues that the concept of self was born. Due to man’s ability to symbol he can internalize the communication process with others and decide how he or she differs and is alike from other humans. In fact humans are constantly using language to define themselves in relation to others (Mead 1934).

There are all kinds of ways we might define ourselves in relation to others. We might define ourselves as a member of National Rifle Association or we might define ourselves as an Episcopalian. In any case, because we interact with people who define themselves in the same way, we come to develop an idea of who we should be and how we should act by observing the behaviors and beliefs of those sharing the same identification. These ideas about ourselves often propel us to certain action. For example, to be a good Episcopalian we may believe that we need to attend Holy Eucharist at least once a week. We develop a cognitive map of who we are and act in accordance to it. For the purpose of this analysis I will refer to this map as a schema defining ourselves in relation to others.

In some ways we may define those who are different than us in negative terms. This may be the root of social disadvantages because schemas motivate us to act in certain ways. For example, if we believe it is our function in life to help a poor person, we will do so. If we believe that poor persons are undeserving of our help we will not
help them. Once again Mead believes that we develop a sense of pride or accomplishment through our associations (Mead 1934). Whether or not we assume Mead is correct he provides a useful framework for thinking about inequality for if we see ourselves as accomplished or noble we may also have a tendency to look to others as the antithesis of ourselves and treat them unjustly. Mead’s paradigm of self can be used to study multiple forms of inequality, but in the present research it is used to study the economic disadvantages of the poor in Appalachia. We may ask why the poor do not have the same economic advantages as those in the middle and upper class.

Like inequality, class can be investigated either objectively or subjectively. We might think of the concept of class as an income distribution and define members of particular classes according to how much money they earn. Yet classes often function more like large groups than income brackets. The wealthy, the poor, and the middle class often maintain subjective group like associations (Kendall 2002).

Since a class is merely a large group of people associating together it also develops beliefs about itself and others in the same way other group identities develop. These class beliefs, like any other group belief, motivate the expression of particular political beliefs. Historically sociologist Oliver Cox explained the paradox of class. In one sense we study class as income distribution. Cox also points out that there are social and behavioral phenomena associated with income distributions. In an attempt to negate the objective and subjective natures of class affiliation, Cox asked sociologists to recognize that the word class is studied in two remarkably different ways.
Oliver Cox specifically gives two examples both and objective and subjective definitions of classes. These classes are the political and social classes. The social class according to Cox is the income differentiation between the poor, rich, and middle classes. The political class is the accompanying difference in political behaviors associated with income differentiation (Cox 1945). Like subjective and objective definitions of inequality objective and subjective definitions of class appear to be related.

Although Cox did not group class definitions into subjective or objective definitions of class, he provides contemporary sociologists a helpful dichotomy to understand multiple conceptions of class. Cox’s social class is an objective definition of class. It implicates that in any given society there are the rich, poor, and those who have just enough to live comfortably forming the upper, working, and middle classes respectively. Such a definition is objective, based on the clearly visible distribution of wealth between the classes. Cox’s other definition of class, as a group of people who display particular types of political behaviors is a subjective definition of class. Such a definition could vary over race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and a host of other factors. So this definition of class is culturally contained and allows class affiliation to interact with other group identities. John Brueggman (1995) for example found that African American racial identification influenced class voting patterns between African Americans and white working class members.

Modern inequality researchers are beginning to investigate the ways in which members of particular classes define themselves and it is leading to a fruitful discussion about how certain social and economic inequalities are perpetuated by particular class
identities. The current research project illustrates how the high value placed on hard work found as a central part of some middle class identities in America shape the way some middle class persons perceive and treat the poor.

The ways people in different economic classes define themselves is known as “class consciousness” (Stuber 2006). “Class consciousness” remains a very subjective form of class because it is based upon beliefs about the nature of class affiliation. For example, many Americans from all classes perceive not only the income that separates them from being in another class, but infer that members of different classes have values and attitudes that are different than their own. In the 1800’s the early American middle class perceived itself as unique and different from the masses. It behaviorally distinguished itself from the masses by avowing and adhering to the values of “frugality, temperance, chastity, silence, tranquility, humility, cleanliness, moderation, order, resolution, sincerity, justice, and industry” (Goloboy 2005: 5), standing in stark contrast to a drunken proletariat (Goloboy 2005). Such a class consciousness still exists in modern America. However, the subjective definitions people use to define their class status vary over geography, ethnicity, race, and religious affiliation. The behaviors and beliefs used to identify one’s class membership also vary across culture and multiple group identities (Mohan 2000).

In particular Sociologist Christian Smith has investigated how class consciousness may prompt members of certain social classes to love and admire fellow members of the same class and despise, fear, and hate those who are not a member of the same class (McCloud 2007). According to Smith, the middle class in America perceives that the
working class has a different set of values than the middle class. The middle class according to Smith fears and hates the values of the working class and is neurotically concerned with becoming it. Such professionals in America maintain distance psychologically and physically from the poor. They act in ways that are consistent with their idea of a good middle-class professional (McCloud 2007).

Although there are many theories about how group identities, beliefs, and affiliations shape social inequalities, inequality researchers seem to have discovered a common mechanism by which much inequality is created and justified. Much research in the field of inequality shares the underlying assumption that powerful groups use status symbols both to identify themselves as part of an elite group and to prevent those outside of these groups from obtaining various economic and social privileges.

For example, Diana Kendall found that elite Texan women only associated with other elite women. They attended balls together and used symbolic gestures to exclude other women from their circles. One of these exclusionary gestures for example is the debutante bow. Young women who enter Austin’s elite society are expected to execute the highly intricate debutante bow before they can become young women of wealth. The proper execution of this gesture is only known by Austin’s elite. When Kendall asked elite women why they orchestrated debutante balls it was in fact to exclude undesirable poor persons from gaining upper class social advantages (Kendall 2002). Likewise Pierre Bourdieu theorized that middle class educators used status symbols to develop a cultural capital, or privileged status as educators, to prevent poor children from learning the things they needed to economically succeed in the Western world (Stuber 2006).
Contemporaries of Bourdieu have continued his investigation of how material and social inequalities are connected. One researcher of these researchers is Bonnie Erickson. Erickson, like Pierre Bourdieu, points out that middle class individuals exchange knowledge with members of the same perceived class status. This knowledge is then in turn used to economically succeed in a world created by middle class individuals. The poor often have no such knowledge and cannot succeed (Erickson 1991).

If subjective understandings implicate that class is a mental construct then why study it? Although subjective definitions of class are mental constructs, the presence of American economic inequality is readily observable. In some areas of the United States, middle class identities and awareness may have detrimental effects on how the poor are treated. In Appalachia for example there is an ever widening economic gap between the middle class and the working class. It may be the case that such a gap may be perpetuated by negative beliefs about the poor stemming from middle-class “class consciousness” and personified by an unwillingness to help the poor by any economic means.

Class Consciousness in Appalachia and its Relation to Religious Affiliation

Large income discrepancies between the rich and the poor in Appalachia may be products of negative beliefs middle class Appalachians have of the poor. In Appalachia, there is an ever widening economic and social divide between the laboring and intellectual class. For example, in the year 2000, Northern (27.8%) and Central
Appalachia (27.1%) had a higher percentage of highly educated professionals (lawyers, doctors, and others) than the average percent from all other areas in the United States (26.1%). When one looks at skilled workers (those with college educations) Appalachia as a whole has a greater percentage of skilled workers than the rest of the country (Baumann 2006). Many educated professionals often live alongside Appalachian blue collar workers struggling to survive.

Appalachian poverty researchers often question why such economic inequality exists between middle class professionals and the poor in Appalachia. Examining the nature of class in America may provide us with some insights why. One type of middle - class consciousness in America may be defined as the Protestant Work Ethic consciousness. This is the type of middle-class consciousness Weber (2003) first describes in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The traits and values Jennifer Goloby later describes fall within this form of consciousness. These values are a love of hard work and distaste for idleness. Segments of the economic middle-class in America believe that the working classes do not adhere to the hard working values of the middle class (Goloby 2005).

Such differences in values between the classes may objectively exist or not; however, such distinctions between the poor and middle class do exist within the minds of professional and skilled Appalachians. In fact, ethnographer Cynthia Mildred Duncan found that the poor in Appalachia are often viewed as having values different than the middle class. The middle class primarily believes that the poor does not value hard work (Duncan 2001). One young Appalachian woman, interviewed by Duncan, is quoted as
saying that there are two types of people in Appalachia: "the good rich people and the bad poor people" (Duncan 2001: 134). Judith Fiene (1990) likewise found that Appalachian professionals largely believe that the poor are lazy.

The perceived difference in values between the middle class and the poor may perpetuate stereotypes of the poor as lazy and may make it harder for professionals in Appalachia to extend a helping hand to those in need. Rather the Appalachian middle class mentally as well as socially isolates itself from the poor. In fact Fiene (1990) found when she interviewed poor Appalachian women that middle class professionals employ a variety of cognitive distancing strategies to maintain a middle class group identity apart from the poor. Middle class Appalachians act as if they know more than the poor, offer intrusive advice to the poor, and are generally critical of the poor.

Research in the field of inequality indicates that class identities are not the sole perpetuators of social inequalities. Rather they may combine and interact with all kinds of groups identities especially religious identities. Religious values may influence the expression of middle class attitudes toward the poor by way of becoming ingrained in Appalachian middle class consciousness. Researchers like Sean McCloud (2007) argue that the modern sociological study of class consciousness has illuminated aspects of oppressive religion, making class consciousness and religious affiliation appear to be linked. The relationship between religious group affiliation, status, and economic inequality, however, remains undefined.

Sociologist Max Weber began exploring how religious belief becomes ingrained in “class consciousness” or class identity (Weber 2003). Max Weber’s work The
Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism is vital to understanding the particular social phenomenon observed in the present study. It is in The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism that Weber defines the relationship between Calvinist religiosity and middle class beliefs. Weber’s work is applicable here because the values of the American professional middle class fall within the wider cultural tradition of the Protestant Work Ethic. The Protestant Work Ethic is defined by many current researchers as believing hard work to be worship, negativity to leisure, frugality, productivity, punctuality, pride in work, commitment to occupation, having achievement needs, honesty, seeing wasting as a vice, believing one has power over any situation, taking ambition as a sign of God’s favor, and taking poverty as a indicator of sin (Arslan 2000).

In the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber argues that specific aspects of Calvinist theology found in American Puritanism gave rise to Capitalism in America. Specifically the belief to which Capitalism is given rise is the Doctrine of Predestination (Weber 2003). Predestination in its orthodox form stresses that God chose individuals to be saved by giving them faith to believe in the atoning power of Jesus’ death (Sproul 1998). Weber stresses that such a belief made the Puritan anxious and preoccupied with salvation because he/she did not have the free will to be saved. The Puritan, according to Weber, was always working hard for God because he/she was concerned with obtaining evidences of God’s favor (Weber 2003).

Weber’s Protestant Ethic is only a small part of his research on religion and class. Over his lifetime, Max Weber continued to define the relationship between religious belief and social class. In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Max Weber
makes the assertion that evidence of predestination and God’s favor emanating on the individual has been culturally transformed from a spiritual construct to a concrete construct through the advent of a scientific and post enlightened society. One’s calling before industrialization occurred in the West was justified by internal evidence based on faith alone that one has been called by God to salvation (Weber 2003). The internal faith based calling as John Calvin (Walls and Dongell 2004) experienced became convoluted through the rationalization of society. “For Calvin himself this [assurance of inner calling] was not a problem. He felt himself to be a chosen agent of the Lord, and was certain of his own salvation” (Weber 2003: 110).

After industrialization in the West occurred, concrete evidence of God’s favor was looked to as evidence of predestination. A sure sign of predestination became material wealth acquired by hard work for those who were now less abstractly inclined (Weber 2003). Weber argues that hard work became valued by American society without the abstract understanding of predestination in Calvinism itself. Thus hard work was endorsed by secular thinkers such as Ben Franklin (Weber 2003).

Max Weber also generally believed that as technology and industrialization progressed, society itself became more bureaucratic or specialized to meet diverse social needs in a more intricate society (Weber 1946). The descendents of the Puritan Calvinists were in prime condition to succeed in such a society because they had learned to work hard for God. This love of hard work was transformed in a bureaucratic society to a love of occupation. Calvinists not only were devoted to God, but also became devoted to occupation. Over time, Weber argued that the descendents of the Puritans would forget
about being the called of God, but would still maintain that their occupations were callings. They would come to dislike leisure and love hard work because they put all of their energy into doing their job well (Weber 2003). These traits, as we have already discussed, comprise one form of middle class consciousness in America because Calvinists as Weber argues succeeded in the economic world to become members of the middle class.

Whether or not the work ethic of middle class contributes hostility to the poor in America is unknown. We do know from Fiene (1990) that various middle class groups, especially in Appalachia, distance themselves from the poor. Christian Smith, as we have already discussed, even goes on to say that this cognitive distancing is a product of hating the poor and seeing poor persons as lazy (McCloud 2007). An even more fascinating question is does cognitive distancing lead to specific policies? Certainly if one believes the poor are lazy and that poverty is caused by laziness, one is not likely to support political aid like welfare to help them. The historic work of Avery M. Guest (1974) provides us more insight into the problem at hand. Guest found that about half the economic middle class in America is unaware of the structural inequalities that inhibit the social mobility of the poor (Guest 1974).

From Guest’s work we can extrapolate three very distinct possibilities about the nature of middle class identity and welfare policies. First of all this unawareness of the plight of the poor may be the product of cognitive distancing from the concerns and plights of the poor. If one does not spend time with the poor, one is not likely to understand the concerns and needs of the poor. Second of all, Guest shows that this
unawareness corresponds with a belief that anyone can succeed if they try hard enough (Guest 1974). This belief is found in Puritan Calvinism (Csabi 2001) and modern definitions of the Protestant Work Ethic (Arslan 2000). Thirdly, Guest found that the segment of the middle class who was unaware of the plight of the poor, was the least likely to support governmental measures to support them (Guest 1974). Keeping these studies in mind, it is very likely that the Calvinist influenced segment of the economic middle class, does in fact constitute a political class as Cox (1945) suggests and does support welfare abolition.

Investigating middle class consciousness associated with Weber’s Protestant Work Ethic in Appalachia is also very complicated because in some ways the presence of Weber’s Ethic is more closely related to the religious identity of Baptist/Calvinists than the traditional Presbyterian descendents of Puritanism. Its relationship to political class and welfare reform remains undefined as well. Sociologists and Appalachian scholars do know that Calvinist thought is strong and influential in modern Appalachia (McCauley 1995; Dorgan 1999; and Jones 1999). Unlike Weber’s Puritan Calvinists these Calvinists are modern Baptists. In Appalachia, Weber’s secularized calling has not been yet transformed into a love of occupation or a love of hard work in the most general terms, but hard work is viewed as a virtue in the pursuit of religious calling (Dorgan 1999; and Jones 1999). In the pages to follow, we will explore how Baptist religiosity, calling, church affiliation, middle class consciousness, political class, and welfare reform are all related in Appalachia.
CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORY OF CALVINISM AND THE CALVINIST/ARMINIAN DEBATE

Historically and theologically the Calvinist is an ever elusive creature found in a myriad of religious persuasions. What is a Calvinist? Below is a definition of a Calvinist in the symbolic terms of Calvinist theology. Unlike other theologies Calvinism does not easily divide across denominational lines, rather it denotes one’s particular adherence to a specific view of the Bible, God, and salvation. The Calvinist theologian, R.C. Sproul expounds on what it means to be a Calvinist in his book, *What is Reformed Theology: Understanding the Basics*. The first defining characteristic of the Calvinist is the unique way in which Calvinists understand the Bible as opposed to other Christians. They see the Bible as systematic guide for daily life in contrast to the mass of conflicting sources understood by many other Christians (Sproul 1997). For them the language symbols found in the *Bible* have particularly strong importance. R. C. Sproul comments,

[The] goal of systematic theology is not to impose on the Bible a system derived from a particular philosophy…Though many themes are treated by many different human authors over a vast period of time, the message that emerges was thought [by Calvinists forefathers] to be from God and therefore coherent and consistent. (Sproul 1997: 23)

Accompanying the belief that the Bible is logical and coherent, Calvinists also believe that God is all powerful. God is capable and able of doing anything he pleases. Since God is all powerful and he uses this power to express his sovereign will in both the natural world and in the social life of all humans. Even the daily occurrences of
individual lives are molded and shaped in accordance with his providential and sovereign will. The implications of God’s all powerfulness and his sovereignty mean that his decisions will always constrain or limit the agency of human beings since human beings often have a will contrary to God’s will (Sproul 1997).

Affirming God’s sovereignty often means that human beings are viewed by Calvinists as powerless. Human beings, by virtue of their powerlessness, cannot choose to serve God or goodness. They cannot choose to do the right things in life or to decide to follow Jesus and surrender to his will for their lives (Sproul 1997). Furthermore, all Christians maintain that all humans have sinned and deserve to spend eternity in hell upon their deaths. Only believing in the death of Jesus for humanity’s sins and turning away from sin will lead to an eternal destiny in the bliss of heaven.

Salvation for the Calvinist is intricate and complicated. The Calvinist maintains that human beings cannot naturally believe in Jesus’ atoning death. Rather God gives them the faith to believe (Sproul 1997). The insistence that God gives the saved the faith to believe in Jesus is known as the doctrine of Predestination. Predestination is the idea that before the world was formed, God the father and his Son, chose who would be saved by giving them faith to believe in Christ’s death (Sproul 1997). Calvinists therefore maintain a theologically bleak view of themselves and others in contrast to the Arminian Christian, who maintains that human beings have free will, affirms that all humans have the faith necessary to be saved and can choose to believe in Jesus (Vance 1999).

Calvinists are in symbolic terms the middle class bureaucrats that Weber describes. Since the Calvinists believe that the Bible is logical and orderly there is a great
tendency in Calvinist thought and theology to be analytical. This means that Calvinist theology itself operates from linear method of deduction. If statement A is true then statement B must be also be true. If statement B is true then statement C must also be true. In fact, non-Calvinists such as Laurence M. Vance recognize that fundamental Calvinist beliefs are indeed a logical progression of one belief to another (Vance 1999).

Common definitions of Calvinism can be linked to a small group of language symbols known as the acronym TULIP. Calvinists refer to TULIP as the Five Points of Calvinism. In fact, these five points are progressive and stem from the Calvinist understanding of the Bible and God’s sovereignty. TULIP uses the lens of God’s sovereignty to understand the salvation of the believer from eternal damnation.

The T in TULIP is the doctrine of the Total Depravity of Man. Man is depraved of the goodness necessary to merit salvation and cannot save himself. If God is all powerful it follows that man so hopelessly corrupt is his antithesis. If man has no way of obtaining his salvation he must be elected or chosen by God. Since God is all powerful he can choose to save anyone he wants to. This doctrine is known as Unconditional Election or Predestination represented by the U in the acrostic TULIP (Walls and Dongell 2004).

Thirdly since God is sovereign he is all knowing, since knowledge is a form of power by which we exercise control over others. Jesus, as a being one with God, henceforth, in his divine foreknowledge died for only the elect since it would be contrary to his all knowingness to die for the world. This doctrine is known as Limited Atonement. Fourthly, if it is God in unlimited power who does the saving and God
alone, his grace must be irresistible. Such a doctrine is known as Irresistible Grace. If it is only God who saves individuals from hell then man since he/she had no part in salvation cannot lose his/her election. This is Perseverance of the Saints otherwise known as the hallmark of the Baptist faith, Eternal Security (Walls and Dongell 2004).

These Five Doctrines are used more than any to define who is and who is not a Calvinist (Stezer 2008). For the purpose the present analysis, each congregation’s statement of doctrine, once again expressed in language symbols, is assessed for the degree it adheres to TULIP. A close similarity or dissimilarity between the two statements has been used to define the Calvinist and Non-Calvinist Baptist study samples. We can further more question if Baptists are also Calvinists. The answer can be found by examining the historical roots of Calvinism itself and also the development of Baptist thought in America. The purpose of the section below is to explain how Calvinist theology became embedded in Baptist thought and its schema of self. It addresses the historic ways in which Calvinists see themselves and relate to others. It extrapolates on how the Calvinist sense of self may influence political opposition to welfare programs to help the poor, and influence Calvinist believers to engage in only certain types of charities.

Just like any natural form Calvinism was conceived, born, and then grew to maturity. The history of Calvinist thought begins long before Calvin gave it his name. Calvinism was conceived in the debates of the early Church fathers. In approximately 200 A.D. the Church fathers began debating whether or not human beings had enough free will to choose to be saved. About 200 years later, such debate gave rise to the two
great theological schools, the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools, one of which affirmed free will and the other which emphasized God’s election of the saved respectively (Dockery 2008).

In the late 300’s AD and the early 400’s AD, the question of whether human beings had free will to choose salvation became the center of all theological debate. Pelagius and Saint Augustine of Hippo were the two primary players in this debate. Both men were influential thinkers and fathers of the church. Pelagius emphasized that God had given each human being the necessary amount of free will to choose salvation. Augustine maintained that although humans have free will, the condition of man’s sinful heart prevents him from coming to God. In this sense, man cannot come to salvation of his own free will because his heart has no desire to serve God or to be saved (Dockery 2008).

While Augustine’s thought nurtured the seed which became Calvinism, the thought of Martin Luther fostered its prenatal growth in the Medieval Period. Luther began articulating that no human action or choice, doing good works, could merit salvation (Dockery 2008). Luther’s understanding of God’s freely given grace challenged the Catholic belief that humans, through good works, earn their own salvation. He magnified the sovereignty of God rather than the power of men by emphasizing that human’s cannot earn their own salvation, but rather that it is only God’s will or grace than enables human beings to be saved (Vance 1999).

In 1509, Jean Cauvin, was born in Northern France. In the English speaking world, we know him better as John Calvin. He, like Luther only a few years before him,
reacted to the works-based salvation of the Catholic Church. He was also troubled by the condition of his soul. Feeling apart from God and unable to merit his own salvation, Calvin converted from Roman Catholicism to infantile Protestantism. As a young Protestant, Calvin began using the analytical mind he developed from studying law to investigate the nature of God. Like Martin Luther, he discovered through theological inquiry that God was sovereign. However, unlike Luther, he began clearly formulating and articulating the effects of God’s sovereignty on humanity’s free will. Thus he concluded that since God is all power, humans cannot choose to be saved. The Doctrine of Predestination, which emphasizes that God only gives an elect group the faith to believe, was born. Calvin began deducing and formulating the doctrines that make up the acrostic TULIP from the understanding that God is sovereign (Vance 1999). In 1536, Calvin published *The Institutes of Christian Religion*. In it he expounded on the sovereignty of God, election, and calling of believers to salvation (Dockery 2008). Calvin like any other good parent gave Calvinism his name, and due to the publishing of his ideas about predestination and election was banished from France.

Calvin fled to Geneva, Switzerland. With him came many Protestants who had read his work and agreed with his notions of predestination. The community of Calvin’s followers at Geneva identified themselves as Calvinists, and thus Calvinists for the first time identified themselves as a particular group of believers. They began seeing themselves and teaching that all those who were saved, were an elect chosen people of God. These believers began to publish their own ideas and spread the doctrines of Calvinism across Europe (Vance 1999).
The Calvinists in Holland began to solidify Calvin’s writings into an acronym meant to guide the Calvinist believer in his walk of faith. The Calvinists in Holland organized Calvin’s major themes in *The Institutes of Christian Religion* into Five Points. These Five Points were placed in their current order by the Synod of Dort and they are known as TULIP because they were born in Holland, land of the Tulip (Dockery 2008).

As Calvinists in Europe began to multiply Calvinist theology matured into adulthood. Calvinism was now an orthodox theology rather than a heretical challenge to Catholicism. It became revered and respected much like Catholicism in the middle ages. Like any other established theology Calvinism soon gained and maintained theological opposition to its various tenants. Certain groups began disputing some of the doctrines of traditional Calvinism espoused by the Presbyterians in England. Those that disagreed with the infantile Baptism found in Presbyterianism became members of what we might think of as a Protestant counter reformation. These groups all affirmed that Baptism was an adult decision to follow Christ. Such groups were the Mennonites, Quakers (who affirmed that Baptism is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and not a sacrament), and Baptists (Weber 1946).

The earliest Baptists in England were known as General Baptists. They strongly disagreed with the Presbyterians and the fundamentals of Calvinism. They were Arminians in theology, rejecting the election of believers. Rather they believed like Dutch theologian James Arminius that God had given every human the free will to be saved, and the saved were no different by any measure of faith or morality than those who were not. Through human reason and faculties all beings could come to faith in the
death of Jesus Christ. According to these Baptists, Christ died for the whole world and not just the elect (Dockery 2008). One might think of the General Baptists as truly anti-Reformed because they sought not to reform the tenants of Presbyterian Calvinism but to abolish it completely.

The majority of Baptists were, however, not anti-Reformed in any sense. Rather they sought to Reform Calvinist Presbyterianism while affirming the major doctrines of Calvinism including the Calvinist belief that the people of God were elected to salvation. Thirty years after the General Baptists were formed in 1609, John Smyth and Thomas Helwys founded the Particular Baptists in England. They believed that the baptism of infants was unbiblical, but they affirmed the Five Major Points of Calvinism or TULIP. Particular Baptists affirmed TULIP in both the first and second London Confession of Faith in approximately 1640 and 1670 A.D. respectfully. By 1689, most Baptists in England were Particular (Dockery 2008). Like the Early Calvinists before them their ideas spread beyond England’s shores.

Baptist Calvinism in America and Appalachia

Most Baptists in America trace their roots back to the Particular Baptists of England. Two types of Calvinist Baptists epitomized the Baptists in America during the 1700 and 1800’s. These groups were the Separates and the Regulars. The Separates flourished in New England and developed as a reaction to the Puritans, (the precursors of Presbyterians in America). The Regular Baptists flourished in Eastern Pennsylvania (Dorgan 1999). The first Baptists in America were Particular Baptists whose ideas
became engrossed in the modern Regular Baptist movement. In 1707, particular Baptists authored the Philadelphia Confession. The Philadelphia Confession was the first major statement of doctrine any Baptists in America had issued. It affirmed the Five Major Doctrines of Calvinism and was modeled off of the First and Second London Confessions (Dockery 2008). After the 1950’s the Regular Baptists in America have continued the Calvinist tradition in America staunchly supporting the Philadelphia Confession first issued by the Particular Baptists (Dorgan 1999).

Scholars of Appalachian Religion have long recognized the historically heavy hand of Calvinism on Appalachian religiosity, but not much is known about how Calvinism influenced the development of particular religious identities in Appalachia. As H. Davis Yeuell and Marcia Clark Myers (1999) point out in their work, *Presbyterians in Central Appalachia*, most settlers of Central Appalachia were Calvinist Presbyterians. Historians, Rudy Abramson and Jean Hakell (2006) also contend that almost all religious denominations in Appalachia are Calvinistic. Calvinistic Separate and Regular Baptists have thrived in Appalachia as well (Dorgan 1999).

Although history, can tell us that Calvinism has left a great impression on Appalachian religiosity studying the influence of Calvinism in modern Appalachia is a tedious task. Sometimes it is very difficult to define who the modern Calvinists in Appalachia are. Scholars of religion in America are quite certain that a great number of modern Baptists are also ardent Calvinists. As theologian Luther Vance (1999) points out the most ardent supporters of Calvinism in modern America are the Baptists.
The American Calvinism first endorsed by the Puritans, rather than becoming an archaic theology survived in Baptist Calvinism. The identity of the hard working Puritan was maintained in Baptist form. In fact, Weber’s suggestion that Calvinist theology was becoming increasingly secularized appears to be inaccurate. Calvinist beliefs in fact are widely held by the multitudes of Baptists in America. The effects of Calvinist Baptist identities on political and social behaviors are not well known, but because the Baptists are the largest Christian denomination in America (Leonard 2005), and because they are not going away over night an exploration of these effects is almost a sociological mandate.

The main problem in studying the effects of Baptist Calvinism in Appalachia on welfare policy lies with Baptist Church Polity. Some modern Baptists are Calvinists while others are not. Baptists believe that each church is capable of governing itself and it is capable of molding its own theological decisions. Theology can therefore vary from church to church. Appalachian scholar Howard Dorgan points out that for a person not familiar with Baptists, it becomes very confusing to study them. American Baptists, National Baptists, Southern Baptists, Regular Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Separate Baptists, United Baptists, Free Will Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists, Six Principle Baptists, and Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Preestrainarian Baptists are all found in significant numbers in Appalachia (Dorgan 1999). However, Baptists do ally themselves together under some theological similarities. Some Baptists belong to conventions that issue convention statements of doctrines which guide the development of individual church statements of doctrines (Brown 1969). By comparing such
statements of doctrine to the Five Major Doctrines of Calvinism one can assess if a particular convention and congregation are Calvinist.

Appalachian religious scholar, Loyal Jones, has also simplified the study of Baptists in Appalachia by identifying and listing those Baptists conventions in Appalachia which are Calvinist leaning. He classifies Regular, Old Regular, and United Baptists as Calvinistic (Jones 1999). For the purpose of this study by examining each of the convention statements of doctrine I have classified the American Baptist Congregation belonging to the convention, American Baptists in the USA, in the present study as non-Calvinist and the Regular Baptist Congregation as Calvinist. Such definitions concur with the classifications used by Loyal Jones.

The American Baptists, the Regular Baptists, and the Southern Baptists are the non-sect denominations of the Baptists faith meaning that they are the popular and non-controversial segments of the Baptist faith. These three are the major denominations of Baptists found in Appalachia (Dorgan 2008). In fact the largest of these denominations are the Southern Baptists (Leonard 1999). Southern Baptists all affirm to varying degrees the doctrines of Calvinism. Some may only affirm two of the major points, while others all five. In any case, Ed Stetzer has revealed an interesting phenomenon. Out of new Southern Baptist Ministers a statistically significant increasing number of them are Five Point Calvinists (Stetzer 2008). To answer who are the Calvinists in Appalachia the answer seems to be the Regular and Southern Baptists to varying degrees. Even modern Regular Baptists trace their theological linage to the Particular Baptists and still affirm the Philadelphia Confession (Brown 1969). Only one thing seems certain in the study of
Appalachian Calvinism; there are many Calvinist Baptists in Appalachia and they are influential.

As an aside, for the purposes of the analysis in the present study, a comparison has been drawn using the American Baptists and the Regular Baptists because they are the clearest exemplars of mainstream Calvinist and Non-Calvinist Baptists exemplified by their convention and church doctrines. Southern Baptists have been omitted only because they range in adherence to Calvinist doctrines and often object to certain points of Calvinist doctrine. Many of these Southern Baptists are Four Point Calvinists rather than Five. These Southern Baptists deny the doctrine of Limited Atonement and maintain that Christ died for the world, not just the elect (Stetzer 2008). Such a view may shape their attitudes toward poverty and monetary aid programs, but for time considerations they have been omitted.

Calvinist Schemas of Self and the Desire to Create a Moral Society

Historical developments and theological beliefs are used to define who is and is not a Calvinist by tracing which modern church groups integrate the doctrines of Calvinism into their own confessions of doctrine. The current research project relies on such methods to define Calvinists. More importantly though the current research project pays closer attention to the ways Baptist Calvinists define themselves and the ways these definitions influence the ways Calvinists interact with others around them. Christians, Calvinist or not, refer to their own theologies when attempting to understand who they are as Christians. Theological beliefs may help Calvinist believers develop an image of
the proper Calvinist. Such images are used to guide particular types of social and political behaviors. Such behaviors may include the support of particular welfare policies.

Historically, Calvinists in America have a very clear idea about who they are as Christians. Calvinist religious identity has been informed by Calvinist theology. When the Puritans arrived in America they came with the understanding that they were the chosen people of God, like the ancient Israelites before them. As the chosen people of God or those who had been elected to salvation, they believed that God had made a covenant with them. They were a special and peculiar people. If the elect did the will of God he would bring each of their endeavors to prosper (Csabi 2001). Historian John M. Murrin comments that “most New England Puritans came to these shores not to establish liberty, but to practice their own form of orthodoxy” (Murrin 2007: 24). As the elect of God, the Puritans endeavored to create a model society full of virtue and justice in New England. They believed that the institutions of the state ought to encourage even unbelievers to do the will of God. They had no qualms about using such institutions to mandate their ideas of the model society (Leonard 2003). The judicial system of Massachusetts for example was based off Old Testament Law. Penalties for breaking Massachusetts law were the same as in the Old Testament (Wells 2002). Although, the Puritans believed that human beings should be afforded some agency under law, the law should never allow human beings to act in ways outside of God’s will (McKenna 2007).

From the beginning of American nationhood Calvinists in America saw no wall between the church and the state and affirmed their right as the symbolic instruments of God to mold American culture in ways that was consistent with God’s will. Their
understanding of themselves as the instruments of God’s will on earth allowed the Puritans to use the state to achieve the creation of a model society was what they believed God called them to do. Throughout history American Calvinists have in different ways tried to create a model society and used political behavior to do so (McKenna 2007). The question remains however, whether or not the Calvinists in the present study are also motivated by similar conceptions of calling. Do they, like the Puritans, see themselves as God’s instruments? Do they use the state to achieve religious purposes?

Calvinist Baptists carry their own ideas about what God has called them to do and what the model Christian is. Particular Baptists are the forefathers of the Regular Baptists. The Particular Baptists sought to create a more perfect church than the Presbytery. They sought to create a church body in accordance to the will of God and scripture. They believed that God had elected certain people to salvation. They believed that baptism was a sign of the covenant of God with believers like the Puritans before them. In 1932, The General Association of Regular Baptists was formed affirming the beliefs of the particular Baptists denoted in the Philadelphia Confession. When one speaks of Regular Baptists in modern America, one usually means those belonging to the General Association of Regular Baptists (Leonard 2003).

From a historical perspective the Regular Baptists also share the vision of Puritan America. Bill Leonard emphasizes that Baptist’s sharing the Puritan vision of America being “a city upon a hill” engage in moral crusades to make America into a model society. They also like Calvinist Puritans’ see no separation of church and state. Rather they support public prayer in schools, posting the Ten Commandments in public places,
and support governmental funding of faith based organizations (Leonard 2009). The researcher expects if Regular Baptists share the vision of Puritan America to use social and political behaviors to mold human beings into moral citizens their own church activities are directed toward making America moral. Therefore, church activities and charities are directed toward making fellow Americans moral citizens, not alleviating their physical needs.

Group beliefs in one’s own uniqueness are similar to the elitist pride arising from middle class consciousness. Like middle class American’s Calvinists may have a tendency to have negative beliefs about those who are not Calvinists. They may also cognitively distance themselves from non-Calvinists. There is a tendency in Baptist religiosity to see oneself as somehow unique or special compared to other believers and to express this uniqueness in symbolic terms. Baptists often emphasize that once a person becomes a Christian, they become a new creature. In other words, they are sanctified or set apart from the world (Leonard 2005). In Baptist Questions, Baptist Answers: Exploring Christian Faith, Baptist historian Bill Leonard, indicates that it is this pride that prevents Baptists from working together and with other Christian believes (Leonard 2003). Later in the current research project, we will explain the social and political implications of such pride, but for the present it is important to know that such pride exists not only in North American Baptists but across the world. For example, the Calvinist Landmark Baptists believe that they are the only true denomination and will not engage in fellowship with other Baptists (Leonard 2009). Baptists in Australia and Russia hold similar views to the Landmark Baptists as well (Leonard 2003).
One may also make the argument that only fundamentalist Baptists adhere to this idea that they are specially called to a purpose and see the church, made up of true believers, as a tiny segment of the Christian population. In fact the opposite is true. When Carol Greenhouse studied affluent Southern Baptists, who eschewed the fundamentalist movement, she found that they also refused to associate with non-Baptists and referred to only Baptists as Christians (Greenhouse 1986). The Baptists whatever their stripe, have clear idea of who they are in relation to other believers. They also have a clear idea about how they should treat others.

Arminianism and the Construction of Self as a Social Servant

Concerning the present study the American Baptists belonging to the convention American Baptist Churches in the USA have well defined ideas about what the church should do and who they are Christians, but they also use theology differently than Calvinist Baptists to create images of themselves. In 1991, the American Baptists, updated and revised a guide to being a Baptist. In a *Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice, Revised Edition*, Norman H. Maring and Winthrop S. Hudson, explain Baptist Denomination and affiliation. They spend considerable time explaining what the church is. They do so from an American Baptist perspective. In the guide, Maring and Hudson, describes the church as made up of all sorts of believers. In the manual they reaffirm the British Baptist definition of the church in which they state, “We believe in the Catholic Church as the holy society of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, which he founded of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit, so that though made up
of many communions, organized in various modes, and scattered through the world, it is yet one in him” (Maring and Hudson 1991: 44).

The fact that the church in the American Baptist vernacular is a diverse entity made up of all kinds of believers. The implication of American Baptist conception of church is that the American Baptists encourage their members to be and are involved in the ecumenical movement. The American Baptists historically are community oriented often fellowshipping with all kinds of believers. At one point, they even issued a joint confession of faith with the Mennonites. Like the Regular Baptists, the American Baptists, received such beliefs from earlier Baptists in America. In this case such beliefs come from the presence of the General Baptists in America (Maring and Hudson 1991).

The American Baptist view of the church and its expansive role in the Christian community appear to be associated with its Arminian theology. Armenian as well as Calvinist theology appears to mold the development of the Arminian Baptist group identity. There is some indication that Arminians have a symbolically expressed image of God that is distinct and different than the sovereign Calvinist God. The Arminian God is a benevolent God. Christ as God in human form, does not nearly express his sovereignty as much as the Calvinist God, but expresses an all inclusive love by dying not for the elect but for the whole world. The American Baptists furthermore, believe that Christ’s love for the world is expressed by serving others. Maring and Hudson, once again, describe the American Baptist conception of God. They state, “The God depicted in Scriptures is greatly concerned about justice in human affairs as well as personal piety” (Maring and Hudson 1991: 107). They also emphasize that Christ modeled servitude
toward others. The church has a social responsibility to meet all the world's needs, even its economic needs. Only then can the world understand Christ’s love (Maring and Hudson 1991). As the instruments of Christ in the world they model servitude rather than political dominance.

In particular the belief about what a good Christian should do is highly relevant to the present study. Research investigating the religious motivations of Christian volunteers in community social service programs; also indicate that one’s particular calling influences the willingness or likelihood of an individual volunteering to help the economically disadvantaged. Diana Garland, Dennis Myers, and Terry Wolfer (2009) found that when asked 84% of their sample donated their time to charity because they believed that God called them to serve others. Such beliefs were often associated with their image of Christ as a servant. The American Baptists share both beliefs making them very likely to contribute to the poor.

In any case church historian Bill Leonard emphasizes in his work, *Baptists in America* that Baptists are not a silent lot of people. Whatever their theological beliefs are they are politically active. Such Baptist constructions of identity mold their interactions with non-Baptists. For example, some work hard to see abortion outlawed. Others were very involved in the Civil Rights movements in the 1960’s (Leonard 2005). One might attribute such diverse political behaviors to different ideas of what the church as a fellowship of believers is called to do or in essence group schemas about self. The wide variety of Baptist political activities may be related to differing conceptions of what a Christian should be.
The Calvinist Reformation of Rural Appalachians

Historians such as George McKenna investigate and enlighten the educated reader to the blatantly political nature of Calvinism. Although Calvinists at times in American history have been involved in helping the poor their objective in helping has been to create moral society by making the immoral poor into moral citizens. This recitation illustrates the ways in which Calvinist schemas of self motivate political action.

McKenna argues that Puritan belief systems have shaped American political and social behavior across the ages. Shortly after the industrial revolution, McKenna argues that American Calvinists in the mainline denominations became social activists. They endeavored to eliminate and eradicate poverty, which they thought prevented citizens from becoming moral citizens. Through various charities and outreaches they targeted impoverished areas of the United States, encouraging poor persons to receive an education and move outside of poverty (McKenna 2007). Originally the Presbyterians started this movement, but Southern Baptists and American Baptists (the General Association of Regular Baptists would be formed from the American Baptists) would soon take up the fight (McCaulley 1995).

Using the rhetoric of John Winthrop and the vision of Puritan American Baptists like Walter Raushenbush encouraged American Christians to make America “a city upon a hill.” This meant eliminating poverty (McKenna 2007). Appalachian Researcher, Deborah Vansau McCaulley (1995), points out that Appalachia was often the target of such endeavors.
Appalachian Christians had developed their own unique forms of religious identity and pride most of which was rooted in the Calvinist settlement of Appalachia by the Scotch-Irish Evangelical Calvinists. Types of Baptists only found in Appalachia as well as members of the Holiness tradition in Appalachia had developed their own religious rituals imported by the Scotch-Irish such as foot washing and speaking in tongues to communicate to the outside world that they were special types of believers and representing the only true church of God. Mainline Baptists having a different sort of identity and pride encouraged Appalachian Christians to become more like them. They encouraged them to become educated themselves, use an educated minister, and get rid of what they thought were superstitious and ignorant rituals such as speaking in tongues. Mainline Baptists as well as Presbyterians developed free schools called Sunday Schools to mold Appalachians to their images of the model Christian. In these Sunday Schools poor Appalachian students were taught the values of Middle-Class Americans (McCauley 1995). Mainline Baptists then hit a brick wall. They could not mold Appalachian Christians to their image of what a Christian should be like. Poverty persisted.

Conservative Appalachian Baptists, in the Landmark, Primitive, and Old Regular Traditions denounced the Social Gospel vehemently. Many poor Appalachians in these traditions refused any form of help from the government or the mainline Christians even in modern times (McCauley 1995). Scotch-Irish Calvinists came to Appalachia to be free of all religious and political entities that wanted to constrain their liberty and way of life, much like the Puritans before them, and they weren’t about to let the mainline Christians tell them how to behave (Jones 1994). The perceived failure of these progressive minded
Calvinists to reform the poor may still linger in the minds of modern Calvinists. It may also contribute to modern schemas of the poor as morally degenerate. In any case in reference to the present research question hostility toward the poor seems to be associated with Calvinist religious identity.

I will outline below how Baptists may be able to use their social status to create inequitable social policy. By adhering to pious principles, Baptists in Appalachia developed a reputation for being respectful and educated middle class citizens. When Max Weber visited Appalachia he noted that the Baptists were also the businessmen, entrepreneurs, and leaders in Appalachia society. They were respected namely because through adult Baptism they agreed to adhere to the principles of frugality and honesty as part of Christian duty (Weber 1946).

Researchers in the field of inequality such as J. Stephen Knoll-Smith emphasize that status groups expect the masses of people to conform to the values and behaviors of the group in power. Knoll-Smith emphasized that status groups believe they have the right to impose their values and images on others (McCauley 1995). Mainline Baptists, as a status group and a church found it perplexing that the Appalachian poor would not learn to value education and Baptist theology. Because Appalachian’s would not let themselves be reformed and molded into model American citizens living in “the city upon a hill” conceptually they became deviants in the mind of Appalachian Calvinists. The schema for treating them as such deviants was developed. Appalachian Calvinists routinely denounced the poor as lazy and shiftless (McCauley 1995).
Appalachian poverty has persisted long after the Calvinist Presbyterians and Baptists tried to reform Appalachians. Confronted with a population that eschewed all of its good intentions the Baptists turned inward and became disinterested in helping the poor monetarily. McCauley points out that progressive Calvinist run missions in Appalachia gradually phased out their aid to the poor. Rather they refocused their efforts on training lay ministers (McCauley 1995).

In 1932, the Northern Baptist Convention (now known as American Baptist Churches in the USA) split itself right down the middle between Arminians and Calvinists. The Calvinists left and formed the General Association of Regular Baptists. These modern Regular Baptists reaffirmed the creedal statements of Baptist Calvinists in the past and reacted against the liberal bent of the Northern Baptist Convention (Leonard 2003). Perhaps these Calvinist Baptists were discouraged. They could not alleviate poverty in Appalachia so they refused to continue to fight it.

The poor person in Appalachia is continually confronted with a dilemma. Appalachian religious folk of all sorts are independent and resilient. As we have seen before these Christians discouraged and disparaged poor individuals from receiving monetary aid from church or the government (McCauley 1995). Poor individuals are therefore not likely to be encouraged by their fellow congregants to receive monetary aid. Since mainline Calvinist Baptists, including the Southern Baptists and the Regular Baptists, make up a high percentage of Christians living in Appalachia the poor person can find very little monetary support from private charity.
A Literature Review

In the paragraphs to follow I summarize research correlating Baptist theological identities and supporting certain types of welfare policies. This review begins with examining the middle class schema of the welfare recipient as lazy and ends with a demonstration of how Calvinist religious identities affect welfare reforms. The welfare recipient first of all seems to live a life in opposition to everything the Calvinist Baptist believes which makes the Baptist even more discouraged and unwilling to help the undeserving poor.

Especially important to the Puritans and the Baptists was the virtue of honesty. Most Americans feel that those receiving welfare are dishonest. In 1969, 71% of respondents to a Gallop poll thought that individuals receiving monetary aid were lying about their economic condition to get monetary aid (Asen 2001). Even today, C. A. Larsen (2008), found that 39% of Americans believe that poor people are lazy a large contrast to the hardworking values of middle class Baptists. Calvinists Baptists may not reach out to the poor for various reasons, but there is at least some sociological evidence to suggest that the reasons why they may not are directly connected with their religious identities.

Earlier we alluded to the fact that the American Baptists may be able to reach out to Appalachia’s poor because they hold to the image of God as a benevolent and loving God. As God’s servants they believe that they should be benevolent and loving. In fact, such an understanding of God corresponds with political tolerance to fringe groups (Frose, Bader, and Smith 2008). The Calvinists conversely hold to the image of a
sovereign God. They emphasize God’s power rather than God’s love. Guiding moral reform may be more important to them than expressing God’s love toward others.

In 2005 Christopher Bader and Paul Froese found something that is vital to our study. In *Images of God: The Effect of Personal Theologies on Moral Attitudes, Political Affiliation, and Religious Behavior*, Bader and Froese examine how people’s understandings of God affect their political beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. They found that if one possessed an image of God as sovereign and all powerful, one was significantly more likely to be Republican in their political leanings than those with a concept of a more distant God (Bader and Froese 2005).

In addition to Bader and Froese (2005), Lyman Kellstedt, John Green, Corwin Smith, and et. al (2007) have discovered a vitally important trend in the Southern Baptist Convention. They found that young Southern Baptists are significantly more likely to be Republican than their older brethren. Such a finding correlates with other research on Southern Baptists which indicate that younger Southern Baptists are significantly more likely than their older brethren to be Five Point Calvinists (Stezer 2008).

However, Ralph E. Pyle (1993) demonstrates the most direct correlation between Calvinist Baptism and dislike of monetary aid programs to help the poor. In his 1993 study, *Faith and Commitment to the Poor: Theological Orientation and Support for Government Assistance Measures*, Pyle found that Fundamentalists taking the words of the Bible seriously, particularly Baptists, were significantly less likely to support government spending to help the poor than other Christians.
The findings of other researchers may also explain how and why the Protestant Work Ethic characteristics are found in both Baptist groups and some forms of middle class consciousness. In 1999, Timothy Clydesdale found that better educated theological conservatives, those who take the Bible very literally like the Calvinists, were also significantly less likely than other Christians to support welfare spending (Clydesdale 1999). In *The Elusive Link Between Conservative Protestantism and Conservative Economics*, Jacob Felson and Heather Kindell also discovered something that is both very vital to our study and confounding. In addition to Pyles’ (1993) study finding that the Baptists did not support welfare spending and Clydesdale’s (1999) study finding that better educated conservatives do not support welfare spending, Felson and Kindell also found that better educated theological conservatives were also significantly more likely than other Christians to be politically conservative (Felson and Kindell 2007). In light of what we know about Calvinism and class appealing to middle class professionals with its logical, bureaucratic, and systematic theology there is a likelihood of these professionals being the educated but theological conservatives in Felson and Kindell’s (2007) study and Clydesdale’s as well.

Pioneering Sociologist Robert Wuthnow observed that in recent years the most dramatic political change in America concerns the Baptists. Wuthnow believes that modern Baptists came to accept the New England Puritan view of America as a Christian nation. Such according to Wuthnow have assumed a Puritanical religious identity and now are willing to use political measures to create a Christian America when it falls into moral decline (Wuthnow 2007).
In summary, the research of Bader and Froese (2005) and the research of Kellstedt, Green, Smith, and et al (2007) indicates that those with Calvinist religious identities likely support a political platform designed to use political power to rid American society of all its vices, including laziness. It is a platform likely to be in opposition to governmental monetary aid.
CHAPTER THREE: INVESTIGATING BAPTIST THEOLOGY, CHURCH CHARITY, AND MONETARY AID

Methods, Participants, and Measures

How does one examine the hypothetical relationship between Baptist theology, monetary aid, and perceptions of the poor? A variety of measures can be used but no single measure captures and assesses the relationship between these. Thus the study takes a mixed methodological approach. For example in the present study, I use the quantitative Protestant Work Ethic scale to observe each population’s attitudes toward leisure. Then I followed up with an interview asking about what types of monetary aid programs and policies respondents support. Ambiguous underlying relationships between attitudes toward leisure and monetary aid can then be observed. The present study employs mix methodology to observe how Calvinist theology in Baptist populations influences attitudes toward work and leisure, monetary aid programs in the United States, church charity, and perceptions of the poor. The study’s methodology also explores the transformation of theological beliefs into class beliefs. Its goal is to allow us to observe the importance of hard work in the Baptist identity and how it motivates social and political behaviors.

The study sample consisted of six participants from a non-Calvinist, American Baptist Church, and five participants from a Calvinist, Regular Baptist Church in Central Appalachia. 30 participants from each church were randomly selected and contacted by mail. Participants were mailed a consent form outlining risks and benefits of participating in the study to make an informed decision to participate in the study.
Interested participants then contacted the researcher by phone, email, or in person at a church meeting.

The survey and interview process took approximately 45 minutes and the study was at a university a few minutes away from the churches. The American Baptists in the study belonged to the American Baptist Churches USA and the Regular Baptists belonged to the General Association of Regular Baptists. Each congregation was defined as Calvinist or not by comparing each association’s statement of Doctrine and the Five Major Doctrines of Calvinism. Appalachian scholar, Howard Dorgan (1999) concurrently defines American Baptists as non-Calvinistic and Regular Baptists as Calvinistic.

The present study assumed a quasi-experimental methodology with two comparison groups. Calvinist theology functioned as the distinguishing characteristic between groups. Differences and similarities, across group theology, in the way each group understood work and leisure, church charity, monetary aid programs toward the poor, and perceptions of the poor were observed using two measures. One measure was the Protestant Work Ethic Scale while the other was a semi-structure interview assessing attitudes toward charity, welfare, and the poor in Appalachia.

The Protestant Work Ethic Scale has nineteen statements that the subject might agree or disagree with. On a scale of one to seven, one being “I strongly disagree” and seven being “I strongly agree,” subjects ranked their agreement with each statement. Factor analysis with varimax rotation is then commonly used to observe group differences and similarities on a variety of the Protestant Work Ethic’s subscales. The
number of subscales found in recent studies varies from three to six (Christopher 2002; and Mudrack 1997). Probably because of the small sample size the current factor analysis revealed seven subscales. Only one item was found in Factor 7 and our factors most closely resemble the five factors found in Arslan’s 2000 study. These factors are: work as an end in itself, money and time saving, internal locus of control, hard work brings success, and negative attitudes toward leisure (Arslan 2000).

The most fundamental part of the research methodology is the Protestant Work Ethic scale. In the 1970’s Mirels and Garrett developed this highly reliable scale to assess to what degree individuals endorse hard work as a virtue, disdain leisure, and perceive those who are not economically successful as sinful (Arslan 2000). Even though it is an older measure it still yields high reliabilities in present studies. Arslan’s 2000 study found a reliability of $\alpha=.84$. Concurrently Peter E. Mudrack (1997) found a reliability of $\alpha=.72$ when using the Protestant Work Ethic Scale. A Chronbach Alpha reliability test conducted in the present study revealed a reliability of $\alpha=.76$.

After participants completed the Protestant Work Ethic scale they responded to an “Attitudes Toward Charity Interview.” The interview schedule was composed of ten open ended items about the importance of occupation, welfare, church charity, and poverty. This measure was then used with the Protestant Work Ethic scale to observe possible relationships between valuing hard work, negativity to leisure, and attitudes toward the poor with support for church charity and monetary aid programs to help the poor.
Results

Because of the small sample size, the present study is an exploration of the following research questions: do Calvinist and Non-Calvinist Baptists differ in their attitudes toward leisure and work? Do Calvinist and Non-Calvinist Baptists support different types of governmental monetary aid toward the poor? Do Baptist Calvinist attitudes toward leisure and work influence the types of governmental aid they support and types of church charity they are involved in?

One of the major problematic issues found with using the Protestant Work Ethic Scale is that it is population specific. Various researchers find various numbers of subscales when they conduct factor analysis. The present study found seven subscales that approximate Arslan’s five factors found in 2000. For example, the same items that are part of Arslan’s Internal Locus of Control Scale factored together in this study forming scale number 4, the Internal Locus of Control Scale. For the most part items that had to do with time and money saving factored together and became subscale 2 in the present study forming the Time and Money Saving Subscale. Most items gauging attitudes toward leisure and Hard Work Brings success factored together to form subscale 1 in the present study, forming a combined Hard Work Brings Success subscale and Negativity Toward Leisure Subscale. Other items having to do with Hard Work Bringing success factored into subscale 5 and 6 respectively. Scale 1 was one of the two items gauging negative attitudes toward the poor. Arslan had to exclude this item in his 2000 study.
Two of the subscales found in the present study were made up of items that appear to be unrelated. It is even rather difficult to give names to subscales 5 and 6 of the present study because the association between these items appears not to have any inherent meaning. Items found in Arslan’s “Work as an end in itself” scale did not load together. Rather items found in this scale were scattered across 5 subscales. Items related to “Work as an end in itself” measure to what degree hard work doing even secular activities is perceived as a religious virtue. Not having a functioning “Work as an end in itself” scale makes it very difficult to assess differences in the way each study population values hard work. Items that Arslan exclude for low factor loadings were associated with the Internal Locus of Control Scale, Scale 5, Scale 6, and Scale 7. A two sample independent sample T-Test was then conducted to detect differences between the groups.

Results of the two-sample t-test and the interview data revealed complex, unclear, and perplexing relationships. Despite this fact the study did identify some significant results. First of all, Max Weber appears to be right on at least one account. Calvinists of any stripe appear to be diligent workers. Hard work is a central part of Calvinist religious identity. A significant finding appeared on Factor 1 of our analysis. This factor, as mentioned before, includes most of the items related to “Hard Work Brings Success” and “Negativity Toward Leisure.”

“Hard Work Brings Success,” measures the degree to which respondents believe that any one can economically succeed in life if they try hard enough. “Negativity Toward Leisure” examines the like or dislike of engaging in leisure activities. Calvinists in this study disliked engaging in leisure activities and felt that everyone could succeed in
life if they worked hard enough. They were also more likely than the American Baptists to see not working hard as a sin. This result was significant at p<.05, p=.02. This scale includes items 9, 13, 15, 17, and 19 on the Protestant Work Ethic scale which may be found in Appendix A. Table A found on this page below demonstrates what appear to be consistent differences in the attitudes between the control and experimental groups as measured by the mean and standard deviation.

Table 1

Group Statistics for Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1.12315915</td>
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<td>.99187723</td>
<td>.44358098</td>
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</table>

Even though the low sample sizes prevented me from determining whether or not the Calvinist religious identity had any effect on what type of welfare programs Calvinists in Appalachia support, it did show that negative reactions to leisure, seeing
hard work as a virtue, and laziness as sin, are all centrally located to the Calvinist religious identity. The study showed that in terms of mean differences and significant findings that Calvinists and Arminians consistently approach the subjects of work and poverty very differently.

I investigated how particular Calvinist beliefs may lead to specific attitudes and beliefs about poverty. Before conducting the qualitative analysis I thought about how such ideas may influence perceptions of poverty and welfare. I asked myself what is the most distinctive belief in the Calvinist belief system. It appeared to me that the one thing that all sorts of various Calvinists shared was this idea that they were called by God to create a moral society. This belief was commonly found among several Calvinist groups: Puritans, Progressive Presbyterians, and modern Baptists. Then I examined the trends in the qualitative data to see if the data appeared to be related to having differing attitudes toward poverty and work as measured in by the Protestant Work Ethic Scale and if such attitudes could be related also to specific theologies.

In the past the idea that Calvinists were called to create a moral society influenced the Puritans to create a nation based on the Bible (Csabi 2001) and Baptists and Presbyterians in Appalachia to develop Sunday Schools aimed at making the poor hardworking (McCauley 1995). However, I also felt that a central part of Calvinist theology is the conception of God as all powerful, sinless, and wrathful.

From these two major beliefs I extrapolated the image of the typical Calvinist Baptist as a hard working and dedicated individual having no time for leisure while working to create a moral society, and someone who was very interested in saving souls
from judgment and hell rather than being engaged in social crusades to end poverty.

Then I asked if the image of the Calvinist in the present study emerging from qualitative and quantitative means was consistent with both Weber’s image of the hard working Puritan and my image of the modern Calvinist as a hardworking Evangelist. For the most part, the qualitative and quantitative data suggest that in fact both images appear to be an accurate portrayal of the Baptist Calvinists in this study.

The significant quantitative findings which suggest that Calvinist Baptists had greater negativity toward leisure, see laziness as a vice, and saw poverty as a sin, were congruent with the image of the Baptist Calvinist as a hard working Evangelist. We may understand leisure as a distraction of the Calvinist from his primary mission on earth to create a moral society. Therefore, the Calvinist does not typically like or need leisure time. Believing that God has elected people to work for the creation of a moral society makes Calvinists particularly hostile to those who do not appear to be working. As we illustrated before, most Americans believe the poor are lazy. It is then no surprise that Calvinists would see the poor as sinning and in need of moral reform. Table B, on page 61, illustrates the results of the factor analysis conducted to observe cognitive and behavioral differences between the two groups.
Table 2

*T-Test Results of Protestant Work Ethic Scales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Verimax Factor Analysis for Control and Experimental Group</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
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<td>Subscale 3</td>
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<td>Subscale 4</td>
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<td>.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale 5</td>
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<td>Subscale 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>8.910</td>
<td>.874</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Control Group=Non-Calvinist
Experimental Group=Calvinist
The interview of both groups revealed that a majority of each group support governmental monetary aid to the poor. Sixty percent of Calvinist Baptists in the study supported monetary aid and sixty-six percent of Non-Calvinist Baptists supported monetary aid. All of those who supported monetary aid programs felt that welfare had been abused by some poor persons but most maintained that they supported it especially for temporary aid.

Every person in the study was also quick to point out that their church provides monetary aid to poor persons in their communities if they knew of any individual need. Therefore, it appears that seeing laziness as a sin has little bearing on willingness to support the poor monetarily or through the government. In fact, comments directly endorsing governmental monetary aid programs were not uncommon even coming from those who believed that in some cases that monetary aid programs were used by the poor to avoid hard work. One respondent made the comment that: “The government should take care of the needs of the people. I support monetary aid through taxes. I also support aid outside the government and wish more people helped people.”

However, the way each congregation perceived their duty toward God did impact the programs and efforts each church implemented to help the poor. Such efforts were contingent upon the belief whether or not helping the poor was a central part of being a Christian. Many of the American Baptists spoke of the church’s responsibility to clothe and feed the poor. One American Baptist respondent articulated the American Baptist view of aid the poor as such: “We [The American Baptist study population] see poverty as an issue we need to aid. We see it constantly….In Acts the original church began by
taking care of the elderly and the poor. The church is called to aid those around them.”
They as individual Christians felt that Christ compelled to help the needy around them.
Another American Baptist respondent was asked at a Christmas Party what he would give
to Jesus as a birthday gift. He reflected upon this and said, “I would give him the three
R’s. I would be more receptive to his word, resist temptation, and reach out to hurting,
lonely, and poor people.”

The American Baptists proudly listed their efforts to help the poor. The American
Baptists in the study seemed most proud of the implementation of a food pantry that fed
over 600 families in the county the church is located in. Some other individuals spoke of
the free health clinic the church was building and the Thanksgiving dinners they had to
help poor persons in the community. Thirty-three percent of those American Baptists
interviewed indicated that it was the primary role of the church to help the poor. Such a
belief corresponds much more to the Arminian image of God as a servant, as opposed to
the Calvinist image of God as a sovereign ruler.

The Regular Baptists in the current study also actively tried to help the poor in the
community; however, their community outreach programs in the Regular Baptist
Congregation were not primarily motivated by the desire to aid the poor. These programs
were designed to evangelize the community which was part of the Calvinist
understanding of what a good Christian should do. The most commonly oriented
program was mentioned was the crisis pregnancy center run by the church and the day
care. The congregation used such programs to tell people about salvation through the
defeat of Christ. However, many felt that the poor in the community benefitted from the
church’s programs. They were proud of this accomplishment as well. For example, one young Regular Baptist woman made the commented that she thought her church did a great deal to help poor persons in the community:

I really see them [the church] as addressing it [poverty] quite well. They [the church] have had numerous times where people don’t have something and are needing of things….They can tell sometimes if somebody needs some clothes or food, or a place to stay. Someone in our church will make it possible for them. Somebody always gives them [the person in need] help with it.

She went on speak about how the church’s community efforts help the poor, “Well, some of them [people that benefit from the churches programs] are not just poor, but they benefit the poor either way.”

In summary, most of these respondents felt that their churches were sensitive to the needs of the poor, and members of both congregations did endeavor to help the poor in different ways. How they understood helping the poor as a Christian duty varied according to theology, and it appeared that the Regular Baptists did not believe it was the church’s responsibility to help the poor to the same degree as the American Baptists which is consistent with the image of the Regular Baptist we spoke about before.

Rather, the community outreach programs in the Regular Baptist Congregation were much more motivated by the Calvinist ideal of creating a model society stemming from the Calvinist idea of the Christian as God’s moral instrument than any concept of Christian servitude. It appears that they saw the poor of the surrounding community directly engaging in sins, although such sins were never clarified or enunciated. The
moral object of the Crisis Pregnancy Center was to reduce the number of abortions. One young woman also mentioned that the purpose of the church’s day care was to teach children how to be moral citizens. She also stressed that all Christians had a responsibility to make America into a Christian nation. “We [Puritan Christians] formed the government to practice our religion freely. That is the one thing we’re not allowed to do right now. It’s not right. We Christians need to stop being quite about it.”

Discussion of Findings

The present study did not find a direct correlation between Calvinist religious identity and political opposition to monetary aid programs. In this case, the relationship between theological beliefs and middle class consciousness that may influence individuals to oppose monetary aid remains undefined. From this exploratory study we cannot speculate that the vast unpopularity of monetary aid programs in America or Appalachia stems from Calvinist theology. However, the study did show that group beliefs and perceptions may influence others to assist the poor in different ways by motivating them to participate in Church charities to help the poor.

Results pertaining to the middle class belief that everyone can succeed in America are also perplexing because other studies show that this belief corresponds with an unwillingness to support monetary aid. Calvinists in our study clearly endorsed this belief. Furthermore, middle class persons who have this orientation are typically known as class unconscious because they seem unaware of the structural inequalities that inhibit the social mobility of the poor. They are significantly more likely not to support
monetary aid programs that help the poor than those who understand the structural impediments to the mobility of the poor (Guest 1974). In this study no one seemed to be particularly opposed to monetary aid including those who believed that all persons can succeed if they try hard enough.

There are many reasons why this sample of Baptist Calvinists does not appear to be particularly willing to resist monetary aid programs to help the poor even though they have the same beliefs as other middle class persons that hard work brings economic success. Perhaps, the Calvinists in the current study are somehow unique to other Calvinist Baptists in Appalachia. Or perhaps the Calvinists also understand the symbolic representation of Jesus Christ as a servant like the American Baptists, and the awareness of this image may make Baptist Calvinists unwilling to do any harm to the less fortunate even if some appear undeserving. In fact, even though their community outreaches did not primarily focus on helping the poor, the Regular Baptists in the study were very happy when they did help poor persons.

Contrasting schemas of what it means to be a Christian have emerged as a result of the study. These schemas do influence the ways the poor are treated by Calvinist Baptists and Calvinist Baptists alike. The qualitative component of the present study revealed that Calvinist Baptists, like the Puritans before them, desire to make America “a city upon a hill.” Like any other status group Regular Baptists used their influence, power, and church charity conform to its image of a Christian community. By witnessing to children in their preschool and unwed mothers in their crisis pregnancy center Christian beliefs were spread to the outside community. Through community outreaches
they sought to reform sinners, which included the poor. The purpose of the Calvinist’s crisis pregnancy center in the present study was a moral rather than social crusade to reduce the number of abortions which is perceived by the Calvinists as one of America’s great sin. The American Baptists in contrast held to a much different image of Christian America. A Christian America to them was one without poverty. They did their best to alleviate it, believing that their role as Christians was to bring about a more economically utopian society.

Although, the study sample was small it yielded a high reliability and a significant finding on the subscale of the Protestant Work Ethic scale that examines negative attitudes toward leisure, the belief that everyone can succeed in America if they try hard enough, and seeing laziness is a sin. From the study we can then reliably deduce that the Calvinist love of hard work and dislike of leisure is a central part of the Calvinist religious identity, and that Calvinists are more likely than non-Calvinists to see not working hard as a sin.

In reference to the research question at hand the study found that Calvinist Baptists dislike leisure. This may indicate that they are tirelessly working toward making America a moral nation. An unawareness of the poor person’s plight found in Calvinist associations may also be the product of the Calvinist belief that God will reward you if you work hard enough. The presence of such beliefs may mean that the poor pass right under the Calvinist radar. Calvinist Baptists may not be greatly involved in helping the poor of Appalachia perhaps because helping the poor is not seen as a central part of their Christian duty. Perhaps at last it is this Calvinistic unawareness of the plight of the poor
and ineffective governmental monetary aid programs that keep Appalachia’s poor in poverty.

In retrospect the study also encountered numerous flaws and problems with its execution and its methodology. Potential respondents did not seem to be interested in the study and they seemed unwilling to be tape recorded or to travel to the study location. The study location was chosen because it could be used to interview both samples and hence avoid environmental factors that confound subject responses, however, it was located a small distance from the church. I did not also perceive that private study rooms at the study location would not always be available. Therefore, I was unable to tape record all interviews. Instead, I had to rely on my note taking abilities. In retrospect, I would change the study location to each church, despite the confounding church environments because the subjects seemed very unwilling to travel any distance at all to participate in my study. I could administer the interview and Protestant Work Ethic Scale to those who agreed to participate after or before church services.

In future studies alternative data collection methods could be used to obtain a higher response rate. Subjects could complete by mail or in a group setting a written questionnaire about their charitable activities and the Protestant Work Ethic scale. Using anonymous written data may put subjects at ease when interacting with the researcher because it would make it in their eyes more difficult to for the researcher to associate their responses with their identities. The rapport that I developed with them may have influenced them to speak very favorably of the poor.
Originally, I thought that such rapport was necessary to get my subject participants engaged and involved in the study. Ironically such rapport may have been the reason so few of them decided to participate in the first place. My recommendation for researchers wanting to expand on the present study would be to develop some rapport with the subjects and then let subjects administer the instruments themselves or hire a research assistant to administer the instruments. In any case, the study would have benefited greatly from a larger sample size. With a large sample size researchers could employ stronger statistical tests to see if there are significant differences in the way each group understands hard work and leisure, and if these differences were also correlated with religious group identity.

A larger sample size in this study may have caused the factors found to more closely represented Arslan’s 2000 factors than in the present study. With a larger sample size I may have been able to assess Weber’s historic claim that Calvinists see hard work as a virtue in itself is a central part of Baptist identity, and then see if there was a relationship between this particular variable and Calvinist support for monetary aid programs and charities toward the poor.

Nevertheless, it is still my hope that inequality researchers in the future will take notice of this small and highly theoretical study and design studies that will more directly investigate how class consciousness is related to religious identities and motivates particular social and political behaviors.
REFERENCES


Guest, Avery M. “Class Consciousness and American Political Attitudes.” *Social Forces* 52: 496-510.


APPENDIX A: THE PROTESTANT WORK ETHIC SCALE

1. Most people spend too much time in unprofitable amusements.
2. Our society would have fewer problems if people had less leisure time.
3. Money acquired easily (e.g., through gambling or speculation) is usually spent unwisely.
4. There are few satisfactions equal to the realization that one has done his best at a job.
5. The most difficult college courses usually turn out to be the most rewarding.
6. Most people who don't succeed in life are just plain lazy.
7. The self-made man is likely to be more ethical than the man born to wealth.
8. I often feel I would be more successful if I sacrificed certain pleasures.
9. People should have more leisure time to spend in relaxation."
10. Any man who is able and willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.
11. People who fail at a job have usually not tried hard enough.
12. Life would have very little meaning if we never had to suffer.
13. Hard work offers little guarantee of success.
14. The credit card is a ticket to careless spending.
15. Life would be more meaningful if we had more leisure time.
16. The man who can approach an unpleasant task with enthusiasm is the man who gets ahead.
17. If one works hard enough he is likely to make a good life for himself.
18. I feel uneasy when there is little work for me to do.
19. A distaste for hard work usually reflects a weakness of character.
APPENDIX B: ATTITUDES TOWARD CHARITY AND MONETARY AID

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not important and 10 being very important, how important is your occupation to you?

2. Do you see your occupation as a calling?

3. What is, in your opinion, the Biblical definition of charity?

4. How does your church address poverty?

5. What are some of your Church’s programs/efforts to support the poor?

6. What types of governmental monetary aid do you support at the federal or state level?

7. Does your church help the poor in your community?

8. When Jesus refers to the second greatest commandment, “to love thy neighbor as thyself” what does it mean?

9. Do you think that individuals should support monetary aid through the government or outside the government?

10. Describe a world without poverty? What would it be like?