THE AFFECTS OF RELIGIOSITY ON ANOMIE

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University Of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Dwain R. Wilson, B.A., M.A.
Denton, Texas
August, 1996
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This study explores the relationship between religion and anomie. The theoretical framework of Durkheim and Merton was used to suggest the hypothetical relationship between the two variables: as religiosity increases, anomie decreases. A secondary analysis was conducted using the 1991 General Social Survey (GSS). The GSS is one of the largest annual surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center. There were 1517 adult respondents composing the 1991 cross-national sample. Questions measuring both the belief and action dimensions of religion were used to measure respondents' level of religiosity. Questions from the Srole Scale of Anomia were used to measure respondents' level of anomia.

Durkheim's theory that religion functions to integrate individuals into the larger society and therefore diminish levels of anomie was not supported with this data. While the lack of significant findings did not support the theory, neither did it disprove it. The hypothetical inverse relationship between class and anomie was supported with this data. Another hypothetical relationship, that of the most religious, women experience less anomie than men, was also not supported due to the lack of a significant relationship among the primary variables. Continued use of comprehensive and large scale surveys such as the General Social Survey is crucial. This research suggests the need for further testing of these hypotheses using more elaborate measures.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of religion and anomie have long intrigued social scientists. Emile Durkheim, who taught the first courses in sociology, addressed both social phenomena in two of his seminal works, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life and Suicide. A major question that Durkheim addressed in his social theories concerned what role religion played in society. Specifically, several of his theories addressed the relationship between religion and anomie. Anomie is a social condition in which norms and values are conflicting, weak, or absent (Popenoe, 1995). Durkheim believed that religion has an integrative function and that anomie describes a state of nonintegration due to a condition of normlessness. Religion binds the members of a society together by providing a normative framework. Therefore, the condition of normlessness, which Durkheim called anomie, is reduced in the lives of those who are religious.

Statement of the Problem

In Suicide, Durkheim (1951) introduced the concept of anomie and used it to describe a condition of normlessness. This anomie state was one of several conditions that can lead people to commit suicide. Anomie describes the lack of a normative structure that helps to keep human impulses in check. In Durkheimian theory, religion is one of the most important normative structures in society. Durkheim believed that religion was a primary and
universal normative structure common in all societies. Religion functions to regulate behavior while it seeks to provide answers to life’s questions.

The problem with which this study is concerned is the relationship between religion and anomic. Studies in this area have used survey data to test an inverse relationship between these two concepts, those who are religious experience less anomic. Using the most current and comprehensive cross-national survey data, this study tested hypotheses that people with high levels of religiosity also experienced lower levels of anomic, controlling for class, race, ethnicity and sex.

Significance of the Problem

There is much debate today about the place of religion in our society. Many are asking, does religion really work anymore, does religion play a significant part in public life or is it strictly a private matter, can religion contribute to finding solutions to the moral fragmentation of society? The purposes of this study have been to confirm and extend current theory and empirical knowledge about the relationship between religion and anomic. The study also sought to analyze data from the most current national survey that might aid those in the field of mental health, religious organizations, and sociologists. Continued testing of this theory helps to broaden and strengthen our understanding about the changing function of religion in post modern society. This study helps to answer questions about the effectiveness of religion as a normative frame of reference.

Theory

The theoretical foundation for this study is the work of Emile Durkheim
and later Robert Merton. On anomie, Durkheim believed that the potential for normlessness increased as society became more industrialized, as labor became more differentiated, and as traditional roles gave way to modern arrangements. Traditional normative structures like the family, community, and religion, when weakened, can cause a state of confusion about what is right and wrong. Some members of society resort to deviant behavior because of anomic social conditions. Merton's theory addressed this process of blocked opportunity many experience when trying to achieve socially significant goals. This state of frustration leads to an anomic condition. Both theoretical positions have at their root the description of a society that has become detached from its moorings and is in a state of confusion. This confusion describes the anomic condition.

Durkheim's theory of religion, spelled out in his work The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, argues that religion is the very glue that binds society together. Religion is a collective experience that functions to answer questions about the unknown and is the basis for social solidarity. One major contributor to any society's normative structure is its religion.

Methodology

To test the theory that religion diminishes the potential for anomie, this study used a national cross-sectional survey of U.S. adults. The General Social Survey (GSS) is conducted annually by the National Opinion Research Center. This study used the 1991 GSS. It is the most recent version that contained questions measuring religion and anomie. The sample size for the 1991 GSS was 1517. Regression analysis was considered the most appropriate
statistical technique to test the relationship between religion and anomie. Regression analysis is a statistical procedure that measures the association between variables showing the amount of increase or decrease in a continuous variable for a one-unit difference in the independent variable.

Two dimensions of religion were used to measure the level of religiosity of the respondents. The ritualistic dimension of religiosity was measured using frequency of church attendance as an indicator of the degree of exposure to religious norms. The ideological dimension of religiosity defines the individual's belief in his/her religious doctrines. This dimension was measured by asking if the respondent believes in life after death. This belief is important when it functions as a reward for accepting and following normative expectations and for giving meaning to suffering and crisis.

To measure anomie, three questions from the Srole Anomia Scale were used. Merton (1968) endorsed Srole's Anomia Scale as a measure of subjective normlessness. The Srole Scale in some form or another has been used in most of the General Social Surveys since 1973. In other research cited in this study, the Srole Scale is an accepted and respected measure of anomie.

**Assumptions and Limitations**

The primary assumptions of this study concern the indicators used to measure the abstract concepts of religion and anomie. This study was a secondary analysis of existing statistics. The measures used in this kind of study have been proven over time. The drawback of this methodology is the fact that the study had to rely upon a set of preexisting measures that were not specifically created for this study. The purpose of the General Social
Survey is to provide basic data for a broad range of research interests. Some of these questions may not have been as valid measures for this study as others might have been.

There are limitations in this study concerning the number of questions used and the subjectivity of some responses. This study is limited in that there are only a small number of questions used to measure religiosity. While the two questions used are themselves accepted measures of the concepts, they may not provide adequate information on the full range of religious behavior of each respondent. The 1991 GSS used only three of the five questions from the Srole Anomia Scale. Answers to the Srole Scale are subjective in nature. Since subjective answers tend to measure emotional responses, they are not always the most reliable of measures compared with those that are objective and focus on behavior.

Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter One of this study introduces religion and anomie and the relationship believed to exist between these two concepts. The chapter also explains why the study of this relationship is important and the significance of the hypothetical findings. A general theoretical background and brief methodology of the study are also presented. The chapter concludes by showing the assumptions and limitations of the study. Chapter Two goes into more depth about the theoretical frame of reference for the study. Conceptual definitions are provided and the study hypotheses are presented. Chapter Three is a review of the literature on religion, anomie and previous research that have tested the relationship between the two concepts. Chapter Four
explains in greater detail the methodology used to test the hypothetical relationships introduced in this study. Chapter Five describes the analytical tests of each of the study hypotheses. Chapter Six is a discussion of the findings of the statistical testing of the hypotheses along with implications of these findings. An alternate theoretical explanation is described. Finally, recommendations for further research and summary conclusions are presented.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following review of the sociological literature, separate overviews are presented on the concepts of religion and anomie. A theoretical foundation is established that both defines and relates these concepts. The review continues with an examination of research on the empirical relationship between religion and anomie. And, finally, class, race, ethnicity and sex are addressed as related variables to the hypothetical correlation between religion and anomie.

Religion

Theologians, philosophers and social thinkers have been studying religious concepts for hundreds of years. While a consensus about the meaning of religion has yet to be reached, all who study human society would agree that religion has and continues to play a significant role in the lives of people (Greeley, 1995).

This study uses Durkheim's conceptual definition of religion. In The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, Durkheim (1915) wrote that religion is composed of both practices which help to maintain collective sentiments and ideas that attempt to explain the world. In sociology, the operationalization of the concept of religion is labeled as religiosity. Religiosity describes an individual's degree of attachment to religion (Popenoe, 1995). This attachment
is often measured by examining levels of individual participation.

Religion affects the way people think, feel and behave. Three of the great thinkers in modern sociology; Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim proposed ground breaking and yet divergent ideas about the role of religion and how it affects society.

Theoretical Background on Religion

Karl Marx' fundamental assertion was that modern society is the history of conflict between the classes. He described religion as a tool of the upper class that used it to coerce, manipulate and keep in check the lower classes. For Marx, religion was used to justify social alienation. Religion was a means of maintaining a false consciousness. This false consciousness promoted the idea that conflict and domination are a part of God's order and purpose for humanity. This is what Marx means when he calls religion an opiate.

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 (Marx, 1963, p43-44).

Marx felt that in the modern world religion was used by the powerful class to keep all other classes in a comatose state of mind concerning the reality of social relations. When religion fails to promote a false consciousness then class consciousness is possible - when the ugly reality appears.

Marx was not so much concerned with the actual content of religious
belief nor of the effects of religiosity on other behaviors. Instead he was keenly aware of the uses of religion as covert and latent oppression. Marx warned of the uses of religion as a type of propaganda to strengthen the status quo (Roberts, 1984). In the Marxian paradigm, religion is treated as one component of a macroanalysis of socioeconomic class conflict.

One of Max Weber's most important questions was, how does religiosity affect other social institutions (Popenoe, 1995). Specifically, Weber examined the relationship between religion and its affect on economic development. His was a comparative study of major world religions. He wanted to know why capitalism had flourished in the West under Protestantism and not so in relation to other religions in other countries.

Weber was also challenging Marx's contention that religious ideas are secondary factors conditioned by economic forces. Weber believed religion can be a primary causal factor in human social arrangements. He pointed to the role of Protestantism in the development of Western capitalism (Roberts, 1984). The ethic or overall set of values of the Protestant culture helped to produce an economic system that promoted the virtue of hard work, reinvestment of capital in business, delayed gratification and work as a religious calling or vocation (Weber, 1992).

Emile Durkheim (1947) approached the study of religion by comparing primitive world religions with current religion to discover the common and most basic elements. He proposed that all religions have in common a worldview in which a distinction is made between the sacred and the profane. Religion deals with the sacred aspects of human existence and provides a moral compass
that is beyond the individual. God is to the worshiper what society is to its members (Roberts, 1984). Durkheim believed that religion is the internalization of society. It is the collective representations and sentiments of society that make its unity and its personality (Durkheim 1947, p.474-475).

In The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, Durkheim defines religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (p.62). Durkheim believed religion to be entirely social in nature, a "collective thing" (p.63). These collective beliefs are greater than the individual and allow the very existence of society. Religion does not provide social cohesion religion is social cohesion. When humanity organizes itself into a society, religion is the by-product of that solidarity.

"Religion is not born out of speculation or reflection, still less out of illusion or misapprehension, but rather out of the real tragedies of human life, out of conflict between human plans and realities" (Malinowski, 1931, p.641). Despite the divergence in their theories, Marx, Weber and Durkheim, like Malinowski, all believed that religion is born in and carried out through human action. Religion is not bound within the realm of individual ideas, it is a social phenomenon that shapes, not only the way we think and feel, but the way we act. Religious beliefs are causally related to behavior we might classify as religious, but also, according to Marx, Weber and Durkheim, it is also related to a host of other behavior such as suicide, economics, and politics.

From a psychological standpoint, Freud (1927) wrote that religious ideas
are the collective illusions of a society. In contrast to Marxian theory that posits religion as a tool of the powerful to keep those in their power "drugged" and unaware of the reality of class relations, Freud examined the function of religion for the individual.

To the individual, religion is a neurotic need for resolution of childhood conflicts and the desire for an all-powerful father figure. Religion emerges when "[A] store of ideas is created, born from man's need to make his helplessness tolerable and built up from the material of memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and the childhood of the human race" (Freud, 1978, p.14). In this context, Freud gave three purposes of religion; (1) to exorcize the terrors of nature, (2) to reconcile men to the cruelty of fate, and (3) to compensate for suffering and privations of civilization. Freud seems to support an integrative function of religion. There is a difference between Freud and Durkheim's integration. For Freud it is individual integration with the natural world and for Durkheim it is a social integration among members of society.

The Functions of Religion

Many social scientists have approached the study of religiosity by first examining the ways that religion functions in society. In keeping with Durkheimian theory suggesting that religion acts to create and enforce society's norm structure, O'Dea and Arvida (1983) proposed three functions of religion that provide this normative framework in the face of the potential for normlessness in the social sphere. First, the sacralization of norms and values is a function by which an added emphasis and importance are provided through religious sanction. Second, an identity function occurs when the individual finds
self-definition in reference to a religious group. And thirdly, there is a security
and a firmer identity function of religion that provides a reference point beyond
the here and now which helps contribute to stability and order and prevent a
self-destructive detachment.

Religion provides not only a structure for defining individual and group
identity (Kurtz, 1995), but it is also an action system that motivates behavior
(Bellah, 1970). It is not simply a static structure within which we find a sense
of self-definition, but it is a whole system of behavior in which not just meaning
(identity) but also motivation for action are integrated into the total behavior
of the individual. When religion fulfills both the meaning and motivational roles,
it functions to promote social solidarity through a determined reinforcement of
the norm structure.

Unlike other social institutions in America (economics, politics, media,
etc.) which now seem to pull us apart, religion is an institution that draws us
together and provides us with a way to find meaning (Bellah, 1991). Religion
transcends the common good of the nation. It is also concerned with the
common good of all humanity and with the ultimate responsibility to a
transcendent God. For Bellah, This is the most important thing to understand
about the role of religion in society - its calling upon us to move beyond
ourselves and see a much bigger picture.

Like Durkheim, Bellah sees religion as the moral fabric of society and
when it ceases to function we are all in an immoral state. This kind of morality
originates in the mores of the social structure. Mores are those norms that
society considers to be among the most sacred (Sumner, 1906). Serious
consequences result when one breaks these norms. When Bellah and Durkheim write about morality they mean that society knows and upholds the mores it has established. An immoral society is one in which these norms are unclear and not working.

In America there are many individuals who are nonparticipants in organized religion and yet consider themselves very religious. Luckman (1967) suggested that there might be another kind of newly developing religious experience. He proposed that many people in America experience an invisible religion. This other religious experience is both private and subjective in nature.

This, of course, is contrary to many other theories that insist religion can only exist as a social phenomenon (Greeley, 1972; Durkheim, 1947; Popenoe, 1995 and Glock & Stark, 1965). What Luckman addressed is the distance and disparity that exist between the number of Americans who profess to a belief in God (95%) and those who attend religious services (42%) (Harris, 1987). There is a difference between these measures of ideological and behavioral religion in America.

Religion helps members of society by making possible the creation of an alternate reality through the processes of objectivation and internalization. This world of religion is a structured set of norms that function to provide meaning in the midst of chaos (Berger, 1961). Berger (1967) writes that religion has two basic functions, symbolic integration and social control. Religion serves to maintain the social structure by integrating and sanctifying the commonly held values on which it rests. Religion helps people to internalize
controlling values. This serves to economize the application of external controls.

Not only is religion a "world maintaining" force, it is also "world shaking" in nature (Berger, 1967). Religion is world shaking when it challenges the way things are and takes on revolutionary characteristics. World shaking examples include, Martin Luther King and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, Mohandas K. Gandhi and the struggle for Indian independence, and religiously based objections to and protests against assisted suicide and abortion.

Religion functions to create a series of roles for individual participants. These roles make up another kind of world (reality) for the believer. It is also possible for people to be alienated from their present socio-cultural world because of religion. This alienation can act as a barrier to anomie as one moves from the old world of physical reality to the new world of spiritual faith. Often, becoming a part of this alienated religion encourages people to embrace a new set of norms that make anomie improbable (Berger, 1967).

**Empirical Research on Religion**

Current studies of the affect of religion on individual well-being have demonstrated an overall positive relationship. Jensen, et al. (1993) found that religious young people scored more favorably on measures of mental health. Oleckno & Blacconiere (1991) found that religion is positively correlated with wellness and inversely correlated with health compromising behavior and illnesses. Other recent studies have found that religion was related to reduced levels of death anxiety (Rasmussen & Johnson, 1994) and perceived stress (King & Shafer, 1992). These studies indicate that religion is related to a
number of factors that contribute to psychological and physical health.

The positive affects of religion have also been evident in relation to marital stability, importance of the family, and a low divorce rate (Jensen and Jenson 1993; Gallup Organization 1988; Kitson, Babri, & Roach, 1985; and Albrecht, Bahr, & Goodman, 1983). Family therapists report the helpfulness of a religious perspective in counseling families who are themselves religious (Burton, 1992; Cornwall & Thomas, 1990; Griffith, 1986; Koltko, 1990; Kudlack, 1991; Pittman, 1988; and Stander, Piercy & Mackinnon, 1994). This kind of perspective appears to greatly aid therapists as they help client families cope with codependency, divorce and disturbed relationships.

Dysfunctions of Religion

While Robert Bellah praises religion as a way to find "the Good Society," he also cautions us to be aware of the ways that religion can be dysfunctional in society;

[M]odern 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 (Bellah, 1991, p.181).

In some cases, the practice of religion can be catastrophically destructive. The activities of the People's Temple community in Jonestown, Guyana shocked the world when it was learned that approximately 900
followers of cult leader Jim Jones willingly committed mass suicide at his orders. Here we find an extreme example of religion being ultimately dysfunctional for society (Miller, 1979; Stark & Bainbridge, 1979; and Johnson, 1979). Again, most recently, the death of the Branch Davidians at their religious community in Waco, Texas, calls attention to religiosity that might be considered dysfunctional (Beck, 1993; Kantrowitz, 1993). It is hardly possible that people joined these deviant religious groups with the foreknowledge that they would later be asked to commit suicide. These religious groups were dysfunctional for their members as evidenced by the measures of social control brought to bear upon them. Ultimately, these religions became completely dysfunctional for their individual members - leading to death.

Religion can be dysfunctional for the individual in many ways. Gallagher (1987) writes that people's response to religion can sometimes lead to dysfunctional behavior. Obsession with holiness, extreme fears of the devil, or the belief that one has been given divine revelations, are some religious behaviors that can become problematic for people. Because of the strong psychological and emotional attachments many people develop as members of religious groups or churches, leaving such groups can cause severe problems.

In far less sensational ways, religion can be dysfunctional in that there are several areas in which it fails to be a social cement. Turner (1983) writes that while the word religion, from the Latin religio, means "to bind together," in a number of critical ways religion fails as social cement because, (1) it does not solve the problem of class and class conflict, (2) it neglects alternate sources of cohesion, and (3) religion is also a source of disciplinary actions. It is entirely
unfair to critique all religions in such a sweeping gesture. While these are very broad brushstrokes, Turner is worth noting.

World history is full of wars, civil unrest, revolutions, torture, invasions, and persecutions all in the name of religion. While religion has more often been used as a guise to mask political and economic based conflict, it has still historically been at the center of a great deal of social unrest, death and destruction.

Current events demonstrate religion to be a historical source of social disintegration. Warfare in the Balkan Peninsula, which escalated after the breakup of Yugoslavia beginning in 1989, has been laying waste to the region for the past 300 years. The three warring parties, Bosnians, Serbians, and Croatians represent three religions, Muslims, Eastern Orthodox Christians, and Roman Catholics. Again, while religion is not the prime cause of the current conflict, it has not contributed to social cohesion either. In the Balkans, religion has been misused to bring death and destruction to thousands of men, women and children (Kaplan, 1993).

Anomie

Anomie is a term used by Durkheim to describe a state of confusion at the social structural level when norms are weakened or broken down. In an anomie society, external constraints diminished to such an extent that unregulated behavior can become destructive. Durkheim said that anomie occurs when there is a lack of regulation in society. Society is an organism with each part in connection and contact. There is a state of mutual interdependence. This state leads to the creation and maintenance of a set of
rules. Anomic results when all these conditions begin to break down (1984).

When anomie is applied to individual behavior it is called anomia and "is a state of mind in which the individual's sense of social cohesion - the mainspring of his morale - is broken or fatally weakened" (MacIver, 1950, p.85). Both terms, anomie and anomia describe what happens when external constraints on behavior (norms) are weak.

Since its appearance in Durkheim's The Division of Labor in Society and Suicide, the concept of anomie has played an important role in the formulation of the most basic of sociologies. Merton (1957) expanded the concept and formulated a macro theory of deviance and social control. At the other end of the analytical continuum, Goffman (1957) wrote that even alienation from conversation is kind of anomia at the microsocial level. When individuals do not have a clear notion of acceptable behavior, they are faced with an insufficient moral constraint. Anomie describes the condition of weakened common morality (Ritzer, 1988) either individually or socially.

**Durkheim's Theory of Anomie**

In *The Division of Labor*, Durkheim (1984) writes that anomie is a pathological problem, one that arises out of a growing organic society. The division of labor that occurs in modern society strengthens the social cohesiveness lost when the moral norms of the mechanical society are in a state of disintegration. The division of labor in modern society and the subsequent interdependence that develop helps to counter the effects of anomie, but these can never really replace collective morality. It is at best artificial and external in nature.
The concept of anomie is elaborated still further by Durkheim (1951) in *Suicide* when he created four categories of suicide: egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic. Durkheim sought to demonstrate that suicide is a social phenomenon (fact). Egoism occurs when the individual ego exerts itself to excess in the face of the social ego and at its expense. Altruism occurs when the individual has no self interests. Fatalism is a state where there is excessive regulation. Anomic suicide occurs because of the decline in collective morality and the lack of sufficient external regulation of the individual to restrain his or her passions (Dohrenwend, 1959; Ritzer, 1988). According to Durkheim's model, egoism and altruism are opposites as are anomie and fatalism (Durkheim, 1951). Dohrenwend (1959) writes that both egoism and altruism are characterized by effective internalized rules, the former individualistic and the latter collectivistic. Fatalism has as its effective source of normative power some authority that is external to the social structure. Anomie is different from all three of these other types in that it is marked by an absence of norms altogether.

Durkheim's theory of suicide and its causes, regulation and integration, can be reduced to a single cause (Johnson, 1965). The more integrated (regulated) a society, group or social condition is, the lower its suicide rate. Another way to say the same thing is that the higher the level of egoism (anomie) prevailing in a society, group or social condition, the higher the suicide rate.

Anomie is the counterpart of social solidarity (Martindale, 1960). Where solidarity implies a state of ideological integration, anomie represents a state of
confusion and insecurity. Much of society's solidarity is based on a set of common collective representations that configure into a set of moral norms. In modern society, Durkheim believed, the danger was present for an immorality to develop as these common norms were strained and confusion reigned (Thompson & Hickey, 1996).

Some thinkers use the term normlessness to define the concept of anomie (Thompson & Hickey, 1996; Farley, 1994; Hess, Markson & Stein, 1996). Mestrovic and Brown (1985) have challenged the use of words like "normlessness" and "deregulation" as too narrow to adequately conceptualize Durkheim's meaning of anomie. The word that Durkheim (1951) used as an antonym for anomie was the French, dérèglement. This word carries with it meanings such as immorality, suffering, madness, "or something akin to sin" (Mestrovic & Brown, 1985, p.81). Again, morality carries with it the connotation of mores, those sacred norms that are most important to society. It is well to remember the full range of meaning that Durkheim meant when he used the term anomie.

Durkheim believed that society controlled individuals through a moral power located in the social environment (Dohrenwend, 1959). This environment is both external and internal to the individual. Understanding the processes of conformity and deviance in social aggregates requires analysis of the relations between internalized and external sources of regulatory power of the rules affecting the behavior of individuals. It was Merton who first undertook the task of trying to understand the relationship of anomie to deviance and social control.
Merton's Theory of Anomie

One of the first great elaborations of Durkheim's concept of anomie was undertaken by Robert Merton (1951). Merton used the term anomie in his theoretical analysis of deviant behavior. According to Merton, anomie occurs when people are taught to want or need certain things, and then society denies the legitimate opportunities to achieve these ends. In this type of blocked opportunity structure society, many are forced to achieve their goals via deviant behavior. In Merton's theory, the result of anomie is deviance.

Merton (1951) categorized four deviant adaptations that people make when confronted with the anxiety and frustration of anomic situations: (1) Innovation describes what happens when people remain committed to society's goals but use alternate, sometimes illegal, means to achieve them. (2) Ritualism occurs when people surrender their hope of achieving socially mandated goals yet continue to follow the rules. Their behavior is mere ritual. (3) Retreatism describes the behavior of those who reject both the goals and means of society. (4) Rebellion, like retreatism, rejects socially accepted goals and means, but then tries to replace them with a different set of goals and means.

Meier and Bell (1959), helped to expand Merton's deviance theory at the individual level - anomia results when individuals lack access to means for achievement of life goals. This lack of opportunity is related to a person's position in the social structure determined by a number of factors such as; occupation, education, income, age, class identification, participation in formal organizations and informal groups, social mobility, marital status, and religious
preference (in less dominant groups, religious preference can limit access rather than enhance integration).

Anomie and Alienation

Many social scientists have treated the sociological term's alienation and anomie as if they represented the same concept (Dean & Reeves, 1962; Goffman, 1957; Lystad, 1972; Martin & Stack, 1983; Mitchell, 1984; Petersen, 1988; and Riesman, 1961). Seeman (1959), quotes Robert Nisbet as including the term normless in with other words to define alienation. Seeman (1959) has theoretically categorized anomie as a subcategory of alienation. He writes that anomie is a form of individualism that occurs when social norms are disrupted. To do this, he also had to remove alienation from its Marxian roots. Only then could he graft anomie with alienation into a new and broader meaning.

Alienation is a sociological concept first introduced by Hegel and later by Marx to describe the feeling of estrangement experienced by workers in the industrial society (Zeitlin, 1990). For Marx (1964), modern capitalism produced four levels of estrangement or alienation in the life of the working class, (1) alienation from the product of his labor, (2) alienation from the act of production itself, (3) alienation from species life (free conscious activity), and (4) alienation from others.

Lystad (1972) and Seeman (1959) have both traced the historic use of the concept of alienation in sociological analysis. Seeman concludes that recent theories of Marxian alienation have expanded the concept into five distinct categories, (1) powerlessness, (2) meaninglessness, (3) normlessness, (4) isolation, and (5) self-estrangement. "Those who employ the anomie version
of alienation [normlessness] are chiefly concerned with the elaboration of the 'means' emphasis in society - for example, the loss of commonly held standards and consequent individualism . . . " (Seeman, 1959, p.787).

A careful reading of both Marx and Durkheim clearly demonstrates that these two concepts are opposites. Marx's alienation occurs when individuals are estranged or separated from something of meaning. Durkheim's anomie means that the moral norm boundaries are unclear and society is confused about the proper limits and direction of behavior. When we are alienated, a distance has been created between the person and object - the worker has been estranged or removed from the object. Anomie indicates that the object (moral norms) itself has changed and is moving. Members of society are no longer able to fix their bearing on a steady guide.

Anomie and Urbanism

Anomie is a condition of modernity and may escalate because of living in what Riesman (1961) called the mass society. It is in such a society that personal identity is lost and feelings of isolation contribute to an uncertainty about what is normal. Louis Wirth (1938) drew attention to this "culture of urbanism" that often leads to anomie. Traditional values are weak (Fisher, 1975). In this type of mass society it is difficult to find a consensus. People find it difficult to agree on a common standard of correct behavior. The lack of social solidarity and interdependent relationships in the modern society often leads to anomie (Willis, 1982).
Religion and Anomie

Religion in America

Almost all research done in this country using the variable religiosity has focused on three major religious groups, Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. Historically, these three groups have dominated the religious scene in America. Information obtained from the General Social Survey for the years 1982-1991 indicates that Roman Catholics comprise one quarter of the population of the United States. A little less than two-thirds of all Americans classify themselves as Protestants. The data show that between 2% and 3% classify themselves as Jewish, 3% identify themselves with some "other" religion, and 7% report no religious affiliation (Greeley, 1995).

Theoretical Relationship

In Durkheim's sociology, the concepts of anomie and religion are related in his continual focus on social solidarity. Religion acts as a cohesive agent. Religion helps to create and maintain social solidarity. It represents the common sentiments of a given social group. Anomie occurs when society has lost its way due to disappearing and confusing norms for living. Durkheim's theory points to a functional aspect of religion in its capacity to provide these essential norms. A society without religion is one that is prone to an anomic state.

There are many reasons that might explain why religion would lessen the potential for anomie. Winch (1971) explains that the core functions of religion are preventive. They prevent a state of normlessness at the societal level. They also prevent alienation at the individual level. Religion provides a
sense of meaning to the suffering in life by promising rewards in the afterlife (Freud, 1960). The religious who suffer emotional or material deprivation in this present world do not necessarily experience a separation from the normative social structure and therefore a sense of normlessness but instead, because of their religious beliefs, they are more able to accept their suffering while waiting for the hope of an afterlife free from pain.

Religion has been shown to function as a substitute for the primary ties broken down by increased urbanization and industrialization (Holt, 1940; Frazier, 1974 and Flora, 1973). Photiadis and Schnabel (1977), in a study of the resilience of fundamentalism in Appalachian communities, contend that religion provides meaning for those of low socioeconomic status and enables them to avoid the anomie of dislocation and alienation from self.

The ritualistic aspect of religion provides a normative structure. Durkheim's theory, that religion is the coercive power of society over its members, seems to support current ideas about the relationship of religiosity to anomie. "In celebrating the power of the sacred and the supernatural, we are in fact constructing a kind of analogy that permits us to express our subconscious awareness of the tremendous power of society over the individual" (Popenoe, 1995, p.360). By engaging in the ritual aspect of religion, members are in effect reinforcing in their own experience the normative function that religion plays in society.

Empirical Research on Religiosity and Anomie

Until recently, research on the effects of religiosity on anomie has not demonstrated a significant relationship. Bell (1957) found that when
socioeconomic status was controlled, the difference in anomie scores between religious and nonreligious respondents was not significant. Photiadis and Johnson (1963) and Dean (1968) found no differences in normlessness due to differential religiosity. Dean (1968) created an Alienation Scale with a measure of normlessness as one of its subscales. Even with such a focused subscale, there was no significant relationship found between the two phenomena. Carr and Hauser (1976) found a relationship between anomie and class but did not find any between anomie and religiosity. Many have questioned the generalizability of findings in these studies because of problems related to their sampling procedure (Stack, 1981; Martin & Stack, 1983; Hynson, 1975; and Peterson, 1988).

More recent research using large cross-national samples (Stack, 1981 and Martin & Stark, 1983) have found support for the hypothesis that the lower the religiosity, the lower the secular integration and the greater the anomie. In a comparison of samples from both the 1973 and 1976 General Social Survey, levels of anomie, as measured using the Srole (1956) Scale of Anomia, were smaller for those in the sample who had a higher level of religiosity. A negative relationship was found to exist between the variables religiosity and anomie.

An analysis of previous national surveys that asked questions about church attendance and belief in an afterlife has shown a positive relationship to exist between these two operational components of religiosity (Hynson, 1975). People who attend church services more frequently also have a stronger belief in an afterlife.
It is only in these large samples that departures from traditional beliefs and rituals are associated with higher levels of anomie. Olson, Schumm, Bollman, and Jurich (1985) report data from a U.S. Midwestern sample. Their findings did not support the hypothesis that religiosity would be inversely associated with anomie. As with many studies done on this subject, the Olson, et al. study has problems with the representativeness of the sample. Stack (1985) responded to the Olson et al. (1985) research by analyzing the relationship of anomie and religiosity using only a Midwest subsample (N=267) from the General Social Survey. His findings support those of Olson, et al.. In the cultural context of the Midwest region of the U.S. the relationship between anomie and religiosity does indeed disappear. Stack cites Tittle and Welch’s (1983) suggestion that religion has its strongest effect on normative control when other institutions are weak. To the extent that nonreligious institutions in the Midwest are strong, Stack reasons, a nonsignificant relationship between anomie and religion is entirely probable.

Lee and Clyde (1974) found that religiosity was operative in the determination of personal anomia in two ways. First, by providing a set of standards, religion becomes a normative structure that reduces anomie. Second, high levels of religiosity may inhibit the effects of other factors (such as SES) which could otherwise produce anomie. Religiosity is both a causal factor in relation to anomie and a conditional factor upon which the effects of other variables may be contingent.

In contrast, other studies of religious orthodoxy have demonstrated this phenomenon to have a positive relationship with anomie. Keedy (1958) showed
that religious orthodoxy might actually be a correlate of anomie and that religion is not entirely supportive or integrative in its functions. Those who are the most orthodox in their religious practice and beliefs experience higher levels of normlessness than do those who are more liberal in their religiosity.

Peterson (1988), using an entire community sample, found that religiosity and anomie were related but not inversely among the more orthodox. He offered a discordance theory to explain why the religiously orthodox actually experienced higher levels of anomie than the population as a whole. Peterson surmised that failure to consistently demonstrate the inverse relationship between religiosity and anomie may be due to the effects of the religiously orthodox who feel more detached from a society with less traditional norms and changing moral values.

The rapid social change of the modern era drew early sociologists' attention to many of its ramifications such as anomie. Other researchers have examined the relationship between the growth of religious orthodoxy (fundamentalism) and rapid social change (Ammerman, 1987; Balmer, 1989; McLoughlin, 1970; and Rose, 1988). Their research is supportive of Peterson's (1988) discordance theory. It could be expected that the highest levels of religiosity are correlated with high levels of anomie.

An important distinction should be made between socially accepted religiosity and other kinds of belief systems, some we might categorize as superstitions (an irrational belief in magic or chance). Tobacyk (1985) did not find an association between traditional religious beliefs and anomie but did find that the greater the belief in superstitions the greater the anomie experienced
by subjects. Those with stronger superstitious beliefs experience higher levels of anomie because they; (1) lack social support systems, (2) have beliefs that are socially less acceptable, and (3) generally have a lower SES. These findings, while not supportive of the relationship between religiosity and anomie, do seem to support the idea that socially accepted forms of religiosity can alleviate a degree of anomie.

**Other Factors**

Historically, research has demonstrated a relationship between other variables and anomie. Class, sex, race and ethnicity have all been important variables used in broadening our understanding of anomie. Simpson (1970) reported finding a negative relationship between normlessness and occupational level. As respondent's occupational level increased, in prestige and SES, their experience of normlessness decreased. Jensen and Jensen (1993) found that gender differences decreased as religiosity increased. It should also be noted, that in this study, those respondents with higher levels of religiosity also had a stronger and more positive opinion on traditional female roles. Gender differences may have decreased because women tended to be more accepting of these traditional roles.

**Social Class**

Previous research has found an inverse relationship between social class and anomie (McClosky & Schaar, 1965; Otto & Featherman, 1975; and Rushing, 1971). Merton has written that anomie is caused by an acute disjunction between the cultural norms and goals in a society and the ability of members within a society to adapt to them (Merton 1957). His theory of
anomie and deviance suggests that those in the lower class experience greater
degrees of anomie because of their inability to realize many social goals.

Research conducted by Stark (1972) using data from the 1975-1984
General Social Surveys found that differences in religiosity among
socioeconomic statuses (SES) are related more to kind than to degree.
[Socioeconomic status is a measure of social class usually constructed using a
respondent's education, income and occupational prestige (Popenoe, 1995)].
Those with a low SES participate in religious activities that meet the needs
arising from their deprivation while those in the middle to upper levels
participate in activities that confirm their worldly success. These findings do
not demonstrate a relationship between attendance and SES. Stark's study
does seem to suggest that there is a negative relationship between SES and
variables that represent other dimensions of religiosity, experience of the
supernatural, feelings of closeness to God, and frequency of prayer.

Race and Ethnicity

Greeley (1995), reporting figures from the 1982-1991 General Social
Survey, shows that more than half of all African Americans in the U.S. are
Baptists. The survey also reveals that 72% of American Hispanics are
Catholic. Of the African Americans included in the survey, over half live in a
large central city or suburb. Over half have lived in the same city since they
were 16 years-old. Almost half of the Hispanic Americans in the survey live in
a metropolitan area. The affects of urbanism are an important consideration
when examining the relationship of religiosity and anomie for racial/ethnic
groups (Schaefer, 1993).
Williams (1990) finds that among Mexican-Americans in Texas, traditional religious ceremonies, such as infant baptisms and marriages, no longer bind together the nuclear and extended families. She points to social forces such as industrialization, urbanization, and the bureaucratization of modern life as contributing factors in the breakdown in traditional religiosity among Mexican-Americans in Texas. Mexican-Americans may be classified, according to Fichter (1954), as either Modal or Marginal Catholics. They are fit somewhere between the two ends of a continuum based on participation and acceptance of beliefs. Ideal church members (Nuclear Catholics) are on one end and those that are nonparticipants (Dormant Catholics) are on the opposite.

Williams' research focuses primarily on the family system of Mexican-Americans. She has examined a number of structural and social psychological changes that have taken place with the Mexican-American family system itself and with its individual members. The Mexican-American family is and has been in the process of undergoing enormous change in their economic structures, in traditional kinship roles, marriage, in the role of women, and the practice of birth control. As Mexican-Americans are adapting to these changes, they experience a sense of anomie, especially those with the lowest socioeconomic status.

Religiosity for most Mexican-Americans has historically been Roman Catholicism, specifically Spanish/Mexican Roman Catholicism (Richardson, et al. 1993). During the time of the Texas Republic (1836-46), preceding the U.S. war with Mexico (1846-48), Roman Catholic holdings in Texas were
transferred, by the Pope, from the hands of the Mexican Franciscan Order into the hands of the French Order of St. Vincent de Paul who were in Louisiana.

Catholics from outside Mexico came to Texas during the years of the Republic (1836-46) to reestablish the church. One of the chief tasks of the Catholics was to try to secure their former property in the territory. The Roman Catholic church did not recognize the independence of Texas until annexation made the question irrelevant. Soon after the Battle of San Jacinto, the Vatican began activities that, in effect severed Texas' historical relationship with the Spanish, Mexican, Franciscan continuum in the church's missionary activities and, instead, pointed Texas Catholicism toward the French (Red, 1926 and Miller, 1983). For Mexican-Americans in Texas, the Roman Catholic Church, for the most part, has been controlled by "Northern Europeans" for the past 150 years.

The Roman Catholic Church's influence is pervasive and historic in Mexican culture. As a religious institution, it may be too entrenched to adapt to the shifting norms of the new Mexican-American culture. This is a very real concern for the Roman Catholic church in Central and South America, where it is estimated that 8,000 Catholics a day convert to Protestantism (Sywulka, 1996). Despite shifting cultural norms and loss of members, the Catholic Church remains resolute in its traditional views on marriage, the role of women, and birth control.

There is still debate about how much socioeconomic status characteristics adequately account for group variations in religious participation (Alston & McIntosh, 1979; Roof & McKinney, 1987). The current
realignment in denominational affiliation by Americans calls for a reassessment of the relationship between religiosity and socioeconomic status. The affects of religiosity on anomie for Mexican Americans is a research question that may produce very different answers than for the larger United States population.

Sex

Gove and Tudor (1973) have suggested that women are more likely than men to experience loneliness and isolation, conditions linked to anomie. In today's society, the level of loneliness and isolation that women feel may be considerably less than they were twenty years ago. According to Merton's theory, women may today experience higher degrees of anomia in our society because of the conflicting demands made upon the various roles they occupy. To a great degree, while women are reaching equality in many areas of society, they are still expected to fulfill certain traditional roles associated with motherhood and homemaking that often produce role strain (Popenoe, 1995).

Barna (1993) and the 1990 General Social Survey both report current survey data that show women attend religious services more often than do men. Religion may be more successful in preventing anomie for women than for men. At an exploratory level, this study will examine the degree of anomie experienced by men and women who also have high levels of religiosity.

Chapter Summary

In this review of literature both historic and contemporary research on the variables of religiosity and anomie have been addressed. Theories and empirical research that have examined the relationship between these two
concepts were outlined.

The first section addressed the sociological literature on the variable of religiosity. The social theories on religion of Marx, Weber and Durkheim and numerous other theories were described and compared. These theories explain the nature of religion in modern society. Durkheim theorized that religion represented the collective sentiments of society and thus helped to maintain a unique bond of solidarity. Research on the affects of religion on other behavior and conditions was also presented. Religion remains a powerful force. Despite some of its dysfunctional characteristics, it has a positive affect on factors such as physical health, emotional well-being, and marital stability.

The second section focused on the theoretical perspectives and empirical research on the concept of anomie. Durkheim's introduction of the term was the logical starting point for understanding this complex phenomenon. He used anomie to describe a condition in which society is in a state of normlessness. Merton elaborated the concept of anomie and its relationship to deviant behavior. Comparing Durkheim and Merton's theories of anomie helped demonstrate both its causes and affects. Another comparison was made between anomie and alienation that helped to differentiate these two concepts from one another.

The third section addressed the theoretical relationship between the variables of religion and anomie. Durkheim's theory of religion as a collective force is the theoretical basis for the hypothesis that there exists an inverse relationship between the two variables. An examination of current research helped explain the nature of this relationship. Studies using large national
samples found an inverse relationship between religion and anomie. People with high levels of religious attachment, religiosity, also had low levels of anomie.

The fourth section reviewed the concepts of socioeconomic status, sex, race and ethnicity. There is a historic relationship between these descriptive variables and both religion and anomie. Controlling for these variables will help to ensure that the current study is accurately measuring the relationship in question.
CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE
AND HYPOTHESES

Introduction

This chapter will frame the study within the theoretical ideas of Emile Durkheim and Robert Merton. The conceptual definitions in this chapter will help to explain and elaborate the meaning of religion and anomie. The three research hypotheses are then presented and explained.

Theoretical Frame of Reference

The theoretical framework for this research was based primarily on the works of Durkheim (1947, 1951, 1984) and Merton (1957). Durkheimian theory asserts that religion plays an integrative capacity in society and, among other functions, provides a normative structure that can reduce the levels of personal normlessness (anomie) experienced by its followers. For Merton, anomie occurs when individuals are denied the opportunity to achieve important social goals. Religion can act to alleviate this social strain by providing an alternate value system within which people can achieve religious goals.

Conceptual Definitions

The word anomie has its origin in the Greek word *nomos*, which means
law. Subsequently, *a-nomos* is an adjective that means lawless (Mestrovic & Brown, 1985). He first used the word anomie in his work, *The Division of Labor* (1893). Durkheim described a state of immorality due to a disintegration of norms. The immorality that Durkheim means is different from our modern connotations of this word. He does not necessarily attach a religious meaning to this concept. The word morality has its roots in the same word as the sociological concept of *mores* - the rules for behavior that are the most important to a society. An anomic society is one that is unsure and confused about these crucial rules for behavior. According to Durkheim, an anomic society is an immoral one.

Merton (1957) differentiates between anomie and anomia. Anomie is the breakdown in the cultural structure while anomia is its subjective aspect that addresses the state of mind of the individual. Anomie refers to the social structural condition of normlessness while anomia describes the individual who experiences normlessness.

Durkheim provided the classic definition of religion. Religion is "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, which is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (1947, p.62). Religion is both belief and practice. Religiosity describes the degree of attachment that a person experiences in relation to these beliefs and practices. Religiosity seeks to measure the degree to which a person believes and practices religion (Popenoe, 1995).
Hypotheses

The central aim of this study was to test the relationship between religiosity and anomie. Resembling Durkheimian social theory, it was suggested that those with a stronger attachment to religious ideas and practices will also experience lower levels of normlessness. Normlessness is conceptualized as a form of alienation most closely related to Durkheim’s concept of anomie. Previous research using small and more homogeneous samples have failed to demonstrate any significant relationship between these two variables. Research conducted using large cross-national samples has shown a significant inverse relationship between religiosity and anomie. This research used the 1991 General Social Survey, a large cross-national data set, to test the hypotheses using a multivariate analysis. The central aim of this research was to demonstrate that those with a high degree of religiosity also have lower levels of anomie.

Controlling for class eliminated the influence of this phenomenon on anomie in the analysis. Since Merton (1957), social researchers have found an inverse relationship between class and anomie. Demonstrating the inverse relationship between class and anomie justified controlling for class when the relationship between religiosity and anomie was examined.

Gove and Tudor (1973) found, that women are more prone to anomie than are men. This study attempted to see if the same held true for among religious women and men. Controlling for sex was justified by demonstrating that women with high levels of religiosity also had low levels of anomie when compared with equally religious men.
\( H_1 \) Anomie varies inversely with religiosity controlling for sex, race, ethnicity and class. This hypothesis contends that people who are more religious will experience less anomie than those who are less religious. Sex, race, ethnicity and class have previously been shown to be factors affecting anomie. Controlling for their affects helped to isolate the theoretical relationship between religiosity and anomie.

\( H_2 \) Anomie varies inversely with class. People who are in a lower class ranking will experience higher levels of anomie than will people in a higher class ranking. This relationship has long been tested and retested and remains consistently a strong one. Testing this hypothesis helped to justify controlling for its affects in hypothesis one.

\( H_3 \) Anomie varies inversely more for religious women than for religious men. Women with high religiosity will experience lower levels of anomie than will men with high levels of religiosity. It is believed that a comparison of religious subgroups will show that woman are more effective at relying upon religion as a normative framework than are men.

**Chapter Summary**

The theoretical frame of reference for this chapter is based on the ideas of Emile Durkheim and Robert Merton. Religion functions to bind members of society together by providing common norms and values. Anomie describes a condition when the values and norms of a society are in conflict, weak or are absent. The hypotheses of this study predict; an inverse relationship between religion and anomie, an inverse relationship between social class and anomie, and a difference in the level of anomie experienced by religious men and women.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the components of the research design for this study. Included are a description of the study respondents, measures used in the study, and the analytical procedures appropriate to test each hypothesis. The objective of this research was to examine the effects of factors related to religiosity on levels of anomie experience by a random sample of U.S. adults. A cross-sectional, survey research design using a nationally representative sample was used. Multivariate analysis was the primary statistical technique used to analyze relationships between variables.

The General Social Survey

The General Social Survey (GSS) is an annual personal interview survey of U.S. households conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The survey consists of a large variety of questions related to many social science topics such as, politics, income, family, and education, etc. "The mission of the GSS is to make timely, high-quality, scientifically relevant data available to the social science research community" (Davis & Smith, 1992, p.1).

General Specifications

Data for this research were obtained from the 1991 General Social
Survey (GSS). The random sample size for this version of the GSS was N = 1517. The 1991 version was selected because it was the most current GSS survey that included relevant questions on anomie and religiosity. The 1991 edition was conducted during February, March, and April. The median length of the interview was approximately one and a half hours.

Subjects of the Study

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame, the actual list of sampling units from which the sample was selected, was devised by NORC. Each decade, based on the U.S. Census, a national sampling frame is constructed by NORC and used in subsequent General Social Survey's. The sampling frame of the 1991 GSS was based on parameters established in the 1990 National Sample. The 1990 National Sample was selected in two major stages, with primary sampling units (PSUs) consisting of one or more counties selected at the first stage and segments consisting of one or more blocks selected at the second. In a few cases, segments were subsampled, a procedure that constituted a third stage of sample selection.

The 1990 sample frame included 100 first stage selections. The PSUs consisted of metropolitan areas or nonmetropolitan counties. The metropolitan PSUs include metropolitan areas of all of all three types distinguished in the 1990 Census - Metropolitan Statistical Areas (or CMSAs, which correspond to the SMSAs used in 1980), Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (or CMSAs, which join the metropolitan area of a very large city with the adjacent metropolitan area of one of its suburbs), and New
England County Metropolitan Areas (or NECMAs, which are the whole county counterparts of the New England MSAs).

Before selection, the United States was divided into 2,489 PSUs; the PSUs were then sorted into strata. The major strata again grouped metropolitan and nonmetropolitan PSUs within each of the four Census regions. The nonmetropolitan PSUs were further sorted by state, within state, by percent minority, and finally, within percent minority groupings, by per capita income. Each PSU was classified according to the percent of its population who are minority group members; this encompassed everyone but non-Hispanic Whites. Percent minority groupings were formed by classifying each PSU according to percent minority quartiles within each major strata.

The sample PSUs were selected using systematic selection, with the selection probability for a PSU proportional to the number of housing units. This selection procedure ensured proportionate representation along each of the sort variables. Nineteen PSUs were so large that they had to be included in the sample with certainty. Nonsampling errors were reduced by using data cleaning procedures that used a combination of the coding specifications and the interviewer instructions to check for inconsistent or illegitimate codes.

**Study Population and Sample**

The study population, the aggregation of elements from which the sample was selected, was 18 years of age and older, living in the United States. The study used a multistage, stratified probability sample in which successively smaller geographic areas are selected proportional to population. Households and adult respondents are chosen so that all members of the
target universe have an equal probability of selection.

The GSS sampling process employs a stratified probability sampling process. The purpose for using probability sampling is to ensure that the sample selected from the population accurately reflects the parameters of the total population. Probability sampling provides an efficient method for selecting a sample that should adequately reflect the variation that exists in the population as a whole (Babbie, 1995).

Multistage stratified sampling is a modification of simple random sampling. This modification is necessary when sampling from populations that are difficult to list, such as the U.S. adult population. Babbie (1995) explains the process of multistage stratified sampling as a process involving the repetition of two basic steps, listing and sampling. The list of primary sampling units (PSUs) is compiled and stratified for sampling. Then a sample of those units is selected. The selected primary sampling units are then listed and stratified again, and so on.

The primary sampling units (PSUs) employed are standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA) or nonmetropolitan counties selected in NORC's Master Sample. These SMSAs and counties were stratified by region, age, and race before selection. The units of the selection of the second stage were Census Block Groups (BGs) and Enumerated Districts (EDs). These EDs and BGs were stratified according to race and income before selection. The third stage of the selection was that of blocks. The blocks were selected with probabilities proportional to population. In places without block statistics, measures of size for the blocks were obtained by field counting. The average
cluster size is five respondents per cluster (Davis & Smith, 1992).

**Respondent Selection**

Potential GSS respondent households are members of these clusters taken from the Census Block Groups. The first notice that a prospective respondent receives that he or she has fallen into the GSS sample is a letter mailed to his or her home that introduces NORC and the GSS and saying that an interviewer will be contacting him or her (Davis & Smith, 192, p.49). Trained interviewers are then sent into the field to contact potential respondents to try to conduct the survey. All respondents are assured that their answers will be held in confidence and that their answers will not be linked to them.

**Measures Used**

**Operational Definitions**

The 1991 General Social Survey contained three items from the anomia scale created by Srole (1956). The three items were treated as an index to measure the level of anomie experienced by respondents. The scale was composed of the following questions (1=disagree, 2=agree): 1) *In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse*, 2) *It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future*, 3) *Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man*. The index of anomia was computed as the simple sum of the three unweighted component items and produced a range from 3.0 (low anomia) to 6.0 (high anomia).

This study used the categorization of religiosity developed by Glock and Stark (1965). They have broken religion down into five dimensions. Religiosity
measures the strength of a person's attachment in any of these dimensions.  

(1) The *experiential* dimension addresses the fact that all religions have certain expectations that their adherents will somehow achieve direct knowledge of ultimate reality or will experience religious emotion. Every religion places some value on subjective religious experience as a sign of individual religiosity. (2) The *ideological* dimension refers to the expectations that a religious person will hold to certain beliefs. Each religion has a set of beliefs to which its followers are to adhere. (3) The *ritualistic* dimension encompasses the specific religious practices in which followers engage. (4) The *intellectual* dimension takes in the expectation that the religious person will be informed and knowledgeable about the basic tenets of his or her faith and its sacred scriptures. (5) The *consequential* dimension encompasses the secular effects of religious belief, practice, experience, and knowledge on the individual. Included in this dimension are all of the prescriptions associated with religious faith, how a religious person lives out his or her faith.

Two of these components that measure religiosity, the *ritual* and the *ideological* dimensions, were used in this study. The ideological and ritualistic dimensions of the Glock and Stark categorization are more reliably operationalized in a survey of this nature. These two categories represented more specific behavior that could be measured more effectively using survey research.

Surveying the ritual dimension of religiosity, the religious behavior a person actually engages in, showed the exposure to religious norms and therefore normative prescriptions for life. This component was measured
using the single item - frequency of church attendance. This single-item variable (ATTEND) has a range from 0 (never attends religious services) to 8 (attends religious services more than once a week).

The second religious dimension used to measure religiosity was the ideological one, the expectation that a religious person will hold to certain beliefs. This aspect of religion addresses traditional religious beliefs such as the existence of God, heaven and hell, and the devil. Belief in life after death may support the idea of "heavenly" rewards for adherence to religiously sanctioned normative behavior in the here and now. This element was measured using the respondents' self-reported belief in life after death. This single-item (POSTLIFE) was coded as 0 (does not believe in life after death) and 1 (does believe).

Previous research has shown an inverse relationship between class and anomie. This study tested the relationship between anomie and social class for this sample. It was believed that a correlation between these two variables would be strong enough to justify paying careful attention to the affect of class when seeking to measure the relationship between religion and anomie. Controlling for class held the affects of this phenomenon constant in the statistical analysis. In this way it was the affect of religion on anomie that was measured and not the affects of class.

The control variable, social class, was operationalized in terms of occupational prestige (socioeconomic index, SEI) as measured by an updated version (Nakao & Treas, 1992) of the well-known Duncan (1961) SEI Scale whose component questions were a part of the 1991 General Social Survey.
On this index occupational titles were assigned a prestige score. An SEI score was assigned based on the occupation of each respondent. The SEI scores of respondents were collapsed into three categories, high, medium and low based on the range of scores of 17.07 to 97.16. The high category represented scores ranging from 97.16 to 70.45, the medium category represented scores ranging from 70.46 to 43.75, and the low category represented scores ranging from 43.76 to 17.07.

Race and ethnicity have both been used as control variables in an elaboration model that tested their affect on anomie. Race is operationalized as (RACE) and ethnicity as (ETHNIC) on the survey questionnaire. Responses for both categories were collapsed and a dichotomous nominal variable was created for each variable. Racial and ethnic minority groups (of non-European, non-white ancestry) were grouped together and majority respondents (of European white ancestry) were grouped into the second attribute. Race was coded as 0 (Non-Hispanic whites) and 1 (all other racial groups). Ethnicity was coded 0 (ethnic majority, of northern European origin) and 1 (ethnic minority, all other groups).

Sex was used as a control variable so that the affects of sex are not mistaken for those of religiosity on anomie. This study also examined the level of anomie experienced by women compared with that experienced by men when both subgroups have high levels of religiosity. This research suggested that because women may be more susceptible to anomie, they may be more prone to rely upon religion as a normative social system. The variable sex (SEX) will be measured as a dichotomous nominal variable.
Procedures for Data Analysis

Hypothesis One tested the inverse relationship between anomie and religiosity controlling for class, race, ethnicity, and sex. A multiple regression equation was created to estimate the relationship between anomie and religiosity. These variables were measured at the interval level; regression analysis was therefore an appropriate statistical procedure to examine the hypothesized covariation. Regression analysis demonstrated that if there is an increase or decrease in anomie for a one-unit difference in religiosity, controlling for class, race, ethnicity and sex.

Hypothesis Two tested the inverse relationship between anomie and class. People who have a lower class ranking will experience higher levels of anomie than will people in a higher class ranking. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique was used to determine how much of the change in anomie was explained by class.

Hypothesis Three tested the difference in anomie between men and women who also have high levels of religiosity. To test the statistical relationship between these groups and the sample mean, a T-test of significance was made. A T-test is possible because the variable anomie was continuous and was measured at an interval level. In the T-test, the sample mean for both subgroups was compared with the expected mean if the null hypothesis were true. The null hypothesis states that the level of anomie experienced by male and female respondents who are high in religiosity is the same as that of the entire sample. The T-test revealed two things; if those high in religiosity had lower levels of anomie than the entire sample and, which
subgroup, male or female, had the lowest level of anomie.

To differentiate high religiosity respondents from others in the sample a high attendance category was constructed. Included in it were respondents who; attend almost every week, once a week, or more than once a week. For the belief category, those who answered positively to a belief in life after death were categorized as high in religiosity.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a description of the subjects, measures and procedures used in this study. The sampling procedures of the General Social Survey insure that this survey is both random and representative and therefore the application of probability sampling theory is appropriate.

The variable anomie was operationalized using an index constructed from three items of the Srole Anomia Scale. Religiosity was operationalized using two survey questions that measured the ritual and ideological dimensions of religion. Class was measured using a revised and updated version of the Duncan socioeconomic index (SEI). The index is highly correlated to class.

Measures of race and ethnicity were each collapsed into nominal variables that each represent groupings of respondents into majority and minority categories. Sex was also measured as a dichotomous nominal variable.

The three hypotheses of the study were presented with the corresponding analytical techniques necessary to test them. To test the first hypothesis, regression analysis demonstrated the relationship between religiosity and anomie, the direction and the strength of that relationship controlling for class, race, ethnicity and sex. The second hypothesis examined
the relationship between class and anomie using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The third hypothesis tested the relationship between sex and anomie among those who also had a high level of religiosity using a T-test and subgroup comparisons.
CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the collected data and to report on the tests of the study hypotheses. To begin, a brief description of the sample will inform the reader of its general characteristics. Each of the three hypothetical relationships is then presented along with the results of the corresponding analytical procedures. First, the results of the multiple regression that tests the relationship between religiosity and anomie are presented. Second, the relationship between class and anomie is tested using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique. The goal of this analysis is to see if findings for this sample are congruent with the findings of previous research and to justify controlling for the effects of class in the previous regression analysis. Third, a comparison is made between men and women in this sample who score highest in religiosity in respect to their level of anomie.

A Description of the Sample

The sample (N=1517) was made up of 636 men (41.9%) and 881 women (58.1%). The religious orientation of the sample was overwhelmingly Christian (89.2%). Table 1 is a frequency distribution of respondents' religion. Less than 10% of the sample is Jewish, other or none. This is almost an insignificant amount. Because this is such a small percentage, it is difficult to
analyze. Well over half of the respondents were Protestant (63.8%). While this would seem to indicate that a large portion of the sample was a part of a monolithic belief category, in fact, the very opposite is true. Within the Protestant category are included a very wide range of denominations. There is a tremendous degree of variation between groups in this category. Examples of denominations that are very different from one another would include: Assemblies of God and Mennonites, Presbyterians and Baptists, and Methodists and Evangelical Free.

Table 1: Frequency Distributions of Respondent's Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1517 100.0 100.0

For analytical purposes, the sample was divided into two broad racial categories. One category was labeled "white" and represented 83.3% of the sample. All other racial groups were combined to form the remaining 16.7% of this variable. It should be noted that the Hispanic population is not provided
with a designation in this racial categorization on the General Social Survey. Hispanic respondents are distributed in both categories. This is why a variable measuring ethnicity was included in the analysis. The sample had the following reported ethnic distributions; 75% were of northern European ethnicity (majority), 22.8% were of an ethnic minority background, and 2.3% reported "other." For the purposes of analysis, the ethnic minority and "other" groups were collapsed into a single minority category. The ethnic minority category included, among others, African-American, Hispanic, and Asian minority populations.

Most of the respondents to the survey (80.5%) believed in life after death (Table 2). The attendance of respondents at religious services was spread in an even manner across the range of choices. The largest portion (23.1%) reported attending religious services every week (Table 3). These statistics indicate that a little over half of respondents (52.7%) attend religious services once a month or more. Despite the even distribution, half attending less than once a month and the other half once a month or more, the largest number of respondents attend every week.
Table 2: Frequency Distribution: *Belief in Life After Death*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1517</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Frequency Distribution: *How Often Respondent Attends Religious Services*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT Once a Yr</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Year</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevrl Times a Yr</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Month</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3x a Month</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nrly Every Week</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Week</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Thn Once Wk</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK, NA</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1517</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the questions measuring anomia, those who responded were more pessimistic about their own lives now than they were about the future. When asked if they thought that the lot of the average man was getting worse, 60.9% agreed (Table 4). These feelings may be tied to economic changes and realignments taking place in post modern society. Most respondents (69.8%) did not believe that public officials were interested in their lives (Table 6). Current dissatisfaction with the federal government and cynicism about politicians may be reflected in these responses. But, when asked if they agreed with the statement, it's not fair to bring a child into the world, 64% disagreed (Table 5). Perhaps the end of the Cold War has eased fears of a nuclear holocaust and reinforced hopefulness about the future.

Responses to two of the three Srole Scale questions indicated an anomic condition on the part of those who responded. The mean score on the Srole Scale for this sample was 4.42. The range of possible scores was 3 to 6, with a mean of 4.5. The sample's mean score on the Srole Scale (4.42) did not reveal any information on respondents' anomia one way or another. A score lower than the mean of 4.5 would have indicated an anomic condition. A score higher than 4.5 would have indicated lack of anomia.

Responses to the individual questions on the Srole Scale reveal more about the anomic condition of the sample than does the scale itself. The single question, it's not fair to bring a child into the world (Table 5), caused the scale to show no anomic condition. Respondents disagreed with this statement almost two to one (64% disagreed, 32% agreed). Replacing this question with others from the original Srole Scale might have indicated a certain degree of
anomia.

Scores on the other two questions (Tables 4 and 6) revealed that an anomic condition existed. Table 4 shows responses to the question, *the lot of the average man is getting worse*. Respondents disagreed with this statement at a ratio of almost 60 to 40. Table 6 reveals a similar finding. Respondents disagreed with the statement, *public officials are not interested in the average man*, at a ratio of 70 to 30. These variations in responses to questions on the Srole Scale indicate that the three questions are not measuring the same concept.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Anomia Question: *The lot of the average man is getting worse*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1517</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Frequency Distribution of Anomia Question: *It’s not fair to bring a child into the world*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1517 100.0 100.0

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Anomia Question: *Public officials are not interested in the average man*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Label</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1517 100.0 100.0
Religiosity and Anomie of Religious Subgroups

When the variables measuring religiosity are crosstabulated with the religious preferences of respondents, comparisons were made between religious subgroups. The largest subgroups in the sample are Protestants and Catholics. Combined, these two groups represent 89.4% of the total. When comparing Protestant and Catholic respondents' attendance at religious services there is very little difference between the groups (Table 7). Differences between Protestants and Catholics are more apparent when comparing their belief in life after death (Table 8). The percentage of Catholics who do not report a belief in life after death (26%) is almost twice that of Protestants (14%). Despite this, it should be pointed out that, overall, both Protestant (86.4%) and Catholic (74.1%) subgroups overwhelmingly believe in life after death
### Table 7: Crosstabulation of Religion with Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attend</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT once a yr</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a yr</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevrl times a yr</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3X a month</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nrly evry wk</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evry wk</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More thn once wk</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Column Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>949</strong></td>
<td><strong>384</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>98</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>1491</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8: Crosstabulation of Religion with Belief in Life After Death

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postlife</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Column Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>591</strong></td>
<td><strong>236</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>909</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postlife</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Column Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>591</strong></td>
<td><strong>236</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>909</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison of responses to the three anomia questions reveals a high degree of uniformity among religious subgroups (Tables 9, 10 and 11). Each subgroup response was very close to the total sample response. Protestant and Catholic subgroups showed little difference in their responses to all three questions. Both groups provided anomic responses to two of the questions (Tables 9 and 10). Responses to the third question, about bringing children into the world (Table 11), were negative among all religious groups. More people from each subgroup thought it was fair to bring a child into the world. It appears that among religious subgroups, there is a greater degree of hopefulness about the future. These subgroup responses mirrored those of the overall sample as well.

Table 9: Crosstabulation of Religion with Anomia Question: *The lot of the average man is getting worse.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting worse</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Total</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10: Crosstabulation of Religion with Anomia Question: Public officials are not interested in the average man.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Interested</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>664 69.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>287 30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Total</td>
<td>611 64.2%</td>
<td>239 25.1%</td>
<td>20 2.1%</td>
<td>66 6.9%</td>
<td>15 1.6%</td>
<td>951 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Crosstabulation of Religion with Anomia Question: It's not fair to bring a child into the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child into the world</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>346 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>614 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Total</td>
<td>617 64.3%</td>
<td>242 25.2%</td>
<td>21 2.2%</td>
<td>66 6.9%</td>
<td>14 1.5%</td>
<td>960 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Affects of Religiosity on Anomie

The first hypothesis of this research, anomie varies inversely with religiosity controlling for sex and class, was not supported by this data. When a bivariate analysis is conducted, measuring the affects of religiosity on anomie, no relationship exists. The religiosity level of respondents did not affect their individual reported feelings of anomia.

The regression analysis of both variables measuring religiosity (belief in
life after death and attendance of religious services) on the variable anomie did not demonstrate a significant relationship (Table 12). A one-tailed test of significance between anomie and the attendance variable revealed a statistic of .364. The correlation between anomie and the belief in life after death variable provided a statistic of .305. If this statistic is less than .05, then a relationship between the variables is significant and it can be said that a correlation exists. Since a correlation among the variables could not be shown, demonstrating causality was impossible.

The significant F Score of the regression of the attendance variable on anomie was .6744. To reject the null hypothesis, that no relationship exists between attendance and anomie, the score would have to be less than .05. The correlation coefficient (R) for this regression is .05130. A value of 0.00 indicates no linear relationship between the variables and a value of ± 1 indicates a perfect linear relationship. The R² statistic (the coefficient of determination) for this regression was .00263. These statistics reveal that there is no significant variance in anomie explained by attendance.

The significant F score of the regression of the belief in postlife variable on anomie was .8990. In order to reject the null hypothesis, that no relationship exists between anomie and belief in life after death, the statistic would have to be less than .05. The correlation coefficient (R) for this regression is .00734. A value of 0.00 indicates no linear relationship between the variables and a value of ± 1 indicates a perfect linear relationship. The R² statistic (the coefficient of determination) for this regression was .00005. Again, these numbers indicate that there is no significant variance in anomie
that is explained by belief in life after death.

Table 12: Regression Analysis of Anomie with *Belief in Life After Death* and *Attendance at Religious Services*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSTLIFE</td>
<td>-.010232</td>
<td>-.004081</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>.9451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTEND</td>
<td>-.063918</td>
<td>-.052039</td>
<td>-.879</td>
<td>.3801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTEND</th>
<th>POSTLIFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.00263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>.39445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signif F</td>
<td>.6744</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Significant Variables

Table 13 is a 1-tailed test of significance using a number of other variables with anomie as the dependent variable. This test indicates a significant relationship (≤ .05) between anomie and several other variables, education, income, ethnicity and class (SEI). These findings have been historically supported in the literature (Bell, 1957; Dean, 1961; Lee & Clyde, 1974; Lystad, 1972; Meier & Bell, 1959; Olson et al., 1985; Rushing, 1971; and Wirth, 1938) and are reconfirmed in this study.
Table 13: One-Tailed Test of Significance: Anomie and Age, Education, Race, Ethnicity, Income, Class and Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Educ</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Ethnic</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anomie</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td>.359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant ≤ .05

The Relationship Between Class and Anomie

The second hypothesis, *anomie varies inversely with class*, was supported by this data. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) between class and anomie did reveal a significant relationship between these two variables (Table 14). The ANOVA procedure examined the variation in anomia throughout the sample in relation to the Socioeconomic Index level (higher class, middle class and lower class) assigned to each person. The F Ratio statistic represents the ratio of mean effects to residual effects. A larger F Ratio suggests that the hypothesis is more likely to be true. If the F Ratio is 0.00 then the null hypothesis is true. The F Ratio for this ANOVA was 13.5379, well above 0.00. The null hypothesis can be rejected. The F Prob. statistic (.0000) tells how many times the null will be true, less than 1 time in 100,000 for this relationship.

The Eta² statistic is always a positive number ranging between 0.00 and 1.00. It measures the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable (anomia) which is "explained" by the independent variable (class). For this analysis our Eta² was .0317 which indicated that 3% of the variation in anomie
is explained by class.

To test for the difference in the mean score of anomia among the three class categories (higher, middle and lower) a post hoc comparison of the means was implemented using three different techniques, Tukey-B, Sheffe, and Student-Newman-Keuls. Each of these tests revealed that, in regards to anomia, there was a significant difference between those in the higher class category and those in both the middle and lower categories. There did not appear to be a significant difference between the means of the medium and lower class categories regarding their levels of anomia.

Table 14: Analysis of Variance between Anomia and Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>D.F.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>F Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.2808</td>
<td>14.1404</td>
<td>13.5379</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>861.7192</td>
<td>1.0445</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>890.0000</td>
<td>Eta² = .0317</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious Men and Women and Anomia

The third hypothesis, anomia varies inversely more for religious women than for religious men was not supported in this data. This hypothesis is related to the first one. It suggests differences in the level of anomia experienced by subgroups of the highly religious. Because the initial relationship between religiosity and anomie was not supported for the first
hypothesis, then neither could it be supported for male and female subgroups.

A T-test was conducted (Table 15) that compared males and females who responded with high scores on the attendance variable with anomie. There were 97 males whose mean anomie score was 4.4536 (R = 0 to 6) with a standard deviation of 1.061. There were 192 females with an anomie mean score of 4.2552 with a standard deviation of 1.035. The 2-Tail Significance statistics, .128 and .132, must be less than .05 in order to reject the null hypothesis - that no relationship exists. This was not the case. Levene's test for the equality of variance showed that F = .416, which indicated that the difference between the means of males and females is very small. The P value was .52 which indicated that 52% of the time we would find this difference in means (F value) when no relationship existed between religiosity and anomie. There was no significant relationship to anomia among those who scored highest in attendance. Subsequently, there was no significant relationship apparent when the comparison was made between male and female subgroups of high attenders either.
Table 15: T-Test Comparing High Attending Males with High Attending Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE of Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>4.4536</td>
<td>1.061</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>4.2552</td>
<td>1.035</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variances</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>2-Tail Sig</th>
<th>SE of Diff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unequal</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>188.56</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances: $F = .416 \quad P = .520$

Another T-test was conducted (Table 16) that compared males and females who responded positively to a belief in life after death with anomia. There were 125 males whose mean anomia score was 4.48 ($R = 0$ to 6) with a standard deviation of .964. There were 199 females whose mean anomia score was 4.3819 with a standard deviation of 1.027. The 2-Tail Significance statistics, .392 and .386, must be less than .05 in order to reject the null hypothesis - that no relationship exists. This was not the case. Levene's test for the equality of variance showed that $F = 1.361$, which indicated that the difference between the means of males and females was very small. The $P$ value was .244 which indicated that 24% of the time we would find this difference in means ($F$ value) when no relationship existed between religiosity.
and anomia. There was no significant relationship among males and females who believed in life after death with anomia.

Table 16: T-Test Comparing High Believing Males with High Believing Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE of Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>.964</td>
<td>.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>4.3819</td>
<td>1.027</td>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variances</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>2-Tail Sig</th>
<th>SE of Diff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unequal</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>276.07</td>
<td>.386</td>
<td>.113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances: F = 1.361  P = .244

Conclusion

This chapter presented an explanation of the data and reported on the tests of each hypotheses. Responses to two of the three Srole Anomia Scale questions were positive and indicated a moderate anomic condition to exist for this sample. A comparison of religious subgroups to one another and to the total sample did not demonstrate significant differences. The first hypothesis, that religiosity has an inverse relationship with anomie controlling for class, sex, race and ethnicity, was not supported. No correlation was shown to exist between religiosity and anomia using a one-tailed test of correlation. In the
second hypothesis, the inverse relationship between class and anomie was supported using an analysis of variance and several post hoc analyses of subgroup means. People from a higher class ranking had lower levels of anomia. The third hypothesis, that women who are high in religiosity experience lower levels of anomia than do men who are high in religiosity, was not supported using a T-test of significance. This test compared means of those high in religiosity with the overall sample. There was no significant relationship between religiosity and anomia for these subgroups.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the study and to offer conclusions. In so doing an overview of the research findings is presented. These findings are considered in light of the existing research that has already been discussed. An alternate theory is offered in an attempt to explain another proposed relationship between religiosity and anomie. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of this study and recommendations for further study.

An Overview of the Findings

The primary hypothesis for this study, that religiosity has an inverse affect on anomie, was not supported using data from the 1991 General Social Survey. Not only did the statistical analysis fail to demonstrate a causal relationship, but the two variables were not even correlated. Neither a positive nor a negative relationship was found to exist. Since no relationship between the variables was shown, the lack of significant findings does not necessarily invalidate the theoretical foundation of this study.

While this study did not find statistically significant empirical support for the hypothetical relationship between religion and anomie, it did raise some
important questions about the operationalization of the concepts of religion and anomie. The method of this study was a secondary analysis of a large national survey. One of the drawbacks of a secondary analysis is having to rely upon preexisting measures. Therefore, methodological questions should be addressed before attempting to invalidate the theoretical framework.

Methodological Questions

There are several possible explanations for the lack of a demonstrable relationship between these variables, especially considering the theoretical basis for this relationship. One principal explanation for the findings of this study might be the validity of the measures used to identify religiosity and anomie. The number of questions used to measure sweeping and complex concepts such as anomie (three) and religiosity (two) may not have fully addressed the range of behavior represented in these phenomena.

Replication is one method of addressing the problem of a few questions used to measure phenomena. Other questions that measure these variables could be used as independent tests of the hypothesis. Unfortunately, the 1991 GSS data set contained several religious questions but none beyond these two measured the ideological and ritualistic dimensions that were necessary for this study.

Martin and Stack (1983) in a similar study, used the same questions from the General Social Survey as this study to measure religiosity. They were able to use all five questions from the Srole Scale to measure anomie. The 1991 GSS, used for this study, contained only three questions from Srole’s Scale (#1, #2, and #5). The five questions that compose the original Srole Scale
of Anomia are:

1. In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse.
2. It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future.
3. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.
4. These days a person doesn't really know who he can count on.
5. Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man.

The failure to support the hypothetical relationship between religiosity and anomie in this study may be due to methodological problems rather than a faulty theory. The two GSS questions designed to measure religiosity (attendance of religious services and belief in life after death) were both used in the Martin and Stack (1983) study. Their study did show a weak inverse relationship between religiosity and anomie. Even the casual observer is left to wonder if these two dimensions of religion (ideological and ritualistic) can be adequately measured using just two questions.

New Measures

More substantive and sophisticated measures of religiosity need to be developed and incorporated in large national surveys like the General Social Survey to strengthen the ability to replicate findings and to insure the greater generalizeability of results.

To measure the ritualistic dimension of religion, the practice of religious activities, scales that measure the level of orthodoxy of respondents should be
used. These kinds of scales should measure indicators such as attendance at religious services, money given to the church, time spent praying, time spent reading scriptures, and religious service/work. In this case, a scale is better than a simple index because such a measurement could examine the intensity structure among the indicators of the variable. For instance, attending religious services might not be as strong an indicator as time spent engaged in religious service/work.

The ideological dimension of religion, the religious beliefs that a person ascribes to, could be measured more effectively using a scale. An ideology scale should measure indicators such as belief in; God, an afterlife, scriptures, and in a final judgement. Such a scale would provide a more comprehensive measurement of religious ideology than any single indicator could.

A more modern version of Srole's Anomia Scale that takes cultural and historical bias into account is needed. To measure the degree in which norms and values are in conflict, weak or absent a composite measure, such as an index, would be the best way to measure a dimension such as anomia. The following questions could be included in a revised version of an anomia scale:

- Many times nowadays, it's hard to know the right thing to do.
- Less people today seem to share the same values that I have.
- People today seem more confused than ever about what's right and wrong.
- My values today are much different than those of my parents.

The finding that there was an inverse relationship between class and anomie was not surprising. There is great support for this hypothesis in the literature. The rationale for including this hypothesis was twofold: to test it
again using current data, and to justify controlling for the effects in the first hypothesis. Class is an important component of the sociological concept of socioeconomic status (SES). This study found that a number of other important components of SES; education, ethnicity and income, were also related to anomie.

The third hypothesis is that, of the most religious, women will have lower levels of anomie than will men. The theory is that women are more successful at adapting to the religious norm structure than are men. Without demonstrating a significant relationship between religiosity and anomie from this data, it becomes impossible to go any further in attempts to test among subgroups.

Consideration of Findings in Light of Existing Research

The finding that there is no significant relationship between religiosity and anomie confirms the findings of many other studies (Bell, 1957; Photiadis & Johnson, 1963; Dean, 1968; and Carr & Hauser, 1976). In these studies there were questions about the samples used, specifically as to their representativeness. The Martin and Stack (1983) study was the first to test this relationship using a large national sample that was both random and representative. They found a weak but significant relationship between religiosity and anomie. Their study used data from the 1973 and 1976 General Social surveys and their findings represent respondents' attitudes from almost twenty years ago.

The findings of the second hypothesis, that there is an inverse relationship between class and anomie, do add support to the body of research
about these two variables (McClosky & Schaar, 1965; Simpson, 1970; Otto & Featherman, 1975; and Rushing, 1971). This is especially true in reference to Merton's theory that anomie results when members of society are blocked access to achieving socially enforced goals. Those in the lower echelons of the class structure are limited in their ability to easily move up the ladder of success.

Meier and Bell (1959) specifically address a number of other variables related to anomie. These related variables include; occupation, education, income, age, class identification, participation in formal organizations and informal groups, social mobility, marital status, and religious preference (in less dominant groups, religious preference can limit access rather than enhance integration). In this study, many of the same variables (education, income, ethnicity and class) were found related to anomie.

While studies have been conducted on the relationship of sex to anomie and sex to religiosity, the merging of these two relationships has had little attention. The hypothesis that religious women would have lower levels of anomie than would religious men was developed in light of research conducted by Gove and Tudor (1973), that women are more prone to anomie, and Barna (1993), that women have higher attendance figures at religious services than do men. Besides the lack of support for any kind of relationship between religiosity and anomie, this study was not able to demonstrate a difference between men and women in relation to anomie.

In the 1991 General Social Survey, women did not appear to be experiencing anomie at any greater level than men (there was no significant
difference between the means for men and women). In reading the Gove and Tudor study, it is important to put the findings into the historical context of the 1970's in America. Theories of anomie would support the notion that women in this period were uncertain about the changing norms that they faced.

**An Alternate Theoretical Approach**

Peterson (1988) proposed an alternate theory about the relationship between religion and anomie. He examined those who held to more orthodox religious beliefs and found them to experience higher levels of anomie. Religion and anomie can be analyzed using discordance theory. The people who feel most alienated from society are those who perceive that the values, norms and lifestyles that should characterize it are being undermined by socio-cultural change (Peterson, 1988, p. 374). Anomie is higher among people who perceive that change is undermining their religious values and norms that they believe should be upheld.

Durkheim's theory about the role of religion in modern society is based on his study of simple undifferentiated societies, argued Peterson (1988). Complex society is characterized by a greater separation between religious and social norms and by rapid change. During these periods of social strain and realignment the religiously orthodox experience a higher degree of anomie. This strain is due to a greater gap between the real and the ideal in relation to values and norms.

The current study failed to find either a negative or a positive relationship between religiosity and anomie. The subgroups of men and women with the highest levels of religiosity also demonstrated no significant
relationship to anomie. While discordance theory could not be supported by the general findings of this study, it does not disprove it. Discordance theory would help to explain a positive relationship between religiosity and anomie among specific religious subgroups.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Recent qualitative research (Roof, 1993 and Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton, 1991) have reinforced the idea that religion is still an important institution that helps individuals and families to find social integration and a sense of identity within a larger community. To complement these kinds of findings, there is a need for more meaningful and objective quantitative measures of the affects of religion in our society. It is important to discover findings that are generalizable to the larger population.

The General Social Survey has periodically included numerous batteries of religious questions in their yearly surveys. Social scientists interested in religion need to take full advantage of these data. Specifically, attention should continue to be paid to religion and anomie. Because of the nature of the GSS, longitudinal studies on religiosity are possible. Further research is called for to test discordance theory as an explanation for the affects of religion. Finally, studies should be undertaken that fully examine the differences in the ways that males and females are affected by religion.

**Conclusion**

Despite the fact that this study failed to demonstrate an inverse relationship between religiosity and anomie, it is important to realize that the study hypotheses were not disproven. This study has accomplished the
following; (1) retested the relationship between these variables using popular measures with a large national survey, (2) reinforced the empirical data on the relationship between class and anomie, (3) raised questions about the adequacy of measures related to religiosity and anomie, and (4) introduced an alternate explanation about the possible relationship between religiosity and anomie.

Durkheim's theory, that religion functions in society to bind it together into a single moral community, deserves further examination and testing, now more than ever. Social cohesion seems ever more elusive in our post modern society. Confusion about norms can only lead to further social fragmentation. Institutionalized normative structures such as religion act to ease social strain and to make solidarity possible. Sociological research should focus attention on these kinds of larger issues that challenge our democracy. Despite the inherent dysfunctions, religion is an institution that has historically brought diverse groups together and kept them together. The national motto of the United States, which appears on all of our coins, is E Pluribus Unum - out of many one. Durkheim's sociology of religion helps to explain how this is possible. It deserves continued study.
REFERENCES


