MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

52 Vanderbilt Avenue • New York, NY 10017
Phone: 212.599.7000 • Fax: 212.599.3494
e-mail: mi@manhattan-institute.org
www.manhattan-institute.org

Henry Olsen, Executive Director

Center for Civic Innovation
at the Manhattan Institute
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017
Phone: 212-599-7000 Fax: 212-599-3494
holsen@manhattan-institute.org
www.manhattan-institute.org

The Wall Street Journal

Friday, November 20, 1998

Civil Society's Paramedics

Houses of Worship

By Collin Levey

With all the "mm-hmms" and "he's rights" humming around the room last week, the normally staid University Club in midtown Manhattan seemed at times as much a gospel meeting as an academic caucus. But then, that's the point.

The event was convened by the Manhattan Institute, an urban think tank of mildly libertarian bent, to look at whether religiously motivated groups have any more luck than others in reaching out to urban kids. Church-based programs have been around for a long time, operating "beneath the radar screen of our liberal policy elites," said the Rev. Eugene Rivers. Only recently have they begun to attract mainstream attention.

The institute gave the proceedings a double-entendre title: "Can Churches Save the Inner City?" Representing one view of the issue was Mr. Rivers. He had been a member of a street gang in Philadelphia until he was saved—"both my butt and my soul," as he has been heard to say—by a local street preacher. After doing time at Harvard and Yale, he took his mission to Dorchester, one of the sketchiest neighborhoods in Boston—preaching in crackhouses, organizing after-school programs and working with police to help defuse tensions.

"You have to be part Jesuit, part Marine," Mr. Rivers said. His policy is zero tolerance for missteps by kids on his watch. "We tell the children, 'we will send you to jail and ask the Lord to bless you on the way.'"

But this occasion brought together social scientists and grass-roots activists as well as ministers, and even after hearing many "finding God" testimonials, some participants still saw the initiatives as mostly about the community, not the church. If the faith-based programs work, they say, it's because the pastor lives around the corner, knows his neighborhood and can speak the language of the people he's trying to help. Secular initiatives are usually staffed with Ivy League sociology majors bused in for a few hours a week. What's needed is help every hour, every day, all year long—"24-7, 365," as John DiIulio, a professor at Princeton and authority on crime, put it.

Despite good-natured disagreement, pragmatism was the order of the day. What works, works. As Stephen Goldsmith, the Republican mayor of Indianapolis, pointed out: "The government had a monopoly on good deeds for too long and pushed out a lot of local initiative."

Asked whether he finds himself on a church-state tightrope, Mayor Goldsmith stressed that there's a difference between the government "facilitating" religiously affiliated programs and endorsing a particular religion. But he also recalled a friend's counsel that "there are things that are more dangerous to inner-city children than religion."

And sometimes the church is the only functioning institution, civil or political. That fact alone earns it the respect of the community, to the point where ministers take on a role of "provisional governance."

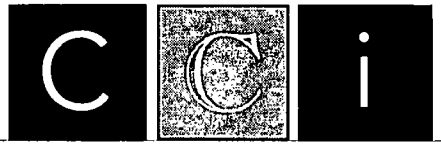
In Camden, N.J., a city where four out of five ZIP Codes are below the poverty line, the Rev. Mark Aita is reading every report card at his parochial school. It's paying off. In a town where more than half the kids drop out, 90% of his kids graduate. "If we can just father and mother these kids from sixth grade to college," he told the conference audience, "they're going to make it."

The church is a natural in this role, and there is plenty of room for secular appreciation of the miracles being worked. David Larson of the National Institute for Healthcare, who is researching programs to combat juvenile delinquency, confessed: "We're out to show that God does not make a difference, and we're having a really hard time doing that." But he also cites the old Garrison Keillor quip: "If you think that by going to church you'll become a Christian, go sit in your garage and you'll become a car."

His point is that not everyone who is helped by the church is necessarily religious or ends up being converted. This may be just the thing to ease the minds of secular do-gooders who worry about sponsoring faith-based programs. With corporate foundations like Chase and Texaco on the conference guest list, along with private groups like the Hearst Foundation, there was some quiet collection-plating going on.

Preaching to his makeshift congregation at the University Club, former Rep. Floyd Flake—now the pastor of a church in Queens—zeroed in on the bottom line. Regardless of the religious content of the programs, "when corporations see you putting your own money into your community," he said, "you don't have to go to them. They'll come to you."

Ms. Levey is a member of the Journal's editorial page staff.



CENTER FOR CIVIC INNOVATION

AT THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Simply stated, the Center for Civic Innovation's purpose is to improve the quality of life in cities by shaping public policy and by enriching public discourse on urban issues.

To extend, formalize and strengthen its relationship with the country's urban leaders, the Center has brought together a bipartisan group of mayors who have achieved dramatic changes and improvements in their cities. Their efforts are focusing on moving municipal governments away from dependence on state and federal subsidies toward more self-help and competitive approaches of governing. The Center has also brought some of the nation's foremost intellectual talents under one roof to develop a new generation of public policy prescriptions tailored to the needs of urban areas.

A major focus of the Center looks at the efforts of black and Hispanic ministers to rebuild civil society in our nation's cities. This effort, named The Jeremiah Project, includes work to study, assist, and popularize the important progress these inner-city ministers are achieving with at-risk populations.

Leading this work is Manhattan Institute Senior Fellow John DiIulio. John is a nationally renowned criminologist who has recently redirected his talents to the study of inner-city urban ministries. Though too often ignored by politicians and the mainstream press, he has found that churches play a unique role as service providers in at-risk inner-city communities.

CCI's Chairman is Indianapolis' Mayor Stephen Goldsmith. During his tenure, Goldsmith has reduced government spending every year in office, cut the city's bureaucracy, held the line on taxes, eliminated counterproductive regulations, and identified more than $400 million in savings. He has reinvested these savings by putting more police officers on the street and implementing a $700 million infrastructure improvement program. His book, The Twenty-First Century City: Resurrecting Urban America, (Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1997) chronicles Goldsmith's experiences reforming city government and provides a blueprint for urban leaders while articulating the range of policies that CCI advocates.

CCI's Executive Director is Henry Olsen. Prior to his current role, Mr. Olsen served as President of the Commonwealth Foundation and was a lawyer in private practice.

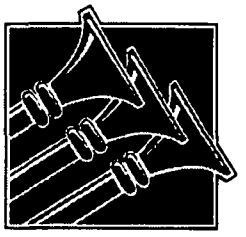
CAN CHURCHES SAVE THE INNER CITY?

A LOOK AT FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

November 13, 1998
The University Club
New York, New York

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration & Continental Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 9:10 a.m.	Welcoming Remarks and Introduction of Keynote Speakers **Henry Olsen**, Executive Director, Center for Civic Innovation
9:10 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	"The Jeremiah Project: Hope for Our Cities" **John Dilulio**, Professor of Politics and Public Affairs, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University
9:30 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.	"Government and Ministers in Partnership: The Indianapolis Example" **Mayor Stephen Goldsmith**
9:50 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.	Religious Belief and Activity among Urban Residents: Salvation for our Cities? Moderator: **Midge Decter**, Author and Editor Panelists: **John Dilulio**, Professor of Politics and Public Affairs, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University "The Extent, Efficacy and Capacity of Faith-Based Approaches to Urban Problems" **David Larson**, M.D., President, National Institute for Healthcare Research **Byron Johnson**, Ph. D., Director, Center for Crime and Justice Policy Summary of the Research on the Efficacy of Faith-Based Factors **Gary Walker**, President, Public/Private Ventures Discussion of 30 Years of Research on Youth and Community Development and Mentoring
10:50 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	Coffee Break
11:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.	Faith-Based Activity That Works: A View from the Trenches Moderator: **Father Richard John Neuhaus,** Editor-In-Chief, *First Things* Panelists: **Father Mark Aita,** Holy Name of Camden/JUST **Rev. Gene Rivers**, Pastor, Azusa Christian Community Featured for his work in Boston by *Newsweek* magazine Rev. Rivers will discuss his work in reducing juvenile crime and delinquency **Tom Lewis**, The Fishing School Ministry Will discuss his successful after-school program in Washington, D.C. **Dr. Luis Lugo**, Director, Religion Program, Pew Charitable Trusts Will discuss Pew's Urban and Hispanic Ministry Program
12:05 p.m. - 12:35 p.m.	Reception
12:35 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch and Featured Speaker Introduction: **Henry Olsen**, Executive Director, Center For Civic Innovation "Urban Ministers and Their Communities: A View from the Pulpit" **Rev. Dr. Floyd Flake**, Fmr. Cong. (D-NY); Senior Pastor, Allen AME Church, Queens NY

The Manhattan Institute • 52 Vanderbilt Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10017
Phone: 212-599-7000 • Fax: 212-599-3494 • E-mail: mi@manhattan-institute.org



The Jeremiah Project

An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation

Religion: The Forgotten Factor In Cutting Youth Crime and Saving At-Risk Urban Youth

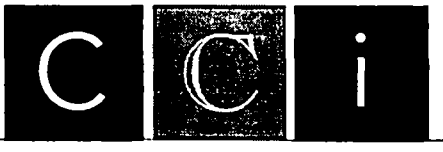
Report 98-2

By
David B. Larson, M.D., M.S.P.H.
President, National Institute for Healthcare Research
and
Adjunct Professor, Duke University Medical Center

And

Byron R. Johnson, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Crime and Justice Policy
and
Senior Fellow, Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee

Introduction by
John J. DiIulio, Jr.,
Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute
Director, The Jeremiah Project



CENTER FOR CIVIC INNOVATION
AT THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Promote the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you;
pray for it to the Lord, for upon its welfare depends your own (Jeremiah 29:7).

The Jeremiah Project

Begun in 1998, The Jeremiah Project (TJP) of the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation (CCI) is dedicated to identifying, documenting, publicizing, and funding outstanding examples of faith-based programs that help inner-city youth and young adults to avoid violence, achieve literacy, and access jobs while resurrecting hope and opportunity in America's most distressed urban neighborhoods.

John DiIulio, a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and Professor at Princeton University, directs TJP. He began his "faith factor" line of research in 1994. In 1996 he founded Public/Private Ventures' Partnership for Research on Religion and At-Risk Youth, and developed the Partnership's national research agenda on faith-based approaches to youth and community development. Known widely for his work on crime, social policy, and government reform, he predicts that by the year 2006, America will be home to 30 million teenagers, the highest number since 1975. Much of the increase in the nation's youth population, he stresses, is occurring in "forgotten urban neighborhoods with high rates of child abuse and neglect, poverty, crime, illiteracy, and chronic unemployment . . . Where secular mentoring and conventional social services programs for severely at-risk inner-city youth and young adults normally end, faith-based programs often begin. . . . Not all churches do it, and churches certainly can't do it all alone. But there's good news. From preschools to prisons, religion works, and adequately supported outreach ministries—the clergy and other religious paramedics of inner-city America's civil society—can save lives and offer a better chance in life to those whom the *Bible* call the 'least of these.' We will need, however, to learn more about the extent, efficacy, and capacity of faith-based efforts, and the general conditions under which they succeed. We need not only research but a willingness—here and now—to help proven urban outreach ministers to meet their unmet everyday needs, from money for fixing a broken pipe in a church basement where an after-school latchkey learning ministry runs, to help writhing a grant proposal, to brokering positive connections with other local institutions...The bottom line is leveraging the 'spiritual capital' of inner-city ministries into more children who are safe, literate, job-ready—and loved."

Others affiliated with the Institute who have roles in TJP include Reverend Floyd Flake, CCI Director Henry Olsen, and the Editor of *City Journal*, Myron Magnet. With Institute President Lawrence Mone, Professor DiIulio co-directs The Jeremiah Funds (TJF) which in just six months provided over $100,000 in support for specific unmet needs of outreach ministries and religious schools in Boston, New York, Camden, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. The Institute invites support for both TJP and TJF.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Section I	5
Religiosity and Youth Crime	5
Systematic Reviews of Research	5
Methodology	6
Results	9
Conclusion	11
References	13
Appendix A	15
Section II	18
Religiosity and At-Risk Urban Youth	18
Escaping from the Crime of Inner-Cities: Religiosity and Young Black Males	18
Conclusions	20
Black Churches and Youth Outreach	22
Conclusions	24
Religion and Youth	25
Findings	26
Discussion and Conclusion	28
Endnotes	29

INTRODUCTION

Religion Reduces Deviance

John J. DiIulio, Jr.

My friend and occasional co-author Dr. William J. Bennett has half-jokingly defined social science as "the elaborate demonstration of the obvious by methods that are obscure." To some readers, this report may justify that definition. Do we really need social science to "prove" that religion reduces many forms of deviance, including but not limited to crime and delinquency and other problems that are highly concentrated among inner-city youth?

Yes, we do, and for a host of reasons. First, in every major field of intellectual endeavor, including social science and criminology, the expert consensus has been that religion has either no effect on human behavior and social outcomes — indeed, most research on social problems omits any measure of religion as either an explanatory or a control variable – faith is indeed "the forgotten factor" – or a net negative effect on human behavior and social outcomes.

Essentially, the dominant theory has been that religiosity (almost universally assumed to be highly correlated with low intelligence and less than average formal education) probably conditions people to be more rather than less prone to poor physical and mental health outcomes, and no less likely to commit deviant, delinquent or criminal acts.

Second, even if one accepts that religion probably reduces deviance, it is important to know both the conditions under which this relationship holds and how robust the relationship is over time. For example, does "religion" as in mere church-going have any effect? Does it have the same effect as church going in concert with daily prayer or other behavioral manifestations of religiosity? Other things held equal, does exposure to faith-based programs among unchurched children have the same effect on deviance as church going among otherwise comparable young persons? Do prisoners exposed to Bible studies commit fewer crimes after release than otherwise comparable prisoners do one year out of prison? Two years? More?

Third, for the last three decades, most major social programs, especially those supported with government monies, have been developed, institutionalized, and funded without much in the way of research indicating they might actually work or the conditions under which they might eventually succeed. In areas from teen pregnancy to teen illiteracy, youth crime to welfare dependency, child abuse to substance abuse, Americans have paid a terrible price for this triumph of ideological advocacy over empirical analysis, policy-pushing dogma over policy-relevant data. That a generation of social engineers "got away with it" is all the more reason for persons interested in faith-based approaches to avoid, not repeat, the mistake. We should proceed enthusiastically but realistically, inductively, and incrementally, always with genuine openness to whatever serious social science, obscure methods and all, can tell us about the efficacy (or lack thereof) of churches and religious non-profits in relation to avoiding violence, achieving literacy, promoting employment, and achieving other desirable secular social goals among disadvantaged urban youth and young adults.

There is also a fourth reason to pursue faith-factor efficacy research, both statistical (as in the present paper) and field-based (as in other work of The Jeremiah Project), namely, the religiosity of

most Americans, the majority's belief in the efficacy of faith-based approaches in a day when "decline of morals, values" consistently tops the list of major public concerns.

From the famous nineteenth-century observations of Alexis de Tocqueville to the latest findings of survey researchers and social scientists, it is abundantly clear that Americans have been, and continue to be, a religious people. "The United States," observes George Gallup, Jr., "is one of the most devout nations of the entire industrialized world, in terms of religious beliefs and practices."[1] Belief in God remains the norm in America, with levels of belief ranging between 94 percent and 99 percent over the past five decades. Claims of membership in a church, synagogue or similar place of worship have ranged from a high of 75 percent in 1947 to a low of 65 percent in 1988 and 1990.

Black Americans are in many ways the most religious people in America. Some 82 percent of blacks (versus 67 percent of whites) are church members; 92 percent of blacks (versus 55 percent of whites) say that religion is "very important in their life;" and 86 percent of blacks (versus 60 percent of whites) believe that religion "can answer all or most of today's problems."[2]

All reports of the death of organized religion and religious sentiment in America have been greatly exaggerated. Since the end of the Second World War, we have witnessed what Roger Finke and Rodney Clark have aptly described as the "churching of America," resulting by the mid-1990s in a nation with an estimated half a million churches, temples, and mosques, 2,000 or more religious denominations, and an unknown number of independent churches.[3] In 1995, Gallup's Religion Index, an on-going measurement of eight key religious beliefs and practices of the American public, hit a ten-year high.[4] That same year, Nobel economist Robert W. Fogel of the University of Chicago speculated that the United States was in the midst of "its Fourth Great Awakening," a "new religious revival . . . fueled by a revulsion with the corruptions of contemporary society."[5]

Great Awakening or not, public laws have grown more faith-friendly. For example, the federal government's latest welfare reform overhaul measure, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996, contains Section 104, the so-called Charitable Choice provision, which encourages states to utilize "faith-based organizations in serving the poor and needy," requires that religious organizations be permitted to receive contracts, vouchers, and other government funding on the same basis as any other non-governmental provider, and "protects the religious integrity and character of faith-based organizations that are willing to accept government funds."[6] As enacted in 1996, Charitable Choice covers each of the major federal anti-poverty and social welfare programs (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income and Food Stamps). Congressional efforts begun in 1998 could eventually expand its scope to juvenile justice programs and other federal policy domains. Many states, most notably Texas, have moved aggressively to reorient their anti-poverty programs around Charitable Choice and kindred state laws favoring church-state cooperation.[7]

Philanthropy, too, has been gradually tilting toward religion. Over the last few years, many foundations have either launched new grant-making initiatives focused on religion, increased their support for research on religion, or increased grants for technical or direct financial assistance to community-serving ministries. For example, in 1996 three foundations with long-standing programs in religion, Lilly, Pew, and Irvine, made record religion grants of $60 million, $13 million, and $7.7 million, respectively. In 1997, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation made its 800th $25,000 grant to its "Faith in Action" program, which mobilizes interfaith networks of religious volunteers to serve

some 200,000 elderly and disabled Americans. The program's director describes it as "the first mega program undertaken" by the foundation, and "the largest program" in the foundation's history.[8]

It is hardly surprising that networks of interfaith volunteers are the backbone of such a program. As Father Andrew Greely has aptly summarized the evidence, research has consistently shown that both "frequency of church attendance and membership in church organizations correlate strongly with voluntary service. People who attend services once or more are approximately twice as likely to volunteer as those who attend rarely if ever."[9] As Greely also notes, the best available data suggest that religious organizations and "relationships related to their religion" are clearly the major forces in mobilizing volunteers in America; even a third of purely secular volunteers (persons who did not volunteer for specifically religious activities) also relate their service "to the influence of a relationship based on their religion."[10]

What, if any, broader social consequences for blacks and other Americans flow from religiosity and faith-based charitable, volunteer and community-service work? In social science terms, what, if any, data are there to indicate that, other things being equal, religious belief, church-going, community-serving ministry, or some combination thereof, varies inversely with poverty, joblessness, crime, substance abuse, or other social ills? In plain English, is there any scientific evidence to show that religious do-gooding does any good, or to justify the faith of most black Americans that religion can "answer all or most of today's problems"?

Over the last several years, journalists seem to have become more interested in this question. For example, *Newsweek* magazine wrote a cover story on the inner-city ministry of Boston's Rev. Eugene Rivers, "God v. Gangs," following stories on the same ministry by a diverse set of writers, including Joe Klein of *The New Yorker* and columnists George Will of *The Washington Post*, Bob Herbert of *The New York Times*, and several others. In each case, they credited the ministry with working cooperatively with police and probation officials, working one-on-one with the city's most severely at-risk youngsters, and thereby helping to engineer a dramatic drop in youth crime and the virtual elimination of gun-related homicides. Two months before the *Newsweek* story, *Time* magazine featured "In the Line of Fire," the tale of Brother Bill, a Catholic lay worker who "repeatedly walks into gunfire to stop the shooting – and love the unloved."[11] Two years earlier, the cover of U.S. News & *World Report* asked "Can Churches Cure America's Social Ills?," and the story answered largely in the affirmative.[12]

While such "faith factor" journalism is out ahead of the empirical research on religion and social action, it is hardly pure hype. As UCLA's James Q. Wilson has succinctly summarized the small but not insignificant body of credible evidence to date, "Religion, independent of social class, reduces deviance."[13]

Exhibit A is the present report, summarizing the latest research of David Larson, the medical research scientist who pioneered the development of the scientific "faith factor" research on public health outcomes (physical health, mental health, addictions) that led to new training programs at Harvard and three dozen other medical schools.[14] With criminologist Byron Johnson, Larson has reviewed some four hundred juvenile delinquency studies published between 1980 and 1997. They have found that the better the study design and measurement methodology, the greater the likelihood the research will produce statistically significant results associated with "the faith factor." In other words, the more

scientific the study, the more optimistic are its findings about the extent to which religion reduces deviance.

This conclusion squares with the results of another major review of the relevant research literature as it pertains to adult criminals: "Our research confirms that the religiosity and crime relationship for adults is neither spurious nor contingent . . . [R]eligion, as indicated by religious activities, had direct personal effects on adult criminality as measured by a broad range of criminal acts. Further, the relationship held even with the introduction of secular controls."[15] In other words, "religion matters" in reducing adult crime, too.

But in relation to black inner-city poverty and related social ills, perhaps the single most illustrative line of "religion reduces deviance" research begins with a 1985 study by Harvard economist Richard Freeman, runs through Larson's work, and continues through the community development, mentoring, and "faith-factor" research of analysts with Public/Private Ventures, a Philadelphia-based national nonprofit youth policy research organization, and the Manhattan Institute's Jeremiah Project.

In 1985, Freeman reported that church-going, independent of other factors, made young black males from high-poverty neighborhoods substantially more likely to "escape" poverty, crime, and other social ills.[16] In this analysis and extension of Freeman's work, Larson and Johnson mine national longitudinal data on urban black youth and find that, using a more multi-dimensional measure of religious commitment than church-going, religion is indeed a powerful predictor of "escaping" poverty, crime, and other social ills, more powerful even than such variables as peer influences.

Like Freeman, Larson and Johnson conjecture that the potential of church-going and other religious influences to improve the life prospects of poor black urban youth is in part a function of how church-going and other "faith-factors" influence how young people spend their time, the extent of their engagement in positive structured activities, and the degree to which they are supported by responsible adults.

Larson and Johnson's report on the "forgotten factor" is organized into two main sections. Section one, "Religiosity and Youth Crime," previews the findings of a research paper in which they examine the findings of virtually all extant scientific studies of the relationship between religiosity and delinquency in the United States. Section two, "Religiosity and At-Risk Urban Youth," extends the aforementioned work of Freeman and mines national data on religiosity and young black urban makes, black church youth and community outreach efforts, and a nationally representative sample of youth.

The bottom line of their research is that religion reduces deviance under a wide range of conditions and for diverse populations of youth and young adults. Their work is, as it were, hardly the final word about the social efficacy of religious belief, but it speaks powerfully to the need for researchers and others to start remembering the faith factor and to take religion as an ally in repairing lives, saving children, and resurrecting the civil society of inner-city America. The Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation and Jeremiah Project are grateful to the authors and pleased to have sponsored this paper and publicized their findings.

John J. Dilulio, Jr.
Senior Fellow, The Manhattan Institute
Director, The Jeremiah Project

Section I

Religiosity and Youth Crime[17]

The relationship between religiosity and delinquency has been an area lacking research review, study, and explanatory consensus in the research literature (Evans et al., 1995; Johnson, 1987; Title and Welch, 1983). While some studies have found a strong negative or beneficial relationship between religion and delinquency (Benda, 1995; Brownfield and Sorenson 1991; Tittle and Welch, 1983), others have suggested that religion has only a weak or insignificant effect on delinquency (Cochran, Wood, and Arneklev, 1994). Another issue of equal importance but often overlooked in researching the relationship between religion and delinquency is how well religiosity or religious commitment is measured. To provide an accurate and unbiased summary of the research on religion and delinquency, a review method is needed that is systematic yet sufficiently flexible to encompass and review a wide range of studies using diverse methodologies as well as using different measures of religion.

Systematic Reviews of Research

An innovative review strategy called a systematic review (SR) uses a method that permits a quantitative, or replicable, review of a specific research literature. In this way, the SR minimizes the opportunity for bias found in more traditional research review approaches. In this approach, key aspects of the review design are quantified, including inclusion and exclusion criteria regarding the published studies, or the study "subjects" to be sampled, the method for analyzing the methodologies of each study sampled, determining and specifying interrater reliabilities, and finally, summing the results across all reviewed studies. Results can be simply presented and understood as numeric items. Thus, the review and its results, like any good research protocol, are replicable. In areas of controversy such as the study of religion, replication of a literature review should be an available option.

The SR surveys a specified sample of representative research usually over a certain specified time period, reviewing and evaluating the field's leading, or "tenure-granting," journals (Bareta, Larson, Zorc, & Lyons, 1990; Beardsley et al., 1989; Larson, Lyons, Hohmann, et al., 1989; Lyons et al., 1990). These leading journals are often those most frequently cited and thus often define or at least provide the lead for clarifying the state of research in a certain field. In addition, the SR can sample various types of studies with diverse samples and different research methodologies as long as they all have the study factor of interest (e.g. religiosity) in common.

Like another type of analytic review method, or meta-analyses, systematic reviews are objective, with reported interrater reliabilities generally above 0.90. A clear advantage of SRs is that, like meta-analyses, the review method and thus the study (i.e. review) findings can be replicated. Therefore, the systematic review represents an objective, accurate method for reviewing within a particular scientific literature how a specific and potentially controversial factor like religion is handled both in terms of frequency of study and quality of study. One of the authors and numerous collegues have pioneered a series of studies using the SR methodology to gain insights on religion, beginning with another field that has shown some difficulty in handling and measuring religion - psychiatry (Larson 1993; Larson et al., 1986; Larson et al., 1989; Larson et al., 1992; Larson and Larson 1994). In this effort, our goal was to follow-up on previous systematic reviews by using this innovative strategy to review and critique the state of research on religiosity and juvenile delinquency.

Methodology

Article Selection

The study population of interest for the present SR is a specified group of study publications rather than a population of individuals. Our population consists of journal articles that examined the effect of religion on juvenile delinquency published from January of 1980 to December 1997. By utilizing an online library database, we searched for published research, or quantified articles (i.e. not commentaries or reviews) with key terms: religion, spirituality, church, delinquency and matched these terms with deviant behavior, deviance, or delinquency. After identifying articles utilizing the database, we then checked the references of each article to determine if additional articles could be identified. In the current study, we reviewed peer-reviewed journals in relevant study fields (i.e. addiction, adolescence, criminology, psychology, sociology) because the leading journals in criminology published very few studies on religion and delinquency.

To be selected to our sample for systematic review, an article must have met the following criteria:

1. Contained at least one quantified variable of any kind. A quantified variable was defined as one about which data were collected for a group of subjects. The sample primarily consisted of juveniles under the age of 18, although some studies looked at young adults up to age 20.
2. Published in a peer-reviewed journal in the United States between January 1980 and December 1997.
3. Used a sample collected from the USA. Studies using international and cross-national samples are excluded.
4. Analyzed both religiosity and juvenile delinquency measures.

All total, we located 402 articles that quantitatively studied an aspect of delinquency and were published between January, 1980 and December 1997. Each of the 402 studies was read independently by two different reviewers to determine how many of the studies contained any measures of religion or religious variables. Forty articles, or approximately 10 percent out of the pool of 402 studies examined the relationship between religiosity and juvenile delinquency (see Appendix A). The focus of the current systematic review, as with previous SRs, was to systematically examine these 40 studies, not the remaining studies that did not include religious variables. Our sample of forty articles provides us with the opportunity to assess how well religion was treated in relevant peer-reviewed journals in a very recent eighteen year time period.

Characteristics of the Study Sample

The average sample size of the forty studies reviewed was 2,324, with a maximum sample size of 34,129 and minimum sample size at 123. Only five of the forty studies used samples smaller than 300 and ten studies had samples smaller than 500. None of the studies used a small group sample—a sample smaller than 50. The samples studied in these published articles varied in scope and type. Eighteen studies, or 45 percent, used samples collected from a population within the boundaries of a state. Sixteen, or 40 percent, of the studies were based on regional samples drawn from the populations of two or more states. Only six, or 15 percent, of the studies used nationally representative samples.

There were also notable differences in sampling methods and sample response rates. The majority of the studies—(25 of 40), or 63 percent—failed to adopt a random sampling procedure. Fourteen, or 35 percent, of the studies did not report sample response rates. Of those that specified sample response rates, 14, or 35 percent, of the studies had response rates higher than 70 percent, nine, or 25 percent, of the studies had response rates between 50 percent and 70 percent, with three studies having response rates smaller than 50 percent.

Quality of Research

Specific criteria were used to measure the quality of research methodology in the current sample of articles that were systematically reviewed. These criteria were derived primarily from Cook and Campbell's well known methodological text on quasi-experimental research (1979). Eleven items or criteria are used to rate the methodology of the articles in the current SR: (1) no ambiguity about causal inference; (2) the use of prospective data; (3) specification of response rate; (4) specification of missing data; (5) specification of race of subjects; (6) specification of gender of subjects; (7) specification of reliability of measures; (8) no mono-operation bias (refers to the use of multiple measures to represent a particular possible cause or effect construct); (9) no mono-method bias (refers to the use of diverse methods to collect data for operational representation of a construct); (10) use of multivariate statistics; and (11) interpretation of statistical findings. These eleven items were chosen since they represent basic criteria from which researchers are able to draw acceptable causal inference and to achieve optimal reduction of measurement problems (Cook and Campbell, 1979). For coding purposes, the eleven criteria are dichotomized thus facilitating the construction of an index that quantifies the quality of research methodology. If a study includes or utilizes one of these eleven methodological procedures (or criteria), it is coded one (1), while the absence of a procedure resulted in the coding of zero (0).

Measures of Religiosity

In parallel with a previous review (Larson et al., 1986), the focus of the present review is on the measurement of religious variables and their evaluated relationship within the published delinquency research. Studies were reviewed to determine whether they contained at least one quantified variable of delinquency. Delinquency was defined as referring to any criminal, delinquent, or status offense committed by a juvenile (and in several study instances by young adults). Studies were also reviewed to determine whether they reported at least one quantified religious variable. This approach permits comparison of occurrence, results and quality of the measure of religious variables with the delinquency variables.

Role of Religiosity Measures

The forty published articles in the sample were reviewed to determine the role assigned to the religious variable or variables within each study. All of the study articles assessed religion as an independent variable impacting other variables. As an independent variable, religion can be treated in one of three ways: (1) a central explanatory variable, (2) a peripheral explanatory variable, or (3) a covariate used for statistical control. We reviewed every article in our sample to determine how religious measures were treated by researchers over the recent eighteen years covered by the systematic review.

Effect of Religiosity Measures

Each of the articles was also examined with a view toward identifying the relationship (if any) of the religiosity measure upon the dependent variable of delinquency. Specifically, we were interested in identifying: (1) if the relationship between religiosity and delinquency was not specified; (2) if there was no relationship between religiosity and delinquency; (3) if there was an inverse relationship between religiosity and delinquency; (4) if there was a positive relationship; or (5) if there was a mixed or reciprocal relationship between religiosity and delinquency.

Religiosity Measures

Six categories of religious measures were examined in the current SR:
(1) Attendance. As a straightforward measure, church or synagogue attendance has been found to be one of the most commonly used single-item measures for religiosity; (2) Salience. Researchers sometimes incorporate measures of religious salience (e.g., importance of one's religion or God in one's life) into studies. Such measures of religiosity can operate independently of other religiosity measures which might for example focus on church attendance (see above) or prayer or Bible study (see below); (3) Denomination. This particular variable refers to the denominational affiliation of the study subjects (e.g. Catholic, Baptist, Jewish, Muslim, other, or no religious affiliation); (4) Prayer. This variable typically refers to the degree to which one indicates that prayer is an active and/or meaningful part of one's life; (5) Study of scripture. This measure usually refers to the frequency of reading or studying sacred scriptures such as the Bible, Koran or Torah; And, finally, (6) Religious activities. Generally refers to the recognition that an individual participates in various religious activities both inside and outside of typical church settings.

Number of Research Items used to Measure Religiosity

Often times religiosity has been measured with a single-item like church attendance or level of participation in various religious activities (e.g., small groups, study or mid-week meetings). In fact, much of the previous research in the religiosity and delinquency area has used church attendance as the sole measure of religiosity (see Evans et al, 1995; Johnson, 1987; Title and Welch, 1983).

A continuing concern among researchers deals specifically with the question of whether religiosity is best measured as a unidimensional or multidimensional concept. And though we recognize that single-item measures like church attendance remain a frequently used measure within the literature, the frequent use does not make such a unidimensional assessment an acceptable research practice. It is important to acknowledge that treating religion as a multidimensional concept should be a more methodologically desirable goal (Gorsuch and McFarland 1972). Therefore, the current systematic review examined the forty published studies to determine how many research items were used to measure religiosity. For example, we were interested in determining if church attendance only was used (one factor) or if salience and prayer were both used (i.e. two factors). Or finally, if several indicators were used to develop a multidimensional measure of religiosity (i.e. three factors, or four or more factors).

Religiosity Measures and the Influence of Religiosity on Delinquency

One of the goals of the current study was to examine the differences in methodologies between published studies of religiosity and delinquency and to assess if these differences influence researcher

findings in regard to the relationship between religiosity and delinquency. We first sought to identify how religiosity was operationalized in the study sample (e.g. attendance, salience, prayer) and then to determine the effect of religiosity measures on delinquency outcomes. A preferred approach would be to analyze the effect size of each of these studies, whereby we are able to make comparisons between the statistical levels of significance in each of these studies. The issue of effect size is an important feature when examining any body of literature. However, the forty studies reviewed in our sample do not all contain data necessary to compute statistical effect size that can be generalized across these studies. As an alternative we computed crosstabulations to determine if the operationalization of religiosity affects research outcomes. While this approach has limitations such as our inability to assess levels of significance and the impact of sample size due to insufficient data, it does allow us to gain important insights into how research on religiosity and delinquency may potentially be impacted by research methodology.

Reliability of Religiosity Measures and the Effect of Religiosity on Delinquency

We also sought to determine whether studies that assessed reliability of religiosity measures would generate results systematically different from those produced by the studies that did not administer reliability tests. Data collection was performed by two trained raters, who reviewed all 40 articles independently.

Rater reliability was calculated as the percentage of agreement between the two raters for decisions made independently about dimensions of religious measures, effect of religiosity, and quality of research methodology. This reliability check allowed us to determine the degree to which these independent reviewers reached similar conclusions after reading and coding the 40 studies. Interrater reliability averaged 0.83 for all measures assessed. Interrater reliabilities for the separate variables were as follows: quality of research methodology 0.75, dimensions of religious measures 0.83, and effect of religiosity 0.91. In other words, the coding decisions of the independent reviews were very sufficiently similar to warrant confidence in the reliability or consistency of our findings.

Results

Quality of Research

Examining a basic frequency distribution of the eleven items outlined on page seven reveals that there were extreme high and low scores, indicating that this group of articles performed well against some criteria but underperformed in some other areas. On the positive side, 85 percent of the studies had no ambiguity about the causal order that they were intended to test (see item 1) and 92.5 percent of the studies used multivariate statistics to test the causal relationship (see item 10). On the negative side, only 12.5 percent of the studies used prospective, longitudinal data, while the remaining 87.5 percent were all based on cross-sectional data (see item 2). Further, only five percent of the studies controlled for mono-method bias (see item 9), and in only half of the articles were there test for the reliability of the study's measurements (see item 7).

A composite measure of the quality of research methodology is computed by taking the average of these individual items across all studies. The scale of this composite measure ranges from 0 to 1. The 40 articles as a whole had an average score of 0.59 on the quality index.

Religiosity Measures

The Role of Religiosity Measures

Of the 40 studies reviewed, 27 articles (67 %) treated religion as the central explanatory variable. To assess religion as a key or central explanatory variable is somewhat unusual given past SRs. Nine treated religion as a peripheral variable and four studies treated religion as a control variable.

The Effect of Religiosity Measures

The vast majority (75%) of studies reviewed revealed that religious measures consistently had a negative, or beneficial, effect on delinquency, whereby higher levels of religiosity were associated with inhibiting or reducing delinquency. Only one of the 40 studies found that religiosity had a positive impact on delinquency, whereby religiosity was associated with increases in delinquency. This lone study, however, was one of the four studies that utilized religiosity as a control variable. The remaining studies found that the effect of religion was either not significant or inconclusive depending on its interaction with other variables.

Dimensions of Religiosity

Consistent with past systematic reviews of religious measures, salience and attendance were the two most frequently used variables to measure religion (85 percent and 65 percent respectively). Prayer was used to measure religiosity in 35 percent of the studies. Participation in religious activities was utilized in 27.5 percent of the studies to measure religiosity, while denomination and Bible study were both used in only 22.5 percent of the forty articles, respectively.

For the sample as a whole, only three studies took account of all six dimensions. Five out of the forty studies included five dimensions and only one study examined four different dimensions. Thus, 15 of the 40 assessed four or more dimensions of religiosity. The majority of the studies (24 or 60%) measured only 1 or 2 dimensions, usually religious participation and/or religious salience. Twenty-one studies included measures of both religious participation and religious salience.

Number of Items used to Measure Religiosity

Although it has been suggested that it is preferable to use multiple questions or items to measure religion (Gorsuch and McFarland, 1972), most of the studies in our study sample failed to do so. Less than half of the studies (19 of 40) used more than two items to assess or measure religiosity. Slightly more than half of the articles (21 of 40) reviewed in the current study measured religiosity with one or two items.

Dimensions of Religiosity and the Effects of Religiosity on Delinquency

Utilizing a crosstabulation analysis we examined the interaction between dimensions of religiosity and the effects of religiosity on delinquency. Of the nine studies that measured four or more dimensions of religiosity, all nine found that religiosity had a negative or beneficial effect on delinquency. Among the 31 studies that measured three or fewer dimensions of religiosity, 21 (67.74%) found that religiosity negatively affected delinquency, five (16.13%) found that religiosity had no

association with delinquency (an additional study did not specify an effect), three (9.67%) found interactive or mixed effects, and only one (3.13%) found a positive or detrimental effect between religiosity and delinquency. A summary of these findings reveal that studies utilizing more religious dimensions to measure religiosity were clearly more likely to demonstrate a negative, or beneficial, relationship finding between religiosity and delinquency. Though a majority of the studies using three or fewer dimensions to measure religiosity continued to indicate this negative relationship, the likelihood of religiosity to have mixed effects or even positive or harmful effects only occurred in those studies utilizing fewer dimensions of religiosity. Thus, the more religiosity is treated as a multidimensional variable, the more likely researchers will find a negative, or beneficial, relationship between religiosity and delinquency.

Reliability of Religiosity Measures and the Effect of Religiosity on Delinquency

Each of the studies in the sample was reviewed in order to determine if reliability tests had been performed on the study's religiosity measures. Of particular interest was determining if those studies that assessed the reliability of the religiosity measures generated results different from those produced by the studies that did not administer reliability tests.

The 13 studies that assessed the reliability of their religious measures all found that religion had a negative or beneficial effect on juvenile delinquency. In contrast, the 27 studies that did not administer reliability tests yielded somewhat mixed results. Among those studies, 17 (62.96%) still found that religion had a negative effect on delinquency, five (18.52%) found no effect, three (11.11%) found mixed effect, one article (3.70%) found a positive or harmful effect, and in one last study, no effect was specified. The SR results reveal that the studies using demonstrated reliable measures of religiosity are more likely to find a negative or beneficial relationship between religiosity and juvenile delinquency than those studies that failed to access the reliability of their measurement. In sum, studies which included reliability measures reached a unanimous consensus that religiosity is inversely related to delinquency, while those which failed to include reliability measures were not able to make such a pervasive claim. Interestingly, the majority of those studies that did not administer reliability measures still found the negative or beneficial relationship between religiosity and delinquency.

Conclusion

The current systematic review of the state of the art of religious measures in crime and delinquency research documented that the role of religiosity in explaining and understanding juvenile delinquency has been an overlooked factor in many studies. In fact, the present study found that only 10 percent of the quantitative delinquency studies in an eighteen year sample frame included religious variables as either central, peripheral, or covariate measures. Since public opinion polls have consistently shown for decades that a majority of Americans, particularly adolescents, indicate that religion is an important part of their lives (Gallup and Bezilla, 1992), it is indeed intriguing that only 10 percent of the 402 published delinquency studies located from 1980 to 1997 included religious measures. Of the 40 articles we systematically reviewed, only four included religiosity as a control variable. By so frequently excluding, and, in particular, not controlling for religious measures, researchers may have misspecified their theoretical models, especially if religiosity serves as a common cofounder to a target relationship.

While there exist some good studies, research on religiosity and delinquency has often been plagued with many methodological problems. The same remains in the recent studies, representing the present, state of the art of the research. Many studies in our sample did not use random sampling, did not use multiple indicators to control measurement errors, and did not test for the reliability of their religious measures. Almost all of the studies had mono-method bias. In addition, very few studies were based on longitudinal data.

The current review reminds us that research methodology can have an important effect on research findings. Studies that adopted multiple indicators to measure religion consistently found that religiosity was negatively related to delinquency. Likewise, studies that selected religious measures by means of reliability tests also found that religion consistently had a negative effect on delinquency. In contrast, studies that generated mixed findings regarding the impact of religiosity on delinquency did not use multiple indicators and did not administer reliability tests. The results of the current review suggest that the previously assumed "inconsistent findings" inconsistent findings regarding the role of religion in explaining delinquency are due at least in part to different research strategies employed in the state of the art sociological and criminological research. With improvement in measurement and analytic methods, we should expect more consistent empirical results.

Finally, most of the studies we reviewed showed that religion had an inverse, or beneficial, impact on delinquency. Notably, this was particularly true with the studies that demonstrated higher quality of research methodology as discussed above. Survey research has long indicated that a majority of American youth are exposed to religion early in their lives. As this systematic review found, given such population prevalence, commitment to religious values and beliefs can have both an immediate and a long-term impact on deviant or delinquent behavior. Religion is a large part of many adolescents' lives, but it remains is a small part of the criminological research. Unless this disparity is reconciled, researchers will limit unnecessarily their ability to understand this phenomena in delinquency research.

References

Bareta, J.C., D.B. Larson, J.J. Zorc, J.S. Lyons. 1990. "A Comparison of the MEDLARS and Systematic Review of the Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Literature." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 147:1040-1042.

Beardsley, R.S., D.B. Larson, J.S. Lyons, G. Gottlieb, P.V. Rabins, and B. Rovner. 1989. "Health Services Research in Nursing Homes: A Systematic Review." *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences* 41:30-35.

Benda, B. 1995. "The Effect of Religion on Adolescent Delinquency Revisited." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 32:446-466.

Brownfield, D. and A. M. Sorenson. 1991. "Religion and Drug Use among Adolescents: A Social Support Conceptualization and Interpretation." *Deviant Behavior* 12:259-276.

Cochran, J., P. Wood, and B. Arneklev. 1994. "Is the Religiosity-Delinquency Relationship Spurious? A Test of Arousal and Social Control Theories." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 31:92-123.

Cook, T. and D. Campbell. 1979. *Quasi-Experimentation: Design & Analysis Issues for Field Settings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Evans, T. D., F. Cullen, R.G. Dunaway, and V. S. Burton, Jr. 1995. "Religion and Crime Reexamined: The Impact of Religion, Secular Controls, and Social Ecology on Adult Criminality." *Criminology* 33:195-217.

Gallup, G. and R. Bezilla. The Religious Life of Young Americans. Princeton, NJ: The George Gallup International Institute

Gorsuch, R. L. and S. G. McFarland. 1972. "Single vs. Multiple-Item Scales for Measuring Religious Values." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 11:53-63.

Johnson, B.R. 1987. "Religiosity and Institutional Deviance: The Impact of Religious Variables Upon Inmate Adjustment," *Criminal Justice Review* 12 (1):21-30, 1987.

Larson, D.B. 1993. *The Faith Factor, Volume II: An Annotated Bibliography of Systematic Reviews and Clinical Research on Spiritual Subjects*. Rockville, MD: National Institute for Healthcare Research.

Larson, D.B. and S.S. Larson. 1994 *The Forgotten Factor in Physical and Mental Health: What Does the Research Show*. Rockville, MD: The National Institute for Healthcare Research.

Larson, D.B., J.S. Lyons, A.H. Hohmann, R.S. Beardsley, W.M. Huckeba, P.V. Rabins, and B.D Lebowitz. 1989. "A Systematic Review of Nursing Home Research in Three Psychiatric Journals." *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 4:129-134.

Larson, D.B., E.M. Pattison, D.G. Blazer, A.R. Omran, and B.H. Kaplan. 1986. "Systematic Analysis of Research on Religious Variables in Four Major psychiatric Journals, 1978-1982." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 143:329-334.

Larson, D.B., K.A. Sherrill, J.S. Lyons, F.C. Craigie, S.B. Thielman, M.A. Greenwold, and S.S. Larson. 1992. "Associations between Dimensions of Religious Commitment and Mental Health Reported in the American Journal of Psychiatry and Archives of General Psychiatry: 1878-1989." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 149:129-134.

Lyons, J.S., D.B. Larson, J.C. Bareta, A.H. Hohmann, I.Y. Liu, and C.H. Sparks. 1990. "A Systematic Analysis of the Quality of AIDS Publications and the Quality of Research Methods in Three General Medical Journals." *Evaluation and Program Planning* 13:73-77.

Tittle, C. and M. Welch. 1983. "Religiosity and Deviance: Toward a Contingency Theory of Constraining Effects." *Social Forces* 61: 653-682

Appendix A

Articles Comprising the Systematic Review:
January, 1980 – December, 1997

1. Barnes, G. M., Farrell, M. P., and Banerjee, S. (1994). Family influences on alcohol abuse and other problem behaviors among black and white adolescents in a general population sample. Special issue: preventing alcohol abuse among adolescents: preintervention and intervention research. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 4: 183-201.

2. Bahr, S. J., Hawks, R. D., and Wang, G. (1993). Family and religious influences on adolescent substance abuse. *Youth and Society* 24: 443-465.

3. Benda B. B. (1997). An examination of a reciprocal relationship between religiosity and different forms of delinquency with a theoretical model. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 34: 163-186.

4. Benda, B. B. (1994). Testing competing theoretical concepts: Adolescent alcohol consumption. *Deviant Behavior* 15: 375-396.

5. Benda, B. B. (1995). The effect of religion on adolescent delinquency revisited. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 32: 446-466.

6. Benda, B. B., and Whiteside, L. (1995). Testing an integrated model of delinquency using LISREL. *Journal of Social Service Research* 21: 1-32.

7. Bliss, S. K., and Crown, C. L. (1994). Concern for appropriateness, religiosity, and gender as predictors of alcohol and marijuana use. *Social Behavior & Personality* 22: 227-237.

8. Brownfield, D., and Sorenson, A. M. (1991). Religion and drug use among adolescents: A social support conceptualization and interpretation. *Deviant Behavior* 12: 259-276.

9. Carlucci, K., Genova, J., and Rubackin, F. (1993). Effects of sex, religion, and amount of alcohol consumption on self-reported drinking-related problem behaviors. *Psychological Reports* 72: 983-987.

10. Chadwick, B. A., and Top, B. L. (1993). Religiosity and delinquency among LDS adolescents. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32: 51-67.

11. Cochran, J. K. (1989). Another look at delinquency and religiosity. *Sociological Spectrum* 9: 147-162.

12. Cochran, J. K. (1988). The effect of religiosity on secular and ascetic deviance. *Sociological Focus* 21: 293-306.

13. Cochran, J. K. (1993). The variable effects of religiosity and denomination on adolescent self-reported alcohol use by beverage type. *Journal of Drug Issues* 23: 479-491.

14. Cochran, J. K., and Akers, R. L. (1989). Beyond hellfire: An exploration of the variable effects of religiosity on adolescent marijuana and alcohol use. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 26: 198-225.

15. Cochran, J. K., Wood, P. B., and Arneklev, B. J. (1994). Is the religiosity-delinquency relationship spurious? A test of arousal and social control theories. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 31: 92-123.

16. Donahue, M. J. (1995). Religion and the well-being of adolescents. *Journal of Social Issues* 51: 145-160

17. Dudley, R. L., Mutch, P. B., and Cruise, R. J. (1987). Religious factors and drug usage among seventh-day adventist youth in north America. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 26: 218-233.

18. Ellis, L., Thompson, R. (1989). Relating religion, crime, arousal and boredom. *Sociology and Social Research* 73: 132-139.

19. Engs, R. C., Diebold, B. A., and Hanson, D. J. (1996). The drinking patterns and problems of a national sample of college students, 1994. *Journal of Alcohol & Drug Education* 41: 13-33.

20. Evans, T. D., Cullen, F. T., Burton, V. S., Dunaway, R. G. et al (1996). Religion, social bonds, and delinquency. *Deviant Behavior* 17: 43-70.

21. Fernquist, R. M. (1995). A research note on the association between religion and delinquency. *Deviant Behavior* 16: 169-175.

22. Free, M. D. (1991). Clarifying the relationship between the broken home and juvenile delinquency: a critique of the current literature. *Deviant Behavior* 12: 109-167.

23. Free, M. D. (1994). Religiosity, religious conservatism, bonds to school, and juvenile delinquency among three categories of drug users. *Deviant Behavior* 15: 151-170.

24. Free, M. D. (1992). Religious affiliation, religiosity, and impulsive and intentional deviance. *Sociological Focus* 25: 77-91.

25. Free, M. D. (1993). Stages of drug use: A social control perspective. *Youth and Society* 25: 251-271.

26. Hardert, R. A., and Dowd, T. J. (1994). Alcohol and marijuana use among high school and college students in Phoenix, Arizona: A test of Kandel's socialization theory. *International Journal of the Addictions* 29: 887-912.

27. Hawks, R. D., Bahr, S. J., and Wang, G. (1994). Adolescent substance use and codependence. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 55: 261-268.

28. Humphrey, J. A., Leslie, P., and Brittain, J. (1989). Religious participation, southern university women, and abstinence. *Deviant Behavior* 10: 145-155.

29. Ingram, A. L. (1993). Type of place, urbanism, and delinquency: further testing the determinist theory. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 30: 192-212.

30. Johnson, R. E., Marcos, A. C., and Bahr, S. J. (1987). The role of peers in the complex etiology of adolescent drug use. *Criminology* 25: 323-340.

31. Mitchell, J., Dodder, R. A., and Norris, T. D. (1990). Neutralization and delinquency: A comparison by sex and ethnicity. *Adolescence* 98: 487-497.

32. Nagin, D. S., and Paternoster R. (1991). On the relationship of past to future participation in delinquency. *Criminology* 29: 163-189.

33. Peek, C. W., Curry, E. W., and Chalfant, H. P. (1985). Religiosity and delinquency over time: Deviance deterrence and deviance amplification. *Social Science Quarterly* 66: 120-131.

34. Perkins, H. W. (1987). Parental religion and alcohol use problems as intergenerational predictors of problem drinking among college youth. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 26: 340-357.

35. Ross, L. E. (1994). Religion and deviance: Exploring the impact of social control elements. *Sociological Spectrum* 14: 65-86.

36. Sloane, D. M., and Potvin, R. H. (1986). Religion and delinquency: Cutting through the maze. *Social Forces* 65: 87-105.

37. Stark, R. (1996). Religion as context: hellfire and delinquency one more time. *Sociology of Religion* 57: 163-73.

38. Walsh, A. (1995). Parental attachment, drug use, and facultative sexual strategies. *Social Biology* 42: 95-107.

39. Yarnold, B. M., Patterson, V. (1995). Factors correlated with adolescents' use of crack in public schools. *Psychological Reports* 76: 467-474.

40. Zimmerman, M. A., and Maton, K.I. (1992). Life-style and substance use among male African-American urban adolescents: A cluster analytic approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 20: 121-137.

Section II

Religiosity and At-Risk Urban Youth

In Section I we systematically reviewed the recent religiosity and delinquency research and summarized a number of methodological shortcomings present in many of these studies. In Section II of this paper we present in summary fashion the research results from three forthcoming studies which offer important theoretical and methodological improvements to the research publications systematically reviewed in Section I.

Religiosity and Young Black Males

In the first study we examine the efficacy of churchgoing to help young black males residing in poverty tracts in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia, to escape criminal and delinquent activity so often associated with at-risk youth living in urban communities. Drawing upon relevant criminological theories and utilizing hierarchical regression analysis, the findings confirm that churchgoing is significantly associated with lower levels of crime and delinquency. This finding holds after controlling for various demographic, family, and other social control variables, suggesting that churchgoing has its own unique effect on crime prevention.

Black Churches and Youth Outreach

The second study builds upon the beneficial finding of churchgoing among young black males in poverty tracts by examining the role of the African-American church to reduce delinquency among black youth residing in urban communities in a national sample. Improving on earlier research by incorporating a multidimensional measure of religiosity and utilizing a longitudinal study design, the hierarchical regression models demonstrate that religiosity is significantly linked to reduced levels of minor and general delinquency over time. The historical legacy of the African-American church as an agency of social control is well documented in the sociology literature, but the current longitudinal finding is the first to demonstrate its significance in reducing delinquency over time. Indeed, the beneficial legacy of the African-American church is one that continues to the present.

Religiosity and Youth

The third study examines the indirect and directs effects of religiosity upon delinquency in a nationally representative sample of youth in a longitudinal panel study. Religiosity, a multidimensional variable, was found to have a positive direct effect on adolescent belief and a negative indirect, or beneficial, effect on delinquency in three separate time periods. The effects of religiosity among both white and black youth remain significant even after controlling for peer association, belief, and other background variables. The results suggests that religiosity can influence current behaviors and attitudes of youth, and thus can affect their involvement in delinquency.

Escaping from the Crime of Inner-Cities: Religiosity and Young Black Males[18]

Sociologists and criminologists have often studied the propensity for crime or deviance among at-risk adolescent groups in inner-cities, but the role of religious institutions has often been overlooked

or ignored (Larson 1993; Larson and Larson 1994). Freeman's (1986) finding of the importance of churchgoing in helping inner-city black male youth escape from the world of poverty, drug use, and crime is a rare, much needed research effort with substantial implications for criminological theory. For example, the influence of religious belief in social learning as well as the role of the faith community in enhancing social control, particularly in urban areas often typified by social disorganization and decay is worthy of much more extensive study.

The present study is intended to extend and modify Freeman's economic model into one that fits into a criminological framework, especially within the context of research on the effects of religiosity on youth deviance. The core hypothesis of the present study concerns whether a youth's church attendance has any independent effect on delinquent behavior, especially among inner-city black youth. Although church attendance might be found to have little or no significant direct effect on deviance, we are still interested in identifying potential intervening variables between church attendance and deviance.

Data from the National Bureau of Economic Research

The present study will be primarily focussed on reanalyzing data collected on inner-city black youth by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), a coalition of research economists interested in studying black youth joblessness in America. NBER researchers developed a survey (Survey of Inner-City Black Youth) that made it possible to study the problems facing black youth including delinquency, drug use, and school dropout. NBER researchers developed this survey as a response to the perceived inadequacy of existing governmental data,[20] to study and understand the problem of employment among American black youth in the inner-city.[21]

Measures of Delinquency

In the NBER data set, delinquency is measured on a dichotomous, or "yes – no," scale. The respondents were asked whether or not they committed any of nine different illegal activities (played street numbers or gambling; sold or fenced stolen goods; sold marijuana or other drugs; committed burglary, larceny, or auto theft; shoplifted or stole from cars or trucks; committed muggings or purse snatchings; committed robberies or stickups; cashed or forged stolen checks; run or been part of any con games, swindles, or frauds) over the past 12 months. All nine of these activities can be determined as serious offenses. Since we do not know the frequency of offenses and all the known offenses are serious ones, we use a simple dichotomous variable to measure delinquency involvement. Respondents who reported involvement in any of the offenses during the past 12 months are classified as delinquents. Those who did not report any involvement are treated as non-delinquents.

Drug use in the NBER data is also measured on a dichotomous scale. Respondents were asked whether they used marijuana or other drugs such as cocaine, heroin, barbiturates, amphetamines or LSD at the time of the interview. Those who reported use of any drug are given the value of 1. Those who did not report drug use are assigned the value of 0. Ideally, regular and habitual users should not be distinguished from experimental users – those who use drugs four times or less (see Elliott, Huizinga, and Menard, 1989).

Two measures of alcohol use are also introduced in the analysis. In the descriptive analysis, a simple dichotomous measure is used to distinguish frequent users from nonusers and infrequent users.

Respondents who used alcoholic beverages every day or almost every day are given a value of 1. Otherwise, they are given the value of 0. In the hierarchical regression analysis to follow, an index of alcohol consumption was used to measure alcohol use in the NBER data. The index consists of three items: frequency of drinking beer, frequency of drinking wine, and frequency of drinking hard liquor. The reliability coefficient (α) for the three-item index is 0.731.

Hierarchical Models for the NBER Sample

We conducted a series of hierarchical regression analyses to test the relationship between religiosity and delinquency. A hierarchical analysis allows us to adjust for different sources of study impact or influence so that the net effect of religious commitment or religiosity on delinquency can be determined. For each delinquency measure, we first examined the effects of religious measures on the outcome. We then entered a set of background variables into the equation to test whether the impact of religiosity on delinquency is spurious. Age, family structure, family size, welfare status, and illegal opportunities have been shown in past research to correlate strongly with delinquency. Previous studies have also suggested that urban residence has an impact on the commission of illegal behavior. Two dichotomous variables measuring urban residence (i.e., Boston and Chicago) were also entered into the equation to control for this geographic effect.

The results indicate that church attendance: (1) has a direct inverse, or beneficial, impact on delinquency, drug use, and alcohol use; and (2) has a positive influence on a juvenile's behavior net of the impact of age, family structure, family size, urban residence, and illegal opportunities. Regular attendance at religious services seems to produce many socially desirable outcomes, such as strong attachment to education and stable job records. The results indicate that in addition to its direct effect on delinquency, church attendance also indirectly reduces delinquency involvement by fostering stronger social bonds, good peer relationships, and high involvement in productive social activities. Though the inner-city may present the same challenges for all the kids who live in it, those who attend religious services seem to have a much better chance to build strong attachment and commitment to conventional values and activities such as the church and school, which in turn decreases their involvement in delinquency.

In sum, these findings suggest that when it comes to church attendance, the less deviant behavioral patterns among churchgoing inner-city black youth cannot be accounted for by either background factors or social process variables (i.e., social bonding and social learning variables). These findings provide evidence that church attendance itself has its own unique effect on deviance among inner-city black youth. Further, the findings lend support to the notion that religiosity, as measured by church attendance, appears to be a strong protective factor in insulating at-risk youth from the crime and delinquency of inner-city poverty tracts.

Conclusions

We find that regular church attendance has a consistent direct impact on all three types of deviance (i.e., illegal activities, drug use, and alcohol use) for those high-risk youth. This pattern remains even after controlling for background and non-religious or secular bonding and learning variables. As expected, the effect of church attendance on deviance somewhat decreases when those variables are held constant, indicating that the effect is indirect as well as direct. However, the lower levels of deviance reported by inner-city black male youth who are religiously committed could not be fully

explained by their stronger bond to family and school, more conventional peer networks, or higher involvement in productive activities.

Thus, a policy implication from this finding would be to bolster weakened social control mechanisms, such as the family, and to encourage utilization of other urban institutions, like churches, synagogues, or mosques, whose ability to influence youth through informal means of social control remain largely intact. Criminologists have historically focused on the school and family, paying little attention to religion when they address the etiology of deviance among at-risk urban youth whose chance to escape from the substance abuse and crime of inner-cities is relatively low. Therefore, from a social disorganization perspective for at-risk youth in poor urban environments, the church can be viewed as a remnant of social organization amidst the otherwise disorganized and troubled areas so often found in inner-cities.

One might also argue that participating in a church community is much of what leads to the protective or beneficial influence of religion. From a life course perspective, it is the quality of relationships formed within the participation in that faith community (i.e., whether church, synagogue, mosque, or temple) that is important. In this way, youth commitment to the church can be seen as analogous to other life changing events such as employment or marriage, that research shows can help shape in a pro-social or positive fashion, an individual's behavioral trajectory over the life course.

Further, churchgoing may play a key a role as a protective factor that insulates inner-city black male youth from various forms of deviance. Church teachings in general, tend to run counter to various forms and expressions of anti-social behavior such as that espoused by gangs. Therefore, social support networks and the influence of mentors provide what criminologists call "buffers" that help protect otherwise vulnerable youth to the criminal and delinquent elements adversity of poverty tracts in the inner-city. Indeed, if churchgoing matters and is a source of resiliency among youth, then we have a basis for arguing that we need to support public and private policies that strengthen inner-city churches and bring youth into these churches.

Finally, the authors believe these findings have both theoretical as well as policy implications. First, this study adds to the small, but mounting, body of evidence already suggesting that religiosity is a neglected, but relevant, variable in delinquency research. Second, the findings suggest that at a minimum, religiosity is a variable with considerable relevance for social disorganization, life course, and resilience perspectives. Additional research is needed which examines additional ways religiosity may influence theories of social control as well as its unique contribution to pathways and turning points in the life course. We need to know more about how religious commitment, religious practices, religious institutions are linked to protective factors and the resiliency of youth in general, and specifically, youth from socially disorganized communities.

Black Churches and Youth Outreach[22]

The historical significance of the African-American church as an agency of social control and organization is well documented in the sociology literature (see for example: DuBois, 1898, 1903; Frazier 1963; Lincoln, 1974; Lincoln and Mamiya, 1992; Mukenge, 1983; Nelsen, Yokley, and Nelsen, 1971; Paris, 1985; and J. Washington, 1964). However, one will search the criminological literature with difficulty to locate empirical studies examining the role of the black church as agency of social control with regard to crime and delinquency.

Therefore, the current study examines the significance of the African-American church in impacting delinquency among black youth living in urban communities. Bursik and Grasmick (1993) point out that local religious institutions such as churches or mosques can play an important role as the agent of community socialization and informal social control. That is, the African-American church can provide relational networks of community social organization for urban black youth living in environments of structural disadvantages that have been shown to be predictors of adolescent deviance.

Urban communities are often characterized by various structural disadvantages, such as family disruption and unemployment (Wilson 1987), which put youth who live in those communities at increased risk of delinquency, especially criminal violence (Sampson 1987). However, it is also true and should be underscored that many urban youth do not turn to delinquency as a result of living in disadvantaged communities. That is, there exists a significant proportion of children who develop through adolescence without serious problems, such as juvenile delinquency, in the face of great adversity during the early and formative years of life (e.g., Williams and Kornblum 1985). Often referred to as "resilient youth," developmental criminologists have recently begun to focus on factors that not only tend to protect at-risk youth from the risk factors associated with structural disadvantage, but help provide an explanation of the significant within-group variation in delinquent involvement (Rutter 1985, 1988; Rutter and Giller 1983; Smith et al. 1995; Werner 1989; Werner and Smith 1992).

Identifying protective factors which may serve to buffer or shield at-risk children and adolescents like urban black youth from negative behavioral outcomes (e.g. delinquency, drug use, school dropout) has strong implications for delinquency prevention and intervention policy as well as important theoretical implications. Though previous research has mostly focused on risk factors, resilience research is far more promising in that it takes into consideration the contribution of often overlooked protective factors. For example, social disorganization theory can be expanded by incorporating community-level protective factors like local religious institutions given that social organization and social disorganization are conceptualized as opposite ends of the same continuum of systemic networks of community social control (Bursik and Grasmick 1993; Elliott et al. 1996; Sampson and Wilson 1995).

Resilience researchers have begun to examine various sources of protective factors such as family, school and peers (Smith et al. 1995), but like many other research fields (Larson 1993; Larson and Larson 1994; Larson et al., 1997) have largely ignored religion though it has been shown to protect children and adolescents from negative behavioral outcomes (Anthony and Cohler 1987; Gartner, Larson, and Allen, 1991; Stark 1996). Criminological research on the effects of individual religiosity on adolescent deviance also provides evidence that religious adolescents (e.g., those who regularly attend church) are less likely than their non-religious peers (e.g., those who never or irregularly attend church) to engage in deviance, especially what has been referred to as "ascetic" deviance like alcohol and drug use (Benda and Corwyn 1997; Brownfield and Sorenson 1991; Burkett and Warren 1987; Cochran and

Akers 1989; Elifson et al. 1983; Evans et al. 1995; Higgins and Albrecht 1977; Johnson et al. 1997a, 1997b; Tittle and Welch 1983). What is relatively lacking, however, is research that investigates whether individual religiosity protects at-risk adolescents such as urban youth from engaging in delinquency.

The present study defines individual religiosity as the extent to which an individual is committed to religion he or she professes and its teachings so that the individual's attitudes and behaviors reflect such commitment. Applying this definition to the present study, urban black youth who are religiously committed are expected to (1) more frequently attend religious services, (2) more often participate in religious activities besides regular services, and (3) attribute more significance to religion and religious activities in his or her life as compared to those who are less committed.

Measurement

This study incorporates four sets of variables, including: (1) measures of delinquency (divided into three categories: minor delinquency, general delinquency, and serious delinquency); (2) an index of religiosity (measured by four variables: frequency of attending religious services; time spent on community-based religious activities during weekends; salience; and importance of involvement in religious activities); (3) measures of social control and delinquent peer association; and (4) a set of variables measuring demographic characteristics and family background.

Data come from Wave 3, Wave 4, and Wave 5 of the National Youth Survey (NYS), a multi-wave panel survey based on a national probability sample. The survey started in 1977 with a sample of 1,725 youth ranging in age from 11 to 17. The survey items used in the NYS have been validated in numerous refereed publications in criminology and sociology over the last decade.

Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate scatterplots between religiosity and delinquency demonstrated that most minor, general, and serious delinquent acts were committed by juveniles who had low levels of religious commitment. Those juveniles whose religiosity levels were in the middle to high levels committed very few delinquent acts. However, to determine the actual impact of religiosity on the delinquency measures we ran a series of multivariate models that allowed us to control the influence of any number of variables.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

We ran three separate models to test the effect of religiosity on minor, general, and serious delinquency when controlling for other explanatory variables in the model. In all three models, the effects of religiosity, social bond, and peer association were assumed to have similar effects on this group of individuals. This is a reasonable approach because the subjects of this study belonged to a relatively homogenous group (i.e. urban black youth), compared to the general population.

Both hierarchical regression models with minor and general delinquency as the response variables indicated that religiosity had a negative effect on delinquency, controlling for social bond, association with delinquent peer, demographic characteristics and family background. In these models, religiosity was one of only four variables (the others being age, gender, and belief in conventional

values) that were significantly related to minor and general delinquency.

The effect of religiosity on serious delinquency was small and non-significant. Our inability to detect a significant relationship between religiosity and serious delinquency might be due at least in part to the fact that very few respondents in the small sample we examined committed serious delinquency. Because serious delinquency is less prevalent than minor or general delinquency, a larger sample is needed to accurately test the relationship between religiosity and serious delinquency.

Conclusions

Prior delinquency research has not examined the role of the African-American church as an agency of local social control that might help black youth to be resilient to and thus resistant to delinquency. The present study examined a national sample of urban black youth to determine the relationship of religious commitment to delinquency in urban areas.

Urban black youth tend to come from more disadvantaged backgrounds and report more involvement in deviant as well as non-productive activities than other black or white youth. We have found that higher levels of religiosity have a beneficial impact on lower levels of delinquency over time. This pattern remains even after controlling for background and non-religious or secular bonding and learning variables.

The present findings have theoretical, methodological, and policy implications. First, the current findings provide evidence that religiosity can be seen as a relevant protective factor for urban youth. As resilience researchers continue to pursue factors that may provide buffers from deviant activities for at-risk youth, religiosity measures should clearly not be overlooked in such future studies. Similarly, more research is needed which examines more closely what contribution religious variables may make to our understanding of delinquency over the life-course.

Second, much of the prior research on religiosity has relied upon single-item measures of religiosity rather than multidimensional measures. In the present study we have created an index of religiosity that consists of four observed variables that capture levels of religious participation as well as the intensity of religious commitment. We believe that inadequate measurement and operationalization of religiosity in previous research has contributed at least in part, to the mixed results so often referred to in the literature. Further, utilizing longitudinal panel data allowed us to examine in a multilevel modeling approach, the effects of religiosity over time, a feature that has been missing from the religiosity-delinquency literature.

Third, the current study suggests that future delinquency prevention and intervention policies that overlook the role of the African-American church in reducing delinquency among black youth in urban areas will, at a minimum, be unnecessarily short-sighted. In the spirit of multidisciplinary and multifaceted approaches to various social problems, it would seem that common sense, coupled with empirical evidence, warrant the inclusion of the faith community in various partnership strategies to fight urban delinquency. This is quite important given the prevalence of religious belief among American adolescents. Though more research is needed in this area, the current study provides important nationally-relevant evidence that the African-American church can play a key role as an agency of local social control in communities too often typified by disorganization and disadvantage.

Religion and Youth[23]

In this article we make the theoretical argument that religious commitment can be seen as influencing the key processes of social learning: differential reinforcement, definitions, differential association, and imitation. Drawing mainly upon Akers' social learning perspective, we outline several hypotheses that lead us to expect direct as well as indirect effects of adolescent religiosity on delinquency. The behavior of adolescents who are religiously committed is expected to be strengthened through: (1) the learning from religious beliefs that are opposed to deviant behavior; (2) being exposed to religious as well as behavioral patterns that are pro-social (i.e. conventional or law-abiding); and (3) modeling the behavior and attitudes of pro-social spiritual role models that youth like and/or respect.

As outlined in Section I of this paper, prior research in the area of religiosity and delinquency has a number of methodological shortcomings. One of these flaws is the failure to pay adequate attention to both indirect and direct effects of religious commitment variables in regard to various measures of delinquency. For example, if religiosity is not found to be significantly related to delinquency in a particular study, one cannot state that there is no relationship between these two variables. If, for example, increasing religiosity is directly related to a variable called belief, and belief is directly related to delinquency, then the indirect relationship between religiosity and delinquency is indeed measurable and important. Further, the sum total of all the indirect effects can be substantial in explaining variance in the dependent variable even though there may not be a direct link between the two.

Data and Sample

This study examines the relationship between religiosity and delinquency using data from the National Youth Survey. We selected data from Wave 3, Wave 4, and Wave 5 of the National Youth Survey (NYS) since the data in each of these waves contains an identical list of variables that can be used to assess both religiosity as well as delinquency. Because the variables we selected represent the same attributes measured at different points of time, we can use them to test whether the same relationships hold true across time. The NYS is a multi-wave panel survey based on a national probability sample. The study started in 1977 with 1,725 youth aged 11 to 17. The sample originally selected was representative of the total 11-year old through 17-year old youth population in the United States as established by the U.S. Census Bureau (Elliot & Ageton, 1980).

Variables and Measurement

The same set of variables is used in all three waves. The variables are either composite measures or factors represented by several indicators. We deliberately incorporate latent variables into our analysis to control for measurement errors, which are often unexamined in previous studies of religion and crime (Tittle & Welch 1983; Burkett & Warren 1987). Failure to control measurement errors can have serious consequences. One of these is inconsistency in parameter estimation, which can result in either overestimation or underestimation of the population parameters (Bollen 1989:151-178). To minimize the effects of measurement errors, most of the variables in our model are measured by multiple indicators.

Social bond elements proposed by Hirschi (1969), including attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, are often cited as important correlates of religion and crime (Brenda 1997; Burkett &

Warren 1987). Researchers argue that a strong social bond attenuates the effect of religion because the restraining effect of religiosity may not be necessary when personal bond to family, school, and conventional values is sufficiently strong (Cochran et al. 1994). Thus in addition to personal belief, we controlled several additional measures of social bond, including attachment to parents and school and commitment to conventional social activities, in a separate analysis. These social bond variables did not have significant effects on the outcome variables. This finding is consistent with Agnew's (1991) finding that social bond does not contribute significantly to the explanation of delinquency in the NYS data. Therefore, based on our preliminary analysis and previous literature, we eliminated the measures of attachment and commitment from the model.

Two sets of causal effects are specified in the study. The first set of effects consists of contemporaneous effects among the variables in the same wave. Consistent with our hypothesis, religiosity is proposed to have direct effects on delinquent attitudes, delinquent peer associations, and delinquency. Delinquent attitudes are expected to have direct effects on delinquent peer associations and delinquency. Finally, delinquent peer associations are expected to have a direct effect on delinquency. The second set of relationships comprises stability effects among the same attitudinal and behavioral variables measured at different waves.

Direct Effects

Based on the development of the social learning processes, we expect the effect of religiosity on delinquency to remain significant after controlling for other religious as well as secular variables that we hypothesize mediate some portion of the behavioral impact of religiosity. In this study we focused on two key social learning concepts as intervening variables between adolescent religiosity and delinquency: (1) delinquent attitudes and (2) associations or relationships with delinquent peers. We hypothesize that delinquent attitudes have significant direct effects on delinquent relationships as an adolescent's belief system plays a significant role in determining the normative or law-abiding behavior of his/her peer group (Hirschi 1969).

Indirect Effects

The centrality of relationships with delinquent peers (henceforth, delinquent relationships) in the social learning perspective is well documented in the literature (Akers 1985, 1997; Akers et al. 1979; Elliott, Huizinga & Ageton 1985; Thornberry et al. 1994; Warr 1993). The attitudes of adolescents and those of their friends, has a strong, independent effect on adolescents' behavior (Thornberry et al. 1994). Therefore, we hypothesize that the effect of religiosity on delinquency is partly mediated by delinquent relationships to the extent to which an adolescent's religious commitment enhances the selection of conventional or law-abiding friends and the avoidance of delinquent friends.

Findings

Direct Effects of Religiosity

In general, the effects of religiosity are consistent with our hypotheses. Religiosity has a positive direct effect on delinquent attitudes and a negative direct effect on delinquency in all three waves. In addition, religiosity also has a negative direct effect on association with delinquent peers in Wave 3. All the direct effects, except the one from religiosity to delinquent attitudes in Wave 3, are moderate in

strength. The highest standardized coefficient in absolute term is 0.17 and the lowest is 0.07.

Indirect Effects of Religiosity

In addition to the direct effects, religiosity also has significant, indirect effects on delinquency in all three waves. The indirect effects of religiosity on delinquency in Wave 3 are especially strong. Through its direct impact on delinquent attitudes and peer association, religiosity in Wave 3 exerts a significant, negative effect on delinquency in Wave 3. It also has negative, indirect effects on the delinquency measures in Wave 4 and Wave 5 through other intermediate variables. The standardized coefficients of the three indirect effects are -0.23, -0.30, and -0.35, for Wave 3, 4, and 5 respectively indicating that the indirect effects of religiosity in Wave 3 on delinquency becomes progressively stronger from Wave 3 to Wave 5.

Total Effects of Religiosity

Overall, religiosity in Wave 3 has a strong, negative total effect on delinquency in all three waves. The effects of religiosity in Wave 4 and Wave 5 follow the same pattern. They all have a negative total effect on delinquency in the same wave, and, when applicable, on delinquency in the subsequent wave. The indirect impact of religiosity in Wave 3 on delinquency is especially strong. More than two-thirds of its total impact on delinquency in any of the three waves consists of indirect effects through intermediate variables, including delinquent attitude, peer association, and religiosity in later waves.

In comparison with the other variables in the model, religiosity, especially religiosity in Wave 3, contributes significantly to the explanation of delinquency in the adolescent's life. The two variables most strongly related to delinquency are association with delinquent peers and religiosity. These two variables directly affect delinquency across three waves. In addition, the total effects of these two factors on the delinquency measures are all significant. Peer association has a stronger effect on delinquency than religiosity, but the effects of religiosity, however, remain quite robust after controlling for peer association, delinquent attitudes, and the background variables.

The major findings regarding religiosity can be summarized as follows: (1) All three measures of religiosity have direct, negative effects on delinquency; (2) Religiosity in Wave 3 has the strongest effect on delinquency, suggesting that religious commitment and involvement in early age has a strong inhibiting effect on delinquency; (3) All three measures of religiosity have significant indirect effects on delinquency. The indirect effect of religiosity in Wave 3 is much stronger than its direct effect. This result suggests that one can seriously underestimate the total effect of religiosity if one focuses on either only direct or else on only indirect effects; and (4) Religiosity remains an important explanatory variable of delinquency after the effects of peer association, delinquent attitudes, and the exogenous variables are controlled. Though association with delinquent peers has a stronger total effect on delinquency than religiosity, the total effect of religiosity remains substantially robust.

These results indicate that a youth's current behavior and attitude, such as church attendance and conventional belief, can affect their involvement in delinquency one year or even two years later by increasing their future participation in the same type of behavior and by strengthening their belief in the same value system. In sum, the variables in the model show both strong contemporaneous effects

and stability over time. The results suggest an adolescent's behavior may be more affected by current rather than past events and beliefs.

Discussion and Conclusion

We proposed that religiosity would have a direct effect on delinquency independent of the effects of other social and economic variables. We find that religiosity has a consistent direct effect on delinquency, independent of the effects of all the other variables controlled in the model. We also find that the indirect effects of religiosity through delinquent attitudes and peer associations to be significant and substantial.

In addition to theoretical limitations, previous research concerning the effects of religiosity on deviance and crime has also been plagued by methodological limitations. Rarely have such studies used nationally representative or longitudinal data, and thus, tend to lack generalizability. Further, studies in this area tend to use data from relatively small samples, often having problems with response rates and missing data. And, finally, the concept of religiosity has often been measured with only single items.

In the current study we have eliminated many of the methodological flaws that have too often plagued studies examining the relationship between religiosity and delinquency. The NYS is a longitudinal and nationally representative data set, making our findings more generalizable than previous studies. Further, we have operationalized religiosity as a multidimensional variable, thereby measuring the influence of religious attendance and activities as well as indicators of salience. Finally, given that religiosity is an abstract and, thus, not directly observable construct, we have modeled the concept as a latent variable and applied a structural equation model to examine the indirect and direct effects of religiosity.

In light of these findings we are intrigued that among the host of published delinquency studies using data from the NYS, we have yet to find one article which acknowledges the contribution of religiosity in the etiology of delinquency. Thus, it would seem prudent for delinquency researchers to reconsider any number of theoretical arguments by considering religious measures in future delinquency research.

Endnotes

[1] George Gallup, Jr., Emerging Trends, Princeton Religious Center, Volume 18, Number 3, March 1996, p.5. Also see Richard Morin, "Keeping the Faith: A Survey Shows the United States Has the Most Churchgoing People in the Developed World," *The Washington Post Weekly Edition*, January 12, 1998, p.37.

[2] George Gallup, Jr., "Religion in America: Will the Vitality of Churches Be the Surprise of the Next Century?," *The Public Perspective*, October/November 1995, p.4.

[3] Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, The Churching of America (New Brunswick, NJ; Rutgers University Press, 1992).

[4] Gallup, Emerging Trends, op. cit., p. 1.

[5] Robert W. Fogel, "The Fourth Great Awakening and the Political Realignment of the 1990s," paper prepared for presentation at the Seventh Annual Bradley Lecture Series of the American Enterprise Institute, September 11, 1995, p. 2.

[6] Center for Public Justice, A Guide to Charitable Choice (Washington, D.C.: Center for Public Justice, 1997). Also see Carl H. Esbeck, "A Constitutional Case for Governmental Cooperation with Faith-Based Social Service Providers," Emory Law Journal, Volume 46, Number 1, Winter, 1997, pp. 1-83, and Stanley W. Carlson-Thies and James W. Skillen, eds, Welfare in America: Christian Perspectives on a Policy in Crisis (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996).

[7] For example, see Governor's Advisory Task Force on Faith-Based Community Service Groups, Faith in Action: A New Vision for Church-State Cooperation in Texas (State of Texas, December 1996).

[8] Mike Jackson, "Faith in Action Supporting Volunteering with 800 Grantees," Advances: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Quarterly Newsletter, issue 1, 1998, p.10.

[9] Andrew Greely, "The Other Civic America: Religion and Social Capital," *The American Prospect*, Number 32, May-June 1997, p.70.

[10] Ibid., p.72.

[11] Ron Stodghill II, "In the Line of Fire," *Time*, April 20, 1998, pp. 34-37.

[12] Joseph P. Shapiro, "Can Churches Save America," September 9, 1996, pp. 46-53.

[13] James Q. Wilson, "Two Nations," paper delivered as Francis Boyer Lecture, American Enterprise Institute, December 4, 1997, p. 10.

[14] For example, see David B. Larson, et al., Scientific Research on Spirituality and Health (Radnor, PA: The John M. Templeton Foundation, October 1, 1997).

[15] T. David Evans, et al., "Religion and Crime Reexamined: The Impact of Religion, Secular Controls, and Social Ecology on Adult Criminality," Criminology, Volume 33, Number 2, 1995, pp. 211-212.

[16] Richard B. Freeman, "Who Escapes? The Relation of Church-Going and Other Background Factors to the Socio-Economic Performance of Black Male Youths From Inner-City Poverty Tracts," Working Paper, Number 1656, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 1985.

[17] Based on a forthcoming article entitled, "A Systematic Review of the Religiosity and Delinquency Literature: A Research Note," (Johnson, Li, Larson, and McCullough, 1999).

[18] Based on a forthcoming article entitled, "Escaping from the Crime of Inner-Cities: Churchgoing Among At-Risk Youth," (Johnson, Larson, Li, and Jang 1999).

[19] Specifically, the Current Population Survey (CPS), produced the by Census Bureau.

[20] The NBER survey was administered in 1979 and 1980, by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., to black males, aged 16 to 24, residing in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The sample encompassed persons living on city blocks identified by the 1970 Census as having at least 70 percent black residents and 30 percent of families living below the poverty line. Well over 2,800 survey interviews were attempted in the worst poverty tracts of these three cities, and more than 2,300 interviews were completed.

[21] Based on a forthcoming article entitled, "The 'Invisible Institution' and Urban Delinquency: The African-American Church as an Agency of Local Social Control," (Johnson, Li, Jang, and Larson, 1999).

[22] Based on a forthcoming article entitled, "Does Adolescent Religious Commitment Really Matter?: A Reexamination of the Effects of Religiosity on Delinquency," (Johnson, Larson, Li, and Jang 1999).

The Center for Civic Innovation

at the Manhattan Institute

52 Vanderbilt Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10017

Telephone: 212.599.7000

Fax: 212.599.3494

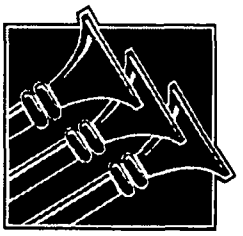
e-mail: holsen@manhattan-institute.org

Henry Olsen

Executive Director

The Jeremiah Project

An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation



The Jeremiah Project

An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation

Faith-Based Outreach to At-Risk Youth in Washington, D.C.

Report 98-1

By

Jeremy White
Mary de Marcellus
Public/Private Ventures

CENTER FOR CIVIC INNOVATION
AT THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Promote the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you;
pray for it to the Lord, for upon its welfare depends your own (Jeremiah 29:7).

The Jeremiah Project

Begun in 1998, The Jeremiah Project (TJP) of the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation (CCI) is dedicated to identifying, documenting, publicizing, and funding outstanding examples of faith-based programs that help inner-city youth and young adults to avoid violence, achieve literacy, and access jobs while resurrecting hope and opportunity in America's most distressed urban neighborhoods.

John DiIulio, a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and Professor at Princeton University, directs TJP. He began his "faith factor" line of research in 1994. In 1996 he founded Public/Private Ventures' Partnership for Research on Religion and At-Risk Youth, and developed the Partnership's national research agenda on faith-based approaches to youth and community development. Known widely for his work on crime, social policy, and government reform, he predicts that by the year 2006, America will be home to 30 million teenagers, the highest number since 1975. Much of the increase in the nation's youth population, he stresses, is occurring in "forgotten urban neighborhoods with high rates of child abuse and neglect, poverty, crime, illiteracy, and chronic unemployment . . . Where secular mentoring and conventional social services programs for severely at-risk inner-city youth and young adults normally end, faith-based programs often begin. . . . Not all churches do it, and churches certainly can't do it all alone. But there's good news. From preschools to prisons, religion works, and adequately supported outreach ministries—the clergy and other religious paramedics of inner-city America's civil society—can save lives and offer a better chance in life to those whom the *Bible* call the 'least of these.' We will need, however, to learn more about the extent, efficacy, and capacity of faith-based efforts, and the general conditions under which they succeed. We need not only research but a willingness—here and now—to help proven urban outreach ministers to meet their unmet everyday needs, from money for fixing a broken pipe in a church basement where an after-school latchkey learning ministry runs, to help writhing a grant proposal, to brokering positive connections with other local institutions...The bottom line is leveraging the 'spiritual capital' of inner-city ministries into more children who are safe, literate, job-ready—and loved."

Others affiliated with the Institute who have roles in TJP include Reverend Floyd Flake, CCI Director Henry Olsen, and the Editor of *City Journal*, Myron Magnet. With Institute President Lawrence Mone, Professor DiIulio co-directs The Jeremiah Funds (TJF) which in just six months provided over $100,000 in support for specific unmet needs of outreach ministries and religious schools in Boston, New York, Camden, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. The Institute invites support for both TJP and TJF.

Executive Summary

As summarized in this report, our research helps answer the following five questions:

- What is the extent of faith-based outreach to at-risk youth in Washington, D.C.?
- What shape does this faith-based outreach take?
- What are some of the technical and financial needs of these organizations?
- How might the effectiveness of these programs be enhanced?
- Would these programs and the youth they reach benefit from increased financial and technical support?

- Our survey clearly suggests that there is a critical mass of faith-based organizations in Washington, D.C. that work directly and intensively with at-risk youth. Most of these youth live in impoverished families or neighborhoods, come from single-parent backgrounds, and/or are confronted with drugs and/or violence on a daily basis.

- Excluding schools, the programs fell into five major categories: tutoring programs; youth groups; evangelization; gang violence prevention; and mentoring.

- Few faith-based programs (5% of those we studied) focused exclusively on evangelization for children in the form of youth church, Bible study, or street evangelization.

- Volunteers were the backbone of most programs. Fifty-six percent of the programs were run entirely by a volunteer staff.

- Excluding schools, we estimate that the faith-based organizations we interviewed, worked with a total of roughly 3,500 youth on a weekly basis.

- Throughout our survey we repeatedly encountered five issues which shaped the work of the faith-based non-profits and church ministries: leadership, faith, funding, location, and teen participation.

- Most ministries and faith-based non-profits we studied were borne of the vision and initiative of one individual. Almost without exception, each organization we visited conjures up one name: Children of Mine, Hanna Hawkins; The Fishing School, Tom Lewis; The Children's Center, Myrtle Loury; Calvary Baptist, Paget Rhee; The Unique Learning Center, Sherry Woods; and so on.

- Our interviews suggested that the directors of faith-based organizations make enormous, seemingly irrational, sacrifices to reflect God's unconditional love in their love for the children; and yet few programs focused solely on evangelization. Instead, they centered on filling the daily practical needs of the children by providing a safe haven, tutoring, and productive activities.

- Throughout our interviews and site visits we discovered many common difficulties faced by non-profits as they sought funding.

- First, many of the faith-based organizations we interviewed have difficulty finding the time and

resources to put together proposals, yet have basic needs such as rent, food for the children, a playground, school materials, or a salary that allows full-time ministry. In addition, many of these organizations lack the training to create a proposal and the funding to hire someone to do part-time or full-time development work.

- Second, one of the non-profits' greatest needs was funding for the salaries of staff. As an organization grows and increases the number of children it serves, it naturally requires more staff to ensure that each child receives the individual attention he or she needs.

- Third, many non-profits found that seeking grants placed them in the position of possibly compromising or obscuring the faith component of their program, even where, as was almost universally true, evangelization was more motive than method and the programs served purely secular purposes such as keeping kids safe, fed, literate, and so on.

- Programs like these are "below the radar screen" as far as foundation and corporate support is concerned. The volunteers who staff these ministries often do not have the contacts and education needed to draw resources from foundations and the wealthier organizations in D.C.

- There are several means of ensuring that support, both technical and financial, reach faith-based organizations that are working with the most at-risk youth on a daily basis. These steps lie in a number of funding, collaboration, and mobilization strategies.

Funding. There is no shortage of worthwhile causes where programs for at-risk youth in Washington are concerned. By using this report to become acquainted with churches and non-profits in the at-risk communities through site visits, interested individuals and organizations could:

  - Administer small grants to faith-based non-profits, reaching a whole segment of at-risk youth, which up to this time most grants have been unable to reach.
  - Encourage corporate givers to support the work of faith-based non-profits in Washington.
  - Draw attention to faith-based non-profits by publishing studies and articles on their programs. (Love Thy Neighbor, a small tutoring program in Southeast, was able to quantify the financial benefit of a newspaper article about the center at about $4,000.)

- Church Mobilization. With anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000 churches in Washington, there is practically a church on every corner. The potential for the churches to become safe havens for at-risk youth is enormous. Although most churches have not developed an outreach to at-risk youth, many have. However, their outreach remains small and focuses on retaining only the younger children. Training in youth ministry could empower these ministries to reach the older youth out on the streets.

- Collaboration Strategies. Supporting the work of faith-based non-profits involves facilitating the collaboration and the sharing of resources between organizations. Often, we found organizations with the same goals and just down the street from each other that were not aware of each other's existence. As a result, many grassroots programs had to reinvent the program wheel simply because they were not aware of the solutions and resources discovered by other organizations.

Table of Contents

Foreward	1
Youth Outreach in D.C.	4
Faith-Based Schools	7
Church Ministries	7
Faith-Based Non-Profits	8
Leadership	9
Faith	10
Funding	11
Location: Grassroots vs. Suburban	12
Teen Outreach and Gang Prevention	13
Recommendations	14
Funding	14
Church Mobilization	14
Collaboration Strategies	14
Appendix A: Note on Study Procedures	15
Appendix B: Compendium of DC Youth Outreach Programs	17
Appendix C: Contacts at DC Youth Outreach Programs	21

Foreword

In the 1990s there has been a surge of interest in the potential of faith-based approaches to urban and social problems. Academic researchers from many disciplines have begun to push the envelope on "faith-factor" studies into how, if at all, religiosity, spirituality and church-going, variously measured, relate to a wide range of socio-economic and public health outcomes. Leading journalists representing a diversity of ideological perspectives have published more stories about religion in the public square. The federal government has passed a number of new laws with profound implications for church-state relations, most notably the "Charitable Choice" provision of the 1996 welfare law which permits expressly religious organizations that are in compliance with federal anti-discrimination regulations to receive federal dollars for the delivery of certain services. Major foundations have launched or expanded programs on religion, and major for-profit corporations have considered contributing directly to faith-based organizations that serve secular social and community-building purposes. Meanwhile, pollsters continue to find that over 90 percent of Americans believe in God, and that over 60 percent of all Americans, including over 80 percent of African-Americans, believe that religion in some form is vital to solving social problems.

In 1996, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) began to investigate the empirical research evidence on faith-based approaches to social and urban problems. P/PV conducted preliminary fieldwork, and began an active dialogue with leaders of youth and community outreach ministries all across the country. In 1997, P/PV established its Partnership for Research on Religion and At-Risk Youth (PRRAY), and launched a multi-site demonstration project designed to produce credible information that might help answer four important sets of questions:

1) What is the extent of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts in America's inner-city neighborhoods? How, if at all, do their efforts engage substantial numbers of at-risk youth? What, if any, partnerships do they have with secular non-profits or government agencies? What range of services, programs or interventions do they provide? Do they tend to work in collaboration with other faith-based organizations? Across denominations? Via inter-faith alliances?

2) What is the efficacy of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts? For example, under what, if any, conditions do they succeed in helping at-risk inner-city youth to avoid violence, achieve literacy, and access jobs? How, if at all, do they accomplish other major youth development goals?

3) What is the capacity of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts? Even if we knew that certain types of faith-based programs worked under given conditions, we would still need to know how to foster those conditions. For example, what are the typical human and financial resource needs of these programs? How, if at all, can so-called community-serving ministries be strengthened via para-church organizations that provide technical assistance and training?

4) What is the replicability of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts? For example, how, if at all, have faith-based anti-violence programs, which seem to have worked well in some places, been replicated in other jurisdictions or neighborhood settings?

This report is derived from the fieldwork of two very talented P/PV junior staff, Jeremy White and Mary de Marcellus. Essentially, the senior staff involved in planning P/PV's systematic research on religion and at-risk youth was challenged by these two junior colleagues. They argued that a great deal could be learned about the extent of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts simply by the sort of intensive if episodic field research aptly characterized by the award-winning Rochester University social scientist Richard Fenno as "soaking and poking, or just hanging around." We took them up on their challenge, arranging to have them spend six months in Washington, D.C. and learn as much as they could about that city's youth and community outreach ministries. This report highlights the main findings from their study, the complete text of which is available from P/PV.

As the authors stress, this report is not a "survey" in the formal sense, and the programs studied or profiled may or may not be representative of the District's faith-based efforts targeted on at-risk youth. A formal survey of the District's faith-based service providers was completed recently by The Urban Institute. The Urban Institute found that 95 percent of the city's congregations perform outreach services. This finding is quite consistent with the findings of earlier formal surveys, including the six-city survey released in 1997 by the Brookings Institution and conducted by Professor Ram A. Cnaan of the University of Pennsylvania for Partners for Sacred Places. Professor Cnaan found that 91 percent of congregations provided at least one social service. The average was four services per congregation, the main beneficiaries of which were neighborhood youth and adults who were not members of the congregation.[1] Such findings spell "outreach."

As noted candidly in The Urban Institute survey, "collecting information from religious congregations is challenging because many do not keep detailed records, do not have the time or staff to complete a survey," and have other limitations that make objective, systematic data gathering on what they do difficult.[2] Also, as the present report makes plain, much of faith-based outreach in the District occurs not via congregations as such but via faith-based non-profit organizations with secular-sounding names. If anything, therefore, the formal surveys completed to date probably underestimate the extent of faith-based outreach to at-risk youth.

This informal survey is rich in precisely the ways that our junior colleagues predicted it would be, providing not only a credibly affirmative answer to the question "Are they out there?" but also a sense of how the "faith" in "faith-based" matters as both motive and method in what outreach workers do and how they do it. This report provides useful baseline information about the extent of faith-based programs in one city, and usefully raises cross-cutting questions about how the intangible qualities of such programs (in particular, their leadership) may or may not matter to their efficacy, capacity, and replicability.

The authors wish to thank the people of the churches, schools and faith-based nonprofits without whose cooperation this report would not have been possible. They also wish to acknowledge the help of several agencies: The Mayor's Office on Religious Affairs; World Vision; Greater DC Cares; The Southeast White House; the District Schools Community Relations Department; Metropolitan Washington Council of Churches; and the Skinner Farm Leadership Institute.

P/PV is grateful to the American Enterprise Institute and The Brookings Institution, each of which provided the authors with office space while they were conducting this study in the District. Finally, P/PV is grateful to the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation and The Jeremiah Project for sponsoring the release of this summary of the study.

John DiIulio
Senior Counsel
Member of the Board
Public/Private Ventures;
Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute

Youth Outreach in D.C.

In a six-month period between October 1, 1997 and April 1, 1998, we conducted an intense but informal survey of faith-based outreach to at-risk youth in Washington, D.C. As summarized in this report, our research helps answer the following five questions:

- What is the extent of faith-based[3] outreach to at-risk youth in Washington, D.C.?
- What shape does this faith-based outreach take?
- What are some of the technical and financial needs of these organizations?
- How might the effectiveness of these programs be enhanced?
- Would these programs and the youth they reach benefit from increased financial and technical support?

The organizations we selected to study were faith-based, served at-risk youth, and were located in Washington, D.C. Following these simple selection criteria, this report profiles a variety of community organizations, including church ministries, non-profits, and schools of varying sizes, faiths, and purposes. Seven of the more interesting general aspects of our survey are as follows:

- Our survey clearly suggests that there is a critical mass of faith-based organizations in Washington, D.C. that work directly and intensively with at-risk youth. Most of these youth live in impoverished families or neighborhoods, come from single-parent backgrounds, and/or are confronted with drugs and/or violence on a daily basis.
- We interviewed leaders and volunteers in a total of 129 faith-based organizations which met our criteria (faith-based, youth-focused, and located in Washington, D.C.). The survey suggests that there are three main groups of programs: faith-based schools, faith-based non-profits, and church-anchored outreach programs. We interviewed staff and volunteers in 13 faith-based schools, 52 faith-based non-profits, and 64 outreach programs operated inside church buildings. (See table 1.)

Table 1

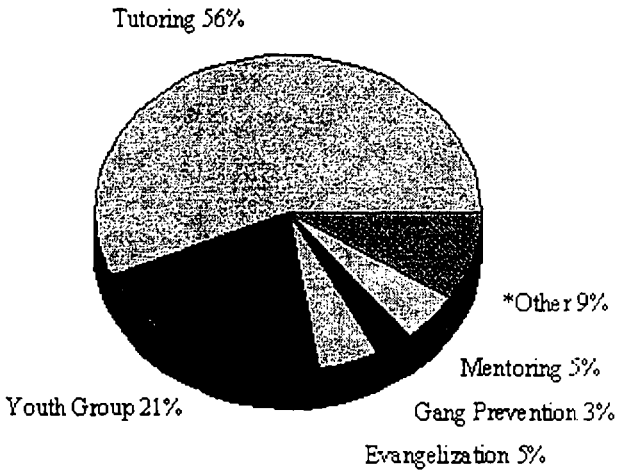
	Church Ministries	Non-Profits	Schools	Total
Interviewed	98*	70	13	181
Fit criteria	64	52	13	129
On-site interviews	21	46	13	80
Telephone interviews	43	6	0	49

*34 churches indicated that they had no youth ministry.

**Other programs include detention ministry, pregnancy counseling, foster care, group homes, sports, summer camp and domestic violence.*

NOTE: Many programs provide multiple services so their primary focus was used for this chart.

Figure 1 - Faith-Based Programs by Type



- Excluding schools, the programs fell into five major categories: tutoring programs; youth groups; evangelization; gang violence prevention; and mentoring. (See figure 1 and table 2.)

- Few faith-based programs (5% of those we studied) focused exclusively on evangelization for children in the form of youth church, Bible study, or street evangelization.

Table 2

Faith-based Programs by Type	
Tutoring	65
Youth Group	24
Evangelization	6
Gang Prevention	4
Mentoring	6
Other*	11
Total	**116**

*Other programs include detention ministry, pregnancy counseling, foster care, group homes, sports, summer camp, and domestic violence.

- Volunteers were the backbone of most programs. Fifty-six percent of the programs were run entirely by a volunteer staff. Nine percent had one full-time staff person, two-thirds of which were also full-time clergy members. Thirty-five percent had two or more full-time staff. Almost all the organizations with paid staff were non-profit organizations. (See table 3.)

Table 3

Volunteer	57
1 Paid Staff	9*
2 or more Paid Staff	35
Total**	**101**

*Six of these are paid clergy who coordinate youth programs.
**This information was not available on 15 programs.

- Only five programs charged a fee for their services. None of them charged a fee over twenty-five dollars a month. Those that did charge a fee for their services believed that charging a nominal fee encouraged parental investment in the program's activities.

- Excluding schools, we estimate that the faith-based organizations we interviewed, worked with a total of roughly 3,500 youth on a weekly basis. An estimated 49 percent of the organizations worked with a group of ten to thirty children on a regular basis. Thirty-five percent worked with 31 to 60 children. Sixteen percent worked with over 60 children. (See table 4.)

Table 4

Programs with 10-30 children	43
Programs with 31-60 children	31
Programs with over 60	14
Total number of programs*	**88**

*Twenty-eight programs did not provide an estimated number of children because attendance varies so widely.

Table 5

7 days a week	4
4-6 days a week	46
2-3 days a week	16
Once a week	26
Once or twice a month	5
Seasonal	4
Total number of programs*	**101**

*Fifteen programs did not report set schedules in their work with the children.

Faith-Based Schools

Faith-based schools are often overlooked as an important source of outreach to at-risk youth in the inner city. Our survey includes thirteen faith-based schools located in at-risk neighborhoods in Washington, D.C.: six Christian, one Muslim, and six Catholic. We are aware of at least eighteen other Christian schools that do youth outreach in the District. The thirteen schools studied were affiliated with a particular church or mosque, from which they received support and guidance.

All the faith-based schools we studied seemed to work wonders as far as basic literacy was concerned. They took advantage of the opportunity to provide individualized academic attention as well as an atmosphere of encouragement and moral structure every day from 7am to often as late as 7pm.

Even though these schools took some of the most at-risk children in their communities, many of their students went on to attend college. Sister Elizabeth, principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, told us, "Around here it's just expected that the child will go to college." Most of the schools charged a tuition which generally fell between two hundred and three hundred dollars a month (far below the actual cost).

The principals did what they could to find scholarships and forgive debts for as long as they possibly could, and only rarely let students go for unpaid tuition. It was common in the schools we interviewed to find teachers going unpaid for months and students taking tests copied on the back of old letters and flyers. Most of the schools had six or seven students receiving some type of scholarship through scholarship programs such as One on One, the Washington Scholarship Fund, or the Black Fund. However, scholarships were rare and required involved parents, which many neighborhood children lacked.

Our survey suggested that the more a school's leaders considered the school an "outreach program," the lower the tuition and the more the school struggled to meet its most basic needs. The directors of each school commented on how many more at-risk students they would be able to enroll with increased funding.

A typical example of a faith-based school in D.C. is the Sacred Heart Catholic School. Sacred Heart is located in the Mt. Pleasant/Adams Morgan neighborhood, the city's predominantly Latino community. The school's budget is so tight that its teachers often are forced to buy their own supplies. Yet it excels at providing a nurturing environment that promotes positive reinforcement. The children are encouraged to be creative and to encourage one another. They are excited to learn. Many of the children have become literate since enrolling. The school, which was founded in 1932, enrolls 213 students in grades Pre-K through 8, eighty percent of whom are Latino.

Church Ministries

Although almost every church in D.C. has a youth ministry, many of them work only with the children from their church, who often come from suburban neighborhoods. We included in our survey only those ministries that worked with children from the at-risk, inner-city neighborhoods surrounding the church.

Church ministries are an extension of the church activities and outreach. They are usually housed in the church and are often operated entirely on a volunteer basis by members of the church with little to no funding. Other ministries are part of the church's regular activities such as church youth groups. These groups typically meet weekly and provide an informal outlet for the youth and an alternative to the streets. Church ministries are usually small and meet with an average of thirty children per week. They are designed with the needs of the community children in mind and rarely charge any fee for their services. Many churches we studied also had some form of a daycare program.

In response to an enormous need in inner-city Washington to keep children well-fed, engaged in school, and off the streets, the majority of the ministries we interviewed offered after-school tutoring programs with small meals. Other programs included sports programs, youth groups, and Bible study. Some met once or twice a week, and some met every day after school. Their doors always seem to be open.

Faith-Based Non-Profits

As noted in the foreword, a recent survey by The Urban Institute focused on outreach by congregations.[4] The Urban Institute's survey was not designed to include faith-based non-profits or those that have secular names (for example, Growing Together, The Unique Learning Center, The Fishing School, and the Neighborhood Learning Center). Because such non-profits were not included in The Urban Institute study, it probably underestimates somewhat the extent of faith-based outreach that can be attributed to the District's communities of faith.

The church ministries described above are often the incubators for faith-based non-profit organizations. Church members motivated by their faith provide the original ideas and initiative, while the church provides the facilities, volunteers, and the funding to get a ministry off the ground.

While many ministries remain within the church, some grow to a point where church funds are no longer sufficient to support their increasing expenses. Often they decide to apply for 501-C3 status in order to seek foundation funding that will allow them to expand.

Faith-based non-profits provide much the same services as church-based ministries. Due to larger budgets, which allow for more staff, non-profits generally provide these services with more depth. For example, many non-profits have the time and staff to visit with parents and teachers to monitor each child's progress. Like ministries, the majority of the non-profits we interviewed provide after-school programs with meals and one-on-one tutoring.

We found that faith-based non-profits were constantly stretching their budgets to the limit so as to provide more services for the children. Like the church ministries, non-profits constantly encountered difficulties in recruiting participation by the parents of the children they served.

Other non-profits are best described as para-churches. They had a particular purpose, such as tutoring the children each day after school, but also considered themselves a church and conducted their own worship services. For example, Love Thy Neighbor, a non-profit, began in an impoverished section of Southeast D.C. While the organization's primary purpose is to minister to the children within the tutoring program, Sara Thompson, its founder, also used her facilities as a place of worship, minis-

tering to those who came on Sundays and going to her students' homes when counseling and prayer were requested.

Throughout our survey we repeatedly encountered five issues which shaped the work of the faith-based non-profits and church ministries: leadership, faith, funding, location, and teen participation.

Leadership

Most ministries and faith-based non-profits we studied were borne of the vision and initiative of one individual. Almost without exception, each organization we visited conjures up one name: Children of Mine, Hanna Hawkins; The Fishing School, Tom Lewis; The Children's Center, Myrtle Loury; Calvary Baptist, Paget Rhee; The Unique Learning Center, Sherry Woods; and so on.

These leaders usually worked alone or with a few volunteers, and made enormous sacrifices of time, money, and even health to keep their ministries afloat. We frequently interviewed directors who worked long hours, often unpaid for months.

The directors we interviewed demonstrated deep religious and moral convictions. They felt a call to reach out to inner-city youth. Their faith is contagious. Through daily demonstrations of what we can only describe as unconditional love, they seemed to be able to motivate the children and staff to accomplish incredible feats.

The type of leadership which drives these non-profits is best expressed through their stories. Sara Thompson founded Love Thy Neighbor Community Center five years ago after tiring of seeing the community's children left with nothing better to do than to kick bottles around in a parking lot each day after school. With no other space available, she opened her basement to the children, allowing them a place to receive help with their homework and to play games. Most importantly, it kept them off the streets. When she could, Sara would take as many children as she could fit in her car on field trips. Soon she quit her job, spent her meager life savings, and opened the community center in a storefront.

Through the community center, Ms. Thompson was able to provide everything from clothing and food to bus tokens and other supplies that the children often needed (all paid for largely from her own pocket). She said "If I had more money, I could do more [for the children]...sometimes I wonder how I'll keep the roof over my head." However, Sara always had an ample supply of the invaluable commodities of love, kindness, patience, faith, and devotion to the 40 or 50 young people she guided. Her willingness to serve did not end with the children. It extended to the entire community as she provided drug and family counseling and job referrals to many of the members of the community.

Her work did not go unnoticed. Love Thy Neighbor received coverage from local television news stations as well as a few articles in The Washington Post. Ms. Thompson and her children were even visited by Oprah Winfrey (she displayed the pictures to prove it). Still, financial resources were often hard to come by and it was during the times when the rent was overdue and the future of the center was in doubt that Sara Thompson's faith was tested, although not broken. Time and time again she was able to pull resources from individuals and other sources to keep the doors of the center open. Even when she was diagnosed with cancer and was restricted to her hospital bed she continued to pay the

center's bills. On March 27, 1998, Sarah died. To the end, she struggled to support the center. Today, the doors of her center are closed and its future, like the futures of the children she served, is in doubt.

The devotion and faith of the program leaders are often the key element to their success. They work up close and personal with and for youth whom many other people would not help. They do this work where the children live, in places where many dare not go. It is the strong commitment and faith of the leaders of these non-profits which sustains them in spite of dire circumstances and long odds against success.

Faith

Our on-site interviews revealed enormous variety in the way programs chose to translate their faith through their services, not only between the different denominations but within denominations as well. Some programs were founded in churches and involved volunteers from the church who were motivated by their faith, yet provided no faith component in their activities with the children. Others were not affiliated with any religious institution but shared their faith with the children on a regular basis through Bible study or prayer.

Even determining what is faith-based and what is secular became difficult when interviewing organizations that, while not directly linked with a community of faith, made very strong expressions of faith and featured some religious teaching. This was particularly true of the faith-based grassroots organizations.

For example, the Barry Farms Community Center, directed by Mrs. Dorathea Ferreal, was not officially connected with a religious organization. However, Mrs. Ferreal is very strongly motivated by her faith. As one enters the center a sign on the door reads "Relax, God is in charge" and the programs involve "God talk" with the children and Bible study with the reverend of a nearby church.

Our interviews suggested that the directors of faith-based organizations make enormous, seemingly irrational, sacrifices to reflect God's unconditional love in their love for the children; and yet few programs focused solely on evangelization. Instead, they centered on filling the daily practical needs of the children by providing a safe haven, tutoring, and productive activities. For us, the seeming paradox of faith-motivated outreach workers who evangelize mainly or solely by example is resolved by the Biblical injunction, "Ye shall know them by their works."

The directors felt that by being the object of this unconditional love, children learned to love themselves and to understand that they are loved by God and are part of a greater plan. It is this spiritual plan, they confided, which alone can make sense of the child's world filled with chaos and pain. In the lives of many at-risk children, answers to the complex problems they face often have spiritual components as well as practical ones. A program that offers a child a hot meal, tutoring, and other assistance is beneficial. But the program that provides those things as well as a sense of self-respect, faith, and hope to combat their often depressing surroundings offers a different approach and maybe "something more." Perhaps it is that extra something borne of faith-based human relations that helps turn at-risk youth into resilient youth.

Funding

Faith and effective leadership are the only absolutely crucial elements of ministry. However, funding quickly becomes necessary to allow those in ministry to dedicate themselves full-time to the needs of the children.

Almost all of the faith-based outreach organizations that we have interviewed, grassroots and non-grassroots, are in need of funding in order to continue their work and strengthen their outreach capacity. Some programs, such as Love Thy Neighbor, were in clear need of financial assistance just to keep their doors open. Throughout our interviews and site visits we discovered many common difficulties faced by non-profits as they sought funding.

First, many of the faith-based organizations we interviewed have difficulty finding the time and resources to put together proposals, yet have basic needs such as rent, food for the children, a playground, school materials, or a salary that allows full-time ministry. In addition, many of these organizations lack the training to create a proposal and the funding to hire someone to do part-time or full-time development work.

Second, one of the non-profits' greatest needs was funding for the salaries of staff. As an organization grows and increases the number of children it serves, it naturally requires more staff to ensure that each child receives the individual attention he or she needs. However, many organizations said they found that foundations and corporations were willing to fund special projects but that few were willing to fund any general operating expenses.

Third, many non-profits found that seeking grants placed them in the position of possibly compromising or obscuring the faith component of their program, even where, as was almost universally true, evangelization was more motive than method and the programs served purely secular purposes such as keeping kids safe, fed, literate, and so on. For example, in order to seek funding from foundations, government, and corporations, ministries must file for 501-C3 status. Several organizations we interviewed were agonizing over the decision to become a non-profit, fearing that it might weaken their strong ties to their church and thereby weaken the faith expressed in the program.

Furthermore, as faith-based programs apply for funding, they are compelled to present a radically secularized version of their mission to their funding source. For example, in a great number of non-profits we interviewed, Bible study or prayer is described as "character building" or "spiritual awareness." Similarly, we found that many of the directors were very careful to mention that religious activities were voluntary and downplayed the Bible study. Still we found that a large number of organizations that received grants from numerous foundations continued to include prayer time and Bible study in their daily activities with the children.

The majority of the organizations we interviewed shied away from government funding. Although they were concerned that it would restrict religious study, they were primarily concerned with two practical limitations incurred by government funding. First, they felt that the enormous paper work and guidelines required by government grants would take away their autonomy and flexibility, not to mention their time with the children. Second, government grants would bring a large influx of funds into the program only to have them disappear with the next budget cut, leaving the organization floundering.

Location: Grassroots vs. Suburban

Despite their enormous variety in terms of activity, size, and religious affiliation, the programs fell into two distinct groups: those church ministries and non-profits which drew their leadership and resources from outside the at-risk communities they served, and those that drew resources only from within these communities.

This difference between grassroots and suburban organizations greatly affects the shape of their outreach and their ability to find resources. The organizations that are not grassroots generally offered more structured programs. They, too, were in need of funding, but with their education and connections to more affluent neighborhoods, they were able to write successful grant proposals that could pay a small staff and support an office. They generally focused on a group of inner-city at-risk children, but were less likely to be involved with the families or communities of these children. In a word, they were not "holistic" even though they were marginally better funded.

In contrast, about half of the grassroots programs we studied had almost no funding and relied entirely on a handful of volunteers who dedicated their own money and their time to their ministry in addition to holding down a job. These organizations tended to be very small and were located in the heart of the at-risk neighborhoods. The volunteers were members of the community and personally knew the families of the children involved in their activities.

Children are attracted to the grassroots programs for a variety of reasons. The staff is from the neighborhood and is familiar with the children's families and the difficulties they face. They will visit the homes of children to pray and counsel with the family. The programs meet the children where they are. This is particularly true of gang prevention programs. Their doors are left open in the most dangerous sections of the city so that youth feel safe to come and just hang out.

Programs like these are "below the radar screen" as far as foundation and corporate support is concerned. The volunteers who staff these ministries often do not have the contacts and education needed to draw resources from foundations and the wealthier organizations in D.C. Their numbers are limited because without any funding these programs often fold (not fail, but close) after two years due to an inability to pay rent, find materials, or support a full-time staff member.

Another characteristic of most of the grassroots non-profits is a sense of frustration, bitterness, and skepticism about the middle class. They have seen a line of media, celebrities, and foundations come to their communities, use their stories, and leave no funding behind. They struggle every day with life and death and want to know who is going to help for real.

This divide has grown in the past forty years as families have left the at-risk inner-city neighborhoods to live in surrounding communities in Maryland and Virginia. Despite suburbanizing, many of these families continue to attend their inner-city churches. This seems particularly true of mainline denominations.

Washington is full of churches located in the inner city whose congregations do not live in the surrounding community. Many of the "commuting congregations," not all, lose their ties to the communities and to their needs. In addition, these congregations also tend to be elderly and often do not have the energy to place into projects with youth. Many of the congregations want to tune into their

communities but don't know how. There is real potential for some of the willing churches that may have few youth, but plenty of resources, to get involved. They need to know where they can offer help and how they can be of assistance.

Many of the grassroots organizations expressed frustration that they had received neither volunteer nor financial support for their projects from the neighboring churches. They complained that each church had its own political turf and its own projects and did not work on community projects.

In our study we found that, despite these differences, both grassroots and suburban leadership ran meaningful youth programs. The ability of suburban programs to reach the most at-risk youth seemed to weigh heavily upon their ability to cross the urban/suburban divide and make the sacrifices necessary to root themselves in the lives of the children, families, and communities. For some, like Steve Park of Little Lights, this means moving into the communities they serve. Indeed, many programs see the need (and for a few it is a requirement) to live in the community. The struggles for the grassroots organizations lie in maintaining the organization necessary for applying for 501-C3 status, locating funding sources, and presenting a structured program.

Teen Outreach and Gang Prevention

One obstacle, which confronted nearly every outreach organization we interviewed, was the difficulty of reaching the teenagers, particularly males who were already involved in at-risk activity. Programs tried a variety of tactics to attract teens off the streets and into their programs. Some programs, such as Calvary Baptist, were able to draw a small group of teens through a basketball program. Others, like New Community Center, created special teen hangout zones. Still others, like the Unique Learning Center, had a handful of teens, which had grown up through the program and now helped with the younger children. Many programs, such as Love Thy Neighbor, encouraged their teens to stay involved by using them as counselors. However, most had difficulty retaining their teens.

The only programs that seemed able to maintain a relationship with a substantial number of at-risk teens were a handful of extremely grassroots gang-intervention programs. The three main programs in Washington are Cease-Fire: Don't Smoke the Brothers, Alliance of Concerned Men, and Barrios Unidos. The leadership of these programs consists without exception of men, some of them ex-felons, who from a very early age were involved in the street life of Washington themselves.

The work of these programs is often late at night on the streets and ad hoc. For example, Luis Cardona of Barrios Unidos spends much of his time roaming the streets in his car late at night looking for various groups of teens hanging out. He hangs out with the homeboys, who he knows by name. Sometimes he plays ball, sometimes he just talks, and sometimes he takes them home. Although the program is not structured, many of his homeboys are now in college.

Unfortunately, the same characteristics that draw the teens also make these programs difficult to support. Because their activities are sporadic and unstructured, it is difficult for them to demonstrate to foundations exactly where time is spent and what shape their activities will take from one month to the next. The other conundrum is that the most effective "witnesses" to gangs are former gang members themselves. Some former members have criminal records and negative opinions of and/or reputations with law enforcement. This complicates their outreach for two reasons. First, foundation support becomes scarce when the criminal history of the directors is revealed. Second, collaboration with the

police (which is vital to gang programs) is often difficult either as a result of program directors' distrust of the police or vice versa. Despite the difficulties of working with these faith-based organizations, they remain perhaps our "last best hope" for reaching the at-risk teens who seem "unreachable."

Recommendations

There are several means of ensuring that support, both technical and financial, reach faith-based organizations that are working with the most at-risk youth on a daily basis. These steps lie in a number of funding, collaboration, and mobilization strategies.

Funding. There is no shortage of worthwhile causes where programs for at-risk youth in Washington are concerned. By using this report to become acquainted with churches and non-profits in the at-risk communities through site visits, interested individuals and organizations could:

- Administer small grants to faith-based non-profits, reaching a whole segment of at-risk youth, which up to this time most grants have been unable to reach.
- Encourage corporate givers to support the work of faith-based non-profits in Washington.
- Draw attention to faith-based non-profits by publishing studies and articles on their programs. (Love Thy Neighbor, a small tutoring program in Southeast, was able to quantify the financial benefit of a newspaper article about the center at about $4,000.)

Church Mobilization. With anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000 churches in Washington, there is practically a church on every corner. The potential for the churches to become safe havens for at-risk youth is enormous. Although most churches have not developed an outreach to at-risk youth, many have. However, their outreach remains small and focuses on retaining only the younger children. Training in youth ministry could empower these ministries to reach the older youth out on the streets.

Collaboration Strategies. Supporting the work of faith-based non-profits involves facilitating the collaboration and the sharing of resources between organizations. Often, we found organizations with the same goals and just down the street from each other that were not aware of each other's existence. As a result, many grassroots programs had to reinvent the program wheel simply because they were not aware of the solutions and resources discovered by other organizations.

Many of those we interviewed commented that one of the most useful services we could provide was a copy of our list of non-profits. In response, we are creating a resource book which includes not only all the faith-based programs we have contacted but also secular organizations with resources often sought by faith-based organizations, such as the Prevention Partnership which gives free technical training to small non-profits. There are also many new government initiatives that could also be instrumental in any collaborative effort, such as HUD's Public Housing Graduates program, which pays students to stay in school while demanding study and service hours in return.

Finally, churches and non-profits are often busy with the interests of their own congregation and are reluctant to place scant resources into projects other than their own. However, if the faith community–with the aid of the corporate sector and foundations—can be mobilized to "save" the youth of the city, then we could witness a radical reduction in youth violence, and an overall improvement in the lives and well being of Washington's most truly disadvantaged children.

Appendix A: Note on Study Procedures

There has yet to be a comprehensive survey of faith-based outreach in the District that includes less visible grassroots non-profits. We were given access to a list of non-profits involved in projects sponsored by World Vision, a large database of care providers compiled by People's House, and a list of churches gathered by the Mayor's office. All our contacts were gathered primarily through these lists, newspaper articles, and referrals by other non-profits.

Organizations that met our selection criteria were researched for as much of the following information as was available:

Name of Outreach:
Director:
Contact:
Address:
Telephone:
Size of Staff (full-time, part-time):
Hours of Operation:
Nature of Youth Outreach:
Years of Operation:
Current Source of Funding:
Immediate Funding Needs:
Future Funding Needs:

Church Affiliation(s):
Nature of Affiliation: (i.e. church ministry or para-church)
Number of Members:
Denomination:

In both site visits and phone interviews, we sought answers to five sets of questions:

- Faith
  To what extent is religious faith explicitly or implicitly expressed?
  Is faith the main motivation behind the leadership?

- Community
  To what extent does the outreach involve the local community?
  Is there a sense of community/family within the program?
  What seems to be the parents' opinion of the program?

- Youth
  What is the nature of interaction between adults and youth?
  What is the attitude of youth with regards to the program?
  Do graduates of the program come back to participate?

- Leadership
  Leadership Profile (faith, education, personality).
  How much of the staff work is on a volunteer basis?
  Do they share resources with other churches or para-churches?
  In their opinion: What is the role of faith-based outreach to youth in D.C.?
  What is necessary to reach D.C.'s at-risk youth?
  How should faith-based outreach be funded?

- Funding
  How do they fund themselves at present?
  Could the program manage increased funding?

The interviews generally lasted an hour or an hour and a half and were usually with the director of the programs. We were able to observe the youth activities of most of these organizations.

Because faith-based outreach organizations usually are small and often unlisted, locating, contacting, and visiting these organizations was a challenging and time-consuming process. Interviews were limited by the amount of time directors were able to or willing to provide (rarely going beyond two hours). Observation was limited because their activities were often sporadic and often conducted in the evenings in dangerous settings.

Still, we feel confident that we have contacted the majority of the larger organizations and a substantial portion of the smaller ones that fell within our criteria in metropolitan Washington.

---

[1] Diane Cohen and A. Robert Jaeger, *Sacred Places At Risk* (Partners for Sacred Places, 1997), p. 4.
[2] Tobi Jennifer Printz, "Faith-Based Service Providers in the Nation's Capital: Can They Do More?," *Charting Civil Society* (The Urban Institute, April 1998), No. 2.
[3] "Faith-based organizations" are defined as organizations or programs which claim to be affiliated with a religious congregation, or those organizations that are independent from a religious congregation or order, but who express a religious motivation for working with at-risk youth.
[4] Tobi Jennifer Printz, "Faith-Based Service Providers in the Nation's Capital: Can They Do More?," *Charting Civil Society* (The Urban Institute, April 1998), No. 2.

Appendix B: Compendium of DC Youth Outreach Programs

Organization	Main Category	Number of Children	Days of month	Type of Program	Number of paid staff
15th Presbyterian	Church Ministry	30	20	tutoring	0
Allen Community Outreach Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	4	tutoring	2
Alliance of Concerned Men	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	24	gang prevention	N/A
All Souls	Church Ministry	N/A	1	tutoring	0
Ark Foundation Church	Church Ministry	40	8	youth group	0
Assemblies of God–Urban Outreach, Inc	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	spring/summer	evangelical	0
Barrios Unidos	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	24	gang prevention	2
Barry Farms Community Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	70	24	tutoring	0
Beacon House Community Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
Brightwood Park United Methodist Church	Church Ministry	30	20	tutoring	0
Building Bridges	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	2	youth group	N/A
Calvary Baptist	Church Ministry	100	20	tutoring	0
Calvary Christian Academy	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	2
Calvary-Episcopal	Church Ministry	11	8	tutoring	0
Campbell AME Church	Church Ministry	25	4	tutoring	2
Capitol Hill Crisis Pregnancy Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	10	20	pregnancy	2
Capitol Hill Group Ministry	Faith-Based Non-Profit	30	4	mentoring	2
Casa del Pueblo	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
Cease Fire	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	28	gang prevention	0
Central Union Mission	Faith-Based Non-Profit	60	4	evangelical	0
Children of Mine	Faith-Based Non-Profit	80	20	tutoring	0
Children's Trust Neighborhood Initiative	Faith-Based Non-Profit	25	8	tutoring	2
Chinese Community Church	Church Ministry	25	4	youth group	N/A
Christ Lutheran-Teens On Their Guard	Church Ministry	10	4	youth group	0
Christ Our Shepherd Church, Jesus House	Church Ministry	20	4	evangelical	0
Church of Jesus Christ	Church Ministry	40	4	evangelical	0
Church of the Ascension and St. Agnes	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	tutoring	0
Church of the Atonement	Church Ministry	25	N/A	tutoring	N/A
Church of the Redeemer Presbyterian	Church Ministry	20	20	tutoring	2
Church of the Reformation	Church Ministry	80	16	tutoring	2
Clara Mohammed School	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
Community Children's Ministry of the National	Church Ministry	119	20	tutoring	2
Community Family Life Services	Faith-Based Non-Profit	120	16	tutoring	2
Community of Hope	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	20	tutoring	2
Concerned Brothers	Faith-Based Non-Profit	30	20	gang prevention	2
Contee AME Church	Church Ministry	N/A	8	tutoring	0
Covenant Baptist	Church Ministry	N/A	4	youth group	0

Organization	Main Category	Number of Children	Days of month	Type of Program	Number of paid staff
Covenant House	Faith-Based Non-Profit	575	20	shelter	2
DC Christian Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	100	24	tutoring	2
Derrel Greene Youth Life Foundation	Faith-Based Non-Profit	35	20	tutoring	2
Dupont Park School	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	2
E. Washington Heights Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	4	tutoring	1
Ebeneezer Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	tutoring	0
Ella's Kids	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	seasonal	gift give out	0
Emmanuel Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	20	tutoring	2
End Time Harvest Ministry	Faith-Based Non-Profit	60	N/A	mentoring	0
Faith Untied Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	2	youth group	N/A
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	Faith-Based Non-Profit	60	N/A	youth group	0
First Baptist Church	Church Ministry	40	4	youth group	0
First Baptist Church of Washington	Church Ministry	15	4	youth group	1
First Baptist Church of Deanwood	Church Ministry	35	20	youth group	1
First Rock Baptist Church School	Faith-Based School	N/A	20	school	0
Fishing School, The	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
Florida Avenue Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	4	tutoring	0
For the Love of Children	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	N/A	foster care	N/A
Frederick Douglas Community Center-resident	Faith-Based Non-Profit	35	4	tutoring	0
Freedom Youth Academy	Church Ministry	N/A	20	tutoring	N/A
Friends of the Children	Faith-Based Non-Profit	32	28	mentoring	2
Garfield House	Faith-Based Non-Profit	35	20	tutoring	0
Glory Tabernacle	Church Ministry	35	4	youth group	0
Good Shepherd Children's Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	100	20	tutoring	2
Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church	Church Ministry	50	N/A	youth group	0
Growing Together-St. Stevens Episcopal Church	Faith-Based Non-Profit	100	20	tutoring	2
Hermanas Unidas	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	8	domestic violence	0
Highland Community Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	25	20	tutoring	0
Holy Comforter St. Cypria	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
Hughes Memorial	Church Ministry	20	12	tutoring	0
Imani School	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
Immaculate Conception	Church Ministry	60	N/A	youth group	1
Israel Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	16	tutoring	0
Joenning Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	20	tutoring	1
Jones Memorial U.M.C.	Church Ministry	40	8	tutoring	0
Kid's Konnection	Faith-Based Non-Profit	100	12	evangelical	2
Liberty Temple Zion Church	Church Ministry	N/A	spring	evangelical	0
Little Lights	Faith-Based Non-Profit	20	8	tutoring	0
Love Thy Neighbor	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	0
Michigan Park Christian Disciples of Christ	Church Ministry	20	8	youth group	1
Midtown Youth Academy	Faith-Based Non-Profit	50	20	tutoring	0
Mother Dear's Community Center-St. Ann's Church	Faith-Based Non-Profit	12	16	tutoring	N/A
Mother's on the Move	Faith-Based Non-Profit	25	4	tutoring	0

Organization	Main Category	Number of Children	Days of month	Type of Program	Number of paid staff
Mt. Gilead Baptist Church	Church Ministry	10	20	tutoring	0
Mt. Horeb Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	8	tutoring	0
Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church	Church Ministry	20	16	tutoring	0
Neighborhood Learning Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	36	20	tutoring	2
New Bethel	Church Ministry	30	20	tutoring	2
New Community Church	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
New Covenant Church-School	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
New Hope Freewill Baptist Church	Church Ministry	25	summer	camp	N/A
New Macedonia Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	camp	N/A
New Testament Church School	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
New United Baptist Church	Church Ministry	20	2	youth group	0
Our Lady of Perpetual Help	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	0
Our Lady of Queen of Peace	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	1
Our Lady Queen of the Americas	Church Ministry	20	16	tutoring	0
Paramount Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	8	tutoring	0
Peace Lutheran	Church Ministry	20	4	youth group	0
Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church	Church Ministry	30	12	youth group	0
People Congregation Church	Church Ministry	20	4	youth group	1
Peter Bug Youth Entrepreneurship	Faith-Based Non-Profit	30	12	tutoring	N/A
Pilgrim Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	mentoring	0
Plymouth Church	Church Ministry	20	12	tutoring	N/A
Purity Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	youth group	0
Refuge Hope Warehouse	Church Ministry	30	4	youth group	1
Sacred Heart Catholic School	Faith-Based School	N/A	8	school	2
Sacred Heart Church	Church Ministry	50	20	youth group	N/A
Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
Sargent Memorial Presbyterian Church	Church Ministry	35	16	tutoring	2
Shaw Prison Service Program	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	N/A	detention ministry	N/A
Shiloh Baptist Church	Church Ministry	35	20	tutoring	2
Sojourner's Neighborhood Center	Faith-Based Non-Profit	40	20	tutoring	2
St. Aloysius	Church Ministry	N/A	4	homeless meal	2
St. Francis de Sales	Faith-Based School	N/A	N/A	school	N/A
St. Ann's Maternity Home	Faith-Based Non-Profit	428	28	shelter	2
St. Matthews Lutheran Church	Church Ministry	N/A	1	youth group	0
St. Monica's Church	Church Ministry	35	N/A	youth group	0
Step Foundation	Faith-Based Non-Profit	70	12	tutoring	1
The Children's Center at Wilkerson Elementary	Faith-Based Non-Profit	72	20	tutoring	2
The Gage-Eckington School/St. George's Episcopal Ch	Faith-Based Non-Profit	29	16	tutoring	0
Third Street Church of God	Church Ministry	20	4	youth group	0
Union Temple-Rites of Passage Program	Church Ministry	35	4	mentoring	0
Unique Learning Center-One Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	20	20	tutoring	2
United Church (United Methodist), The	Church Ministry	10	4	tutoring	0
United Triumphant Church	Church Ministry	50	N/A	camp	N/A

Organization	Main Category	Number of Children	Days of month	Type of Program	Number of paid staff
Upper Room Baptist Church	Church Ministry	N/A	4	tutoring	0
Ward Memorial AME Church	Church Ministry	N/A	N/A	mentoring	0
Washington Middle School for Girls	Faith-Based School	40	4	school	0
Way of the Cross Ministries	Faith-Based Non-Profit	20	4	tutoring	0
Western Presbyterian Church	Church Ministry	10	4	tutoring	0
Young Life	Faith-Based Non-Profit	N/A	28	tutoring	2

Appendix C: Contacts at DC Youth Outreach Programs

15th St. Presbyterian
Mrs. Brown
(202) 234-0300

All Souls
Mrs. Embry Howel
(202) 232-4244

Allen Community Outreach Center
Milton Douglas
(202) 889-5607

Alliance of Concerned Men
Eric Johnson or Tyrone Parker
(202) 645-5098

Ark Foundation Church
Sister Roi Kaima
(202) 832-5420

Assemblies of God-Urban Outreach, Inc.
Rev. Ken and Kathy Brown
(202) 575-4867

Barrios Unidos
Luis Cardona
(202) 424-6309

Barry Farms Community Center
Dorothea Ferrell
(202) 645-3854

Beacon House Community Ministries
Rev. Donald Robinson
(202) 529-2862

Building Bridges
Faith Fowler
(202) 393-4820

Calvary Baptist
Paget Rhee
(202) 347-8355

Calvary Episcopal -- Tutorial Outreach Program
Dr. Ridley
(202) 546-8011

Campbell AME Church
Deborah Davis
(202) 778-9824

Capitol Hill Crisis Pregnancy Center
Renee Swanson
(202) 546-1018

Capitol Hill Group Ministry
Kim Jackson
(202) 544-0631

Casa del Pueblo
Edwin Gonzalez
(202) 332-1094

Cease Fire
Al Malik Farakhan
(202) 541-9807

Central Union Mission
Jack Martin
(202) 745-7118

Children of Mine
Hanna Hawkins
(202) 610-1055

Children's Trust Neighborhood Initiative
Ally Bird
(202) 396-4102

Chinese Community Church-Youth Group
Sharmine Lao
(202) 637-9852

Christ Lutheran-Teens On Their Guard
Peggy Parry
(202) 829-6727

Christ Our Shepherd Church, Jesus House
Paul Bowman
(202) 3877-5466

Church Of Jesus Christ
Phyllis Venison
(202) 584-8488

Church of the Ascension and St. Agnes
Catherine Held
(202) 347-8161

Church of the Atonement
Douglas Bowman
(202) 582-4200

Church of the Redeemer Presbytarian
Marilyn Fleming
(202) 832-0095

Church of the Reformation
Pastor Wanda McNeil and Craig Middlebrook
(202) 543-4200

Clara Mohammed School
Ann Sanders
(202) 610-1090

Community Children's Ministry of the National City Christian Church
Mrs. Mary Ann Brown
(202) 797-0106

Communtiy Family Life Services –Tutoring
Ann Marie Foley
(202) 347-0511 x 333

Community of Hope
Rev. Phillips
(202) 232-9091

Concerned Brothers and Sister of Benning Terrace
Derick Ross
(202) 645-0918

Contee AME Church
Rosemary McCall or Valerie Robinson
(202) 396-0638

Covenant Baptist Church
Deborah Camphor
(202) 562-5576

Covenant House
Pastor Williams
(202) 610-9612

Darrell Green Youth Life Foundation-Learning Center
Donnell Jones, Deborah Knight
(202) 398-7902

DC Christian Ministries
Bob Mathieu Jr.
(202) 574-3053

Dupont Park School
Mrs. Quinnonez
(202) 575-5307

E. Washington Heights Baptist Church
Mrs. Willis
(202)582-4811

Ella Kids
Ella Strother
(202) 547-5076

Emmanel Baptist Church
Margaret Cooper
(202) 678-0884

End Time Harvest Ministry
Gail Addison
(301) 345-7548

Faith United Ministries
Mrs. Sturdivant
(202) 543-3251

Fellowship of Christian Atheletes
Rev. Steve Fitzhugh
(202) 393-2870

First Baptist Church City of Washington
Roger Underwood
(202) 387-2206

First Baptist Church of Deanwood
Rev. Bennett
(202) 393-0534

First Rock Baptist Church School
Sister Della Tillman, Grace Jones
(202) 583-0992

The Fishing School
Tom Lewis
(202) 399-3618

For the Love of Children
Fred Taylor
(202) 42-8686

Frederick Douglas Community Center-Resident Council
Brenda Graham
(202) 678-7911

Freedom Youth Academy
Mrs. Gaskins
(202) 889-1682

Friends of the Children
Sammy Morrison
(202) 581-7010

Garfield House
Rosemary Akimboni
(202) 232-0130

Glory Tabernacle
Pastor Dennis Pisani, Joel Garret
(202) 234-3716

Good Shepherd Children's Ministries
Kim Montrol
(202)483-6043

Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church, Youth Department
Evangelist Anthony Franklin
(202) 529-4547

Growing Together-St. Steven's Episcopal Church
Theresa Knudson
(202) 232-8016, (202) 882-5359

Hermanas Undias
Rosa Rivas
(202) 387-4848

Highland Community Center
Brenda Wright
(202) 574-2863

Holy Comforter St. Cyprian Catholic School
Dr. Leighton
(202) 547-7556

Hughes Memorial United Methodist
Miss Diane Tynes
(202) 398-3411

Imani School
Rose Pope, Iris Robinson
(202) 724-8641

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
Deacon Genis
(202) 332-8888

Isreal Baptist Church
Rev. Martin
(202) 269-0288

Johenning Baptist Church
Yvonne Chambliss
(202) 561-2095

The Center for Civic Innovation

at the Manhattan Institute

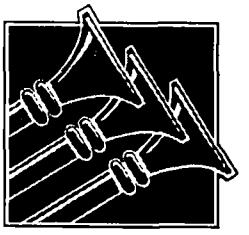
52 Vanderbilt Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10017

Telephone: 212.599.7000
Fax: 212.599.3494
e-mail: holsen@manhattan-institute.org

Henry Olsen
Executive Director

The Jeremiah Project

An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation



The Jeremiah Project

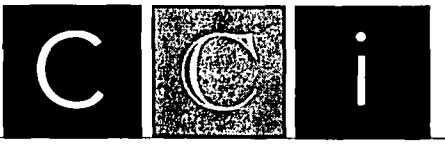
An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation

Living Faith: The Black Church Outreach Tradition

Report 98-3

By

John J. DiIulio
Senior Fellow, The Manhattan Institute
Director, The Jeremiah Project



CENTER FOR CIVIC INNOVATION
AT THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Promote the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you;
pray for it to the Lord, for upon its welfare depends your own (Jeremiah 29:7).

The Jeremiah Project

Begun in 1998, The Jeremiah Project (TJP) of the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation (CCI) is dedicated to identifying, documenting, publicizing, and funding outstanding examples of faith-based programs that help inner-city youth and young adults to avoid violence, achieve literacy, and access jobs while resurrecting hope and opportunity in America's most distressed urban neighborhoods.

John DiIulio, a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and Professor at Princeton University, directs TJP. He began his "faith factor" line of research in 1994. In 1996 he founded Public/Private Ventures' Partnership for Research on Religion and At-Risk Youth, and developed the Partnership's national research agenda on faith-based approaches to youth and community development. Known widely for his work on crime, social policy, and government reform, he predicts that by the year 2006, America will be home to 30 million teenagers, the highest number since 1975. Much of the increase in the nation's youth population, he stresses, is occurring in "forgotten urban neighborhoods with high rates of child abuse and neglect, poverty, crime, illiteracy, and chronic unemployment . . . Where secular mentoring and conventional social services programs for severely at-risk inner-city youth and young adults normally end, faith-based programs often begin. . . . Not all churches do it, and churches certainly can't do it all alone. But there's good news. From preschools to prisons, religion works, and adequately supported outreach ministries—the clergy and other religious paramedics of inner-city America's civil society—can save lives and offer a better chance in life to those whom the *Bible* call the 'least of these.' We will need, however, to learn more about the extent, efficacy, and capacity of faith-based efforts, and the general conditions under which they succeed. We need not only research but a willingness—here and now—to help proven urban outreach ministers to meet their unmet everyday needs, from money for fixing a broken pipe in a church basement where an after-school latchkey learning ministry runs, to help writhing a grant proposal, to brokering positive connections with other local institutions...The bottom line is leveraging the 'spiritual capital' of inner-city ministries into more children who are safe, literate, job-ready—and loved."

Others affiliated with the Institute who have roles in TJP include Reverend Floyd Flake, CCI Director Henry Olsen, and the Editor of *City Journal*, Myron Magnet. With Institute President Lawrence Mone, Professor DiIulio co-directs The Jeremiah Funds (TJF) which in just six months provided over $100,000 in support for specific unmet needs of outreach ministries and religious schools in Boston, New York, Camden, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. The Institute invites support for both TJP and TJF.

History of Outreach

Where secular mentoring and conventional social services programs for poor urban youth typically end, churches and religious outreach ministries often begin, especially in predominantly black communities.

The black church has a unique and uniquely powerful youth and community outreach tradition. Indeed, the black church's historic role in providing blacks with education, social services, and a safe gathering place prefigured its historic role in the civil rights movement.

There are eight major historically black Christian churches: African Methodist Episcopal; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Christian Methodist Episcopal; Church of God in Christ; National Baptist Convention of America; National Baptist Convention, USA; National Missionary Baptist Convention; and the Progressive National Baptist Convention. There are also scores of independent or quasi-independent black churches or church networks, and at least nine certified religious training programs operated by accredited seminaries that are directed toward ministry in black churches and black faith communities. Together, the eight major black denominations alone encompass some 65,000 churches and about 20 million members.

To illustrate how the black church outreach tradition has been transmitted and lives on today, let me briefly offer just three sets of examples, the first set emanating from major denomination churches, the second set from an independent church, and the third from inter-denominational faith-based nonprofits that serve predominantly black churches, congregations, and communities.

In 1794, Richard Allen and a delegation of ex-slaves started Philadelphia's Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, breaking off from the parent Methodist church the better to meet the particular ministerial needs of black congregations and communities. While Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church in Philadelphia is often cited as America's oldest black church, First African Baptist Church of Savannah is, in fact, the "oldest continuing black church in North America."[1]

First African Baptist Church of Savannah's first four pastors responded to events from the British occupation of Savannah (1779 to 1782) to the coming of General Sherman in 1864. With each response, the church was "moved out beyond its preaching, praying and singing."[2] For example, the church's fourth pastor, Reverend William J. Campbell, led a delegation of ministers who met with General Sherman and advised the government on how to implement the Emancipation Proclamation. Four days after his dialogue with Pastor Campbell, General Sherman issued Field Order #15 which set aside forty acres of land for each black family ("forty acres and a mule"), and provided federal troops to protect them.[3]

Between 1982 and 1995, the seventeenth pastor of First African Baptist Church of Savannah, Reverend Thurmond Neill Tillman, consciously continued to combine the church's "spiritual or privatistic

---

[1] Judith Crocker Burris and Andrew Billingsley, "The Black Church and the Community: Antebellum Times to the Present, Case Studies in Social Reform," National Journal of Sociology, 8, numbers 1 and 2, Summer/Winter 1994, p. 26.

[2] Ibid., p. 33.

[3] Ibid.

mission with its social or communal mission."[4] Tillman, a former probation officer and apprentice aircraft pilot, emphasized the development of church-anchored programs for neighborhood youth, including juveniles who had gotten into trouble with the law. With 200 years of outreach tradition to guide him, Tillman explained the church's mission: "Whatever the needs of the people, that they cannot meet themselves, it is the mission of the church to help them . . . We can tackle any problem our people face because the church comes to the problem not bound by its own resources and capacities. The church is God's representative on earth. We have access to all the resources that implies."[5]

Black Church Outreach Today

The denominational descendants of Richard Allen may not have the nation's oldest continuing black church, but they, too, have an extraordinary outreach tradition. That tradition is alive and well in the work of New York's Reverend Floyd H. Flake, the former U.S. congressman who leads the historic Allen A.M.E. Church. Over the last decade, Flake's 8,000-member congregation has raised millions of dollars and devoted countless volunteer hours to the slow, but steady redevelopment of the church's surrounding working-class Queens community. Equally impressive, in 1992 Flake launched the Shekinah Youth Chapel in Jamaica Queens, one of the city's poorest, most drug-and-crime-torn minority neighborhoods.

As Flake initially outlined it, Shekinah's mission would be to mentor and minister to neighborhood children ages 3 to 19 (not just the children of Allen A.M.E. members, referred to as "remnant youth"); encourage older Shekinah youth to reach out to their unchurched peers in schools and on the streets; and use the chapel building as a community "safe haven" for any child who simply wanted to get off the surrounding mean streets or find something constructive to do.

Flake entrusted Shekinah's development to Reverend Anthony Nathaniel Lucas, then a 26-year-old graduate of Columbia's Union Theological Seminary. Lucas pastored Shekinah from 1992 to mid-1998. Before coming to Shekinah, he had worked as a youth minister in the Bronx. He began Shekinah with only two dozen youngsters, virtually all of them remnant youth of Allen. By 1998, however, Shekinah had over 500 youth members, some 80 percent of them children from its surrounding neighborhood.

Shekinah's outreach success is captured by the tale of two of its members from different worlds. Michelle Lawrence, age 16, is one of Shekinah's remnant youth, a comfortably middle-class black daughter of two black lawyers who are members of Allen A.M.E. She has many not-so-fond memories of Abraham Abdul, age 23. "As a younger child," she recounted to me, "I remember seeing him out on the streets hustling drugs . . . He was very threatening . . . a neighborhood roughneck, plain and simple." Abraham confirmed her recollection: "I did what she saw and worse . . . At age 17, I left home . . . At home, I was physically abused . . . sometimes I starved for food . . . On the streets, whatever I did, I didn't go hungry, and I didn't care about anybody else."

Jailed at age 19, Abraham escaped a possible five-year prison term, but he finally could not escape the relentless outreach of Lucas and the tug of Shekinah. "Pastor Lucas," he recalled, "meets

[4] Ibid., p. 44.

[5] Ibid., p. 38.

with me one-on-one and says, 'Right now, let it go. Put it all on Christ and let it go . . . Our church in Queens, not the streets, is our home . . . All of a sudden, I'm struggling to see how I can help him reach other kids on the streets." Michelle confirmed his transformation: "He's definitely a positive influence in the neighborhood now, like a big brother in Christ Jesus to everyone, especially to the boys from group homes, street gangs, or on the streets."

Having cut his outreach teeth at Shekinah, Lucas, now age 33, is completing his doctoral studies at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and planning a new youth outreach ministry, one focused in part on the needs of poor black inner-city children who have one or both parents in prison or jail.

While Lucas came up through a major black denomination, the outreach ministry of Boston's Reverend Eugene Rivers evolved out of Philadelphia's Deliverance Evangelistic Church. Begun in 1960, Deliverance developed as an independent church out of the North Philadelphia home of Pastor Benjamin Smith, a Pentecostal preacher. Smith's "concern was to have a church that worshiped God and served the total needs of the community."[6] Over four decades, the ministry remained rooted in North Philadelphia's poorest black neighborhoods. In time, it transcended its storefront beginnings to become a 10,000-person congregation occupying a 5,000-seat sanctuary and ministry complex built where a Major League Baseball stadium (Connie Mack) once stood. The Deliverance ministry began providing food, clothing, and shelter for neighborhood residents as far back as 1962. Today it is home to several dozen different outreach programs, including community patrols, special education, and a Bible school. "Ain't God," I have often heard Pastor Smith ask rhetorically, "so very good?"

Pastor Smith, now age 85, has always had what church folks call a "special heart" for troubled inner-city youth. Thirty years ago his street outreach ministry saved one such youth, a then 16-year-old gun-toting gang-banger named Eugene Rivers. Smith, whom Rivers and other Deliverance "graduates" call "Pops," was the inspiration for just about everything that Rivers and affiliated clergy have done in Boston. "Pops," Rivers told me, "was the one who put it on the line when nobody knew and nobody cared. He stayed faithful to the kids and the black community when others fled the violence and the noise to the suburbs. More than anyone else, for me personally, he firmly embodies the black church outreach tradition, especially regarding 'the least of these,' the poor, and made me feel called to live up to it and to call others to do the same."[7]

Organizationally, that tradition is not confined to major black denomination or independent churches. Inter-denominational faith-based organizations (sometimes referred to as "pro-church" or "para-church" organizations) that train black pastors to do outreach work, provide them with technical or financial assistance, or focus on particular community-serving projects are also very much a part of the tradition. In Boston, for example, Rev. Rivers and his church volunteers have often worked via the Ten Point Coalition, an inter-denominational group of black clergy that focuses on a wide range of youth and community problems.

Likewise, in Philadelphia, Reverend Willie Richardson, pastor of Christian Stronghold Church, is also the chairman of the Center for Urban Resources (CUR). After decades as an urban outreach minister, Richardson recognized that, because of their religious origins and lack of familiarity with

---

[6] Harold Dean Trulear, "Deliverance Evangelistic Church: Transforming Lives and Communities," Impact, 10, no. 3, Fall 1997, p. 10.

[7] Interview with author, June 1998.

secular grant making organizations, many community-serving urban ministries, most especially those associated with black urban churches, were constantly struggling to obtain needed training and financial support. Working out of his own church, in 1987 he established what became CUR as an inter-denominational faith-based nonprofit organization. CUR has since assisted over 550 local church leaders in obtaining training and money to perform a wide variety of community-serving tasks: preschools; day care centers; job training programs; drug counseling; shelters; programs for elderly shut-ins; food distribution programs; and more.[8]

Similarly, in 1994 Elder Eugene Williams helped to establish the Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches (LAM), which by 1997 had grown to encompass thirty-four black churches working in partnership to "train and develop the capacity of clergy, lay and community leaders to revitalize their communities."[9] Among recent LAM initiatives are a literacy program for parolees who return to the community and a "one church, one school" program, described to me by Williams as sort of a "latch-key learning ministry" that tends to the educational and after-school supervision needs of the city's most severely at-risk black youth.

The foregoing illustrations, of course, only lightly scratch the surface of the living black church outreach tradition. Unfortunately, until quite recently, that tradition and what it portends for social action against inner-city ills has been largely ignored by a strange bedfellows assortment of academics and intellectual elites.

Until the 1990s, for example, the richly religious lives of black Americans and the black church outreach tradition were given short shrift by both historians and social scientists, and not just by white historians and social scientists. Writing in 1994 in a special double edition of National Journal of Sociology, Andrew Billingsley, a dean of black family studies, noted that the subject was largely ignored even by leading black scholars who were keenly aware of "the social significance of the black church," including many who "were actually members of a black church."[10]

For example, James Blackwell's 1975 book The Black Community, considered by Billingsley and several other experts to be "the best study" of its kind since Dubois' 1899 classic The Philadelphia Negro, devoted not a single chapter to the black church; and Billingsley's own 1968 book Black Families In White America, written as a rebuttal to the 1965 Moynihan Report, "devoted less than two pages to discussing the relevance of the black church as a support system for African-American families."[11] Billingsley speculates that black intellectuals ignored black churches in part out of a false fidelity to the canons of objective scholarship.

A refined and empirically well-grounded perspective on variations in the extent of black church outreach is provided by sociologist Harold Dean Trulear, an ordained black minister who did outreach work in New Jersey, taught for eight years at the New York Theological Seminary, has conducted

---

[8] For an overview, see Center for Urban Resources: Directory of Community Service Programs, 1995-1996 (Philadelphia, PA: Center for Urban Resources, 1996).

[9] Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches, 1997 Annual Report, p. 1.

[10] Andrew Billingsley, "The Social Relevance of the Contemporary Black Church," National Journal of Sociology, 8, numbers 1 and 2, Summer/Winter 1994, p. 3.

[11] Ibid.

extensive research on black clergy training, and is presently Vice President for research on religion and at-risk youth at Public/Private Ventures in Philadelphia.

"When it comes to youth and community outreach in the inner city," Trulear cautions, "not all black urban churches are created equal . . . Naturally, it's in part a function of high resident membership. Inner-city churches with high resident membership cater more to high-risk neighborhood youth than . . . black churches with inner-city addresses, but increasingly or predominantly suburbanized or commuting congregations . . . [The high resident membership black churches] tend to cluster by size and evangelical orientation . . . It's the small- and medium-sized churches . . . [especially] the so-called . . . blessing stations and specialized youth chapels with their charismatic leader and their small, dedicated staff of adult volunteers [that] . . . do a disproportionate amount of the up close and personal outreach work with the worst-off inner-city youth."[12]

When it comes to social action against urban problems and the plight of the black inner-city poor, the reality is that black churches cannot do it all (or do it alone) and that not all black churches do it. But that reality should obscure neither the black church outreach tradition nor its many and powerful contemporary manifestations from Boston to Austin, from New York to Los Angeles.

Today, a number of intellectual and policy leaders are reclaiming the black church tradition. Let me cite just two examples. First, in a 1997 essay, Boston University economists Glenn Loury and Linda-Datcher Loury argue persuasively that a "spirit of self-help, rooted in a deep-seated sense of self respect, was widely embraced among blacks of all ideological persuasions well into this century."[13] They rebut the view that "economic factors ultimately drive" behavioral problems "involving sexuality, marriage, childbearing, and parenting," and, in turn, challenge the notion that merely fiddling with economic incentives via policy changes can change behavior for the good. Rather, they argue, voluntary associations, "as exemplified by religious institutions," can be valuable allies in the battle against social pathology.[14]

Although they themselves write not only as economists but as blacks attached to black churches, and despite Glenn Loury's own quite eloquent personal testimony and research-based meditations on the social power and potential of black spirituality and churches, the Lourys are duly cautious about just how much the churches can achieve, but without being unduly pessimistic about what, supported by other sectors of society, the churches may yet achieve.[15]

From a less academic, more practice-driven perspective, Robert L. Woodson, Sr., president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in Washington, D.C., reclaims the black church outreach tradition in his 1998 book on how "today's community healers are reviving our streets and neighborhoods."[16] The children depicted with Woodson in the photo on the book's inside dust jacket are inner-city District youth who have been ministered to by Tom Lewis, a retired black city police officer who has spent the last decade building a tiny neighborhood outreach ministry called The Fishing School.

---

[12] Interview with the author, June 1998.

[13] Glenn Loury and Linda Datcher-Loury, "Not By Bread Alone," The Brookings Review, 15, no. 1, Winter 1997, p. 13.

[14] Ibid., pp. 10-11.

[15] Ibid., and Glenn Loury, One on One From the Inside Out: Essays and Reviews on Race and Responsibility in America (New York: The Free Press, May 1995).

[16] Robert L. Woodson, Sr., The Triumphs of Joseph: How Today's Community Healers Are Reviving Our Streets and Neighborhoods (New York: The Free Press, 1998).

Lewis is one of innumerable faith-motivated inner-city leaders of all races whom Woodson has helped fund, battle inane government regulations, or otherwise supported over the last thirty years. Some of these men and women, like Freddie Garcia, an ex-drug user whose Texas-based Victory Fellowship has rehabilitated (or, as people of faith generally prefer, "saved") over 13,000 persons, are fairly well known outside church circles and faith communities. Countless others, like Lewis, who feeds, tutors, shelters, and otherwise helps scores of poor black children every week, remain faceless even to many fellow churchmen. "We're always," Lewis told me, "in need of extra hands and money to repair a broken pipe or what have you. But the children come, we have God, God helps always, and we always do our best."[17]

Surveys of Church-Based Outreach

Still, tradition is not always prologue, and the plural of inspiring anecdote is not hard data. Black church history and present-day examples aside, just how common are black-led outreach ministries like those of Lewis, how much of what Rivers terms "high-octane faith"[18] is in the black church tank, and what, if any, more systematic evidence is there to suggest that the extent of youth and community outreach by black churches is nontrivial? As Trulear has observed, "Simply stated, there has yet to be a survey of the blessing stations and youth chapels that do most of the actual work with the worst-off kids in black inner-city neighborhoods."[19] But the path breaking research of scholars such as Eric C. Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, combined with recent systematic research by Trulear and others, should persuade even a dedicated skeptic to take church-based outreach seriously.

The Urban Institute published the results of a survey of "faith-based service providers in the nation's capital" in 1998.[20] The survey found that 95 percent of the congregations performed outreach services. The 226 religious congregations (out of 1,100 surveyed) that responded (67 of them in the District, the rest in Maryland or Virginia) provided a total of over 1,000 community services to over 250,000 individuals in 1996. The services included food, clothing, and financial assistance. The survey was limited to religious congregations. Local faith-based nonprofits like The Fishing School were not surveyed.

In the mid-1990s a six-city survey of how over 100 randomly selected urban churches (and four synagogues) constructed in 1940 or earlier serve their communities was undertaken by Ram A. Cnnan of the University of Pennsylvania. The study was commissioned and published by Partners for Sacred Places, a Philadelphia-based national nonprofit organization dedicated to the care and good use of older religious properties.[21] Congregations were surveyed in Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Indianapolis, Mobile, and the Bay Area (Oakland and San Francisco). Each church surveyed participated in a series of in-depth interviews.

Among the Cnnan-Partners survey's key findings were the following: 93 percent of the churches opened their doors to the larger community; on average, each church provided over 5,300 hours of

---

[17] Lewis Conversation with Princeton freshman seminar, Spring 1998.

[18] Eugene F. Rivers, III, "High-Octane Faith and Civil Society," in E. J. Dionne, Community Works, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1998), pp. 59-63.

[19] Interview with the author, June 1998.

[20] Tobi Jennifer Printz, Faith-Based Service Providers in the Nation's Capital: Can They Do More? (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, April 1998).

[21] Diane Cohen and A. Robert Jaeger, Sacred Places At Risk (Philadelphia, PA: Partners for Sacred Places, 1998).

volunteer support to its community programs (the equivalent of two-and-a-half full-time volunteers stationed year-round at the church); on average, each church provided about $140,000 a year in community programs, or about 16 times what it received from program beneficiaries; on average, each church supported four major programs, and provided informal and impromptu services as well; and poor children who were not the sons or daughters of church members or otherwise affiliated with the church benefited from church-supported programs more than any other single group.

Typical of the churches behind these heartening statistics is Hyde Park Union Church, located in a Chicago neighborhood where half of recent murder victims have been juveniles. Pastored by Reverend Susan Johnson, the church sponsors Vigil Against Violence, an anti-violence grassroots initiative, and houses the State Attorney General's Support Group for Victims of Violence program. The church also houses a Parent Support Network and operates an 89-year-old daycare center that serves fifty neighborhood children, none of them congregation members. "It's our mission," explains Pastor Johnson, "to offer programs that stabilize family welfare."[22] "We don't have much money," she adds, but her church and others like it are the "most durable institutions in the community--more so than many businesses or (even) public schools."[23]

The best-known and still the most comprehensive survey focusing exclusively on black churches was published in 1990 by Lincoln and Mamiya.[24] In their book The Black Church in the African-American Experience, they reported on the results of surveys encompassing nearly 1,900 ministers and over 2,100 churches. Some 71 percent of black clergy reported that their churches engaged in community outreach programs including day care, job search, substance abuse prevention, food and clothing distribution, and many others.[25] Black urban churches, they found, were generally more engaged in outreach than rural ones. While many urban churches also engaged in quasi-political activities and organizing, few received government money, most clergy expressed concerns about receiving government money, and only about 8 percent of all the churches surveyed received any federal government funds.[26]

A number of site-specific and regional surveys of black churches followed the publication of Lincoln and Mamiya's book. So far, all of them have been broadly consistent with the Lincoln-Mamiya survey results on black church outreach. To cite just two examples, in a survey of 150 black churches in Atlanta, Naomi Ward and her colleagues found that 131 of the churches were "actively engaged in extending themselves into the community."[27] Likewise, a survey of 635 Northern black churches found that two-thirds of the churches engaged in a wide range of "family-oriented community outreach programs," including mentoring, drug abuse prevention, teenage pregnancy prevention, and other outreach efforts "directed at children and youth."[28]

---

[22] Ibid., p. 40.

[23] Ibid., p. 40.

[24] Eric C. Lincoln and Lawrence W. Mamiya, The Black Church in the African-American Experience, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990)

[25] Ibid., p. 151.

[26] Ibid., p. 15.

[27] Naomi Ward et al., "Black Churches in Atlanta Reach Out to the Community," National Journal of Sociology, 8, numbers 1 and 2, Summer/Winter 1994, p. 59.

[28] Roger H. Rubin et al., "The Black Church and Adolescent Sexuality," National Journal of Sociology, 8, numbers 1 and 2, Summer/Winter 1994, pp. 131, 138.

The raw data from the Lincoln-Mamiya surveys were reanalyzed in the course of a 1997 study of black theological education certificate programs (Bible institutes, denominational training programs, and seminary non-degree programs). The study was directed by Trulear in collaboration with Tony Carnes and commissioned by the Ford Foundation.[29] Trulear and Carnes reported no problems with the Lincoln-Mamiya data. Rather, they compared certain of the Lincoln-Mamiya survey results to data gathered in their own survey 724 students representing 28 theological certificate programs that focused on serving black students. Again, the findings were quite consistent with those of the Lincoln-Mamiya study. For example, three-quarters of those surveyed by Trulear and Carnes reported that their church encouraged them "to be involved in my local community," more than half said relevance to "my community's needs" was of major importance to them in choosing a theological certificate program, and about half were already involved in certain types of charitable community work.[30]

New outreach surveys are underway. As Trulear's colleague, P/PV's Dine Watson, told Newsweek. "there is a lot of interest in this area now, because secular institutions have failed."[31]

But, then again, if black church outreach is so potent, then how come inner-city poverty, crime, and other problems remain so severe? That is a fair question, but it can easily be turned around: How much worse would things be in Boston and Jamaica Queens, Philadelphia and Los Angeles, and other cities were it not for the until recently largely unsung efforts of faith-based youth and community outreach efforts? How much more would government or other charitable organizations need to expend, and how many volunteers would suddenly need to be mobilized, in the absence of church-anchored outreach? The only defensible answers are "much worse" and "lots," respectively.

Citizens who for whatever reasons are nervous about religion or enhanced church-state partnerships should focus on the consistent finding that faith-based outreach efforts benefit poor unchurched neighborhood children most of all. If these churches are so willing to support and reach out to "the least of these," surely they deserve the human and financial support of the rest of us--corporations, foundations, and, where appropriate, government agencies.

I agree with Father Richard John Neuhaus of First Things magazine when he characterizes one of my earlier writings on black poverty as advancing the view that "religion is the key to anything good happening among the black poor" (well, at least the key to most good things that are happening among them). And I confess to being doubly in agreement with Father Neuhaus when he writes that, rather than turn our heads and harden our hearts to the plight of the black inner-city poor, rather than merely exposing "liberal fatuities about remedying the 'root causes' of poverty and crime . . . there must be another way. Just believing that is a prelude to doing something. The something in question is centered in religion that is both motive and means, and extends to public policy tasks that should claim the attention of all Americans.[32]

---

[29] Harold Dean Trulear and Tony Carnes, A Study of the Social Service Dimension of Theological Education Certificate Programs: The 1997 Theological Certificate Program Survey, submitted to the Ford Foundation, November 1, 1997.

[30] Ibid., pp. 34, 40-41.

[31] Dine Watson as quoted in Leland, "Savior of the Streets," *Newsweek*, June 1, 1998, p. 23.

[32] Richard John Neuhaus, "The Public Square: A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life," *First Things*, no. 81, March 1998, pp. 63-65.

The Center for Civic Innovation

at the Manhattan Institute

52 Vanderbilt Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10017

Telephone: 212.599.7000
Fax: 212.599.3494
e-mail: holsen@manhattan-institute.org

Henry Olsen
Executive Director

The Jeremiah Project

An Initiative of the Center for Civic Innovation