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Different Forms of Religiousness and Their Complex Relationship with Prejudice

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Abstract

A century of theoretical and empirical work in the psychology of religion has attempted to establish the links between different forms of religiousness and various types of prejudice. The present study examined the connection among four types of personal religiousness and four targets of prejudice. Using a sample of college students, we found that religious fundamentalism, religious ethnocentrism or exclusivity, religious commitment, and religious quest had complex patterns of relationships across measures of anti-Muslim, anti-Black, antigay, and anti-poor hostility. The results depended on the particular form of personal religiousness, the particular target of prejudice, and type of statistical analysis used. There was one consistent finding: religious ethnocentrism was strongly and positively connected

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with all prejudices in all analyses. Anti-gay prejudice was the most successfully predicted outcome variable by the religiousness variables ($R^2 = .45$, p < .001), and anti-poor prejudice had the weakest correlation with the religiousness variables ($R^2 = .07$).

Keywords: religious fundamentalism, religious commitment, religious openness, religious ethnocentrism, ethnic-racial prejudice, sexual orientation prejudice, Muslim prejudice, anti-poor prejudice

Overview of the Relationship Between Institutionalized Religion and Intergroup Hostility

Is religion a force for good for us individually and collectively, or is it instead a source of personal distress and cultural enmity? Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis's Parable of the Stranger asks if religion is "On our side" (367). Religion would appear to be a force for good in the world because a core tenet of all major religions is to love your neighbor. Indeed, many religions stress the path to transcendence is inextricably tied to compassionate, loving relationships with other people (Kimball; Polinska). Religions convey values that foster peace among neighbors, contribute to mental health (Koenig) and happiness (Rizvi and Hossain), and promote the sanctity of all human life. Religious leaders and religious organizations have contributed to social change and social justice (e.g., abolition of slavery in Europe and America). An empirical study of people devoted to compassion and helping others found that religion was a key motivator underlying their virtuous acts (Colby and Damon).

And yet centuries of history (e.g., the Crusades) and today's news headlines (America's 9-11) remind us of the negative side of religion, and spotlight how religion has been used as an instigator and rationalizer of intolerance and hate in many parts of the world (Silberman). Internationally, there is the Taliban's fundamentalist reading of the Quran, serving as a justification for repression and violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Conflicts and violence continue between Israel and Islamist Hamas terrorists, between Hindus and Muslims in India, and religiously-based violence against Christians in several parts of the world. "Religious ideologies and commitments are indisputably central factors in the escalation of violence and evil around the world" (Kimball: 4). Indeed, Jenkins makes the remarkable and discouraging claim that religion as a trigger for prejudice will continue unabated: "The twenty-first century will almost certainly be regarded by future historians as a century in which religion replaced ideology as the prime animating and destructive force in human affairs" (54). This century is far from over, but there is no evidence as yet to invalidate this prediction.

Clearly the role of religion in human affairs is complex. Further, the events mentioned above raise the crucial issue of why religion can be both a source for good and a source for evil. Silberman, among many others, has asked the logical follow-up question to these observations: "What are the processes through which religion can facilitate violence, terrorism and peace in these contexts?" (530). There are a host of answers to this question

from biological evolution,² to systemic culture and local socialization practices, to charismatic leaders, to an individual's identification with violent groups. To this we, as psychologists, offer another focus: "What are the intra-individual religious and personality traits that incline people toward either tolerance or prejudice?"

Personality and Prejudice

The intensity and targets of prejudice vary across time and social contexts, but prejudice in some form is ever-present. For example, racial prejudice has recently surged in both the United States and Europe (Agiesta and Ross), following years of decline. Anti-gay bias has declined in Europe and the U.S. (Smith, Son, and Kim), but increased in other areas (Human Rights Watch). Anti-Muslim hate crimes have increased five-fold in the Britain during the past two decades. Finally, the Southern Poverty Law Center claimed in 2018 that hate groups are at an all-time high (Southern Poverty Law Center).

One reason, among many, for why prejudice is difficult to eradicate is that stable personality or individual difference variables underlie the formation and maintenance of prejudice. Prejudice has been traced to differences in worldview (for example, in believing the world is a dangerous place where religion offers safety; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, and Birum), ideology (such as right-wing authoritarianism where obedience is a virtue and religious authorities should be obeyed, even if they tolerate prejudice; Altemeyer 1996), and personality (evidenced by associations with the trait of disagreeableness; Crawford and Brandt).

Specific Ideologies and Prejudice

Beyond those broad traits noted above, several studies have identified other, more specific characteristics related to prejudice. Two of these are among the strongest predictors of hostility and prejudice: right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation (SDO). Right-wing authoritarianism is a trait characterized by submission to legitimate authority, staunch conventionalism in adherence to mainstream and normative values, and feelings of aggression toward those who threaten those values (Altemeyer 1996). Right-wing authoritarians view the world as a threatening place and value social conformity which promotes the social cohesion and order that can control threats to safety and security (Duckitt and Fisher; Duckitt and Sibley 2008). Social dominance, on the other hand, is an ideology that enables the person to view the world in a "tough-minded" fashion. To social dominators the world is a competitive jungle where hierarchies are natural, weaker groups should be dominated by stronger groups, and efforts to create equality are misguided and therefore rejected (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle).

Research indicates both of these ideologies or attitudes predict prejudice toward a wide variety of out-groups and to a remarkable degree. Alterneyer whimsically awarded them the

² A field of psychology, labeled evolutional psychology (EP), states that religion (e.g., beliefs and practices) are evolved adaptations, the products and by-products of evolutionary-based mental mechanism designed by natural or sexual selection to solve recurrent evolutionary challenges our ancestor faced. That is, religion has an evolved, adaptive purpose that has aided believers' survival and reproduction in our "environment of evolutionary adaptedness" (e.g., Kirkpatrick 1993).

Silver and Bronze medals in what he called the Prejudice Olympics, claiming "the two scales could, between them, explain most of the prejudice . . . against minorities" (2006: 162). They have been shown to have statistically powerful direct and indirect effects on a variety of prejudices.

Personal Religiousness and Prejudice

While the majority of religious people may espouse an unconditional but abstract love for all, social science research has revealed that this putatively unconditional love can be elusive. Scores of studies have shown many religious people harbor prejudice towards members of specific outgroups (especially gay men), as well as scoring high on a measure of general ethnocentrism (for reviews see Altemeyer 1996; Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis; Hall, Matz, and Wood; Wulff). Considerable research suggests it is best to view religion as a multidimensional construct and not categorize people as simply religious versus not religious or attending religious services versus not attending services (Wulff: ch. 6). Rather, it is the way in which one is religious that matters; one's motivations for being religious and the strength or degree of one's religious commitment and devotion strongly influence one's level of prejudice.

In the literature review below, we focus on the specific religiousness dimensions or constructs used in our empirical study. Our review indicates the religion-prejudice linkage is complex and depends on: (a) the way in which one is religious, (b) the target of prejudice, (c) the nature of the sample of research participants, and (d) the specific methods used to study this relationship.

Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Ethnocentrism

We have combined our presentation of religious fundamentalism and religious ethnocentrism into one section because of their considerable empirical overlap ($r \approx .70$; Altemeyer 2003). Altemeyer defined fundamentalism as "the belief that there is one set of religious teachings that clearly contains the fundamental, basic, intrinsic, essential, inerrant truth about humanity and deity . . . this truth must be followed today according to the fundamental, unchanging practices of the past" (1996: 157). Friedman and Rholes, citing the work of Pargament, stated that "fundamentalists have an unquestioned sense of right and wrong, hold unambiguous rules for living, and believe that their lives are sanctioned and supported by God" (38). They have a dogmatic perspective that provides a breeding-ground for prejudice toward outgroups, as well as affection and altruism toward their ingroups.

Empirically, religious fundamentalism has been associated with in-group altruism (e.g., Hall, Matz, and Wood) but also outgroup prejudice, including racial prejudice and sexual orientation prejudice (e.g., Altemeyer 2003; Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Blogowska, Saroglou, and Lambert; Kirkpatrick 1993; Smith, Stones, Peck, and Naidoo; Whitley and Kite) and anti-Muslim prejudice (e.g., Rowatt, Franklin, and Cotton). While most studies in the psychology of religion have used Protestant participants (Hill), it is important to note that the link between religious fundamentalism and out-group prejudice has been demonstrated in members of other religions as well, such as Hindus and Muslims (Hasnain and Abidi).

The strongest link between religious fundamentalism and prejudice, both in magnitude and consistency, has been with anti-gay or sexual orientation prejudice (e.g., Altemeyer 2003; Hunsberger and Jackson; Fulton, Gorsuch, and Maynard; Jonathan; Laythe, Finkel, Bringle, and Kirkpatrick; Rowatt, Tsang, Kelly, LaMartina, McCullers, and McKinley; Schwartz and Lindley). Indeed, in many studies religious fundamentalism was the best predictor of prejudice against homosexuals, which is one of the more deeply held prejudices in Western countries (Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny) as well as being prevalent in other parts of the world. Even across different faiths (e.g., Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish), religious fundamentalists consistently show hostility towards homosexuals (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005; Hunsberger, Owusu, and Duck). Indeed, it is how people are religious, their fundamentalist attitude, rather than the specific content of their religious beliefs, that is the better predictor of prejudice (e.g., Brown and Henriquez). Altemeyer (2006: ch. 4) went as far as to say fundamentalism is a "template" for the formation of prejudice.

So, why do fundamentalists tend to be prejudiced? A variety of answers have been offered, such as the fundamentalist's greater cognitive rigidity (Hunsberger and Jackson) and right-wing authoritarianism (e.g., Altemeyer 2006; Laythe, Finkel, and Kirkpatrick). Altemeyer (2003; 2006) hypothesized that childhood socialization experiences were the culprit. Fundamentalists raise their children with a strong emphasis on the home-religion as foundational to their identity and in turn fostering of a strong in-group vs. out-group categorization of people on the basis of their religious identification.³ This strong in-group vs. out-group distinction results in the stigmatization of those outside of their in-group, particularly if they are disapproved of by their respected religious authorities. He referred to this simple "us" versus "them" categorization based on one's strong religious identification as religious ethnocentrism or religious exclusivity, and we included this variable in our research. Altemeyer developed the Religious Ethnocentrism Scale to measure "not just shunning, but hubris and rejection, disparagement and dislike" (2003: 27) of others who differ from them in faith. He reported that religious ethnocentrism was strongly correlated with a general measure of racial-ethnic ethnocentrism and especially anti-gay prejudice (Altemeyer 2003).

Religious Openness: Quest Orientation and Fowler's Concept of Faith Development

Allport's (1950) influential theory of religious maturity has dominated thinking about the concept for over 50 years, and it has directed many psychologists in their thinking about maturity in faith (e.g., Erik Fromm and Abraham Maslow). Allport believed an open-minded search for religious truth was a key element of mature development in one's faith. Batson and his colleagues attempted to capture people's openminded search for religious truth with his scale to measure what he called religion-as-quest (summarized in Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis). Religious quest entails three interdependent components: (a) an openness to doubt religious tenets, (b) coupled with a willingness to examine religious issues, (c) but

³ Altemeyer and Hunsberger (2005) stressed a social-learning approach to the development of fundamentalism. However, opinions vary greatly about the personal origins of fundamentalism, from the neuro-biological (e.g., a deficit in the prefrontal cortex; Asp, Ramchandran, and Tranel) to the existential (e.g., fundamentalism provides a coherent, meaningful philosophy of life through strict adherence to sacred texts and authorities; Hood, Hill, and Williamson).

without reducing their inherent complexity. A quest orientation involves the search for understanding, but also the acceptance that an absolute "Truth" about faith issues may never be known. Note religion-as-quest is the antithesis of fundamentalism's absolutism and rigidity.

Empirical studies consistently show the quest orientation is linked to decreased prejudice, regardless of whether the prejudice was measured directly or indirectly (i.e., direct self-report or with an implicit association test), and regardless of whether the target of the prejudice was proscribed (i.e., explicitly prohibited) or non-proscribed (i.e., endorsed or at least allowed) by their religion (Batson and Stocks). Indeed quest orientation is associated with lower levels of prejudice against a wide variety of targets, including ethnic minorities, homosexuals, members of other religious denominations, and even atheists (e.g., Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Duck and Hunsberger; Herek; Polinska; Rowatt, Franklin, and Cotton). Furthermore, the decreases in prejudice connected to higher levels of quest are genuine, and not simply the desire to avoid appearing prejudiced in the eyes of others, as seems to be the case with intrinsic religiousness, described later. Indeed, the quest orientation has come the closest to supporting Allport's powerful and profound claim that religion can serve as a bulwark against prejudice (1954).

A prominent theory of religious and faith development, one that has influenced theology and the psychology of religion for almost 40 years, is Fowler's faith development theory (Fowler; see Fowler and Dell for his most updated statement of the theory). Fowler and his intellectual descendants (e.g., Streib; Streib and Keller) have developed a theory of how individuals evolve in their faith and make sense of life's existential challenges.

According to faith development theory, faith provides meaning to our personal experiences, relationships, and identity. As people age and develop they may, or may not, progress through various stages of faith. Faith Stages 3 and 4 are of greatest relevance to our focus on religious openness and prejudice. Stage 3, called Mythic-literal faith, is a committed, consensually-oriented faith that is characterized by a strong but tacit and unexamined system of beliefs. This stage represents an outer-directed, social conformity orientation to faith issues that is common among adolescents and is similar to intrinsic religiosity's "settled orthodoxy" (Wulff: 292). Stage 4, Individuative-reflective faith, stands in stark contrast to Stage 3. It is a product of greater cognitive complexity that includes the development of a critical reflection about one's beliefs that is coupled with greater self-determination or self-selection of beliefs.⁴

Two studies in particular have examined the connection between faith development and prejudice. Crownover used the Faith Development Scale (FDS) (Leak, Loucks, and Bowlin), and found the higher one scored in faith development the lower one scored on measures of

⁴ With the possible exception of Stage 6 faith, it appears that growth toward a mature faith is compatible with Batson's concept of quest religiosity (i.e., growth in flexibility and complexity coupled with an objective, self-critical focus). Fowler has clearly stressed the essential role of struggle and doubt as an inherent part of faith development (31 and 38). There are theoretical connections between aspects of quest religiosity and more mature stages of faith development, such as Fowler's Stage 4 (180) and Stage 5 (186) faith. For these reasons we used scales to measure quest and faith development as manifest, observable indicators of religious openness.

fundamentalism and Christian orthodoxy. She also found higher scores in faith development were associated with lower levels of racial prejudice, but surprisingly was unrelated to prejudice against women or homosexuals (i.e., faith development did not reflect a generalized tolerance toward all minorities). Leak and Finken, using a structural equation modeling analysis, found that higher levels of religious openness, assessed by the Quest Scale and the FDS, was associated with lower levels of anti-Black, anti-Muslim, and anti-gay prejudice.

Religious Commitment

Research involving religious commitment has produced some of the most complex findings in the psychology of religion. Religious commitment concerns such things as how devoted one is to his or her religious life or the importance and sincerity with which beliefs are held. Allport (1959) proposed a distinction between extrinsic religiosity (ER; i.e., religion is a means to non-religious ends, such as social acceptance or to fit in socially in one's community) versus intrinsic religiosity (IR; i.e., religious commitment; religion is embraced as an end in itself, and it becomes the central, guiding, or internalized "master motivation" in the life of the person). Literature reviews by Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis, as well as by Wulff, found a strong trend for high extrinsic religious people to be more intolerant and prejudiced than high intrinsic religious people (in 39 of 41 studies reviewed by Batson et al.). Donahue's meta-analysis also found extrinsic religiosity was strongly associated with increased racism, while intrinsic religiosity was often associated with decreased racism. Unfortunately, progress has been limited because IR is related to socially desirable responding (Leak and Fish 1989; Sedikides and Gebauer). So it is possible that when an IRtolerance link has been found, it may be only a product of impression management, either in the form of conscious and strategic self-presentation or unconscious self-enhancement or self-deception (cf. Batson and Stocks).

Recent research has added more complexity to our earlier understanding of the link between IR and facets of prejudice. Specifically, the relationship is moderated by other factors. One important consideration is whether or not prejudice against a particular group is actively discouraged or proscribed by the religious teachings of one's faith, or if, instead, it is supported or at least tolerated by their religion. For example, mainstream contemporary religions consistently preach against racial prejudice, while often tacitly encouraging anti-gay prejudice based on tradition and scripture (Miller and Romanelli; Morrow). For proscriptive prejudices like racism, devoutly religious people report lower levels of prejudice (e.g., Fulton, Gorsuch, and Maynard). Importantly, the decrease in proscriptive prejudice associated with high levels of IR is quite small in magnitude (e.g., Donahue) and again may be triggered by "a desire to avoid appearing racially prejudiced than with a genuine reduction of prejudice" (Batson, Schoenrade, and Venis: 326, italics in the original). However, when it comes to relatively non-proscriptive or permissible prejudices, such as anti-gay prejudice, those higher in intrinsic religiosity have been found to have higher levels of both implicit (unconscious and powerful) and explicit (easy to articulate and bring into conscious awareness) prejudice (e.g., Duck and Hunsberger; Tsang and Rowatt) These and other finding have prompted one prominent scholar to lament that inconsistencies in the IR-prejudice relationship, and to state they are "hardly surprising" and that it is "not unusual for statistical trends inexplicitly to reverse themselves" (Wulff: 233).

We believe these inconsistencies stem from methodological flaws in previous research that often examined only a few facets of religiosity and have treated them as separate and unrelated forms of religiosity. In our research we strove to consider a wide range of religiosity variables, as well as multiple forms of outgroup prejudice, and examined the intercorrelations among these variables. In this way we hope to develop a clearer understanding of the complex relationships between religion and prejudice.

The Present Study

Progress in the psychology of religion has been hampered by too many piece-meal studies. For example, some researchers have used one religious variable, such as Christian orthodoxy, to predict several types of prejudice. Other researchers have used several different ways of being religious to predict one or two types of prejudice.

Our study integrates four important types of personal religiousness to predict and thus understand four important types of prejudice. However, the major value of our study rests on two pillars. First, we examined an important but largely neglected aspect of religiousness: religious ethnocentrism (RE). This variable is strongly connected with religious fundamentalism, but is nevertheless conceptually distinct from it (i.e., they are similar but not interchangeable). Because religious ethnocentrism (RE) is strongly related to fundamentalism, and fundamentalism is strong linked with various prejudices, RE should also be a strong predictor of religiously-based prejudices. Second, we included a rarely examined type of prejudice, especially in the psychology of religion literature: anti-poor prejudice or prejudice against those perceived by some as drains on societal resources. The poor in general are often viewed as lower in status and competence, but also as lower in interpersonal warmth and trustworthiness, than our other three groups: Blacks, homosexuals, and Muslims (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu). These negative perceptions of the poor along both of the dimensions often lead to strong prejudice (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu). Hence, our study examined two traditional forms of prejudice in the psychology literature (anti-Black and anti-gay), as well as two increasingly important prejudices that require further study (anti-Muslim and anti-poor).⁵

Method

Participants and Procedure

The initial pool of participants (N = 529) was recruited from among Creighton University undergraduate students in Omaha, Nebraska, USA, for a study on "personality and social attitudes." Selected for analysis were those students who reported themselves: (a) theists (i.e., they chose either believing in a personal God or believing in God as a transcendent life-force, and removing self-reported atheists and agnostics), (b) race other than black, and (c) heterosexuals. These selections were done because most of the religious

⁵ There has been anti-Muslim prejudice for over a millennium, but it has only recently been a focus of understanding in the psychology of prejudice and stereotyping. Anti-poor has always been with us as a more hidden prejudice, and it is only within the past 10-15 years that psychologists have hoped to find its roots.

scales (e.g., fundamentalism and commitment) presume some belief in the transcendent (see Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis for a further justification of this selection rationale). It was also considered important to remove Blacks and non-heterosexuals because of the use of attitudes towards homosexuals and Blacks used in this research. In addition, one extreme outlier was removed.

The final sample (N = 429) was composed of 56% women and 44% men, with a mean age of 20.0 years (standard deviation = 2.4, range 17-48). The majority were Catholic (62%) and the rest primarily from various Protestant denominations. The vast majority of participants were white, followed by Asian, and Hispanic (82%, 10%, 3%, respectively, with other = 4%). The reported modal family income was > \$90,000.

These students anonymously completed a booklet of randomized measures in groups of 10-15. The materials took approximately 60 minutes to complete.

Instruments

Religious fundamentalism. Fundamentalism was assessed with Altemeyer and Hunsburger's (cited in Altemeyer 1996) 20-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale (coefficient alpha, or α , measures internal consistency reliability and the higher the number, from 0 to 1.0, the more reliable a scale is; in Altemeyer's research it was $\alpha = .91$). A sample item from the scale is: "God has given mankind a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed." This scale is among the most frequently used and respected in the study of religious fundamentalism in psychology.

Religious ethnocentrism. Altemeyer (2003), building on the work of others in the realm of religious insularity or religious exclusivity, developed the 16-item Religious Ethnocentrism (RE) scale (α = .92). It measures prejudicial attitudes towards others who hold religious beliefs at variance from one's own, such as atheists and persons of "other religions." Altemeyer claims the scale "captures not just shunning, but hubris and rejection, disparagement and dislike" (2003: 11) of others who hold alternative beliefs from one's own. It is also considered a measure of religious prejudice. A sample item is "Christian prayer (and only Christian prayer) should be said in our public schools."

Religious openness. We used two scales to assess religious openness. Mentioned above, quest represents an openminded search for religious or existential truth. We used a shortened, 12-item version of Altemeyer and Hunsberger's Quest scale (1992). This version of the scale has high internal consistency ($\alpha = .88$). A sample item from the scale is: "Religious doubt allows us to learn."

Another indicator of openness, faith development, was measured with the Faith Development Scale (FDS) (Leak, Loucks, and Bowlin; $\alpha = .73$ in this research). The FDS is an 8-item, forced-choice measure of global faith development or faith style. For each item, one response option reflects Stage 4 or Stage 5 (higher) faith development, while the other is keyed for Stage 2 or 3 faith development. The validity of this scale has been established in several studies (Leak 2003; 2008). The correlation between Quest and the FDS was .64. A sample item subjects choose between is: (a) "I believe that my church offers a full insight int what God wants for us and how we should worship him"; (b) "I believe my church has

much to offer, but that other religions can also provide many religious insights." The two separate measures of openness were standardized and summed to provide a composite index of religious openness.

Religious commitment. The importance one places on their religion was measured with two scales. One was Gorsuch and McPherson's 9-item revision (α = .83) of the Allport and Ross) Intrinsic Religiosity (IR) scale. The IR scale was used because of its frequent deployment in psychology of religion research and because there is good evidence that it measures a limited aspect of Allport's conceptualization of religious maturity: devout religious commitment and the importance one places on religion in life (Wulff).

Leak and Fish developed and validated a scale to measure Allport's conceptualization of religious maturity (1999). Factor analysis (Leak 2002) yielded 4 factors; the first factor has 8 items and was labeled Master Motive (MM; α = .91). Master motive was Allport's term for a person with a strong, internalized, religious commitment and who has religion as the fundamental or "master motive" in their life. The correlation between IR and MM was .81. A sample item is: "Religion is the major framework or perspective I use in ordering my life." The two scales were standardized and combined into a religious commitment variable.

Prejudice Measurement

Sexual orientation or anti-gay prejudice. This was assessed with the 12-item Attitudes toward Homosexuals scale (ATH) (Altemeyer 1988). The ATH assesses hostility toward homosexuals, with scale items dealing with "condemning, vindictive, and punative sentiments toward gays" (167). Participants responded using a 5-point rating scale anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree (α = .90). A sample item from the scale is: "I won't associate with known homosexuals if I can help it."

Anti-Black prejudice. This was measured with Pettigrew and Meertens's scale that contains items reflecting both subtle ("modern") and blatant anti-Black racism (α s = .74 and .65, respectively). The statements were answered on a 4-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, and they were standardized and summed to provide an index of racial prejudice. The correlation between the blatant and subtle racism scales was .62. A sample blatant item is: "Blacks have jobs that the Whites should have."

Anti-Muslim prejudice. Altemeyer (1988) developed a "posse" scenario to assess extreme hostility and discriminative tendencies against various groups. Our research modified one of his scenarios that asked how far the participants would be willing to go toward the repression and persecution of Muslims, if asked to do so by their government (i.e., a legitimate authority). Students responded to 7 items or dimensions that ranged from indicating relatively mild anti-Muslim prejudice ("I would tell my friends and neighbors it was a good law") to extreme anti-Muslim hostility ("I would support the execution of leaders in the Muslim faith if the government insisted it was necessary to protect America"). Each of the statements dealing with their reactions to the anti-Muslim law was answered on a 7-point scale from extremely untrue of you (1) to extremely true of you (7). These responses were aggregated to form the measure of anti-Muslim prejudice ($\alpha = .85$). This approach to

prejudice measurement is similar to recent work on radical responses to Muslim immigration (Sturmer, Rohmann, Froehlich, and van der Noll).

Anti-poor prejudice. Participants responded to two low SES target groups: how hostile they felt towards homeless people and how hostile they felt towards people on welfare (from 1 = not at all hostile to 5 = very hostile). These responses were combined to form the measure of anti-poor prejudice ($\alpha = .65$).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Prior to multivariate analysis, the data were evaluated for violations of univariate and multivariate assumptions and for the presence of outliers. No variables had skew or kurtosis values > 2.0 and thus no data transformations were made. No outliers required deletion.

Correlational Analysis

Bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients, r, convey the strength of association or relationship between two variables. The higher the absolute value of r, the stronger the variables are connected and, as a consequence, the better one can predict one variable from the other.

Table 1 shows the correlations between the religiousness variables and the prejudice variables. In contrast to some studies (e.g., Kirkpatrick 1993) fundamentalism's link with prejudice was highly dependent on the target of prejudice. Its relationships ranged from essentially zero with societal drains (r = .04) to a strong relationship with sexual orientation prejudice (r = .57, p < .001). These correlations show that fundamentalism is unconnected with prejudice toward the poor, but significantly though weakly associated with more anti-Black prejudice. This outcome is consistent with the idea that the degree of prejudice depends on how threatening those groups are perceived to be (Leak, Budesheim, Moreland, and Finken), and that the poor and Blacks are not perceived as particularly threatening to mainstream Christian or dominant American cultural values – and thus love of neighbor in these circumstances can be taken seriously by fundamentalists.

Table 1. Pearson Correlations Between the Religious Variables and the Prejudice Variables

Variable	Anti-Black	Anti-Muslim	Anti-Gay	Anti-Poor
Religious Fundamentalism	.14**	.28***	.57***	.04
Religious Ethnocentrism	.33***	.47***	.67***	.19***
Religious Commitment	04	.07	.30***	09τ
Religious Openness	11*	30***	50***	10*

$$^{\mathsf{T}}p < .10 \ ^{\mathsf{P}}p < .05. \ ^{\mathsf{P}}p < .01. \ ^{\mathsf{P}}p < .001$$

Religious ethnocentrism (RE) had the same pattern of correlations with prejudice variables as did fundamentalism, but in each instance the correlations were larger in magnitude and more significant in each instance. The correlation values ranged from small

but statistically significant, r = .19, p < .001 with anti-poor prejudice, to correlation values large in magnitude, r = .67, p < .001, with anti-gay prejudice. This pattern is what one would expect if RE was the underlying reason for the link between fundamentalism and prejudice (Leak, Budesheim, Moreland, and Finken).

Religious commitment, a combination of the intrinsic religiosity scale and master motive scale, was significantly correlated with only anti-gay prejudice (r = .30, p < .001). As mentioned in the introduction, religious commitment has a mixed association with different types of prejudice, but one constant has been the association between religious commitment with anti-gay prejudice, a non-proscribed prejudice against a group derogated by mainstream society (Duckitt and Sibley 2007).

Finally, the introduction documented the frequently found and robust connection between tolerance and those who achieve higher levels of faith development and form their religious beliefs as part of a search or quest for religious truth. The one exception is that questers are intolerant of others who are themselves intolerant. The composite measure of religious openness – a combination of the Faith Development Scale and Altemeyer's Quest scale – was significantly and negatively correlated with all four prejudice measures. That is to say, the higher people scored in religious openness, the less prejudiced they were toward each of the four groups. The correlations between religious openness and anti-Black and anti-poor prejudices were statistically significant but small in magnitude, explaining only 1% of the variance in each of these two prejudices. However, the correlations between religious openness and with anti-Muslim and anti-gay prejudice were notably larger in magnitude (rs = -.30 and -.50, ps < .001, explaining 9% and 25% of the variance in these judgments, respectively), indicating significantly greater tolerance toward these groups. Consistent with earlier work by Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis, religious openness here was associated with tolerance generally, and especially tolerance toward potentially threatening and often derogated minority groups.

The relationship between personal religiousness and prejudice is not simple. At this point, our data support three conclusions: (a) some forms of personal religiousness (religious openness) militate against feelings of hostility and prejudice toward outgroups; (b) other forms of religiousness (religious fundamentalism and religious commitment) seem to "green light" prejudice toward some target groups (e.g., homosexuals) but not others (e.g., the poor); and (c) and at least one form of religiousness (religious exclusivity) is associated with greater prejudice toward every outgroup we examined.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is an extension of bivariate correlation and regression. The advantages of multiple regression analyses over bivariate analyses are two-fold. First, adding multiple predictors or independent variables simultaneously can result in a higher overall relationship with the outcome or dependent variable, and that translates into an increase in predictive accuracy for that outcome variable. Second, this statistical technique can evaluate and isolate the unique contribution of each predictor variable by simultaneously holding constant or statistically controlling for the impact of the other predictors on the outcome variable. So, for example, we can assess the unique contribution of openness to the

prediction of prejudice, uninfluenced by the other three religious variables. The size of the contribution is indexed by beta weights (β) that can range in value from 0 to 1.0.

Table 2 shows the contribution of each religious variable to the prediction of each prejudice variable. The impact of fundamentalism on anti-Muslim and anti-gay prejudice is dramatically reduced in the multiple regression analysis, and the relationships become trivial, when the other predictors are controlled. This suggests a diminished role for fundamentalism per se in explaining prejudice, and that the fundamentalism-prejudice link is explained by other religious characteristics.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Prejudice from the Religious Variables

	Anti-Black Prejudice	Anti-Muslim Prejudice	Anti-Gay Prejudice	Anti-Poor Prejudice
Variable	β	β	β	β
Religious Fundamentalism	07	14τ	.14*	19*
Religious Ethnocentrism	.52***	.58***	.55***	.36***
Religious Commitment	23***	19***	10*	19***
Religious Openness	.05	14*	11*	11
R2 values	.16***	.26***	.48***	.09***

 $^{\tau}p < .10 *p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001$

Something quite different happens when we examine religious exclusivity or ethnocentrism and prejudice. In most cases, the connection (reflected in beta weights) increases when we hold the other factors constant, and all relationships are highly significant. This bolsters Altemeyer's (2003) view that fundamentalism is driven by religious ethnocentrism, but also supports the idea that ethnocentrism could be acting as a statistical suppressor variable. Our data also show that those high in religious ethnocentrism are not just prejudiced against racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities - three groups that might be perceived as either competitive threats (e.g., a threat to one's own group's political power) or cultural threats (e.g., a threat to one's own group's values and traditions). Our research shows for the first time that they also feel hostility toward those who are economically disadvantaged and low in societal status and power. Note the poor can be considered a derogated group, using Duckitt and Sibley's terminology (2007), but they would not be considered a threat to one's in-group - a major foundation of prejudice (Cottrell and Neuberg). The poor are relatively powerless and are often dependent on the benevolence of others. Anti-poor prejudice is the antithesis of the tenets of all major religions. Nevertheless, religious ethnocentrism is associated with such strong "us-versus-them" thinking that it results in significant prejudice toward the poor in spite of the explicit teachings of their faith.

Religious commitment was consistently associated with reduced prejudice. Some studies have found religious orthodoxy and devotion positively linked with prejudice (Wulff), but

when other religious variables are controlled (e.g., commitment's association with fundamentalism) those high in commitment tend to be low in prejudice. This indicates that those earlier studies that found a simple commitment-prejudice link failed to detect the role of fundamentalism or ethnocentrism driving the relationship. In very recent research we have conducted, we used a more sophisticated method of analysis that demonstrates religious commitment increases prejudice only when it leads to higher levels of fundamentalism that in turn leads to higher levels of religious ethnocentrism (Leak, Budesheim, Moreland, and Finken). Unraveling the religious commitment-prejudice knot thus depends on carefully examining several forms of religiosity at once, and carefully examining how each of these interact and relate to different targets of prejudice.

Previous research has consistently shown religious openness to militate against prejudice, often to a strong degree. When openness was combined with other religious variables in a multiple regression approach, openness was then only weakly correlated with prejudice, albeit in a direction consistent with the literature. We were surprised to see openness, when working with powerful variables such as exclusivity, did not contribute in any important way to our understanding of any type of prejudice. This is in stark contrast to the sizeable correlations found for openness with anti-Muslim and anti-gay prejudice in the simple bivariate analysis (see Table 1).

The value or importance of the four religious predictor variables in understanding prejudice is indexed by the size of the multiple correlation, R^2 , between the set of predictors taken together and each target prejudice. Table 2 shows that variance in prejudice scores accounted for by the religious variables ranged from 9% for anti-poor to a sizeable 48% for anti-gay prejudice (all p-values were significant). The major contributor to prejudice in each instance was religious exclusivity. The religious variables of fundamentalism, commitment, and openness were negatively correlated with or uncorrelated with prejudice, with the exception of the fundamentalism-anti-gay link (β = .14, p < .05). This suggests two important conclusions: (a) the strength of the religion-prejudice link depends on the target of prejudice, and (b) the strength of the religion-prejudice link depends on how personal religiousness is conceptualized (and measured). In particular, religious openness and commitment are aligned with tolerance and religious ethnocentrism is strongly connected with intolerance, even when the influence of other religious variables were statistically controlled.

Discussion of Results

Our project is one of only a few studies in the psychology of religion that has used Altemeyer's concept and measurement of religious exclusivity or religious ethnocentrism (RE) to understand prejudice. Those high in religious ethnocentrism hold a strong dislike of other religions. Consistent with this we found RE was the only religious variable shown to be a powerful predictor of all types of prejudices we studied (Table 1). The results showed exclusivity predicted prejudice toward a low status group derogated by many in society (the poor) as well as groups perceived as culturally deviant and a potential threat to the status quo (gays and Muslims). If people wanted to catalogue personal religious dimensions that contribute to prejudice, they can put religious ethnocentrism, those with a "We're number 1"

ethnocentric attitude, at the top of the list. This previously ignored dimension proved crucial in understanding the psychological roots of prejudice.

What might account for the underlying reason for the RE-prejudice link? Two possibilities come to mind. First, there quite simply is an arrogance or sense of superiority that comes with thinking one's religious in-group is a people favored by God. Despite strict religious teachings to the contrary, it would be hard to be humble and treat others with equality when one sees his or her own religious group as holding the keys to Truth and as especially virtuous and worthy in God's eyes. However, another possibility exists. It may be that RE has a negative impact on tolerance because of a fundamental ideology or personality characteristic. The empirical connection between RE and social dominance orientation (SDO) is approximately r = .40. Recall from the introduction that those high on SDO favor inequality and are staunch supporters of social and other hierarchies. But there is a darker side to the make-up of the high SDO individual. Alterneyer found them to be high in desire for power, possess a general meanness, and strive for interpersonal dominance (e.g., they agree with this statement: "It's a dog-eat-dog world where you have to be ruthless at times"; 2006: 165). They also are exploitive, manipulative and dishonest (Alterneyer 2006). Possibly RE is just an aspect of a more generalized personal trait of social dominance expressed in a religious realm. From this point of view, the roots of the RE-prejudice connection can be traced to a generalized antipathy toward others who are weak or who may wish to elevate their status in the social hierarchy (e.g., racial or social minorities).

A second important conclusion from our work involves religious fundamentalism, a characteristic of importance to theologians and psychologists interested in religion. Table 1 showed fundamentalists were prejudiced against most groups, and especially those who might be a threat to their value system. However, our research also supports the claims of Laythe, Finkel, and Kirkpatrick, who say that the role of fundamentalism depends on the statistical analysis used and also what variables are included in the analysis. Until the twentyfirst century, most research looked at the fundamentalism-prejudice link in a vacuum, only assessing the bivariate association between them. But this approach also leaves the correlational results contaminated by other personal characteristics (e.g., religious orthodoxy or commitment). Our study suggests a modified role for fundamentalism in understanding prejudice when other dimensions are factored in, as they always are in the real world. Fundamentalism is still important but does not have the role of a direct predictor of prejudice. Rather fundamentalism is important because it plays a key role in the development of religious ethnocentrism, and it is this type of ethnocentrism that seems to be the driver of prejudice. The multivariate analysis revealed several other things including non-significant associations between fundamentalism and prejudice (anti-Black) or only trivial associations, even though significant (anti-gay; $\beta = .14$). Despite decades of research suggesting otherwise (e.g., Altemeyer and Hunsberger 2005; Wulff), fundamentalism per se does not contribute in any meaningful way to prejudice and may actually decrease it (e.g., anti-poor prejudice). A fundamentalist's very strong, even zealous beliefs may not be the problem in and of themselves. Instead, it may be other aspects of religiousness it can spawn - religious ethnocentrism and exclusivity - which ultimately leads to intolerance and hatred of others. In summary, many statements in previous research regarding the connection between fundamentalism and prejudice have been too simplistic or wrong.

Religious commitment is a variable that has vexed psychologists for decades with inconsistent results. Our research, however, provides valuable insights as to why there have been so many contradictory results. Using simple bivariate correlation (Table 1), religious commitment has little to no connections with prejudice, except in the case of sexual orientation prejudice. The commitment-sexual orientation prejudice link has been one of the few recurring findings in the literature. But Table 2 shows that when religious commitment is isolated using multiple regression analysis (the three other religious variables are statistically controlled for), religious commitment is associated with significant reduction in prejudice (i.e., a negative correlation, which translates into increased tolerance), even in the case of sexual orientation prejudice. Colloquially put, it seems religious commitment is not a "bad guy" after all, when he can be removed from a "bad neighborhood" and his association with the "bad influences" known as religious fundamentalism and religious ethnocentrism.

Finally, we must comment on another Janus-faced variable: religious openness. Table 1 replicates the classic finding that religious openness is associated with tolerance toward many traditionally marginalized groups (e.g., more accepting of Muslims than Blacks; Rowatt, Franklin, and Cotton). Religiously open people accept those most in need of acceptance. Perhaps this can be explained by Rowatt et al.'s suggestion that those high in quest and openness are driven by a personal identity with a bedrock foundation based on tolerance (of ambiguity, of uncertainty, of diversity). Finally, we cannot forget that one's methodological approach matters — multifaceted conceptions of religiosity and their relationships with multiple forms of prejudice cannot be adequately analyzed and explained using simple statistical tools. For example, Table 2 reveals that the beneficent associations with tolerance either evaporate (anti-black) or are dramatically attenuated (anti-gay) when other variables are controlled.

Conclusions, Implications, and Unmaking Prejudice

If we step back and look at the big picture, what can we conclude from our results? First, simple statements linking broad and amorphous concepts like "religion" and "prejudice" must be qualified. The present study, along with many others, have shown that the link between religion and a specific prejudice depends on the nature of the religious trait being considered. This can be illustrated best with the two strongest correlates of prejudice and tolerance: religious ethnocentrism and religious openness. Religion can be a force for good by generating tolerance towards ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities. This happens when the broad concept of religion is conceptualized more specifically as religious openness, and the openness-tolerance link is remarkably consistent across both previous studies and across various targets of prejudice. The key role of religious openness supports Allport's famous observation that religion can "unmake" prejudice (1954). However, religion does not always promote tolerance. This appears most clearly with religious ethnocentrism, where religion has become associated with strong in-group versus out-group biases that are the foundation for prejudice. Religion can thus make and unmake prejudice, as Allport theorized, depending on what form of religiousness takes hold.

How might people and society unmake prejudice rather than to create it? Churches would need to be one focus for intervention (Batson and Stocks; Hunsberger and Jackson; Burdette, Ellison, and Hill). Religion has a powerful impact on prejudice, especially in

developed countries like the United States (Adamczyk and Pitt). In particular, prejudice against homosexuals has been and still is deeply imbedded in many religions. Even while churches are preaching against prejudice directed at people of color, they openly encourage and justify sexual orientation prejudice with biblical verses and sermons (Duck and Hunsberger; Herek; Hoffman et al.; Miller and Romanelli; Morrow). "Opposition to homosexuality may be solidified through interpretive communities, guided by pastors and other religious elites...[it becomes a] code for holding certain social and moral values established within the group" (Burdette, Ellison, and Hill: 193). As a consequence, religious individuals can feel morally sanctified in denying gays and lesbians basic civil liberties, such as the right to marry or even the freedom of speech.

However, there is hope for change and the "unmaking" prejudice among many church goers. Early research on the link between prejudice and religiosity focused on racial prejudice (Herek). It was not so many decades ago that the Bible was quoted for moral justification against mixed marriages and states passed laws prohibiting blacks and whites from marrying. However, the contextual moral landscape has dramatically changed during a relatively short period of time. In general, even conservative fundamentalist churches are now proscriptive about racial prejudice and discrimination (Duck and Hunsberger). And while subtle or covert racism still exists, researchers believe even this implicit prejudice can be reduced, in part, through inclusive religious teachings (Rowatt and Franklin; Rowatt, Franklin, and Cotton; Veenvliet). This notion is consistent with Devine's dissociation model of prejudice that is based on increasing the salience of church norms proscribing prejudice. Recent research focused on sexual orientation prejudice showed promise that it too can be malleable. First, in Europe modernization has played a key role in the social acceptance of homosexuality (Stulhofer and Rimac), and secondly research has demonstrated that even autonomic prejudicial attitudes and behaviors (e.g., anti-gay) can be reduced by activating egalitarian beliefs (Fiske, Harris, Lee, and Russell). Understanding and altering the connection between prejudice and religion is a critical issue world-wide (Rock).

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