

THE IMPACT OF CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM UPON THE TIME
FATHERS SPEND WITH THEIR CHILDREN

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This research was concerned with the possible effects that religion, especially conservative Protestantism, has upon the performance of fatherhood. The influence of religion was assessed using the religious beliefs reported by fathers. The performance of fatherhood focused on the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their young children. This research hypothesized that conservative Protestant fathers would spend more time meeting their children's physical needs than other Protestant fathers. Also hypothesized was that the level of conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to the proportion of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their children out of the total time spent by fathers and mothers combined. Finally, it was hypothesized that the level of conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers was positively related to their membership in conservative religious denominations.

In order to test whether conservative Protestantism has an effect upon the amount of time that fathers spend meeting the physical needs of their young children, this study will use data from the first wave of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), completed in 1988. Regression analysis was used to test the first two hypotheses and crosstabulation analysis was used to test the third hypothesis.

The first two hypotheses were not supported. However, interaction was detected between the variables of race and conservative Protestantism. Specifically, Black

conservative Protestant fathers consistently did more childcare than Black non-conservative Protestant fathers, and all other Protestant fathers, whether conservative or not. The third hypothesis was accepted because an index of conservative beliefs was established using denominational labels.

Like other recent studies, there was a lack of consensus about which variables predict how much time fathers will spend with their children. This study also points out the need for further research concerned with conservative Protestants and the impact of their beliefs on families.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research is concerned with the possible effects that religion, especially conservative Protestantism, has on the performance of fatherhood. During the last quarter of the twentieth century, a burgeoning interest in the family has developed within the conservative Protestant community. In many respects, the interest is a reaction against the perception that the traditional nuclear family, which has long been the mainstay of this community, is threatened through its decline and change. The decline aspect, which has most concerned the conservative Protestant community has been the breakup of families through divorce and the single-parent families which result from these breakups (Wilcox and Bartowski, 1999). Usually headed by women, these single-parent families, when they remain in their churches, are having a profound effect upon the composition of their church's membership. The conservative Protestant community, mainly through local churches, has responded to these new families with varying degrees of success. Churches, especially those with large memberships, have formed various ministries to work with these newly formed families. Large, multi-faceted "singles ministries" typically include such programs as divorce recovery classes, counseling, support groups, parenting classes, Sunday School classes, and a broad spectrum of social activities (Yankeelov and Garland, 1998).

The perception that the traditional family is in trouble has also led the conservative Protestant community, which is estimated as nearly 20% of the American population, to efforts aimed to strengthen existing families. During this same 25 year period, a variety of ministries have been started with this goal as their mission. Ellison and Sherkat (1993) conclude that these ministries and their teachings are “social products” which are generated within and disseminated by “interpretive communities.” These interpretive communities consist of a loose network of theologians, teachers, and pastors of several denominations, who have generally shaped conservative Protestantism. They have done this through a variety of media, including, radio, print, television and film. Even more recently, a surprising number of large ministries for men (e.g.; Promise Keepers) has arisen, urging men to reprise their traditional roles of breadwinning, disciplining and providing moral guidance within the family (Abraham, 1997).

Meanwhile, in the scientific community, research interest in the family has also developed, part of the interest, directed toward fathers. Initially, most researchers explored paternal influence by studying children whose fathers were absent from the home and comparing them with children whose fathers were present in the home. Eventually, researchers became aware that some of the differences attributed to fathers in these two types of families were, in fact, the consequences of economical and other social factors. For example, single- parent, female-headed families are much more likely to be poor than are couple-headed families. Thus, living in poverty may be more important in understanding family dynamics than not having a father. Researchers next turned to studies concerned with father-child interaction and paternal influences in two- parent families, typically defined as fathers responsible for breadwinning with mothers as the primary caregivers (Lamb, et al., 1986). More recently, there have been several studies designed to get at how fathers in coupled-headed families affect the development of their

children (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine, 1985, 1987; Seward, Yeatts and Stanley-Stevens, 1993; and Pleck and Pleck, 1997).

Statement of the Problem

Religion will be assessed by using the religious beliefs reported by fathers. The performance of fatherhood will focus on the amount of time fathers spend with their children. A common measure of childrearing has been the amount of time parents spend with their children on a daily basis. More telling, perhaps, is the amount of time parents spend meeting the physical needs of their young children. This research will ask whether conservative Protestant fathers spend more or less time meeting their children's physical needs than do other Protestant fathers. The working hypothesis, then, is that there exists a positive relationship between the level of conservative Protestant beliefs and the amount of time fathers spend meeting the physical needs of their young children. Conservative Protestant fathers, also known as "fundamentalists", are typically involved in denominations and para-church organizations that promote "pro-family" issues as core beliefs. These core beliefs (social products) contain elements, which prescribe fathers' active involvement with their children. If fathers put these core beliefs into practice, then it should translate into spending more time with their children, including meeting their physical needs. The data used in this research will be drawn from the initial wave of the National Survey of Families and Households, completed in 1988.

Significance of the Problem

This study should provide a better understanding of the factors which affect fathers' performance of childcare. Specifically, an understanding of the impact of certain religious beliefs upon fathers' childcare performance will be targeted. Likewise, this research should shed light on how religious factors compare to other key factors (i.e., fathers' age, race, total household income, as well as, children's' gender and age) in

determining the amount of time fathers spend meeting the physical needs of their children. Additionally, findings from this research will be used to confirm or challenge previous findings and current thinking on these issues. Furthermore, the research will help evaluate the usefulness of selected theoretical concepts in explaining fathers' behavior toward their children. Finally, insights into the link between the two institutions of religion and the family will be garnered.

Theoretical Frame of Reference

The theoretical frame of reference, which underlies this research, is structural-functionalism. Historically, this perspective was popular because it presented an idealized type of the traditional nuclear family. Any deviation from these norms was treated as non-normative and dysfunctional. In short, this paradigm views the father as the “instrumental-leader” and the mother as “expressive-leader” of the family; she provides care and nurturing for the children and husband while he provides leadership and economic sustenance (Dienhart, 1998).

Yinger (1970), who also viewed religion from the structural- functional perspective, suggested that social scientists should focus not on what religion essentially is, but what it does. Yinger believed that researchers should define a social phenomenon as religious if it fulfilled the manifest (i.e. conscious and intended) function of religion, which is the salvation of the soul and the setting and maintaining of moral boundaries. The various Conservative Protestant ministries (e.g.; Focus on the Family, Promise Keepers, and Concerned Women of America) and local church activities also illustrate what Roberts (1984:27) referred to when he stated that religions, "... often become concerned with less-than-ultimate issues." Therefore, the Conservative Protestant community's interest in "pro-family" issues and the resulting actions fit Yinger's

(1970:11) statement that, "It is not the nature of belief but the nature of believing that requires our study."

Methodology

In order to test whether conservative Protestantism has an effect upon the amount of time that fathers spend meeting the physical needs of their young children, this study will use data from the first wave of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), completed in 1988. The survey included a large probability sample of households. Data were gathered from randomly selected men and women, aged 19 and over, in each household. The data set included a main cross-section sample of 9,634 households, plus a double sampling of households containing African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, single-parent families, families with stepchildren, cohabiting couples and recently married couples for a total of 13,017 respondents (Sweet, Bumpass and Call, 1988). This study will utilize the data from fathers who were the primary respondents in couple-headed households and who had at least one child between the ages of 0 and 4 years old residing with them.

The dependent variable will be the number of hours fathers spent in caregiving. Fathers (who were the main respondent (R)), of children between the ages of 0 and 4 were asked how many hours in a typical day they spent taking care of their child's physical needs, including feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting the child to bed. Response categories ranged from 0 to 9 or more hours. A second way to measure the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children was also employed. After asking fathers (who were the main respondents), how many hours they spent in caring for their children, the fathers were asked how many hours in a typical day their wives or partners spent meeting the children's physical needs. Response categories again ranged from 0 to 9 or more hours. A calculation was then performed to ascertain

the percentage of the total time of care after combining the fathers' and their partners' hours.

The key independent variables will measure Conservative Protestant beliefs. Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed with the statement, "The Bible is God's word and everything happened or will happen exactly as it says." Later in the survey, respondents were also asked how strongly they agreed with the statement, "The Bible is the answer to all important human problems." The two responses will be used to establish a father's degree of religious conservativeness. In fact, answers to these two questions are often used as an informal litmus test among theological conservatives. Previously, researchers (Ellison, Bartowski and Segal, 1996; Wilcox, 1998) were able to successfully devise an index by compiling these two questions in studies concerned with Conservative Protestant parents and their children. The expectation is that the more religiously conservative fathers, as defined by a more conservative view of the Bible, will also have corresponding behaviors. In this case, it is expected that the more theologically conservative fathers spent more time with their young children, than did other fathers who agreed less with these statements, spent with their children.

The control variable measures fall into three different groups. The first group measures aspects of the respondents and their household characteristics. Realizing that a plethora of factors will influence how much time fathers get to spend with their children, the study controlled for the father's age, race, total household income (Bergen, 1990), as well as denominational preference. The second control variable was self-labeled fundamentalism. Respondents were also asked if they considered themselves a "religious fundamentalist." Answers were either "yes" or "no." This measure explored the correlation between fathers who labeled themselves fundamentalists and those fathers who were fundamentalists, according to the operational definition. The third control

measure was children's characteristics. Gender may affect the amount of time fathers spend with their children, hence, the children's' gender was also included as a control variable. Since the analysis is limited to children between the ages of 0 and 4 years old by the design of the survey, age was not controlled beyond this point.

This chapter has introduced the research problem along with its significance. The underlying theoretical framework and the methodology for the study were also introduced. Finally, the independent and dependent variables were identified, as were the control variables. The next chapter will present a detailed literature review covering the topics of Conservative Protestantism, fatherhood and the study of religion primarily from a structural-functional perspective.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following review of the sociological literature, separate overviews are presented on the concepts of religion, Conservative Protestantism, and fatherhood. The structural-functional theoretical framework is used to help define and delineate each concept and show a relationship between the concepts. Empirical research involving these and other concepts is also examined.

Major Views On Religion

Theologians and sociologists both agree that the term religion can be applied to a wide variety of human behavior (Popenoe, 1995). When the plethora of religious practices are considered, an attempt at a definition is daunting. In this light, Johnstone (1988:13) proposed a working (sociological) definition of religion as, "... a system of beliefs and practices by which a group of people interprets and responds to what they feel is sacred and, usually, supernatural, as well." Macionis (1997:483), on the other hand, disdains an understanding of religion as simply a system of personal beliefs. Rather, he views religion as a social institution when he states that religion involves, "...beliefs and practices based upon a conception of the sacred." In other words, Macionis' view places more emphasis on the institutional aspects of religion rather than on the distinguishing beliefs exhibited by the various members of religions. However, most religions do involve the element of the supernatural, and, thus, require corresponding faith on the part of the adherent. This faith is grounded in conviction rather than scientific evidence. Sociology does not try to explain meaning and purpose in life, as religion does, nor does

sociology pass judgment on any religion in the sense of validity or truthfulness. Instead, sociology attempts to investigate the consequences of religious belief, activity and organization as it affects individuals, society, culture, and the family (Macionis, 1997). Historically, in sociological research, the concept of religion has been operationalized as religiosity. Religiosity is typically understood as an individual's attachment to religion, often based upon the measure of frequency of participation in religious activity (Popenoe, 1995). However, today, most researchers use multi-dimensional measures to try to describe religiosity. For instance, Glock and Stark (1968) developed an index, which specified seven dimensions of religiosity; they operationalized religiosity through experiential, ritualistic, devotional, belief, knowledge, ethical, and particularistic dimensions. This study will focus on a single dimension of religion, which is the ethical or consequential dimension. In other words, does religion affect the behavior of fathers toward their children?

The serious, critical and non-theological study of religion has probably gone on since the dawn of religion itself. However, it was during the nineteenth century that the study of religion as a social phenomena became a formal, even scientific pursuit which engaged a multitude of writers and thinkers. Among sociologists, religion was investigated early on by Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim (Greeley, 1995).

Theoretical Background of the Study of Religion

Karl Marx was a dialectical materialist who asserted that the culmination of contemporary society was the antithesis of economic class struggle. The struggle, as he understood it, had dialectically progressed through history in Western civilization from slavery to feudalism to capitalism. While many believed capitalism was the final stage, Marx (1964) believed and worked toward the next synthesis of a classless society.

Marx and Engels made a lasting contribution through their critique of capitalism. In their book, Capital, Marx and Engels (1967) identified the two principal economic classes of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The proletariat was the working class in industrial societies, while the bourgeoisie was comprised of the owners of the means of production in the same societies. These two classes were always in opposition and their struggle would eventually lead to a revolution which would overthrow the bourgeoisie and their monopoly of the means of production. Instead, they believed, would revert to the proletariat and a classless society would prevail. Thus, the inexorable march of history through various theses, antitheses, and syntheses would finally culminate in a lasting utopia. In the midst of their critique of capitalism, Marx and Engels (1963) carefully described several ways the bourgeoisie kept their power and their stranglehold monopoly on the means of production. One way was through religion. They stated in a piece written in 1844 that:

Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusions about their condition is a call to abandon a condition which requires illusions (1972: 42-43).

Marx and Engels thus believed that religion was used by the bourgeoisie as a way of keeping the oppressed proletariat focused on the afterlife and not on the appalling conditions for the proletariat inherent within the capitalist system. Marx, like Durkheim after him, also believed that religion was a consolidating force within a society which united people around common values and beliefs. While Durkheim (1964) judged this unity as “good” (i.e. valuable) because it promoted social solidarity, Marx thought religion was simply a tool of the bourgeoisie which promoted false consciousness. The solidarity of a common religion that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie invariably shared,

though they had opposing self-interests, was false consciousness. This is why Marx likened religion and its effect on the proletariat to opium, which desensitizes the workers to their (worldly) plight (Greeley, 1995).

Religion, for Max Weber, was not the conservative, static force that was portrayed by Karl Marx. Historically, religion has wrought great change within society, as Weber (1958) pointed out. Religion was of interest for Weber because of its effect on the other institutions in society. He was specifically interested in the relationship of religion and economic development in his seminal work, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Weber, 1958). In this book, he pointed out that in Western, industrialized societies, Protestants, as opposed to Catholics, tended to occupy the more affluent and powerful positions within society. This was attributed to the similarity of values held by Protestant and capitalists. The Protestants, through the teachings of John Calvin and other Reformers, believed that hard work was a virtue and that secular prosperity was a sure sign of God's favor and an assurance of salvation in the afterlife. As lifelong "servants" of God on earth, Calvinist believed that one's "calling" was best fulfilled by reinvesting profits and not through self-indulgent spending. This worked out, in practical terms, to the building of businesses and industries for the Protestants, who reaped even greater profits. Coincidentally, they founded modern capitalism. These Protestant practices perfectly complemented the capitalistic virtues of thrift, initiative, competition, and acquisitiveness (Macionis, 1997; Popenoe, 1995).

As Weber understood it, the early belief in the religious pursuit of prosperity by the Protestants as a sign of God's favor soon died out leaving in its place the secular pursuit of wealth as a means unto itself (i.e. capitalism became a "disenchanted religion"). The Protestants who had early on adopted the values of capitalism were, at the time of Weber's research, financially ahead of their Catholic contemporaries. The

Catholics, for their part, were generally less prosperous because they had maintained the values of the feudal serfs or the commoners in the monarchies that followed. The Catholics, not concerned with an assurance of salvation beyond Church membership, were content in their station and accepted their lot in life. Although Weber believed that Protestantism had a causal effect in the rise of capitalism, he also pointed out the symbiotic nature of the relationship: Protestantism spread even as capitalism grew because each was ideologically supportive of the other (Popenoe, 1995).

Emile Durkheim, unlike Marx and Weber, focused his research on religion to the extent that he can rightly be named as the founder of the sociology of religion. He was also the first to undertake an empirical approach to the study of religion. In his book Suicide, Durkheim's (1951) research question was: Why do Catholics have a lower suicide rate than do Protestants? The answer that he proposed was that the Catholic community exerted a stronger social cohesion than did the Protestant community. The stronger social cohesion abated the isolation and despair that often led to suicide among Protestants, who experienced their religion on a more personal and autonomous basis.

Durkheim (1947), in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, again investigated the role of religion for society by looking at the primitive religions of Australian aborigines. Religion, for Durkheim, was highly evolutionary, and, thus he believed that by observing the more primitive religions, he would gain insight into the contemporary religions that had evolved from the more primitive forms. He concluded that society unwittingly worshipped itself as it experienced the effervescence of ritualism. As the "collective representations" (ritualisms) of society were experienced by the individuals of a society, they encountered a transcendent reality that was, in effect, the individuals themselves. In other words, that which was worshipped was the coercive power of religion. Because there was no actual deity, the society imposed the coercive

power of religion, and was thus, worshipping itself. Mankind, then, through the use of ritualism, created religion.

The Functions of Religion

Durkheim (1947) pioneered the structural-functional perspective of religion. He proposed that religion fulfilled several critical functions for society. First, he believed that religion provided social cohesion for society. He observed that people in religious ceremonies frequently sensed a powerful reality that was beyond themselves. For Durkheim, the explanation for this phenomenon was that the participants, instead of encountering their deity, were actually, encountering the awesome and coercive power of their society. As religious participants encountered and submitted to their deity, they also submitted to their society, which was granted power over people. As people in religious ceremonies met the power of society through worship, they typically did so in the presence of others. The shared experience became a commitment of the participants to one another because they usually abandoned self-interest for the common good. Thus, the worshippers experienced social cohesion and the various manifestations of the religion became powerful symbols of society's ability to influence the individual (Popenoe, 1995, Macionis, 1997). The purpose of this research, then, is to determine whether or not the individuals involved in Conservative Protestantism are influenced by their religious beliefs to spend more time with their children, thereby being better fathers.

The second function of religion for society that Durkheim (1947) observed was that religion acted as an agent of social control. He observed that every society used religious imagery and doctrine to promote conformity to society's norms and values. Many of the norms and values of society were paralleled by religious teachings that gave them added strength. Religion, viewed in such a light, also helped control deviant behavior by giving added impetus to majority- conforming behavior. In other words, if

members of society saw deviant behavior as aberrant to society and God, they would be less motivated to try deviant behavior because the deviants would be threatened with supernatural retribution, as well as societal sanctions. God, in most societies, also acted as a source of future retribution when someone apparently got away with some type of deviant behavior by not being punished in this life. This allowed members of society not to fret unduly about injustices committed against them because justice would be served, even if it were in the far, distant, afterlife. Durkheim also noted that most religions acted to strengthen a society's basic norms and values by providing a way of atonement, as well. Most religions Durkheim (1947) studied incorporated various means of atonement that allowed deviants, through some form of penance, to be restored to an acceptable place in society. Durkheim also noticed that the religious interpretation of life, which included the notion that religion acted as a form of social control, was often extended to a society's government as well. Religions ordinarily justified submission to the government, which led to social stability. The theological understanding typically defined the government and its administrators as divine, or at least, divinely appointed. To rebel against a ruler was thus understood as a rebellion against the ruler and God (Popenoe, 1995, Macionis, 1997).

A third function which Durkheim (1947) believed that religion fulfilled for society was that it gave meaning and purpose for members of society. Most religions, Durkheim argued, offered the comforting idea that the present conditions, as terrible as they may be, were a part of a higher purpose. With this glimmer of hope, people were less likely to succumb to despair in the midst of life's inevitable calamities. Nietzsche said the same thing when he wrote, "He who has a why to live can bear almost any how." (in Roberts, 1984: 56). In order to offer meaning, religions must offer more than philosophical abstractions. Meaning must involve both concept and imperative (Kelley,

1972). The presentation of a worldview by religions must be done in such a way that the believer is, "... held by the belief rather than voluntarily holding the beliefs" (Roberts, 1984: 56). The communication of philosophical concepts, as such, must involve imperatives which are communicated very effectively through ritual and ceremony. In other words, the communication of concepts through rituals successfully involves affective and cognitive dimensions.

An almost universal practice of religions is to have specific ceremonies, which mark and infuse meaning into the major passages of life, such as birth, marriage, and death. A religious worldview offers an answer to the question of "Why." While science typically answers this question along empirical lines, religion, Durkheim (1947) observed, typically answers the question of "Why" by placing the answer in terms of values. For instance, a particularly traumatic event, such as death, may mean something in terms which are understood within the context of the ultimate meaning and purpose of an individual's life. Another way to say this is that religion places a specific occurrence into a larger context. The larger context gives the particular event meaning and purpose because it is attached to the bigger picture offered by a religious worldview (Wuthnow, 1976). Also, the marking and celebrating of various rites of passages by religious groups helps believers to define their roles within society. When religions marked the various life transition events with a ceremony, it also becomes a part of the maturation process for young believers (Roberts, 1984).

Since the time Durkheim did his research, other writers have also observed other functions of religion as it operated within society. Two anthropological theorists, Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, further developed Durkheim's theory of functionalism. Both believed that any social pattern or institution which did not serve a function would cease to exist. The basis for any function was always to be found in basic

human needs. Malinowski (1944), however, believed that the search for the functions of institutions such as religion would only be successful if the needs, either conscious or unconscious, of individuals in society were first identified. The work for social scientists, then, was to discover how the functions of the various institutions met the needs of the individuals in society. Previously, when he had turned his attention to exploring the origins of religion in another article (1931: 641), he stated, "The existence of strong personal attachments and the fact of death, which of all human events is the most upsetting and disorganizing to man's calculations, are perhaps the main sources of religious belief." Although various religions address death differently, they all have incorporated teachings and rituals that seek to reduce death anxiety.

While Malinowski traced the function of religion to the individual's basic needs, drives, and emotions (i.e. functionalism), Radcliffe-Brown (1939) took a different approach. He believed that the origin of religion was traceable to the needs and requirements of society (i.e. structural-functionalism). He thought that religion, instead of relieving stress for individuals, acted to heighten and increase anxiety through its teachings. For instance, he believed that the fear of death and the afterlife was first initiated by religion. The purpose of increased anxiety about these types of issues would lead to social stability because a basic consensus would be struck concerning values, beliefs, and norms. The consensus about the afterlife, either reward or punishment, was based on how the individual lives in the present life. This would lead to socially acceptable behavior and social conformity for the majority which Radcliffe-Brown thought was the true purpose of religion. Thus, for structural-functionalists, the origin of religion, and most other institutions, could be traced back to the basic needs of society, as opposed to the basic needs of individuals.

Religion also served the function of offering belonging and identity to its adherents. Andrew Greeley (1972) suggests that denominationalism is very strong in the United States because of the role that it has played in the lives of immigrants. Many immigrants, upon arriving in America, faced culture shock. One solution to this problem was to attend religious services with others from their native country. Even though the immigrants may not have been overly religious before immigrating, they became so afterwards because the churches became a source of ethnic identity and cultural stability in America. For some groups of believers, the identity function went even farther to include a status of respectability and good standing in the community. Church membership itself was often considered a sign of good, moral character.

Religion offered identity to others not faced with culture shock when a religious group also became a reference group. As emotional and personal bonds with other believers were formed, fellow believers came to rely on one another. Thus, the co-religious adherents formed a reference group, which is among the most important variables to self-identity and behavior. Reference groups are highly cherished by many in America because there exists a high degree of change as well as geographic mobility in the society. Both of these facets of society cause people to want a stable reference group, and many churches and denominations fulfill this need.

Staying within the Durkheimian theoretical perspective that religion worked to create and legitimize a society's norm structure, O'Dea and Arvida (1983) proposed an additional function for religion. They believed that religion staved off anomie, or normlessness, for individuals in modern society. First, they proposed that religion provided the "sacralization" of values and norms through religious sanction. Secondly, they expand Greeley's (1972) idea of religion functioning to give people, especially immigrants, a sense of belonging in a new country. O'Dea and Arvida (1983) suggested

that the identity function experienced by believers within a religious group works to give the individual a sense of self-definition, which goes beyond simple group identification. Lastly, O'Dea and Arvida (1983) wrote that anomie could be prevented by religion because it lent the individual a reference point beyond the present, adding stability, structure, and order in the person's life.

Not only does religion supply a suitable reference point and group identity for individual believers, it also can become an action system that motivates and promotes behavior. While Durkheim (1947) believed that religion was an agent of social control that essentially coerced people into acceptable behavior, Robert Bellah (1970) believed that religion was a dynamic system in which believers find a complete arrangement for behavior, and even attitudes, which goes beyond the identity functions. When a believer's religion provides motivation for behavior, which is deemed appropriate, and the believer acts accordingly, religion makes for an integrated system of belief and action. Social solidarity occurs when religion supplies both identity and motivational roles for believers.

While Durkheim (1947) viewed religion as providing purpose and meaning for individuals in society, Bellah et al. (1991) expanded this concept of religion when they viewed it as an institution. While other institutions in the United States act, at times, to divide citizens against each other, religion can pull diverse people together. As people are drawn together through religion, they often look for a way to find meaning. Institutional religion attempts to transcend the common good of the nation while also being concerned with the common good of all humanity. Ultimately, the responsibility for all is relegated to a transcendent God. Bellah et al. (1991) recognize this aspect of the function of religion as the single most important role of religion. Religion, then, calls upon each of us to move beyond our own personal perspectives and to realize a larger perspective exists.

The Dysfunction of Religion

Robert Merton (1968) further developed the theory of functionalism to include the concept of dysfunction. By coining the term, dysfunction, he meant that instead of relying on a conservative, non-dynamic or slowly evolving view of society and social phenomena, change, even rapid change, could be incorporated within the functional paradigm. Merton (1968) believed that the function of any social phenomenon or pattern was better understood as the manifest or intended consequence of the function. However, the manifest function was likely to have different meanings for various members of society. The idea of differing meanings was labeled latent functions, which were consequences of social phenomena which were largely unintended and unrecognized by most people in society. Merton (1968) also pioneered the idea of social dysfunction, by which he meant that social patterns often have undesirable and even harmful consequences for individuals or for the operation of society.

Bellah, who also viewed religion from a functionalist perspective, incorporated Merton's (1968) idea of dysfunction. Bellah et al. (1991:181) wrote that;

. . . sociological functionalism . . . attributes to religion the function of “social cement” without regard to the validity of its system of meaning. A simple functionalism, regarding religion only as a contribution to social integration, is manifestly false, since religious groups have frequently voiced disruptive demands that polarized society and led to severe conflict. But even a subtler functionalism that evaluates religion only with regard to its contribution to the social good, whether integrative or disruptive, also distorts the deepest meaning of the religious life.

Turner (1983) wrote that religion could be dysfunctional as a source of social cohesion in at least three ways. First of all, he realized that religion does not solve the problem of class and class conflict. Secondly, he noted that religion often ignored alternative sources of social cohesion, such as a political peace process. Finally, he

observed that religion was frequently a source of disciplinary actions which, seemingly, were contrary to social cohesion.

Occasionally, the practice of religion leads to dramatic tragedy. For instance, in 1978, over 900 followers of Jim Jones committed suicide, apparently following his orders. The group, The People's Temple, had relocated from Los Angeles, California to Jonestown, Guyana. Most members of the group had abdicated decision making to Jim Jones, and therefore, followed his suicide orders (1984). A more recent example of decision abdication to a leader, and also extreme dysfunction of religion, occurred among the Branch Davidians, near Waco, Texas in 1993. Again, this group was cultic in its isolation and withdrawal from society, and also in its tragic and dysfunctional end of committing mass suicide (Beck, 1993; Kantrowitz, 1993).

On a less dramatic level, religion can be harmful for the individual as well. Gallagher (1987) realized that a person's response to religion sometimes leads to dysfunctional behavior. For example, extreme fears of the devil, obsession with a personal holiness, or a belief that one has been given divine revelations are all religious behaviors that can be problematic for individuals as they try to lead socially acceptable lives. Also, when people join a religious group, psychological and emotional bonds develop. These attachments are hard to break when an individual decides to leave the group, causing even more personal duress.

Roberts (1984:75) cautioned about evaluating the functions and dysfunctions of religion. He pointed out that the labeling of religious behavior as "positive" or "negative" was extremely subjective. Therefore, he suggested that, ". . . we must discuss the functions and dysfunctions of a specific religion, for specific individuals, for a specific structure, in a specific society."

The historical groundwork for a scientific understanding of religion has now been laid. The views of Marx, Weber and Durkheim concerned with religion have been discussed and expanded upon, especially the structural- functional view of religion, which frames this research. The next section will examine the scientific understanding of Conservative Protestantism, as well as, its rise and definitions.

Conservative Protestantism: Its Rise and Attempt at Definition

Greeley (1995) sites the General Social Survey of 1992 and reports on the current composition of American religious life. Slightly fewer than two out of three Americans belong to the various Protestant denominations while a fourth of Americans are Roman Catholic. Jewish Americans account for two percent of the population. Another two percent are a part of "other" denominations. Seven percent of Americans have no religious affiliation. While two out of three Americans are Protestant, only twenty to twenty- five percent of Americans are aligned with Conservative Protestant denominations (Hunter, 1987).

The Historical Rise of Conservative Protestantism

In the last part of the nineteenth century, many Protestant leaders and scholars were actively seeking ways to accommodate the traditional, Christian beliefs and doctrines with the "realities" of modern, scientific scholarship. For instance, the supernatural element of the Bible was rationalized away as simplistic and unworthy of a modern audience that was thought to be more educated and, therefore, sophisticated. Key parts of the Gospels such as the miracles and the resurrection of Jesus were down graded and deemed mythical, and thus, unreliable. This effort was lead by the so-called "liberal" leaders in many of the mainline denominations, Christian colleges, and seminaries. Not surprisingly, there was a conservative counter reaction which became a defensive effort in the early part of the twentieth century. In 1920, Curtis Lee Laws, the editor of the

Northern Baptist newspaper, The Watchman Examiner, published a series of essays entitled, “The Fundamentals.” The series helped to clarify and solidify the basic beliefs which the conservatives viewed as under attack by the liberals (Marsden, 1980). The name, “fundamentalist,” stuck. In fact, Curtis Lee Laws defined a fundamentalist as anyone willing to “do battle royal” for the fundamentals of the faith. Not only was it an apt label, it was also a call to action (Cox, 1984; Ammerman, 1995).

Harvey Cox (1984:44) delineates the specific, minimal tenets of the Christian faith, as held by fundamentalist, as

. . . the deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth [of Christ], the bodily Resurrection of Christ, the imminent Second Coming [of Christ], the substitutionary atonement, and -very emphatically- the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the whole Bible.”

Fundamentalists believe that these tenets are the irreducible minimum of the Christian faith and that without a belief in these doctrines, one’s religion should not properly be called “Christianity.”

In 1979, Jerry Falwell (1981), an Independent Baptist pastor, as well as a fundamentalist, declared that most Americans wanted a cultural change, and so he formed the Moral Majority. The group set about mobilizing against the perceived moral decline which they saw as having been set in motion by a variety of social, political, and cultural liberals with liberal agendas for society. For the next decade, voters were registered, rallies were held, conservative political platforms were promoted, and conservative politicians were elected. Ronald Reagan came to view the fundamentalists as a viable constituency, as did George Bush, after him. By 1989, Falwell declared that his mission

of raising conservative consciences was accomplished, and returned to pastoring his church and leading Liberty University which he also founded (Ammerman, 1995).

Definitions of Conservative Protestantism

Cox (1984,1995), attempted to demystify and sort out the various groups and subsets within the multitudes of Christian denominations. He treated the labels, “born again”, “fundamentalist”, and “evangelical”, as denoting Christians who took their religion very seriously. The labels were cross-denominational and also denoted various factions within the different denominations. Cox believed that the designation, "born again" described the broadest category. It included the 39 percent of Americans who claim to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The group which calls itself, “evangelical” is noted for their theological positions which recognize a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a view of the Bible which deems it a unique authority in life. Evangelicals also believe that they are obligated to share their faith with others around them. “Fundamentalist” shared most of the views of the born again group and the evangelical group, but insisted on adding a belief that held to a literal, inerrant interpretation of the Bible.

Hunter (1983, 1985 and 1987) researched fundamental Protestants and offered five distinctive characteristics. First, fundamentalists interpret sacred texts literally. Second, fundamentalists reject religious pluralism which tends to equate various religious views as equally valid. Third, fundamentalists actively pursue a personal encounter with God and His presence. A fourth characteristic of fundamentalists is that they oppose “secular humanism,” which was understood, broadly, to describe the reliance upon

science as the source of ultimate knowledge. A fifth characteristic of fundamentalists, according to Hunter, is their endorsement of conservative political goals. Hunter also notes that fundamentalist generally oppose feminism, abortion, gay rights and liberal fiscal policies, as well. Ammerman (1995) rounded out Hunter's fundamentalist characteristics by adding that fundamentalists typically emphasized the approaching "end times" and the second coming of Christ as well as a maintaining a social separation from nonbelievers.

Macionis (1999:500) defined modern fundamentalism as, ". . . conservative religious doctrine that opposes intellectualism and worldly accommodation in favor of restoring traditional, otherworldly spirituality." He also noted that fundamentalism (that is, a return to conservative origins) was not strictly a Protestant phenomenon, having gained a following within Roman Catholicism and Judaism in the last two decades. Lattin (1996) also noted a rise of fundamentalism among non-Christian groups around the world in the last two decades. For instance, New Age leader Elizabeth Clare prophesied an apocalypse at the end of the twentieth century, which caused thousand to flee to the rural areas of the United States and arm themselves. In Japan, the Aum Shrinri Kyo released deadly nerve gas into a crowded subway, killing 12 and injuring thousands. The Aum Shrinri Kyo group is organized around Buddhist teachings, combined with an end-of-the-world vision. Islamic, militant fundamentalism has also been on the rise for several decades. In India, Hindu fundamentalism has been growing in strength and popularity, as well. Its vitality was seen recently in the burning and looting of Christian churches and schools as well as the killing of several Christians and Christian missionaries (Fischer, 1999).

It comes as little surprise that the label, “fundamentalist,” is full of controversy, even among Christians. As Theilman (1995:183) points out, Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, “It is impossible to live in peace with those we believe to be damned.” Theilman continues,

At the popular level, this translates into the notion that Christians who claim to know the truth are somehow comparable to extreme Islamic groups, so that both can be labeled “fundamentalists.” Few today are willing to accept this label since it has been stretched to connote ignorance, rigidity, paranoia and violence.

Appleby agrees, believing, “...that many [Christian] fundamentalist have jettisoned the word because of the way it has been linked to fanaticism. 'Fundamentalism' is a word people use today to describe somebody else's religion” (1996:32).

Lechner (1993) noted that there are two broad approaches that researchers have used to qualify people as fundamentalist. The first approach limits the meaning of fundamentalism to what the “people themselves” mean by it. Though subjective, this approach allows the subjects to qualify or disqualify themselves based on their understanding of what it means to be a fundamentalist. The second approach that is used by researchers is to qualify people based on their position toward specific theological beliefs, usually about the Bible. This approach allows people to shun the perceived negative label of fundamentalist, while at the same time, embracing the conservative theology generally deemed a part of fundamentalism. The self-labeled approach and the qualification by theological beliefs (about the Bible) approach, were both employed for the purposes of this research. Despite the problem of stigmatization which has occurred with the labels, fundamentalist and conservative Protestant, are treated as synonymous in this work. The main qualifier for the label was a strong belief that the Bible is God's literal word for humanity and that it is true. This approach also allowed respondents to be

labeled as fundamentalist outside of their denominational preference. The second approach used in this research simply asked respondents whether they considered themselves to be a fundamentalist (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Ellison, Bartowski, and Segal, 1996).

In order to understand the impact of religion on the performance of fathers, it was necessary to define a religious continuum. Glock and Stark (1965) suggested that Protestant denominations and sects could be grouped into a four-category continuum in terms of beliefs about basic Christian doctrine. Their categories were:

1. Liberals (Congregationalist, Episcopalians, Methodists)
2. Moderates (Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ)
3. Conservatives (American Lutherans, American Baptists)
4. Fundamentalists (Southern Baptists, Missouri Synod Lutherans, and sects).

Hertel and Hughes (1987) did follow-up research using these same categories in the area of "pro-family" issues. They found that the rank order religious continuum of Glock and Stark (1965) corresponded in general to a "pro-family" continuum which they were able to devise. However, no group was found to be consistently homogenous in their support of "pro-family" issues.

Conservative Protestantism has now been placed in a historical context. Though a consensus on any one definition is problematic, a working definition has been offered, encompassing the two approaches described by Lechner (1993). These will be used as a means of operationalizing the study's independent variable. This was done because general denominational preference was not deemed reliable as an indicator of personal beliefs concerning fundamentalism. However, the denominational nomenclature's association with Conservative Protestantism will be examined using the religious continuum first proposed by Glock and Stark (1965).

Conservative Protestant Parents

One of the most emphasized dimensions of the conservative Protestant community is the importance of family, especially, of parenting (Wilcox, 1998). Large and highly visible ministries have developed which concentrate on building strong families. Dr. James Dobson, for example, founded “Focus on the Family”, a non-profit organization, which has had a tremendous impact on conservative Protestant families. Dobson is currently considered one of the most influential and prolific Christian writers concerned with family issues. Focus on the Family is considered influential because it distributes audio-visual and printed materials to over one million households monthly on a request basis. In addition, Dobson produces a syndicated radio program (which is “listener- supported” financially) that is heard on more than 1300 radio stations in several countries worldwide (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993).

Seemingly, the most respected source of information about family issues for conservative Protestants is the Bible, followed closely by the anecdotal accounts of respected leaders within the conservative Protestant community. The conservative Protestant community generally shuns research done by the scientific community. When the research of the secular community is considered, it is filtered through the standards of the Bible and its teachings. For instance, Dobson (1970:13), in connection with the issue of corporal punishment of children, wrote about this distrust of scientific research when he said, “The principles of good discipline cannot be ascertained by scientific inquiry.” However, the same conservative Protestant community which shuns outside scientific research, also under utilizes internal scientific research.

The distrust which exists between the conservative Protestant community and the scientific community is mutual. The scientific community, for its part, has largely ignored research on the religious family in recent years. In the 1950’s, Gerhard Lenski

(1961) conducted survey research which looked very specifically at religious families in the Detroit area. Since that time, researchers have focused on the family without considering the “religious factor” to the same extent. This is brought out in a recent decade literature review in which Darwin and Cornwall (1990) confirmed a lack of research interest on the family and religion. In fact, they pleaded for researchers to consider, “... the direct, indirect, reciprocal and causal relations of the two institutions, family and religion.” Seemingly in response to their plea, Ellison and Sherkat (1993) began an exploration of conservative Protestants who apparently enthusiastically supported the corporal punishment of their children. Using the General Social Survey (1988), the researchers attributed this support for spanking to a religious ideology whose corpus included a belief in biblical inerrancy, the doctrine of original sin and the need for punishment of the sin of subordinates by super ordinates (i.e. children and parents). Ellison and Sherkat (1993:132) see these teachings as “social products” generated and disseminated within “interpretive communities.” The interpretive communities are understood as a loose network of theologians, teachers, and pastors who generally shape Conservative Protestantism through various media, including, radio, print, television and film. The interpretive communities span several denominations perhaps because the various leaders are affiliated with different denominations (e.g.; James Dobson, Focus on the Family founder, is a Nazarene). Their influence generally travels beyond their own denominations, permeating the conservative Protestant community in general. In a more recent article, Ellison, Bartkowski and Segal (1996) again take up the theme of corporal punishment and conservative Protestantism, this time, analyzing data from the NSFH (1988). The research showed again that parents who believe that the Bible is without error and that the Bible contains the answers to human problems, tend to spank their children more than other parents who do not subscribe to this ideology.

Wilcox (1998) built on these two studies of parental discipline by exploring a connection between conservative Protestant parents and positive parental emotion work such as verbal and physical expressions of affection. He found that Conservative Protestant parents exhibited strict discipline and, yet, maintained warm and expressive parent-child relationships. He interpreted this finding as a paradox, labeling it the “Evangelical Family Paradox.” The paradox was the result of evangelicals equally valuing strict discipline and an expressive style of parenting. Also a part of the paradox was a traditional sex-role ideology which portrayed the fathers as the main breadwinners, while mothers were largely responsible for the children and household upkeep. Paradoxically, the fathers in these idealized classic nuclear families were expected to also shoulder more of the responsibility for nurturing and raising the children.

These three key studies, (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Ellison, Bartkowski and Segal, 1996, and Wilcox, 1998) suggest that conservative Protestants are a unique and largely unexplored subculture. In the first two studies, conservative Protestant parents spanked more often than did other parents, despite research claiming that spanking leads to negative outcomes for the children. In the third study, the other half of the paradox, the more frequent hugging and kissing of children by these same parents was explored and found to counterbalance the spanking. In the above studies, the parents were encouraged and taught by their religious communities to raise their children in this manner. The conservative Protestants, particularly fathers, were urged through these same interpretive communities, to spend more time with their children, which, conversely to spanking, is also accepted as a measure of good parenting. A precursor to attachment is the amount of time parents, specifically fathers, spend with their children. This research, then, attempts to gauge the amount of time that conservative Protestant fathers spend with their children, specifically in meeting their physical needs.

Linking the Views of Religion to Conservative Protestants' Approach to Parenting

The theoretical frame of reference for this research is primarily based on the works of Emile Durkheim (1947, 1951), especially his attempt to describe the functions of religion for both individuals and society. Unlike studies of suicide, religious factors influencing parenting have had little exposure (Darwin and Cornwall, 1990). Durkheim, in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1947), delved further into the functions of religion and noted that most religions tended to provide social cohesion for members of society. Hence, if parenting is a vital priority for many conservative Protestants, then, broadly speaking, they are unified around basic ideals about parenting, or, at least, the pursuit of basic ideals that reflect Biblical teachings which have implications for parenting. Durkheim (1947) also pointed out that a second function of religion is to provide social control for society. Therefore, religion benefits society by providing and reinforcing the society's values and norms. The widely held ideology of hierarchical authority and the need to punish sin committed by subordinates (e.g., children) is widely supported by conservative Protestant parents as the basis for the right way to raise children. These children, it is hoped, will grow up to become good citizens who are law abiding and peaceable.

Durkheim (1947) also pointed out that another function of religion is to provide meaning and purpose for members of society. Many conservative Protestant have interpreted their purpose in life (*raison d'être*) as being good parents (Rainey and Rainey, 1993). Not only does being a good parent provide purpose in life, it also provides meaning. Again, most conservative Protestants see life on earth as a proving ground that qualifies or disqualifies humans for life in Heaven (or greater or lesser rewards in Heaven). An important part of that proving ground has been interpreted as raising "good" children who have respect for authority, which would include the law, an employer, the

church, and God. Therefore, this perspective, based on a Durkheimian theoretical framework, suggests that conservative Protestant parents are expected to spend a great deal of time with their children to meet the requirements of their particular religious community. Meeting these requirements is thought to benefit the larger society with good citizens. In the next section, the concept of fatherhood will be reviewed.

Fatherhood

Recently, there have been several studies designed to explore how fathers in two-parent families affect the development of their children (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine, 1985; 1987; Seward, Yeatts, and Stanley-Stevens, 1993; and Pleck, 1997). Several approaches were used in an attempt to understand and measure the various aspects of the relationship of fathers and their children. Jones (1985) noted that children who spent time with their fathers tended to develop attachment or bond with them. Measures of father-infant attachment generally fall into the same categories as those for mother-infant attachment. Behaviors which indicate attachment are usually based on a child seeking and maintaining proximity. In other words, smiling, verbalizing, touching, rocking, and holding are typical behaviors used in analyzing attachment. Jones, however, did not try to quantify the amount of time; she simply recognized that as fathers spent more time with their children, more attachment developed.

Instead of directly analyzing attachment, other researchers attempted to shed light on the father and child relationship by looking at work patterns in the family and the attitudes attached to sex roles within families. Work patterns of both parents have a direct bearing on the amount of time parents can spend with a child. Sex- role ideology, on the other hand, may affect a parent's attitude about how much time, specifically, they should spend with their children. For instance, Baruch and Barnett (1981) looked at sex- roles and employment expectations for mothers and fathers. They found that fathers

participated more in childcare when mothers worked outside of the home and when the couple jointly possessed a non-traditional sex- role ideology. Seward, et al. (1993) affirmed that modern fathers were doing more childcare. Their research attributed the increased care giving of fathers (total hours and increased proportion when compared to mothers) to the fact that more women (mothers) were employed outside the home.

Bergen (1990), using NSFH data, tried a slightly different approach. She analyzed domestic labor, including childcare, for fathers using a variety of theoretical categories. Her research affirmed that fathers spent more time with their children when the mother works outside the home. The more the father works, the less time he will spend with the children. However, neither the absolute time nor proportional time contribution of fathers was affected by resource differences (e.g. education), sex- role ideology or life- cycle stage of the parents. In fact, childcare seemed to be the one category of domestic labor spouses did not negotiate.

Dienhart (1998) has recently taken a postmodern view which diverges from most of the previous models of research used in father studies. Instead of seeing dads from a deficit model, highlighting their inadequacies when compared to moms, she chose to look at dads as unique contributors to family life, outside of the mom template, which dominates most research.

Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985), have proposed an overarching theory to explain differing levels of father involvement with children. They suggested that fathers' involvement is determined by motivation, skills and self-confidence, social support, and institutional practices. Later, Pleck (1997) reviewed most of the recent studies of paternal involvement and found that no single variable was a reliable predictor of paternal involvement. This finding led him back to the earlier theory of Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985). The lack of consensus among the various studies suggested

for Pleck (1997) that a concert of variables would better predict paternal involvement. The lack of a single predictor in the studies reviewed points toward the fact that either the variables acts together accumulatively or that they acts interactively. In either case, this could explain the lack of a single predictor among the variables of the studies reviewed.

In the Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985) theory, religion, in general, has a bearing on all four factors (motivation, skills, self-confidence, and institutional practice). The two major assumptions of their theory hold that religion readily influences social support and institutional practices. In fact, Ellison and Sherkat (1993) understood that the religious denominations, especially among conservative Protestants, held a great deal of sway over their constituency. The institutions of the various denominations are sources of socialization that influence beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. The larger (i.e. beyond a local church) religious community in which most Conservative Protestants participate, tries very hard to impact its adherents, and society at large, in all four areas. For instance, the Family Research Council, a political action committee (PAC), has recently transformed itself from an organization of 3000 members and a \$200,000 budget into a 455,000-member organization with a \$14 million budget (Carney, 1998:32). Not only is this group striving to impact individual families through its teachings, but they are also striving to impact society at large through political reorganization which would favor families in the political and legal sector of society. In fact, the founder of the Family Research Council, Gary Bauer, ran as a candidate for the Republican nomination for the office of the President of the United States in 2000.

Other Factors Which May Affect Parenting

Any number of factors (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine, 1985) may help account for the amount of time that fathers spend with their children. However, Pleck (1997) observes that the findings are mixed in their support of the various respondent and

household characteristics and their bearing on fathers' involvement with their children. For instance, when the age of the father was used as a variable to gauge involvement with their children, Coltrane (1990) found that older fathers were more engaged with their children; Ahmeduzzaman and Roopnarine (1992), on the other hand, were not able to find any association between the fathers' age and their involvement with their children. A similar lack of consensus was found when the race of the fathers was used as a variable. For instance, Pleck (1983) found no consistent relationship between fathers' race and involvement with their children, while, Allen (1981), McAdoo (1988), and Marsiglio (1991) found that black fathers were more involved with their children than were other fathers of different racial groups. However, Roopnarine and Ahmeduzzaman (1993) found no association between race and involvement. The race or ethnicity of the father is especially important for this study because, as Greeley (1995) points out, 55 percent of African Americans are Baptist while only 8 percent are Roman Catholic. Conversely, 5 percent of Hispanics are Baptist. Additionally, 18 percent of Hispanics are "other Protestant" and 72 percent are Roman Catholic. This suggests that denominational affiliation is a factor that must be considered.

When household income was considered as a factor in fathers' involvement with their children, mixed results again abounded. Pleck (1983) and Goldscheider and Waite (1991) found no relationship between the variables of income and fathers' involvement with their children. On the other hand, Blair, Wenk and Hardesty (1994) found that higher income for fathers was associated with more positive engagement with their children. For the purposes of this study, besides total household income, the age and race of the fathers were controlled (Bergen, 1990).

When children's characteristics are considered, any number of factors may affect how much time fathers spend with their children. For instance, the age of the child has

been shown to affect the father-child relationship. Pleck (1985) found that older children received less accessibility and engagement from their father, and Amato (1987) described the limited engagement with older children as less than positive. Also, Wauchope and Straus (1990) found that toddlers were spanked more often than older children and boys were spanked more often than girls. Rustia and Abbott (1993) looked at birth order of children and discovered that first-born children were the recipients of higher positive engagement than were later-born children. However, the analysis was limited to children between the ages of 0-4 by the design of the survey. Because gender may also affect the amount of time fathers spend with their children (Wauchope and Strauss, 1990), the children's sex was included as a control variable.

Summary

In this review of the literature, historical and contemporary sources concerned with religion and fatherhood have been addressed. Theories and empirical research that have explored the various relationships between these two concepts have also been outlined.

The first section addressed the sociological literature on religion. The aspects of social theories concerned with religion in the works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim were delineated and compared. Collectively, their theories offer some explanation of the nature and place of religion in contemporary society. Expanding on Durkheim's theory of the function of religion in society, numerous capacities of religion were explored. Religion was found to have functions not only for society, but also for individuals in society. Additionally, Merton's theory of dysfunction was applied to the practice of religion by society and individuals.

The second section focused on conservative Protestantism and its multiple definitions and synonyms. Generally, researchers were seen to equate, "born again,"

“Christian Fundamentalist,” “fundamentalist,” “evangelical,” and “conservative Protestant.” Researchers also conceded that while the labels may be interchangeable with one another, they were also controversial because of the stigmatization that has arisen with the use of the labels. The historical roots of modern conservative Protestantism were also traced to the current era.

The third section focused on linking the relationship between the two variables of religion, specifically Conservative Protestantism, and parenting. Lamentably, little research using these two variables has been attempted. Pioneering research by Ellison and Sherkat (1993), Ellison, Bartowski and Segal (1993), and Wilcox (1998) have examined the relationship of Conservative Protestantism and some aspects of parenting.

The fourth section reviewed the literature of fatherhood. Various research approaches were described which attempted to measure aspects of fatherhood. Finally, the fifth section focused on other factors that may have an effect on how much time fathers spend with their children. Various researchers have pointed to the differences of gender and age in how parents treat the children. Race, especially in how it is associated with denominational preference, was examined and emphasized as a needed control variable.

The hypotheses will be presented in the next chapter. The lack of research interest on the subjects of conservative Protestantism and fatherhood suggests that there exists a need for this research, which will look specifically at the time Conservative Protestant fathers spend with their children. The next chapter will present a more detailed theoretical frame of reference for this research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY:

TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANT BELIEFS AND PARENTING PRACTICES

This chapter presents the components of the research design for the study. The components of the study included in this chapter are a detailed description of the respondents to the National Survey of Families and Households, research objectives, hypotheses, and operational definitions. Also included in this chapter is a discussion of the procedures used to analyze and test each of the hypotheses.

A National Data Set

The National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) was used as data for this research. The survey offers many advantages for this study. For instance, the goals of the NSFH the creation of a data set that covered a large range of family issues while also being guided by scientific principles. In addition, the data were to be made available to the research community at large. A final goal of the NSFH research was that while it was cross-sectional in nature, with appropriate retrospective questions, it was also planned as a first step toward a longitudinal survey (Sweet, Bumpass and Call, 1988).

Beyond these goals, the NSFH also incorporated specific objectives. The first objective was to design a survey which focused almost exclusively on family issues, including family structure, process, and relationships. The second objective was to include in the design a large probability sample which was also national in character, allowing researchers to generalize findings to the entire United States. The third objective

was to design a survey that would be of interest to a multitude of disciplines and theoretical perspectives, as well. Finally, even though the survey was designed to test a variety of specific hypotheses about the American family, it was also designed to be descriptive of the current American family (Sweet, Bumpass, and Call, 1988).

The Total Sample

The main sample was a national, multi-stage area probability sample containing about 17,000 housing units drawn from 100 sampling areas in the contiguous United States. The sample plan was developed at the Institute for Survey Research (ISR), Temple University. The NSFH utilized the ISR's 100 Primary Sampling Units (PSU) of which, the National Sampling Frame was comprised. The National Sampling Frame was based on 1985 population projections. The PSU's were formed by subdividing all counties in self-representing areas, defined as Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas or Standard Consolidated Areas with two million or more residents, and the rest of the country. There were 18 self-representing areas which accounted for 36 percent of the total population. The larger self-representing areas were divided into two or more PSU's. All together, there were 37 PSU's drawn from the self-representing areas.

The remaining PSU's were drawn from SMSA's and counties with a minimum of 150,000 in population. Some adjacent counties were included which had a combined total population of 150,000 people. These areas were divided into 32 strata based on whether it was a region or had metropolitan status. In addition, each stratum was qualified as to degree of urbanization, rate of economic growth, racial make up, and proportion of Hispanic population.

Block groups were then selected from each PSU as secondary selection units. The number selected was based on the size of the PSU, with an average of 17 secondary units from each block group. Within the 1,700 secondary units, listing areas (LA's) were

created which contained 45 or more households. One listing area was selected from each secondary unit. On average, 20 housing units were selected from each LA. The process resulted in an equal probability sample of 1,700 listing areas for the national sampling frame.

A person was sent to each listing area in order to list each address within the LA's boundary. Twenty addresses were selected from each LA for inclusion in the national sample. These addresses were randomly assigned to the main sample (50 percent) and to the oversample (50 percent). Interviewers were then sent to preselected clusters within a listing area to contact each address. A predesignated screening form, including a random number selection table, enabled the interviewer to list each household member and to determine the respondent.

Despite the large sample size, an oversampling was deemed necessary; otherwise, several subgroups would still not be adequately represented. The strategic subgroups targeted for oversampling included minorities (African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans), one-parent families, families with step-children (or, with children with neither parent in the household), cohabitators, and recently married couples. The oversample was accomplished by doubling the number of households within the 100 sampling areas (Sweet, Bumpass and Call, 1988).

Data Collection

A letter of introduction was sent to each sample address. The letter provided not only information about the survey, but it also foretold that an interviewer would soon visit their home. After this initial contact, the interviewer would then conduct a screening interview with an adult member of the household. The purpose of the screening interview was to ascertain who lived there and to see if they met the inclusion parameters of the survey. The qualified respondents were then given an extensive questionnaire. Portions of

the questionnaire were self-administered while other parts were conducted through personal interview. The self-administered questionnaire was divided into 13 sections. Three of the sections were completed by all respondents, and the remaining ten sections were completed only as they were relevant for various types of living arrangements such as a married couple, a cohabiting couple, or an adult living in the household. The average number of sections completed by respondents was 5.9.

In addition to the main respondent in each household, secondary respondents and even tertiary respondents were enlisted for the survey. Spouses and partners were also given portions of the survey which dealt with the relationship to the main respondent. Occasionally, adult children who remained at home were also given a portion of the survey, as well (Sweet, Bumpass and Call, 1988).

Appropriateness of NSFH for This Study

To summarize, the NSFH data set was appropriate to use for this research because it offered many advantages. The first advantage that it offered was that it was such a large data set. There were 13,017 respondents. Certainly, gathering this much data from this many people is well beyond the capabilities of most students, or even, most research institutions. Yet, a part of the NSFH's strength is that it was made readily available to the research community. The second advantage for research using the NSFH data is that it is national in scope. Conservative Protestants are arguably more concentrated in the south and southeastern United States. The NSFH data, because it is national in scope, went beyond the limits of colloquialism which may well have tainted data gathered at a regional level in the south or southeastern United States. Finally, the third obvious

advantage the NSFH data provided for this research was that the data were gathered with randomness and actual depiction of national the demographic as high priorities. Also, because of a commitment to oversampling, minority groups were double sampled. This lent the NSFH research credibility in that many surveys forego oversampling in lieu of convenience. In other words, the oversampling adds the larger minority groups who are often underrepresented because of a small group size to the data set, thus giving minority groups better representation, and researchers a better picture of the groups.

Limitations of the NSFH Data

The main limitation of the data was identifying the theological beliefs of fathers as either those of conservative Protestants (and Fundamentalists), or as neither. Lechner (1993) noted that there are two broad approaches to qualifying people as fundamentalist. The first approach limits the meaning of fundamentalism to what the “people themselves” mean by it. The second approach that is used by researchers is to qualify people based on their position toward specific theological beliefs, usually about the Bible. Both the self-labeled approach and the qualification by theological beliefs (about the Bible) approach, were employed in this research (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Ellison, Bartowski, and Segal, 1996, and Bartowski and Xu, 2000). This study conceded that there was two approaches and therefore, utilized both approaches. The result of the parallel testing was that, generally, there were parallel results. Therefore, the limitation is that a choice of approaches must be made, or both must be used in an unwieldy manner and varying results are almost assured.

Another limitation of the NSFH data is that it does not distinguish between the various subgroups of the denominations. As noted earlier, all Baptists, whether American, Southern or Independent, were lumped together into a single category of Baptist. This really affected the testing of Hypothesis 3, in that Glock and Stark's four-category continuum was spanned by various subgroups of Baptists and Lutherans in the NSFH data file. As a result, the four-category continuum was collapsed into a three-category continuum.

Finally, as Bergen (1990) points out, the NSFH data files do not provide a complete picture of how much time parents actually spent with their children. Parents were asked only about the time they spent meeting their children's physical needs. They were not queried about the amount of time they spent with them in other activities such as play and recreation, or housework. Surely the social value of parents spending time with their children is more than the sum of just the time they spend meeting the physical needs. In other words, value transmission, character development and relationship building also happen outside of the parents working to meet their children's physical needs.

Research Objective

Two key studies by Ellison and Sherkat (1993) and Ellison, Bartkowski and Segal (1996) were the inspiration for this study. They found that conservative Protestant parents, despite scientific research that questioned the effectiveness of corporal punishment as a strategy in child rearing, spanked more often than other parents. The purpose of this research is to determine if conservative Protestant fathers spend more

time with their children, which, contrary to spanking, is more widely accepted as a measure of good parenting. A precursor to attachment is the amount of time parents, specifically fathers, spend with their children. In lieu of looking at attachment, this research will look at attachment's antecedent and contributing cause, the time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children. The literature review, theoretical perspective, and this research objective were used to generate the following hypotheses.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this research:

H₁: The level of conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to the amount of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their young children.

This hypothesis assumes that conservative Protestant fathers (also known as “fundamentalists”) have been involved with denominations and para-church organizations, which promoted “pro-family” issues as core beliefs. It is also assumed that these core beliefs (i.e. social products) were then put into practice by the fathers in their relationships with their children. Conceptually, these beliefs were translated into fathers spending more time with their children meeting their physical needs. The null hypothesis is that no relationship exists between conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers and the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children. The null hypothesis contends that the Conservative Protestant fathers, despite their involvement in various conservative denominations and para-church organizations, were not influenced to spend more time with their children than were other fathers outside of those circles.

H₂: The level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to the proportion of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their children out of the total time spent by fathers and mothers combined.

This hypothesis extends the first hypothesis by measuring the time spent in childcare in a slightly different manner. In each case, the fathers' time spent meeting the physical needs of their children was added to the amount of time they said their wives or partners spent meeting the physical needs of their children. A calculation was then performed to measure what percentage of the total time the fathers spent in childcare. This hypothesis will test the "evangelical family paradox" concept that was proposed by Wilcox (1999). The paradox contends that while evangelical families endorse a doctrine of "the husband is the head of the wife," evangelical men and women in families are actually average or above average in communitarian practice within the family. Thus, it is assumed that conservative Protestant fathers will contribute a higher percentage of the total time spent in childcare than other fathers. In other words, the distribution of time devoted to meeting the physical needs of children will be more equally divided between mothers and fathers when the latter are conservative Protestant fathers. The null hypothesis holds that conservative Protestant fathers were not influenced to spend more time with their children than were other fathers, even when measured as proportion of the total time they and their wives or partners spent in meeting the physical needs of their children.

H₃: The level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to their membership in conservative religious denominations.

This hypothesis will test whether the Glock and Stark (1965) continuum of rank order of religious denominations is associated with conservative Protestant beliefs. This rank order religious continuum of theological beliefs was developed by Glock and Stark

in 1965. They ranked the members of various denominations and sects in terms of agreement with core Christian doctrines. The continuum was later retested by Hertel and Hughes (1987) and was found to be a valid predictor of denominational preference using “pro-family” issues instead of agreement with core theological doctrines. This hypothesis, then, will test whether fathers with conservative Protestant beliefs were also members of the more conservative denominations as outlined by Glock and Stark (1965). This is being tested to determine to what extent the laity of the denominations, which are a part of this continuum, holds fundamentalist beliefs. As Roof (1993) points out, even within the most conservative denominations, there exists a great deal of heterogeneity concerning core conservative beliefs. The null hypothesis contends that fathers holding Conservative Protestant beliefs are distributed equally across all denominations, regardless of whether they held conservative theological positions.

Measurement of Variables

Dependent Variables

Time Fathers Spent With Their Children.

The primary dependent variable was the number of hours spent in caregiving by fathers. Fathers, who were the main respondent, of children between the ages of 0 and 4 were asked, “About how many hours in a typical day do you spend taking care of (CHILD’S) physical needs, including feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting (him / her) to bed?” (M298A). Response categories ranged from 0 to 9 or more hours. Other possible responses were coded as (96) inapplicable, (97) refused, or (99) no answer.

Father’s Portion of the Total Time Spent by Mothers and Fathers in Meeting Physical Needs of Their Children

This dependent variable extended the above data when parents were further asked, “About how many hours in a typical day does your (husband / wife / partner) spend

taking care of (CHILD'S) physical needs, including feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting (him / her) to bed?" (M298B). Response categories were number of hours, from 0 to 9 or more. Other possible responses were coded, (96) inapplicable, (98) don't know, and (99) no answer. Only the answers of fathers about their wives and partners were analyzed. The portion of time that fathers claimed they spent meeting the needs of their children was added to the time they claimed their wives or partners spent meeting the needs of their children. A calculation was then performed to ascertain the fathers' percentage of the total time spent in meeting the children's physical needs. The portion of time that fathers spent out of the total time that they and their partners and wives spent in meeting physical needs ranged from zero to 100 percent.

Conservative Protestant Fathers and Their Denominational Affiliation.

The NSFH data requires that a different continuum (i.e. other than denominational preference) must be developed because no attempt was made to try to distinguish the finer differences of the various denominational nomenclature used by Glock and Stark (1965). All Baptists respondents, for example, whether Southern, American or Independent, were lumped together as "Baptist." Respondents were asked in question M486, "What is your religious preference? (IF PROTESTANT, ASK): What specific denomination is that?" Obviously, with this type of open-ended question, there was a large range of responses. The responses were coded (00) No religion, (01) Roman Catholic, and (02) Jewish. Next, there were 64 coded responses of specific denominations and religions. Finally, the coded responses concluded with, (95), Not codeable, (97) Refused, and (99) No answer. This research analyzed only the responses that fit Glock and Stark's (1965) continuum. Therefore, Glock and Stark's "Liberal" category included the NSFH coded answers of, (09) United Churches of Christ (Congregational), (04) Episcopalian, (15) Christian Congregation, (06) Methodists, (39)

Wesleyan, and, (43) All other liberal churches. Glock and Stark's "Moderates" category included the coded answers of (08) Presbyterian, (14) Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (Christian Church- any modifier such as First, Eastside, Community etc.) (Christian - Disciples) (Christian, not including, "just a Christian" or "Christian- no denomination"), and, (42) All other Reformed-Presbyterian churches. Glock and Stark's "Conservative" category included the coded responses of (05) Lutheran. Unfortunately, Glock and Stark's "Conservative" category also included, "American Baptist", and, as noted earlier, the NSFH data does not distinguish between the finer points of denominational nomenclature. The final category Glock and Stark included was "Fundamentalist", which was composed of the NSFH coded responses of (03) Baptist, (12) Assembly of God, (13) Christian and Missionary Alliance, (20) Church of God (no affiliation specified), (21) Church of God in Christ, (22) Church of the Brethren, (23) Church of the Nazarene, (28) Full Gospel Fellowship, (31) Mennonite, (33) Pentecostal, (37) Seventh Day Adventist, (44) All other members of Pietist Family, (45) All other members of Holiness family, (46) All other members of Pentecostal Family, (49) All other members of Independent Fundamentalist Family, and (50) All other members of Adventist Family. This variable builds on the previous two variables by extending the identification of Conservative Protestant fathers and other fathers to include their denominational preference. Once the fathers were identified by their denominational preference, they were placed into Glock and Stark's four-category continuum to see how well their views of the Bible fit the rank order religious conservativeness scale.

Independent Variables

Conservative Protestantism.

Arriving at a widely accepted definition of conservative Protestantism is no small feat. Conservative Protestants were operationalized in two ways (Lechner, 1993). The

first way is based on the respondent's view of the Bible (Ammerman, 1995, Hunter, 1985, and Ellison and Sherkat, 1996). Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed with the statement, "The Bible is God's word and everything happened or will happen exactly as it says" (E1359J). Response categories were (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree, (7) refused, (8) don't know, or (9), no answer. Later in the survey, respondents were asked how strongly they agreed with the statement, "The Bible is the answer to all important human problems" (E1360D). The response categories ranged from (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree, (7) refused, (8) don't know, or (9), no answer. Responses 7 through 9 were excluded from the analysis. The two responses, when between 1 and 5, were combined and used to establish a father's degree of religious conservativeness. The constructed range of values was from 2 to 10, with 2 representing the highest degree of conservative beliefs about the Bible. Values of 2 to 4 were reckoned the conservative Protestants fathers. Therefore, in the analysis, the conservative Protestant fathers were coded 1, while the other fathers (i.e. non-conservative Protestant fathers) were coded 0. In fact, these two beliefs are often used as an informal litmus test among theological conservatives themselves. This approach was also used by Ellison, Bartkowski and Segal (1996), who were able to successfully devise an index by combining these two variables in a study about corporal punishment. Wilcox (1998) also successfully combined these two items in a study concerned with parenting styles of conservative Protestants.

The second way that conservative Protestants were operationalized was to allow them to be self-labeled as Fundamentalist. Respondents were also asked how much they agreed with the statement, "I regard myself as a religious fundamentalist" (E1360H). The responses categories permitted by the survey instrument were (1) strongly agree, (2)

agree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree (6) inapplicable (questionnaire completed in Spanish, translation not possible), (7) refused, (8) don't know, or (9), no answer. As noted earlier, this self-labeling is full of controversy, even among Christians. Many Christians, who also possess a high view of the Bible, would not consider themselves "fundamentalists", while some outside of the Christian religion (e.g. Islamic or Hindu) may well consider themselves, "fundamentalist". However, the respondents were considered Christian Fundamentalists if they answered, (1) strongly agree or, (2) agree. The responses of (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) disagree, and (5) strongly disagree, were considered non-fundamentalists.

Control Variables

Respondent and Household Characteristics. Realizing that a plethora of factors can influence how much time fathers spend with their children, the study controlled for fathers' age, race, and total household income (Bergen, 1990).

Age of Fathers. The age of the fathers was determined by asking the question, "What is your date of birth?" (M485M).

Race. Race of the fathers was determined by the respondent's answer to the question, "Which of the groups on this card best describes you?" (M484). A card with the following categories was then shown to them. Possible answers were coded, (01) Black, (02) White - not of Hispanic origin, (03) Mexican American, Chicano, Mexicano, (04) Puerto Rican, (05) Cuban, (06) Other Hispanic, (07) American Indian, (08) Asian, (09) Other, (97) Refused, and, (99) No answer.

Total Household Income. The total household income was determined with a series of questions which asked respondents about the various sources of income within their household. The NSFH data provide a "constructed variable segment of the record, (by source)[which] is shown for the primary respondent, his / her spouse or partner, and for

all family members combined.” Total household income was calculated in the variable labeled, “IFTOT.”

Children’s Characteristics. The children's gender was also included as a control variable because gender may affect the amount of time fathers spend with their children. In the aggregate section of the survey, the variable, “F1Sex” contains the “Sex of respondent’s related focal child.” Males were coded (1) and Females were coded (2), along with (6) Inapplicable and (9) No answer. The analysis was limited to children between the ages of 0 and 4 years old by design of the survey. In other words, fathers were only asked this question, “About how many hours in a typical day do you spend taking care of (CHILD’S) physical needs, including feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting (him / her) to bed?” (M298A), if the child was between the ages of 0 and 4.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Testing the Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₁ tested a relationship between religious belief and parental practice. The time that conservative Protestant fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children who were 0 to 4 years of age was compared with the time other fathers spent in the same activities. A dummy variable approach was used, such that the conservative Protestant fathers were coded as 1 while the non-conservative Protestant fathers were coded as 0. The relationship between religious belief and parental practice was modeled using a regression equation that controlled for age, race, and total household income. In this model, parental practice was predicted from religious belief (conservative and less conservative).

Hypothesis Two

H₂ tested a relationship between the amount of time fathers said they spent meeting the physical needs of their children as a percentage of the total time fathers and partners together spent meeting the physical needs of their children and religious beliefs (conservative and less conservative). A general linear model was used to test this relationship, while total household income, age, race, and sex of the focal child were used as control variables.

Hypothesis Three

H₃ was a retesting of the Glock and Stark (1965) continuum of rank order religious denominational preference and degree of individual conservative beliefs about the Bible. This hypothesis tested for a relationship between denominational preference and degree of conservativeness in fathers of children between the ages of 0 and 4 years of age. Since denominational preference and degree of conservativeness are both ordinal variables, a linear by linear table was formed and an association between the rows and columns was tested with the chi-square test for independence. A rejection of this null hypothesis will imply that denominational preference and religious conservativeness were associated with one another.

Summary

This chapter has presented the methodologies which the study employed. The National Survey of Families and Households was described as the source of data for this research.

A portion of the important time that fathers spent with their children was operationalized by counting the hours they spent meeting their children's' physical needs. The variable, Conservative Protestant, was operationalized in two ways. The first

approach used an index constructed from two questions, which measured a person's beliefs about the origin and importance of the Bible, and its efficacy to guide the seemingly mundane activities of parenting. The second approach asked the respondents if they considered themselves to be a fundamentalist. Finally, the three hypotheses of the study were presented, along with the appropriate analytical techniques necessary to test each of these hypotheses.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the results of the analysis of the collected data and to report on the tests of the study's hypotheses. To begin, a description of the sample, which was drawn from the NSFH data, is given. The process of subsetting the data is portrayed through the operationalizing of the control variables, as well as the two independent variables. Each of the three hypotheses are then presented, along with the results of the analytical procedures employed to test each.

A Description of the Sample

There were 13,017 respondents to the National Survey of Households and Families in 1987 - 1988. The process of creating a subset of data was begun by selecting male respondents to the survey (N = 5227). The men were further pared by including in the data subset those who were fathers of children between the ages of 0 and 4 (N = 874). The fathers with a child 0 – 4 years of age, who had been selected as the focal child for the household, were asked, “About how many hours in a typical day do you spend taking care of (CHILD'S) physical needs, including feeding, bathing, dressing, and putting (him / her) to bed?” Response categories ranged from 0 to 9 or more hours. Other responses, which were coded 96 for inapplicable, 97 for refused, or 99 for no answer, were not included in the data set. Fathers who were a part of households with a total income of

over \$600,000 were found to skew the data by creating outliers in the data distribution, and were, consequently, removed from the analysis. This left a main sample of 462 fathers. Further characteristics of the fathers were documented as the control variables were operationalized.

Control Variables

In order to prepare the control variables for analysis, several steps were taken. The age of the fathers was listed as a birth date coded in a century month format. As such, the mean age of fathers was 678.07, which is to be understood as the 678.07th month of the twentieth century. The process of converting this to a conventional and coherent age was to divide 678.07 by 12 (months). This equaled 56.50, which was the average year that the fathers were born (i.e. 1956.5). The NSFH data set was released in 1988, with data collection primarily completed in 1987. Therefore, the birth year (1956.5) was subtracted from 1987, with the result that the mean age of fathers was 30.50 years. The same procedure was followed to ascertain the median age of fathers, which was 29.66 years (688.00, in century month code). In the analysis of the data, the century month date code format was left unchanged.

The race of the fathers was determined by the respondent's answer to the question, "Which of the groups on this card best describes you?" A card with nine categories was then shown to them. Possible answers were coded, 01 for Black, 02 for White - not of Hispanic origin, 03 for Mexican American, Chicano, Mexicano, 04 for Puerto Rican, 05 for Cuban, 06 for other Hispanic, 07 for American Indian, 08 for Asian, 09 for other, 97 for refused, and, 99 for no answer. The respondents for Mexican

American, Chicano, Mexicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic were recoded and combined into a single category of Hispanic because the number of respondents in each of the four categories was small, with several categories having fewer than five fathers. Therefore, the three categories used in the main sample were Black, White and Hispanic. The distribution of the race of fathers for the main sample is listed in Table 1. Finally, when the racial groups were considered as a portion of the Conservative Protestant variable, African Americans comprised 12.5%, Whites were 80.8%, and Hispanics were 6.7%. These figures compared favorably with the data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau for 1990, which placed Americans of African descent at 12.1%, Hispanic at 9.0%, Native Americans at .8%, Americans of Asian or Pacific Islander descent at 2.9%, and Americans of European descent at 80%. These figures total more than 100% because Hispanics descent describes Americans of several races (U.S. Census Bureau, Macionis, 1999).

Table 1: Race of Fathers Frequency Distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Black	53	11.5
White	377	81.6
Hispanic	32	6.9
N (Total)	462	100.0

Source: NSFH, 1988.

The control variable of total household income was also prepared for analysis. The NSFH data files provide a constructed variable of the total household income labeled, "IFTOT." The total household income was determined with a series of questions that asked respondents very thoroughly about the various sources of income within their households. As noted above, respondents with total family household income of over \$600,000 were found to skew the data by creating outliers in the data distribution, those fathers were removed from the analysis. The mean total household income for the main sample (N=462) was \$27,257.50, while the median total household income was \$25,549.00.

When an analysis of income was done along racial lines, differences of income levels among families began to appear. The mean total family income for Black households was \$20,178.00, while their median total family income was \$16,200.00. Among White families, the amount of income was higher, with \$28,279.10 for the mean total family income, while their median total family income was \$27,900.00. The mean total family income among Hispanic families was \$26,947.90 while the median total family income was \$22,675.00. The median total household income of fathers compared favorable to data from the U.S. Census Bureau for total family income. In 1985, two years before the NSFH data were collected primarily in 1987, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the median family income was \$21,655. In that year, Hispanics family median income was \$19,027, African American median family income was \$16,786, and White median family income was \$36,915. However, by 1990, three years after the NSFH were collected, the U.S. Census Bureau reported the median family income was

\$27,256, an increase of nearly 21 percent. In 1990, Hispanics family median income was \$23,431, African American median family income was \$21,423, and White median family income was \$44,756.

Each respondent of the survey was asked a series of specific and detailed questions about a single child selected by the interviewer in each household. The NSFH labeled this child the focal child. The sex of the focal child, a control variable, was reported by a constructed variable within the NSFH data, where males were coded as 1 and females were coded as 2. The other values of 6 for inapplicable and, 9 for no answer, were not included in the analysis. Table 2 contains the frequency distribution of the sex of the focal children for the main sample.

Table 2: Sex of the Focal Child Frequency Distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Male	239	51.7
Female	210	45.5
No Answer	13	2.8
N	462	100.0

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Two Independent Variables

At this point in the subsetting of the data, the two independent variables of Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist were created. As noted earlier, Lechner (1993) described two broad approaches to qualifying people as conservative Protestants

and fundamentalists. The first approach that is used by researchers is to qualify people based on their position toward specific theological beliefs, usually about the Bible. This approach allows people to shun the perceived negative label of fundamentalist, while at the same time, embrace the conservative theology generally deemed a part of fundamentalism. This method was used in this research to create the independent variable, "Conservative Protestant," which was an index ($\alpha = .86$) based on the combined responses to two questions about the Bible. The first statement was, "The Bible is God's word and everything happened or will happen exactly as it says." Response categories were coded 1 for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neither agree nor disagree, 4 for disagree, 5 for strongly disagree, 7 for refused, 8 for don't know, or 9 for no answer. The second statement about the Bible for respondents was, "The Bible is the answer to all important human problems." The response categories ranged from 1 for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neither agree or disagree, 4 for disagree, 5 for strongly disagree, 7 for refused, 8 for don't know, or 9 for no answer. For both responses, answers coded 7 through 9 were excluded from the analysis. The two responses, when between 1 and 5, were combined and used to establish a father's degree of religious conservativeness. The constructed range of values was from 2 to 10, with 2 representing the highest degree of conservative beliefs about the Bible. Constructed values of 2, 3, and 4 were reckoned Conservative Protestant fathers, while constructed values of 5 through 10 were considered Non-Conservative Protestant fathers. The Conservative Protestant fathers were coded "1" and the Non-Conservative Protestant fathers were coded "0" in the data analysis (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Ellison, Bartowski, and Segal, 1996; and Bartowski and Xu, 2000). The frequency distribution of the Conservative Protestant variable by racial categories is listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Conservative Protestants and Non-Conservative Protestants by Race

	Black ^b	White ^c	Hispanic ^d
Conservative Protestant	75%	33.2%	37.9%
Non-Conservative Protestant	25%	66.8%	62.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

a. 94 cases were missing.

b. N = 44

c. N = 295

d. N = 29

Source: NSFH, 1988

Once the independent variable of Conservative Protestant was created, a crosstabulation procedure was run to garner more information about the distribution of the variable along racial lines. This more in-depth approach was utilized for these two variables because in the testing of the hypotheses, interaction between these variables was detected.

The significance of the measure of association between the variables of Conservative Protestant and race is borne out by the lambda statistic. The lambda measure of association is used with nominal variables and is used to measure the percentage of reduction in error if one variable value is known while estimating the value of the other variable. When Conservative Protestant is the dependent variable, the lambda value is .155, or a 15.5% reduction in error in estimating the value of race. The approximate significance is .001 ($p < .05$).

The second approach that researchers have used to identify theologically conservative Christians is to limit the meaning of fundamentalism to what the “people themselves” mean by it (Lechner, 1993). Though more subjective, this approach allows the respondents to qualify or disqualify themselves based on their understanding of what it means to be a fundamentalist. This approach was utilized in the creation of the second independent variable, labeled “Fundamentalist.” The variable was based on the response to the statement, “I regard myself as a religious fundamentalist.” The responses categories permitted by the survey instrument were 1 for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neither agree or disagree, 4 for disagree, 5 for strongly disagree 6 for inapplicable (questionnaire completed in Spanish, translation not possible), 7 for refused, 8 for don’t know, or 9, for no answer. The respondents were considered Christian Fundamentalists if they answered, strongly agree or, agree, and were coded “1” in the data analysis. The responses of neither agree or disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree were considered Non-fundamentalists, and were coded “0”. All other responses were eliminated from the analysis.

Once the independent variable of Fundamentalist was created, a crosstabulation procedure was run to assemble more information about the distribution of the variable along racial lines. Again, a more in-depth approach was utilized for the two independent variables because in the testing of the hypotheses, interaction between the independent variables and race was detected. The frequency distribution of the Fundamentalist category by race is listed in Table 4. The significance of the measure of association between the variables of Fundamentalist and race could not be calculated because the value of the asymptotic standard error measure was zero.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Fundamentalist vs. Non-Fundamentalist Variable by Race

	Black ^a	White ^b	Hispanic ^c
Fundamentalist	28.3%	17.7%	15.6%
Non-Fundamentalist	71.7%	82.3%	84.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

a. N = 53

b. N = 377

c. N = 32

Source: NSFH, 1988.

When the three racial groups are considered as percentages of the Fundamentalist group, African Americans comprised 11.5%, Whites were 81.6%, and Hispanics were 6.9%. These figures compare favorably with the data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau for 1985 and 1990 (described above), as well as the distribution of the Conservative Protestant variable.

Finally, when the two independent variables of Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist were compared by crosstabulation analysis, it became apparent that the two labels essentially described the same group. Table 5 shows there were fathers who were both Conservative Protestants and Fundamentalists (N=62). This group could best be described as self-labeled fundamentalists who also have corresponding conservative beliefs about the Bible. The Conservative Protestants/ Non-Fundamentalists fathers (N=80) could be described as those who have conservative beliefs about the Bible, but do

not, for whatever reason, care to use the label of fundamentalist. The Non- Conservative Protestants/ Fundamentalists (N=11), the smallest cell count, could be described as social fundamentalists who do not have a correspondingly conservative view of the Bible. Finally, Non- Conservative/ Non- Fundamentalists (N= 215) are those fathers who have neither a traditionally conservative view of the Bible nor use the fundamentalist label.

Table 5: Crosstabulation of Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist Variables

	Fundamentalist ^b	Non-Fundamentalist ^c
Conservative Protestant ^d	84.9%	27.1%
Non-Conservative Protestant ^e	15.1%	72.9%
Total	100%	100%

- a. 94 cases were missing.
- b. N = 73
- c. N = 295
- d. N = 142
- e. N = 226

Source: NSFH, 1988.

The strength of the association between the two independent variables of Conservative Protestants and Fundamentalists was measured using a Chi square test. The Chi square test is used to test the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 82.563), the Continuity Correction (value = 80.115), Likelihood Ratio (value =

84.107), and the Linear-by-Linear Association (value = 82.312) all have significance levels of .000. Each, in turn, means that the null hypothesis may be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation (Table 5) was due to chance was less than 0.1 percent. Even though the null hypothesis based on the Chi square test may be rejected, further measures were needed to better understand the strength of the relationship between the variables.

The appropriate statistics to understand the strength of the relationship between the variables of Conservative Protestant Fathers and Fundamentalist Fathers is summarized in Table 6. The crosstabulation table is nominal by nominal, (or, dichotomized ordinal by dichotomized ordinal) and, therefore, the directional measures used were Lambda, (approximate significance = .000) and Goodman and Kruskal tau, (approximate significance = .000) For the Lambda measure, the symmetric value of .237 indicates the proportional reduction in error of predicting one variable based on the value of the other variable is 23.7%. When the value of the Conservative Protestant variable is dependent, the reduction in error in predicting the Fundamentalist variable is 35.9% (value = .359). (When the Fundamentalist variable is dependent, the value cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error is zero.) In the Goodman and Kruskal tau measure, the value of .224 for both measures indicates that when either variable is considered, the reduction in error in predicting the value of the other variable is reduced by 22.4%. Again, when the two variables of Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist are considered, they essentially denote the same group.

Table 6: Directional Measures for Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist Variables

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. Sig.
Lambda	Symmetric	.237	.029	.000
	C. P. Dependent	.359	.048	.000
	Fund. Dependent	.000	.000	.
Goodman and Kruskal tau	C. P. Dependent	.224	.039	.000
	Fund. Dependent	.224	.042	.000

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Testing Hypothesis 1

Once the two independent variables of Conservative Protestant Fathers and Fundamentalist Fathers were created, the testing of the hypotheses began. The first hypothesis stated that the level of conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to the amount of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their young children. Hypothesis 1 tested a relationship between religious belief and parental practice. The time that Conservative Protestant fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children who were 0 to 4 years of age was compared with the time other fathers (i.e. Non-Conservative Protestants) spent in the same activities. In the initial bi-variate crosstabulation analysis, there was no discernable difference in the number of hours spent in childcare between Conservative Protestant fathers and Non-Conservative Protestant fathers (mean = 2.20 hours, and median = 2.00 hours). Upon further investigation, regression analysis confirmed this finding. In the regression analysis, a dummy variable

approach was used, such that the Conservative Protestant fathers were coded “1” while the non-Conservative Protestant fathers were coded as “0”. The relationship between religious belief and parental practice was modeled using a regression equation that controlled for the age and race of the fathers, total household income, and sex of the focal child. The results of the ANOVA regression analysis for the Conservative Protestant variable are summarized in Table 7.

In this first analysis, none of the control variables, which were entered in a block, were seen to be statistically significant. The R value for the regression model is .176, which is the correlation between the observed and predicted values in the number of hours that fathers spend in meeting the physical needs of their children. Though the sign of the R value is positive, indicating a positive relationship, the strength of the relationship is weak because it is not at the extreme ranges of +1 or -1. The R^2 value for the model is .031, which is the proportion of variation explained by the regression model. In other words, the regression model explains 3.1% of the variation in the amount of time fathers spend meeting the physical of their children. The value of the Adjusted R^2 (It is adjusted because more variables artificially inflate the R^2) is .012. The value of the R^2 change for the model is .014, while the value of the R^2 change for the independent variable of Conservative Protestant is .012. The near equality of these two values indicates that the independent variable explains about as much of the variance in the regression model as does the combined control variables.

Table 7: Coefficients for Conservative Protestant Variable ^a

	Unstandardized	Standardized	Sig.
	Coefficients	Coefficients	
	B	Beta	
(Constant) ^b	1.229		.369
Total Family Income	-3.730E-07	-.003	.961
Age	2.431E-03	.091	.156
Race	.102	.027	.668
Sex of Focal Child	-9.258E-02	-.073	.239
Con. Prot.	-.414	-.116	.074

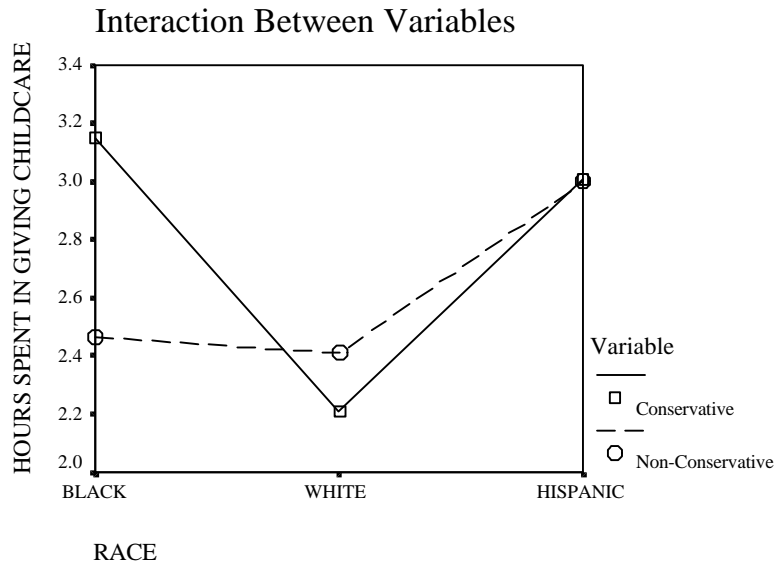
a. Dependent Variable: HRS/DAY R SPENDS W/CHILD PHYSICL NEEDS

b. R Squared = .031 (Adjusted R Squared = .012)

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Chart 1 shows the pattern of interaction which was detected between the variables of race and the number of hours that fathers spent in childcare activities. Black Conservative Protestant fathers, who spent nearly 3.2 hours in childcare, provided the highest number of hours of childcare. Black Non-Conservative Protestant fathers spent nearly 2.5 hours in the same activities. This is the direction that Hypothesis 1 predicted. However, among White fathers, Conservative Protestants did less childcare with a mean time of 2.2 hours, while Non-Conservative Protestant fathers did slightly more at 2.4 hours. Among Hispanic fathers, there was no noticeable difference between Conservative Protestants and Non-Conservative Protestants.

Chart 1



Source: NSFH, 1988.

In order to better understand the relationship between the variables of race, Conservative Protestant, and the number of hours spent in childcare by fathers, the Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 21.183) had a significance level of .172 for Conservative Protestants, while the Pearson's Chi Square measure for the non-conservative Protestant (value = 20.409) was .673. Together, they are understood to mean that the null hypothesis may not be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation was due to chance was not less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by nominal

Lambda statistic (approximate significance = .316), measured the strength of the relationship between the variables as weak.

The next step was to analyze the second independent variable of Fundamentalist. In the initial bi-variate crosstabulation analysis, there was again, no discernable difference in the number of hours spent in childcare between Fundamentalist fathers and Non-Fundamentalist fathers (mean = 2.34 hours, and median = 2.10 hours). When the regression analysis was calculated for the Fundamentalist variable, slightly different results were found. The time that Fundamentalist fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children who were 0 to 4 years of age was compared with the time other fathers (i.e. Non-Fundamentalists) spent in the same activities. A dummy variable approach was used, such that the Fundamentalist fathers were coded “1” while the Non-Fundamentalist fathers were coded as “0”. The relationship between religious belief and parental practice was modeled using a regression equation that controlled for the age and race of the fathers, total household income, and sex of the focal child.

When the model held all of the control variables constant, the significance level for the regression equation was measured at .003 ($p < .05$). However, when the control variables are analyzed *en mass*, the significance level for each single variable disappears. The results of the regression analysis for the Fundamentalist variable are summarized in Table 8. The R value for the regression model is .134, which is the correlation between the observed and predicted values in the number of hours that fathers spent in meeting the physical needs of their children. Though the sign of the R value is positive, indicating a positive relationship between the variables, the strength of the relationship is weak

because it is not at the extreme ranges of +1 or -1. The R^2 value for the model is .018, which is the proportion of variation explained by the regression model. In other words, the regression model explains 1.8% of the variation in the amount of time fathers spend meeting the physical of their children. The value of the Adjusted R^2 is .007, which is a measure designed to compensate for the usually overly optimistic R^2 . The value of the R^2 change for the model is .016, while the value of the R^2 change for the independent variable of .002, indicating that there was little change in the full model when the Fundamentalist variable was entered into the model.

Table 8: Coefficients for Fundamentalist Variable

	Unstandardized	Standardized	Sig.
	Coefficients	Coefficients	
	B	Beta	
(Constant) ^b	4.403		.003
Total Family Income	-1.346E-05	-.074	.126
Age	-2.643E-03	-.071	.134
Race	5.521E-03	.001	.985
Sex of Focal Child	-.179	-.088	.058
Fundamentalist	.336	.049	.300

a. Dependent Variable: HRS/DAY R SPENDS W/CHILD PHYSICL NEEDS

b. R Squared = .018 (Adjusted R Squared = .007)

Source: NSFH, 1988.

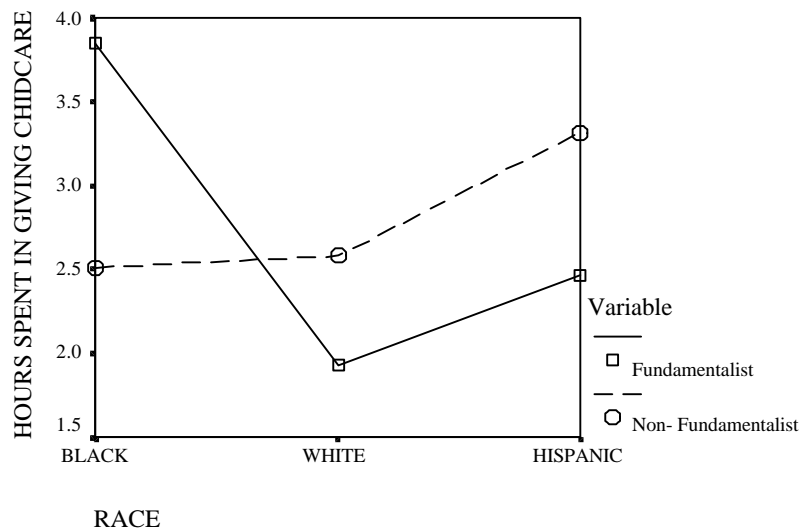
Chart 2 shows the pattern of interaction which was detected between the variables of race and the number of hours that Fundamentalist fathers spent in childcare activities.

Black Fundamentalist fathers, who reported spending nearly 3.7 hours each day

providing childcare, again, provided the highest number of hours of childcare. Black Non-Fundamentalist fathers spent, again, nearly 2.5 hours in the same activities. This is the direction that Hypothesis 1 predicted. However, among White fathers, Fundamentalists did less childcare with a mean of 2.0 hours, while Non-Fundamentalist fathers did slightly more at 2.5 hours. Among Hispanic fathers, Fundamentalist fathers spent less time in childcare activities, 2.4 hours, while Non-Fundamentalist fathers spent more time in the same activities at 3.3 hours.

Chart 2

Interaction Between Variables



Source: NSFH, 1988.

In order to better understand the relationship between the variables of race, Fundamentalist, and the number of hours spent in childcare by fathers, the Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in

their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 32.032) had a significance level of .004 for Fundamentalists, while the Pearson's Chi Square measure for the non-Fundamentalist (value = 27.471) was .385. Together, they are understood to mean that the null hypothesis may not be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation was due to chance was not less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by nominal Lambda statistic (approximate significance = .382), measured the strength of the relationship between the variables as weak.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 1:

Interaction between variables is almost never desirable, and so it was not a welcome feature in this research. The findings for Hypothesis 1 are, therefore, ambiguous. For the Conservative Protestant variable, the analysis showed that the regression equation was able to account only for 1.2 % (Adjusted R^2) of the variation in the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children on a daily basis. However, of all of the variables entered into the equation, the Conservative Protestant variable, based on its significance level (.074), seemed to be the strongest of the variables in the equation. Interaction between the categories of the variable of race, specifically, African Americans, and the Conservative Protestant variable, suggested that conservative Protestant beliefs were a factor in how fathers related to their children. In Chart 1, the Conservative Protestant African American fathers were the single group that spent the most time with their child. This finding held true, not only among Non-Conservative Protestant African Americans, but also for all other fathers. On the other

hand, conservative Protestant beliefs seemed to have a negative impact or, at most, a minimal impact, on the amount of time White and Hispanic fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children. The White Conservative Protestant fathers spent less time on meeting their children's physical needs than did non-conservative Protestant fathers, while Hispanic fathers, both conservative and non-conservative, spent about the same amount of time.

Much the same ambiguous findings surface again when the Fundamentalist independent variable is tested in the hypothesis. The regression analysis showed that the equation was able to account for only 0.7% (Adjusted R^2) of the variation in the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children on a daily basis. Again, interaction between the variables of race, specifically, African Americans, and the Fundamentalist variable, suggested that fundamentalist beliefs were a factor in how fathers related to their children. In Chart 2, the Fundamentalist African American fathers were again the single group that outperformed their Non-Fundamentalist, as well as Fundamentalists, cohort. This held true, not only for Non-Fundamentalist African Americans, but also for all other fathers, as well. On the other hand, fundamentalist beliefs seem to have had a negative impact or, at most, a minimal impact on the amount of time White and Hispanic fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children. The White and Hispanic Fundamentalist fathers spent less time on meeting their children's physical needs than did White and Hispanic Non-Fundamentalist fathers. Therefore, the interaction effects between the variables of race and the Conservative Protestant variable, and race and the Fundamentalist variable, as well as weak regression

equations for both variables, leads to the conclusion that Hypothesis 1 does not hold up under testing.

Testing Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 states the level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to the proportion of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their children out of the total time spent by fathers and mothers combined. This hypothesis extends the first hypothesis by measuring the time spent in childcare in a slightly different manner. In each case, the fathers' time spent meeting the physical needs of their children was added to the amount of time they said their wives or partners spent meeting the physical needs of their children. A calculation was then performed to measure what percentage of the total time the fathers spent in childcare.

In the initial bi-variate crosstabulation analysis, there was no discernable difference in the proportion of time that Conservative Protestant fathers and Non-Conservative Protestant fathers shared in childcare with their wives (mean = 26.46%). Therefore, a regression analysis approach was employed. The results of the UNINOVA General Linear Model regression analysis for the Conservative Protestant independent variable are listed in Table 9. The R^2 value for the model is .076, which is the proportion of variation explained by the regression equation. In other words, the regression model explains 7.6% of the variation of the time fathers spent meeting the physical of their children when viewed as a proportion of the time they reported their wives spent in the same activities. The value of the Adjusted R^2 is .051, which is a measure designed to

compensate for the usually overly optimistic R^2 . The only variable that was deemed significant was race, which was measured at .002 ($p < .05$).

Table 9: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for the Conservative Protestant Variable

Dependent Variable: Percentage of Total Time

Source	Type III of Squares	df	Mean	F	Sig.
Corrected	6224.708 ^a	8	778.089	2.990	.003
Intercept	2273.688	1	2273.688	8.737	.003
Race	3226.356	2	1613.178	6.199	.002
Cons. Prot.	580.799	1	580.799	2.232	.136
Income	611.619	1	611.619	2.350	.126
Age	12.748	1	12.748	.049	.825
Sex of Focal	477.719	1	477.719	1.836	.177
Race * Cons.	1528.363	2	764.181	2.936	.055
Error	75472.074	290	260.249		
Total	282044.41	299			
Corrected	81696.782	298			

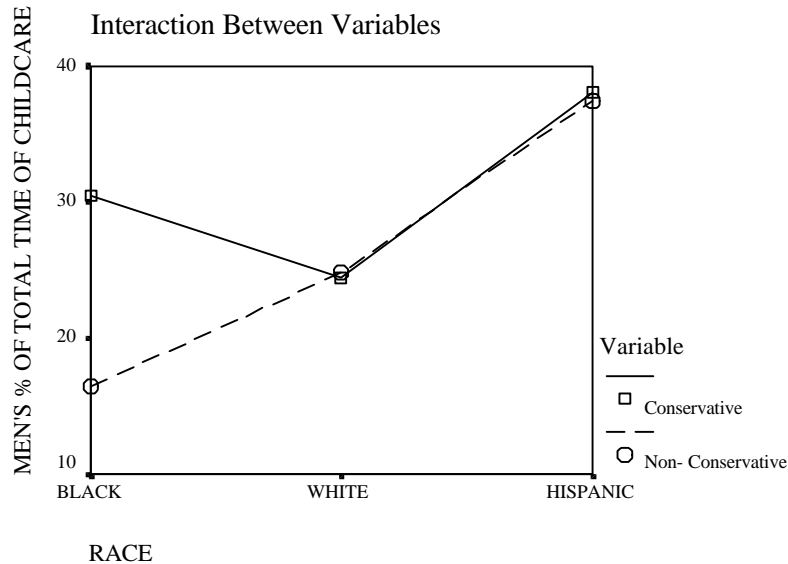
a. R Squared = .076 (Adjusted R Squared = .051)

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Chart 3 shows the effects of interaction for the categories of the variable of race, the Conservative Protestant variable, and the amount of time fathers spent in childcare when converted to a percentage of the total time they and their wives spent in the same activities. Black Conservative Protestant fathers had a higher percentage of the total

childcare (31%) than did Black Non-Conservative Protestant (16%). This is the direction that Hypothesis 1 predicted. However, among White fathers, Conservative Protestants and Non-Conservative Protestant fathers did about the same percentage (25%) of the total time. Among Hispanics, the fathers with the highest percentage of childcare, there was no noticeable difference between Conservative Protestants and Non-Conservative Protestants (38%).

Chart 3



Source: NSFH, 1988.

In order to better understand the relationship between the variables of race, Conservative Protestant, and the percentage of the total hours spent in childcare by fathers, the Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-

Square measure (value = 68.729) had a significance level of .521 for Conservative Protestants, while the Pearson's Chi Square measure for the non-conservative Protestant (value = 80.449) was .284. Together, they are understood to mean that the null hypothesis may not be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation was due to chance was not less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by nominal Lambda statistic (approximate significance = .110), measured the strength of the relationship between the variables as moderately weak.

The results of the UNINOVA General Linear Model regression analysis for the Fundamentalist independent variable are listed in Table 10. The R^2 value for the model is .053, which is the proportion of variation explained by the regression equation. In other words, the regression model explains 5.3% of the variation of the time fathers spent meeting the physical of their children when viewed as a proportion of the time they reported their wives spent in the same activities. The value of the Adjusted R^2 is .030, which is a measure designed to compensate for the usually overly optimistic R^2 .

This model also shows that the total family income (significance = .009) was a significant predictor of whether fathers spent time meeting the physical needs of their children. Fundamentalist fathers were in families with a mean total family income of \$32,533.10 (median = \$25,000.00) while Non-Fundamentalist fathers were in families with a mean total income of \$37,526.80 (median = \$32,000.00). However, upon further analysis, the Chi square test of the null hypothesis could not be rejected. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 220.258, significance = .482), Likelihood Ratio (value = 228.279, significance = .337), and the Linear-by-Linear Association (value = .969,

significance = .325), were each not significant ($p < .05$). Each, in turn, means that the null hypothesis may not be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation was due to chance. In all of the regression models created for this research, this is the only time that total family income appears to be a significant factor in the overall equations.

Table 10: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for the Fundamentalists Variable

Dependent Variable: RATIO

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	5378.682 ^a	8	672.3	2.298	.021
Intercept	1385.563	1	1386	4.735	.030
Race	1581.380	2	790.7	2.702	.069
Fund.	1.787	1	1.787	.006	.938
Income	1999.800	1	2000	6.834	.009
Age	25.386	1	25.386	.087	.769
Sex of Focal Child	621.771	1	621.8	2.125	.146
Race * Fund.	101.359	2	50.679	.173	.841
Error	95688.96	327	292.6		
Total	322251.3	336			
Corrected Total	101067.6	335			

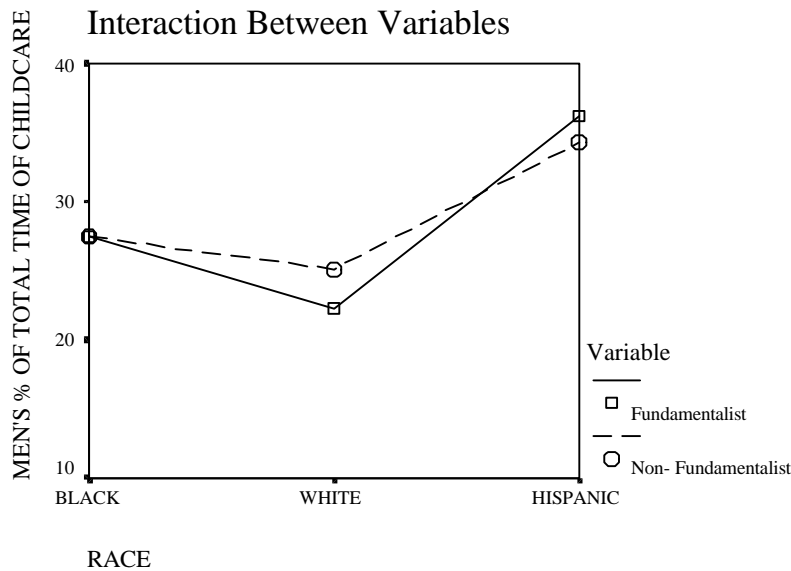
a. R Squared = .053 (Adjusted R Squared = .030)

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Chart 4 shows the pattern of interaction which was detected between the variables of race and the ratio of the total time that fathers spent in childcare activities. Black Fundamentalists fathers and Non-Fundamentalists fathers both spent about the same

amount (27% of total time) of time when their time was compared to the total time they and their wives spent in childcare. Among White fathers, Fundamentalists did less childcare with a percentage of 22% of total time, while Non-Fundamentalist fathers did slightly more at 26% of the total time. Among Hispanic fathers, Fundamentalist fathers spent less time in childcare activities (34% of total time), while Non-Fundamentalist fathers spent more time in the same activities at 36% of the time their wives spent in providing childcare. However, Hispanics, Fundamentalist and Non-Fundamentalist, both had the highest percentage of the total time (38%) when compared to White and Black fathers.

Chart 4:



Source: NSFH, 1988.

In order to better understand the relationship between the variables of race, Fundamentalist, and the number of hours spent in childcare by fathers, the Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 50.254) had a significance level of .857 for Fundamentalists, while the Pearson's Chi Square measure for the non-Fundamentalist (value = 115.337) was .140. Together, they are understood to mean that the null hypothesis may not be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation was due to chance was not less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by nominal Lambda statistic (approximate significance = .028), measured the strength of the relationship between the variables as moderately weak.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 2:

The findings for Hypothesis 2 are, again, ambiguous. For the Conservative Protestant variable, the analysis showed that the regression equation was able to account for 5.1 % (Adjusted R^2) of the variation in the proportion of the total time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children on a daily basis when combined with the time they and their wives and partners spent in meeting the physical needs of their children. Interaction between the variables of race, specifically, African Americans, and the Conservative Protestant variable, suggested that conservative Protestant beliefs were a factor in how fathers related to their children and children's mothers. In Chart 3, the Conservative Protestant African American fathers were the single group that performed a higher proportion of the childcare than did Non- Conservative African Americans. This

finding did not hold true for the other racial categories of fathers. Conservative Protestant beliefs seemed to have a minimal impact on the proportion of time White and Hispanic fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children as both conservative and non-conservative fathers spent about the same proportion of time in childcare.

Ambiguous findings again surfaced when the Fundamentalist independent variable was tested in the regression equation. The regression analysis showed that the equation was able to account for 3.0% (Adjusted R^2) of the variation in the proportion of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children on a daily basis. The regression equation also suggested that fundamentalist beliefs were not a factor in how fathers related to their children. Chart 4 illustrated that the Fundamentalist variable had a minimal impact on the proportion of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children, while race seemed to have more of an impact. Of the three racial groups, Hispanic fathers, both Fundamentalist and Non-Fundamentalist, shared the highest proportion of childcare with their spouses. Therefore, the interaction effects between the variables of race and the Conservative Protestant variable, and race and the Fundamentalist variable, as well as weak regression equations for both variables, leads to the conclusion that Hypothesis 2 does not hold up under testing.

Testing Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 states that the level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers is positively related to their membership in conservative religious denominations. This hypothesis tested whether the Glock and Stark (1965) continuum of rank order of

religious denominations was associated with conservative Protestant beliefs. NSFH respondents were asked the question, “What is your religious preference? (IF PROTESTANT, ASK): What specific denomination is that?” Obviously, with this type of open- ended question, there was a large range of responses.

The responses were coded as 00 for no religion, as 01 for Roman Catholic, and as 02 for Jewish. Next, there were 64 coded responses of specific denominations and religions. Finally, the coded responses concluded with 95 for not codeable, 97 for refused, and 99 for no answer. This research analyzed only the responses that fit Glock and Stark’s (1965) continuum. Therefore, Glock and Stark’s “Liberal” category included the NSFH coded answers for 09 United Churches of Christ (Congregational), for 04 Episcopalian, for 15 Christian Congregation, for 06 Methodists, for 39 Wesleyan, and, for 43 all other liberal churches. Glock and Stark’s “Moderates” category included the coded answers for 08 Presbyterian, for 14 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (Christian Church- any modifier such as First, Eastside, Community etc.) (Christian - Disciples) (Christian, not including, “just a Christian” or “Christian- no denomination”), and 42, for all other Reformed-Presbyterian churches. Glock and Stark’s “Conservative” category included the coded responses for 05 Lutheran. Regrettably, there were no Lutheran fathers, either in the Conservative Protestant variable or in the Fundamentalist variable. Therefore, the category of “Conservative” was removed from the analysis. Glock and Stark’s “Conservative” category also included, “American Baptist”, and, as noted earlier, the NSFH data does not distinguish between the finer points of denominational nomenclature. The final category Glock and Stark included was “Fundamentalist”,

which was composed of the NSFH coded responses for 03 Baptist, 12 for Assembly of God, 13 for Christian and Missionary Alliance, 20 for Church of God (no affiliation specified), 21 for Church of God in Christ, 22 for Church of the Brethren, 23 for Church of the Nazarene, 28 for Full Gospel Fellowship, 31 for Mennonite, 33 for Pentecostal, 37 for Seventh Day Adventist, 44 for all other members of Pietist Family, 45 for all other members of Holiness family, 46 for all other members of Pentecostal Family, 49 for all other members of Independent Fundamentalist Family, and 50 for all other members of Adventist Family. This variable builds on the previous two variables by extending the identification of conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist fathers, as well as other fathers, to include their denominational preference. Once the fathers were identified by their denominational preference, they were placed into Glock and Stark's four-category continuum to see how well their views of the Bible fit the rank order religious conservativeness scale.

The next step in the process of testing Hypothesis 3 was to assess the strength of the association between the independent variable of Conservative Protestant and the newly recoded Glock and Stark (1965) continuum. The Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 47.615), Likelihood Ratio (value = 48.384), and the Linear-by-Linear Association (value = 46.165), all have significance levels of .000. Each, in turn, means that the null hypothesis may be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation (Table 11) was due to chance was less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by

ordinal Contingency Coefficient statistic was used to understand the strength of the relationship between the variables of Conservative Protestant and the religious preference scale. The value of the Contingency Coefficient was .391, and the approximate significance was .000 ($p < .01$). While this is understood as significant, the value of .391 indicates that the relationship is moderately weak (range = +1 to -1).

Table 11: Crosstabulation for Religious Preference by Conservative Protestants

	Conservative Protestant ^a	Non-Conservative Protestant ^b
Liberal	32.7%	69.5%
Moderates	5.5%	10.4%
Fundamentalist	61.8%	20.1%
Total	100%	100%

a. N = 110

b. N = 154

Source: NSFH, 1988.

The next step in the process of testing Hypothesis 3 was to assess the strength of the association between the independent variable of Fundamentalist and the newly recoded Glock and Stark (1965) continuum. The Chi square test was again used to test the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between variables in their distribution within the sample. The Pearson Chi-Square measure (value = 9.437, significance = .009),

Likelihood Ratio (value = 9.227, significance = .010), and the Linear-by-Linear Association (value = 9.310, significance = .002), were each significant ($p < .05$). Each, in turn, means that the null hypothesis may be rejected because the probability that the distribution of the variables in the various cells of the crosstabulation (Table 12) was due to chance was less than 0.1 percent. The nominal by ordinal Contingency Coefficient statistic was used to understand the strength of the relationship between the variables of Fundamentalist and the religious preference scale. The value of the Contingency Coefficient was .165, and the approximate significance was .009 ($p < .01$). While this is understood as significant, the value of .165 indicates that the relationship is relatively weak (range = +1 to -1).

Table 12: Crosstabulation for Religious Preference by Fundamentalist Variable

	Fundamentalist ^a	Non-Fundamentalist ^b
Liberal	39.7%	58.4%
Moderates	5.9%	7.4%
Fundamentalist	54.4%	34.2%
Total	100%	100%

a. N = 68

b. N = 269

Source: NSFH, 1988.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 3:

Crosstabulation analysis showed that the Glock and Stark (1965) continuum of rank order was associated with denominational preference of fathers within the NSFH data for both the Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist variables. Therefore, since the null hypothesis of the crosstabulation analysis may be rejected, Hypothesis 3 is accepted as bearing up under analysis.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has detailed the formation of the main sample and the steps that were outlined in the creation of each of the variables. First, the sample was pared to men who were the fathers of children ages 0 – 4 years of age. Next, the preparation of the control variables of the age of the fathers, race of the fathers, and total household income were described. Next, the process of the formation of the two independent variables of Conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist was also delineated. Finally, the testing of each of the three hypotheses, as well as the results of the testing, were reported. The next chapter will present the findings in light of other research and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 5

RELATING THE FINDINGS TO OTHER RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the summarized results of the analysis of the hypotheses. The results of the analyses will then be compared to previously discussed research. Next, the results of the analyses will be used to suggest specific research areas that need to be addressed within the scientific community, Finally a conclusion will be offered that will include limitations and make suggestions for researchers in the religious and scientific communities.

Summary of Findings

This research was concerned with the possible effects that religion, specifically conservative Protestantism, has upon the performance of fatherhood. The performance of fatherhood in this study has focused on the amount of time fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their young children. The research has asked whether conservative Protestant fathers spend more or less time meeting their children's physical needs than do other fathers. Conservative Protestant fathers, also known as fundamentalists, are typically involved in denominations and para-church organizations that promote "pro-family" issues as core beliefs. These core beliefs (social products) contain elements that prescribe fathers' active involvement with their children. If conservative Protestant

fathers put these core beliefs into practice, then it should translate into spending more time with their children, including meeting their physical needs.

Hypothesis 1 stated that the level of conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers was positively related to the amount of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their young children. Bi-variate analysis showed there was no difference in the amount of time conservative and non-conservative Protestant fathers spent meeting the physical needs of their children. Upon further investigation, interaction between variables contributed to ambiguous results. When the Conservative Protestant independent variable was tested with a regression equation, the further analysis demonstrated that the hypothesis held only for the Conservative Protestant Black fathers. Other fathers in the analysis illustrated either an inverse effect (i.e. negative relationship) or no effect. When the regression equation analyzed the Fundamentalist independent variable, the results were essentially duplicated. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Hypothesis 2 stated the level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers was positively related to the proportion of time they spent meeting the physical needs of their children out of the total time spent by fathers and mothers combined. Further analysis again found that interaction between variables contributed to ambiguous results. When the Conservative Protestant variable was tested with a regression equation, the analysis demonstrated that the hypothesis held only for the Conservative Protestant Black fathers. Other fathers, conservative Protestant, and non-conservative Protestant (within the same racial categories), demonstrated little or no difference in the proportion of the total time they shared in childcare with their wives. When the regression equation

analyzed the Fundamentalist independent variable, the results were again essentially duplicated. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was also rejected.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the level of Conservative Protestant beliefs held by fathers was positively related to their membership in conservative religious denominations. Once the religious preference of fathers was determined, the fathers were placed into a modified religious index of theological beliefs that was first developed by Glock and Stark in 1965. Hypothesis 3 was accepted after crosstabulation analysis demonstrated the validity of the categorizing of the fathers by denominational preference.

The Findings in Light of Other Research

The mixed findings for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 seem to fall in line with other recent studies. Pleck (1997), who completed a thorough review of available studies, observed that the findings were mixed in their support of the various respondent and household characteristics and their bearing on fathers' involvement with their children. For instance, when the age of the father was used as a variable to gauge involvement with their children, Coltrane (1990) found that older fathers were more engaged with their children; Ahmeduzzaman and Roopnarine (1992), on the other hand, were not able to find any association between the fathers' age and their involvement with their children. In line with the later study, the age of fathers was not found to be a factor in this research.

A similar lack of consensus was found when the race of the fathers was used as a variable. For instance, Pleck (1983) found no consistent relationship between fathers' race and involvement with their children, while Allen (1981), McAdoo (1988), and Marsiglio (1991) found that black fathers were more involved with their children than

were other fathers of different racial groups. In line with the later studies, this research found that Black fathers, who were also conservative Protestants (and Fundamentalists), were more involved (i.e. spent more time in childcare), than were other groups of fathers.

When household income was considered as a factor in fathers' involvement with their children, mixed results again abounded. Pleck (1983) and Goldscheider and Waite (1991) found no relationship between the variables of income and fathers' involvement with their children. On the other hand, Blair, Wenk and Hardesty (1994) found that higher income for fathers was associated with more positive engagement with their children. In this study, total household income was found to be a significant factor in only one regression equation, once again leading to mixed results.

The findings of Hypothesis 3 support the religious continuum developed by Glock and Stark (1965). They suggested that Protestant denominations and sects could be grouped into a four-category continuum in terms of beliefs about basic Christian doctrine.

Their categories were:

1. Liberals (Congregationalist, Episcopalians, Methodists)
2. Moderates (Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ)
3. Conservatives (American Lutherans, American Baptists)
4. Fundamentalists (Southern Baptists, Missouri Synod Lutherans, and sects).

However, there were no "Conservative" fathers (American Lutherans or American Baptists) that the research was able to identify, and this led to the formation of a three-category continuum.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

As mentioned earlier, the main limitation of this study was identifying the theological beliefs of fathers as either those of conservative Protestants (and Fundamentalists), or as neither. Lechner (1993) noted that there are two broad approaches to qualifying people as fundamentalist. The first approach limits the meaning of fundamentalism to what the “people themselves” mean by it. The second approach that is used by researchers is to qualify people based on their position toward specific theological beliefs, usually about the Bible. Both the self-labeled approach and the qualification by theological beliefs (about the Bible) approach, were employed in this research (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Ellison, Bartowski, and Segal, 1996, and Bartowski and Xu, 2000). This study conceded that there was two approaches and therefore, utilized both approaches. The result of the parallel testing was that, generally, there were parallel results. However, this was not always the case, with major differences being illustrated in Chart 3 and Chart 4. Therefore, the limitation is that a choice of approaches must be made, or both must be used in an unwieldy manner and varying results are almost assured.

Another limitation of the study is that the NSFH data does not distinguish between the various subgroups of the denominations. As noted earlier, all Baptists, whether American, Southern or Independent, were lumped together into a single category of Baptist. This really affected the testing of Hypothesis 3, in that Glock and Stark’s four-category continuum was spanned by various subgroups of Baptists and Lutherans in the

NSFH data file. As a result, the four-category continuum was collapsed into a three-category continuum.

This limitations of the study points toward an area that also needs to be the target of further research. A more definitive approach to specifying the qualifications of conservative and non- conservative Protestants would go a long way towards the understanding of this important subgroup in our society. Following closely upon this suggestion for further research is the suggestion that when a national survey is proposed, extras steps should be taken to ensure that respondents are asked about their specific denominational preference, such as Cumberland Presbyterian or Freewill Baptist. Not only will this make the survey more accurate, it will be of more interest to the various denominational groups. The data can always be recoded and collapsed into generic nomenclature, but it cannot be un-collapsed under the present NSFH format.

The rhetoric of the conservative Protestant and Fundamentalist groups suggests that a traditional sex-role ideology dominates their movement. Fathers are expected to be the main breadwinners, while mothers are expected to be responsible for the children and household. Paradoxically, the fathers in these idealized classic nuclear families are also expected to shoulder more of the responsibility for nurturing and raising the children. This data set was not able to fathom the degree of sex-role ideology fathers possessed. Perhaps differences in sex- role ideology could have shed more light on amount of time fathers spent with their children.

Finally, as Bergen (1990) points out, the NSFH data files do not provide a complete picture of how much time parents actually spent with their children. Parents

were asked only about the time they spent meeting their children's physical needs. They were not queried about the amount of time they spent with them in other activities such as play and recreation, or housework. Surely the social value of parents spending time with their children is more than the sum of just the time they spend meeting the physical needs. In other words, value transmission, character development and relationship building also happen outside of the parents working to meet their children's physical needs. Therefore, a suggestion for further research would be that more effort would be put into quantifying all of the time that parents spend with their children and then qualifying that time as either a time for meeting physical needs, a time for nurturing, a time for play and recreation, or a time for housework, or something else, all together.

Contributions of This Research

The scientific community has largely ignored research on the religious family in general, and conservative Protestant families in particular. It has been only recently that this oversight has been addressed. Ellison and Sherkat (1993) and Ellison, Bartkowski and Segal (1996) undertook studies about conservative Protestants and their support of corporal punishment for their children. Later, Wilcox (1998) built on these two studies of parental discipline by exploring a connection between conservative Protestant parents and positive parental emotion work such as verbal and physical expressions of affection. He found that Conservative Protestant parents exhibited strict discipline and, yet, maintained warm and expressive parent-child relationships. He interpreted this finding as a paradox, labeling it the "Evangelical Family Paradox." More recently, Bartowski and Xu (2000) found that conservative Protestant fathers were more likely than non-conservative

Protestant fathers to be engaged in the supervision and affective parenting of their children.

This research has gauged the amount of time that conservative Protestant fathers spent with their children in meeting physical needs, and thereby, has added to the growing body of interest and knowledge in the conservative Protestant distinctiveness, or “Evangelical Family Paradox”. Through the testing of Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, knowledge has been gained in the distinctiveness of the conservative Protestantism and in the difficulty of qualifying respondents as such. In other words, the amount of time varies along racial categories.

On the other hand, the conservative Protestant community itself can take some comfort and pride in the knowledge that their distinctive teachings are making a difference in how parents are attempting to raise, and, in fact, are raising, their children, at least among African Americans. However, the conservative Protestant community should also evaluate whether the impact of their unique teachings are widespread and effective in molding young children’s lives. Hopefully, the mutual mistrust that exists between the scientific community and conservative Protestant community can be laid aside in the pursuit of better parenting that affects children, and, ultimately benefits society.

Finally, Durkheim (1947) suggested that religion served three broad functions in society. He believed that religion provided social cohesion, social control, and meaning and purpose in life. For many parents in conservative Protestant circles, faith and family, *together*, serve these three functions. Conservative Protestant families, like most other families, are very concerned with raising “good” children. For these parents, there is

added impetus because their conservative faith is also adamant about the goal of “good” children. The uniting of faith and family, perhaps, pulls families together (social cohesion) keeps families in line (social control), while at the same time, faith and family becomes an important goal and characteristic of successful families (meaning and purpose in life). These three functions of religion may become an idealized goal for conservative Protestants, which, while never quite realized, is, none-the-less, paramount.

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