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## **Countering Culture**

### **Religious Motivation and Adherence to the “Inmate Code”**

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#### **Abstract**

Does religion have an impact on a prison inmate’s behavior? This paper reports the results of a study that shows that an inmate’s motivations for appearing to be religious in prison is a better way to understand the association between religion and their future behavior. Using data from a number of prisons in the United States and multinomial-logistic regression, I show that an inmate’s intrinsic motivations for pursuing religion impact the inmate’s behavioral intentions in a variety of social situations in prison, and that this inmate’s actions would “stand out” from fellow inmates’ actions in ways that run contrary to the inmate code, when compared to those inmates who pursue religion for the extrinsic benefits.

#### **Introduction**

For nearly 40 years, sociologists have explored the relationship between religion and deviant behavior. Baier and Wright’s meta-analysis of the religion and crime literature provide evidence that indicates that religion has a small, negative effect on crime ( $r = -0.12$ ). An offshoot of their research is the impact of religion on the American prisoner. The right of religious freedom is one of few civil rights granted inmates of American prisons. Most prisons offer a variety of religion-based programming, including religion-based service organizations, Bible study, traditional weekly services for a variety of denominations, and other formal “faith-based” programs. Interest about whether religion is a viable form of rehabilitation in prison is growing among scholars and policy makers.

Does religion represent a *super-cultural* source of norms and values that can be internalized in such a way that they can override other cultural, internalized norms? Over time, many inmates internalize the norms of the prison culture through a process of prisonization (Akers, Hayner, and Guruninger; Clemmer; Jones and Schmid; Paterline and Petersen; Schmid and Jones; Thomas and Foster; Thomas, Petersen, and Zingraff). These internalized norms shape and reinforce attitudes, beliefs, and values that contribute to behavioral decisions. Religious norms and values, which can also be internalized by individuals and displayed in a variety of ways, shield the inmate from the pressures of the prisoner culture? Do the norms of the prisoner culture override all others?

This article examines male inmates' motivations for "acting religious" in prison and their adherence to the "inmate code," using a sample of male prisoners from 12 prisons across the United States. I begin with what is known about the association between religion and a variety of prison-based outcomes, and then present a theory of behavior that argues that while the prison culture is dominant, it is not the only source of culture that inmates may draw upon. After presenting my data and methods, I will show that for certain behavioral intentions in certain social contexts, inmates' motivations for religion matter in their decision-making.

### **Religion, Prison, and Behavior Research**

Early work examining religion in prison conducted by Johnson (1987) found no relationship between an inmate's religiosity and disciplinary confinement. However, because officer discretion plays a role in what happens to an inmate who commits a rule infraction (Conover), disciplinary confinement may be the least common punishment. Kerley, Matthews, and Blanchard find a significant and direct negative effect of religion on arguing, but not on fighting. However, further analysis revealed that there is an indirect effect of religion on fighting through arguing. Because inmates who were more religious argued less, the authors theorize, they were also less likely to get involved in a fight. In another study, the authors examine the impact of religiosity on an inmate's emotional and behavioral coping in a southeastern U.S. prison (Kerley, Allison, and Graham). While they did not find an association between religiosity and negative emotions, they found "a suppressing effect of religion on negative interpersonal relations" (84). Inmates who participated often in religious behaviors and believed in a higher power were half as likely to get into an argument with other inmates. Kerley and colleagues' work shows that religion may be one of the tools utilized by inmates to assist them in their adjustment to prison.

Other studies examine the impact of formal "faith-based" prison programs such as Charles Colson's Prison Ministries (Johnson; Johnson, Larson, and Pitts), the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (Johnson and Larson; Trusty and Eisenberg), and Operation Starting Line (Kerley, Allison, and Graham; Kerley, Matthews, and Schultz). These studies use an offender's likelihood of recidivism as the main outcome of interest. In their evaluation of a Prison Fellowship (PF) program in New York State over an eight-year period, Johnson and colleagues (1997) examined the impact of the program on the institutional adjustment and recidivism of inmates in the state. Using a matched-group design, they examined whether participation in religious programming would reduce the incidence of violating prison rules and recidivism. While there was no general effect from participation in religious

programming on recidivism, an important finding is that the “level of participation” matters. Those who had higher levels of formal program participation were less likely to commit any infractions and were less likely to recidivate after one year.

Two reports evaluate the InnerChange Freedom Initiative as implemented in Texas (Johnson and Larson; Trusty and Eisenberg). They find that full participation in the 16-month program greatly reduces the odds that the participant would be rearrested or return to prison, compared to those who did not complete the program or did not participate at all. Finally, Kerley, Matthews, and Schultz present an exploratory study examining the effect of participation in Operation Starting Line on future negative emotions and negative behaviors. While they find reductions in negative behaviors in prison, these reductions are not as large as the reductions in feelings of negative emotions.

While these studies provide valuable insight about the impact of religion and religious programming on a number of important outcomes, they also demonstrate the difficulty in trying to capture religion quantitatively in a prison environment. In the most comprehensive study of religion and prisons, Todd Clear and colleagues (Clear, Hardyman, Stout, Lucken, and Dammer; Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro; Clear and Sumter; Dammer; see also Pass; Sumter), attempt to understand both how religion is used in prison and whether it is even possible to determine who is “sincere” in their religiosity in prison.

One of the key findings of Clear and colleagues’ research is that even after talking with staff and prison clergy, and attempting four different quantitative models, they were unable to determine who was sincere in his religiosity and who was not. One of the main reasons for this is that inmates may try to “look” religious in the prison environment for reasons that have nothing to do with religion. Thus, to understand why inmates may behave the way they do in prison, researchers need to account for the norms of the prisoner culture because “[r]eligiousness in prison involves behavior seen by various ‘publics’ and occurring within various contexts” (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro: 18). To understand the relationship between religion, prison, and decision-making, we need to capture the “context” of the social interaction being studied. In short, the social context influences the decision-making process. A problem with the existing research is that these studies all contain a cultural bias; the behaviors and outcomes examined are those considered positive “in the free world.” Using this perspective, we have come to understand, especially if we are interested in reducing these “negative behaviors” in prison, that the reason why an inmate may choose to argue or fight is related to the dominant culture in prison (the inmate code).

Studies examining religion and its impact on prisoners need to account for the prison culture to capture the social situation as *perceived by a member of the prisoner culture*. In prison, behavioral decisions may be influenced by the *norms of the prisoner culture*. Fighting is a common negative behavior when analyzed through the norms of mainstream American culture. The underlying assumption about these behaviors is that they are bad. But, when seen through the lens of the prison culture, fighting may be the proper way to behave and could be seen as instrumental (Tedeschi and Felson) and necessary for maintaining the perceptions others have of you, and, more importantly, one’s status within the prison culture.

By not considering the social world of the prison, prior research is missing an important component that should be included in studies of how prison affects behavior. To understand why religious motivations and behavioral intentions may be linked, we need to understand the value of religion to inmates. What does religion as practiced in prison provide for the inmates who seek it? Early work in this area by Todd Clear and a number of colleagues (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro; Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Shapiro, and Hardyman; Clear, Hardyman, Stout, Lucken, and Dammer; Clear and Sumter) has provided invaluable information about the role of religion in the prison, and how religion and the prisoner culture interact.

#### *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations for Religion*

Another challenge facing researchers is that it is difficult to determine which inmates are sincere (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) in religiosity, and not just practicing religion for “show.” This dichotomy can be modeled using Allport’s ideas about intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for attitudes and behaviors. Intrinsic, or “internal,” motivations for seeking a religious life in prison are dealing with guilt, dealing emotionally with the many losses of incarceration, especially freedom, and attempting to find a new way of life (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro). Intrinsic motivations have no material reward per se, but could have beneficial psychological and social impacts on the individual. Intrinsically-motivated inmates could be trying to live consistently with their faith because they are most concerned with trying to change *who they are* – their core self-concept to reflect living life in a better way than the one that led to crime and incarceration. The intrinsically motivated inmate uses religion as one of the tools by which he may change himself, deal with his own feelings and emotions for both the perceived benefits one is granted through the practice of religion in prison and also for the joys and feelings derived from religious experience in general. For the inmate with intrinsic motivations, religion is both a means, a toolkit (Swidler) of norms and values used to construct social behaviors and to deal with prison life, and an end, religion for the sake of religion. Intrinsic measures of religious motivation attempt to capture what religion means to the inmate’s life, the kind of internal benefits that the individual receives from religion. Thus, an inmate with strong intrinsic motivations for religion is working to change who he is, whether or not there are material benefits that accrue through religious practice.

In many cases there are material benefits to appearing religious in prison. Inmates may appear to be religious because they proselytize or regularly attend religious services, but they may be using religion as a tool for *obtaining ends unrelated to religiosity* – such as a sense of community, a way to overcome the deprivations of prison life, or safety from the rigors of life in prison. For inmates primarily motivated to appear religious for extrinsic reasons, religion is *only* a means to an end. Some extrinsic motivations for religion in prison are safety, access to material goods, access to outsiders, and potentially improved relations with other inmates (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro). This motivation for religion has less to do with one’s self-concept and inner-peace, and more to do with overcoming the deprivations of prison life and the “pains of imprisonment” (Sykes). The extrinsic measures of religiosity attempt to capture how inmates use religion in order to attain goals not directly related to *religious* practice and behaviors.

The study by Pass is the only one that utilized the intrinsic and extrinsic concepts for defining the motivations for religion, and he was unable to find an association between intrinsic/extrinsic religion and self-reported rule violations. This could be due to a conceptual flaw in his intrinsic/extrinsic measure of religiosity. Pass conceptualizes religious motivation as a continuum, from extrinsic on one side to intrinsic on the other. For Pass, they are opposite ends of the same scale. However, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are related to one another, but they do not represent the same aspects of religiosity. This current article agrees with the original study authors (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) who argue that the constructs for intrinsic and extrinsic motivations should be measured separately. After all, a sincere inmate can score highly on *both* the extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity measures, whereas we can judge an inmate to be insincere in his religiosity if he scores high only on extrinsic measures of religion. Therefore, these measures should be dealt with separately in analyses using these motivations.

In order to better understand the association between religiosity and an inmate's behavioral intentions, this article explores the proposition that inmates with strong *intrinsic religious motivations* are more likely to exhibit behavioral intentions that run contrary to the prisoner culture, the inmate code. Intrinsic motivations for religion can lead to the internalization of religious faith, belief, and adherence. In this way, these religious beliefs can become incontrovertible beliefs (Rokeach) and are tightly linked with images of one's self-concept. Since they are comprised of beliefs that are crucial to a person's understanding of who he is, they should impact his behavioral intentions in certain social situations. These internalized religious beliefs may function as a "shield" against the constraints on behavior implied by the norms inherent in the inmate code. Thus the intrinsically motivated inmate will constantly be working to maintain his ways in the face of intense competition from exposure in the inmate culture (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) because he is constantly working to internalize the attitudes, values, and behaviors of his faith.

Alternatively, because other measures of religion such as extrinsic motivations and measures of denomination are not central to the self, they will not be associated with the behavioral intentions of inmates.

### **The Focal Concerns of Inmates**

So why should one's motivation for religion (and religious beliefs in general) influence behavioral intentions and ultimately behavior? The kinds of religious motivations I am interested in are those that lead to the internalization of religious beliefs and faith as part of one's self-concept. These internalized norms ultimately contribute to one's overall set of attitudes, beliefs, and values. The more central to one's self-concept these attitudes are, the more they are likely to be associated with one's decision-making processes and behaviors. If the social world of the prison was just like the "free world," then we could study the association between religiosity and behavioral intentions with the same cultural contexts as other sociological studies of American culture. But as seminal works in this area note (Clemmer; Sykes), the prison culture more closely resemble "the code of the streets" (Anderson). For this reason, a sub-cultural perspective on behavior should be adapted to explore the link between religiosity and behavioral intentions of prisoners.

To that end, I utilize Miller's focal concerns perspective to suggest an understanding as to why inmate motivations for religion matter. An individual's focal concerns are "areas or issues which command widespread and persistent attention and a high degree of emotional involvement" (208). Focal concerns can be identified for any aspect of social life where attitudes, beliefs, and values are brought to bear in a behavioral decision. Through the use of behavioral intentions and measures of a key focal concern of inmates, this study examines the attitudes and values an inmate draws on when considering how to behave in a given situation and in light of the inmate code. This is an important connection because one's anti-social attitudes and values have been shown in the "what works" literature as a criminogenic need that should be targeted by rehabilitation programs (Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, and Cullen). If there is an association between religiosity and "positive" behavior in prison, it can provide further evidence that religious programming, a tool already available to prison administrators, could be used to assist with both maintaining institutional security (O'Connor and Duncan) and rehabilitation.

The focal concerns perspective has been adapted for use in a number of studies of the criminal justice system where cultural context matters: criminal sentencing (Kramer and Ulmer; Steffensmeier, Ulmer, and Kramer; Ulmer and Bradley; Ulmer, Bader, and Gault), pretrial release decisions (Demuth; Schlesinger), parole decisions (Huebner and Bynum), juvenile sentencing (Kurlychek and Johnson), and the relationship between a victim and defendant (Dawson). One prior corrections study has utilized this perspective to describe and examine prison culture. Stojkovic's dissertation describes the social bases of power in a maximum-security prison and examines how inmates deal with the focal concerns of contraband, race relations, institutional misconduct, and homosexuality.

This current study examines a central focal concern of inmates: *how others perceive you in the prison environment*, as this contributes to a number of different types of social situations in prison life. I test three hypotheses related to this focal concern.

H1: Intrinsic motivations for religion are positively associated with behavioral intentions and produce behavior that other inmates perceive as *different* according to the inmate code.

An inmate with strong intrinsic motivations for religion is more likely to act contrary to the dominant prison culture for both focal concerns because acting religiously is tied to his self-concept.

H2: Extrinsic motivations for religion are not associated with an inmate's behavioral intentions.

If extrinsic motivations are not closely linked to one's self-concept, they will not influence behavioral decisions; inmates whose motivations for religion are extrinsic are more likely to follow the inmate code.

H3: Common measures of religion and religiosity (such as religious denomination and church attendance) are not associated with [not relevant to] an inmate's behavioral intentions.

Common measures of religion and religiosity are not relevant to prisoners and prison culture and, therefore, may not be related to prisoners' self-concept and their behavior in particular situations.

### Data and Methods

To test these hypotheses, I examine an attitude and belief system that leads inmates to intend to behave in a manner that is either consistent with the prison culture ("pro-inmate code"), or contrary to that culture ("no code"). These beliefs are examined against situations that an inmate is likely to face in prison in which the intrinsically motivated individual is likely to act in ways contrary to the norms of the dominant culture. I now turn to a discussion of the methods and results of this study.

#### *The Data and Sampling Information*

The sample for this study was drawn from Sumter's study of religion and recidivism<sup>1</sup>. Sumter's data come from the "prison-based religiousness measurement" created by Clear and his colleagues (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro; Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Shapiro, Hardyman; Clear and Sumter; Sumter). Approximately one week before release, inmates selected by clergy and prison administrators from twelve prisons located across the United States completed both the prison-based religiousness measurement and a pre-release survey, containing a variety of measures of religious beliefs, behaviors, and motivation, and many correlates of crime and prison adjustment measures. Through the use of multiple imputation for missing items, I utilize 456 of the available 464 cases to examine the association between intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivations and the behavioral intentions of prison inmates. The strength of this dataset is that the researchers *and the inmates* from the prison where Clear and his colleagues carried out their pilot study created the in-prison situation measures. Inmates helped create situations where the sincere religious inmate would behave in ways contrary to what the inmate code would dictate; the sincere religious inmate would be seen as acting differently.

#### *Dependent Variables – In-Prison Situation Measures*

To understand the attitudes and values that inform an inmate's decision-making process, or behavioral intentions, the in-prison situation statements are utilized, and the responses are coded to be measures of either a "pro-inmate code" response or a "not code" response. These statements represent a key focal concern of inmates: *how you are perceived by others*. An inmate is constantly worrying about how he is being perceived by others in the social world of the prison, and whether or not other inmates see him as someone not deserving of respect, or weak, based on the norms of the prisoner culture (Carceral; Irwin 1970; Irwin and Cressey; Jones and Schmid; McCorkle; Schmid and Jones; Stojkovic; Sykes; Toch).

In consultation with inmates from the prison where Clear and his team conducted their pilot study, a number of survey items representing social situations (social interactions) among inmates in prison. The value of the input from inmates emerges from Clear's study

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<sup>1</sup> Available from ICPSR. Study replication information provided by request.

that showed that the inmates were able to tell those inmates who were sincere in their religiosity, and those who were not. Thus, the situations devised by the researchers and inmates represent interactions in which the sincere religious inmate would stand out as different, or worse, weak when his behavior was judged against that of the norms of the prison culture. Three of the situations created for the original research are used here.

Table 1: Frequency Distributions for the In-Prison Situation Measures (N=456)

How would the inmate intend to respond to the situation of:	Pro-Code Responses		Non-Code Responses		Missing
	Try to get even	Try to get the item back	Forgive and Forget		
Being the victim of a theft	5.76%	51.04%	43.06%		0.14%
Faced with an emotional, violent inmate	18.62%		81.2%		0.18%
			Try and get someone to stop it	Try and stop it yourself	
Come upon an inter-racial fight	37.64%	Stay out of it	37.84%	24.46%	0.06%

The first situation selected asked the respondent how he would intend to respond if something of minor value is stolen from him. For inmates, what’s important here is not the item stolen, but being perceived by others as a victim. Failing to respond to the theft in a way fitting the inmate code may indicate to other inmates a passive response, and this type of reaction is “generally interpreted by aggressive inmates as signs of weakness and vulnerability, those who employ them risk being assigned to a pool of victims who can easily be robbed or more generally exploited or dominated” (McCorkle).

To measure maintaining perceptions, respondents noted their behavioral intentions for the following situation: “Someone steals something from you of minor value. What would you do? (a) Figure out some way to get even with him; (b) Talk to him to try to get him to return it; (c) Forgive and forget.” Option (a) is the pro-inmate code response – Carceral would call this “Con Rule #6: Get or be got. Don’t be punked!” (103). If someone steals from you, the pro-code response is to get even. Options (b) and (c) represent behaviors that could convey weakness as perceived by other inmates, and are considered the “not code” response. However, there is a substantive difference between trying to get the item back and forgiving and forgetting. Thus, multinomial logistic regression is used for this behavioral intention, which is coded “1” for option (a), “2” for option (b), and “3” for option (c).

The second situation related to maintaining perceptions relates to the notion of displaying toughness in prison. Stretesky, Pogrebin, Unnithan, and Venor argue an important aspect of the inmate code “includes projecting an image of fearlessness and power,” and that even “inmates who try to keep clear of violence are aware that they must project an image of power to do so” (487; see also Tromanhauser; Walters). While there has been much violence caused in the name of religion, the basic tenets of many religions promote peace and forgiveness. For some, power may come from religiosity. McCorkle points out that an inmate who does not display toughness, “is likely to be dominated and exploited throughout

the duration of his sentence” (161; see also Irwin 1980; Johnson 1987). Finally, Paterline and Petersen find a strong relationship between attitudes in favor of violence (which would exclude most religious attitudes) and the adoption of the inmate code.

To measure the intention to respond violently in a confrontation, respondents addressed the following situation: An inmate with emotional problems comes to you in an accusing, angry, and violent way. You are physically stronger than he is. What would you do? (a) Respond physically “to teach him a lesson”; (b) Act in self-defense only; (c) Try to calm him down by talking to him; (d) Walk away. Responses (a) and (b) are statistically coded “pro-inmate code” as they are both physical responses.<sup>2</sup> The non-physical responses (c) and (d) are coded as “not code.” This behavioral intention is analyzed using logistic regression.

The third situation, related to maintaining others’ perceptions, measures the behavioral intention for a situation that confronts three different norms of the prisoner culture. Generally, inmates say the number one rule of prison life is to “mind your business.” Carceral calls this “Con Rule #2: Do your own time” (103). If it does not directly apply to you, you did not see it, you did not hear it, and you do not know anything about it. Closely linked to minding one’s business is not snitching (Carceral, Bernard, Alarid, Bikle, and Bikle; Hassine, Bernard, McCleary, and Wright; Irwin and Cressey; Santos). Inmates are not supposed to voluntarily provide information to administrators or correctional officers. Finally, race and racial segregation is part of the day-to-day life of prisoners (Harer and Steffensmeier; Irwin 1970; Lerner). Prisoner culture dictates socialization with other races only when obligatory, such as on a job or during participation in prison programming, including religious services. An inmate in Stojkovic’s study states it bluntly when asked about Blacks and Whites socializing: “Socializing, no. General conversation or something like that, yeah” (165). The third situation is one in which both issues of race and “minding one’s business” must be addressed.

Respondents were asked what they would do if they came upon an inter-racial fight: An inmate you do not know, who is not of your race, is being attacked by three inmates of your race. What would you do? (a) Stay out of it; (b) Try to get someone to stop it; (c) Try to stop it yourself. Option (a) is the inmate code response, with options (b) and (c) the non-code response. It would be out of character for the inmate to choose choice (c), both for racial reasons, and because of the violation of the “number one rule” of prison social life. Option (a) represents the “inmate code” response, and is coded “1.” Options (b) and (c) are coded “2” and “3” respectively. Both options (b) and (c) represent situations in which you fail to mind your own business. Both options violate the racial segregation norms of the prisoner culture, and option (b) violates the anti-snitching norms. For that reason, this focal concern is analyzed using multinomial logistic regression.

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<sup>2</sup> The argument could be made that responding physically and responding in self-defense emerge from different motivations, and different levels of personal control. I conducted multinomial logit analyses using a 3-way category in which self-defense and respond physically were separate. However, only 4 respondents (out of 456) would respond physically. Results obtained from the multinomial logit were not usable for this analysis.

*Measures of Religious Motivations and Other Religiosity Concepts*

A question posed by this study is not whether religion is associated with an inmate's behavioral intentions, but whether or not an inmate's reasons for pursuing religion influence his decision-making process. In an effort to capture religious motivations and control for a variety of religious experiences, I use different measures to represent religious motivations and religiosity in general in accordance with other recent research examining religion and inmate behavior (Benda; Johnson; Kerley, Matthews, and Blanchard; Pass; Sumter).

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation scales are created by calculating factor scores in Stata using a principle components analysis. Variables are grouped together a posteriori and represent a combination of variables used in the original study (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) and other religious belief variables added to the scales for this current study. Descriptive data for all independent and control variables are provided in Table 1. To measure intrinsically-motivated religiosity, I combine four indicators, each measured with a five-item Likert scale from "strongly disagree," coded "0," to "strongly agree," coded "4." These items combine to make a four-indicator latent variable with factor loadings as presented in Table 1. The overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin<sup>3</sup> (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy indicates that my four measures fit together, and the loadings border on "meritorious" (Pett, Lackey, and Sullivan), indicating that these measures which define an inmate's intrinsic motivations are accurate.

To measure the respondent's extrinsic religious motivations, I again combine four indicators of religious belief. Both the alpha and KMO indicate that these measures scale together well (though not as well as the intrinsic measures). It should be noted here that these two measures of religious motivations strongly correlated at .733 ( $p < .001$ ). This makes sense, given that religiosity has many facets and many representations. To determine whether or not my results will be biased on multicollinearity, a joint hypothesis test (Allison) was conducted and returns a p-value of .004, indicating that multicollinearity is not reducing the ability of my model to fit the data. Also, an examination of the results show that as variables are added to the models presented here, the standard errors for the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation measures increase in a manner consistent with this type of analysis and are not the result of these items measuring the same concept.

*Religious Control Measures*

I utilize four additional measures of religious beliefs, along with religious denomination, and two measures of religiously-motivated behaviors as religiously-based control variables. The first belief is included as an alternative to my intrinsic beliefs variable, as it asks the respondent to *rate the importance of religion* to him compared to other inmates. It is an attempt to capture the centrality of religion for the respondent's self-concept. This variable provides evidence as to whether the importance of religion in an inmate's life can be measured by one

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<sup>3</sup> The KMO test compares the "magnitudes of the calculated correlations coefficients to the magnitudes of the partial correlation coefficients" (Pett, Lackey, and Sullivan: 77) and can range from 0 to 1. The higher the KMO, the better the indicators fit together for a factor analysis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for All Variables Used in the Analyses, Including Factor Loadings and EFA Fit Statistics (N= 456)

	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	Missing		Factor	Alpha	KMO
					Freq	%			
<i>Religiosity Measures</i>									
Intrinsic motivations	3.53	0.998	0	6	9	1.97			
Feel close to God during worship	0.66	0.885	0	4	0	0.00	0.802	0.81	0.79
Religious groups give me sense of self	2.85	1.024	0	4	4	0.88	0.772		
Religious beliefs behind all I do	2.51	1.094	0	4	5	1.10	0.759		
Religion gives my life meaning	3.04	1.012	0	4	2	0.44	0.852		
Extrinsic motivations	3.99	0.998	0	7	10	2.19	Factor	Alpha	KMO
Religious services give me satisfaction*	3.17	0.930	0	4	3	0.66	0.818	0.69	0.65
Religious Services have little meaning*	3.16	1.051	0	4	3	0.66	0.694		
Worship is place to make friends	2.87	1.110	0	4	3	0.66	0.627		
Religious Group gives sense of safety	2.76	1.075	0	4	3	0.66	0.752		
Importance Of Religion Compared to Others	2.41	0.624	1	4	10	2.19			
Hellfire Hypothesis	0.31	0.655	0	4	1	0.22			
Proportion Protestant	0.60	0.489	0	1	11	2.41			
Proportion other faith	0.25	0.433	0	1	11	2.41			
Proportion no religion	0.15	0.356	0	1	11	2.41			
Frequency of attendance at worship	2.28	0.839	0	4	11	2.41			
Participation in Religious Groups	7.21	1.668	0	12	30	6.58			
<i>Prison Life Measures</i>									
Time Served on Current Sentence	6.78	2.882	0	25	7	1.54			
Infractions	4.33	2.513	0	13	3	0.66			
Confinement	2.28	1.474	0	12	4	0.88			
Adjustment to Prison	16.51	4.379	0	29	10	2.19			
Participation in Prison Groups	2.47	1.342	0	8	0	0.00			
<i>Criminal History Measures</i>									
Number of Convictions	5.45	1.260	0	9	5	1.10			
Criminal Propensity	5.69	2.331	0	13	9	1.97			
<i>Demographic Controls</i>									
Age	36.83	7.899	18	70	1	0.22			
Proportion minority	0.60	0.489	0	1	2	0.44			
Proportion married	0.20	0.400	0	1	2	0.44			
Education	4.50	1.231	1	8	4	0.88			

\* These items have been reverse coded.

survey item, and whether or not the inmate is being truthful in his response to this single item. Most of the inmates in this study feel that religion is more important to them than it is to other inmates; the mean is 2.41 on a scale from 1 to 3. My second religious control is a measure of *religious denomination*, which can also be used as a measure of religious identity (Alwin, Felson, Walker, and Tufis). Three dummy variables were created to represent this measure: Protestant, Other (represented by Catholic, Muslim,<sup>4</sup> Jew, or Other), or No Preference/No Faith. The sample is overwhelmingly Protestant (a point that I address in the discussion). Finally, I include two measures of religiously-motivated behavior. The first is an ordinal variable that asks the respondent how often they attend worship: either “never” (coded “1”), “less than once a week” (coded “2”), and “at least once a week” (coded “3”). Attendance at religious services is very common measure of religiosity used in this kind of research. Finally, I use a measure of participation in religious groups in prison. This is both a religious behavior measure and a prison cultural measure for it taps into how often the inmate participates in religious programming. This is an additive scale comprised of whether or not the inmate participates in a variety of religiously-based groups.

#### *Control Variables*

I include measures representing different aspects of the prisoner culture, and the influence that the culture might have on future behaviors. All five items have been shown to contribute to inmate decision-making and behavior in prison. First, prior studies have shown that the odds of inmate misconduct decrease the longer one spends in prison, and that time served is linked to changes in attitudes in inmates (Gover, MacKenzie, and Armstrong; Wheeler). Thus, a measure of time served on the current sentence is included. Next, I include an additive scale representing the respondents’ adjustment to prison. This scale is based on Wright’s prison adjustment indicators. This is an additive scale comprised of eight measures. Each indicator is a five-item Likert scale from “never” (coded “0”) to “most of the time” (coded “4”). After being added together, the scale is reverse-coded so that a higher score on the adjustment scale represents better adjustment to the prison environment. Respondents were asked how often they are: uncomfortable around other inmates, have trouble sleeping in prison, afraid of being attacked in prison, got into a fight, got into a heated argument with an inmate, got into an argument with a guard, hurt or injured in prison, or taken advantage of by other inmates. I also control for the respondent’s participation in non-religious prison groups, such as the Jaycees (a personal skills development and service organization). Prisoners participate in more programs the longer they are in prison (Dhami, Ayton, and Loewenstein). It can be argued anecdotally that most inmates may choose to “behave” for fear of losing the privilege of participating in prison programs (Irvin Moore, a prison inmate, personal communication). Finally, I use two measures of in-prison misconduct: the number of disciplinary infractions, and the number of disciplinary confinements. These represent “write ups” received for something as slight as talking back to a guard, or as serious as starting an altercation with another inmate, and

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<sup>4</sup> The number of incarcerated Muslims has grown with the prison population since the early 1990s. In this study there are only 18 Muslim respondents, just over four percent of the overall sample. Thus, there is no statistical strength to measure this denomination compared to others.

includes situations in which disciplinary segregation was necessary. These five measures cover a wide range of prison's influence on attitudes and behaviors.

Criminal history is typically included as a control variable in studies of religion and behavior in prison. It also may influence one's attitudes and beliefs toward criminal behavior, both inside and outside of prison. I use two measures of the respondent's criminal history. The first is an additive scale constructed of self-report measures representing the respondent's criminal propensity. The respondent was asked how often they had ever been convicted of a variety of criminal activities. The higher the score on this scale, the more criminal activities the respondent has participated in. I control for the number of prior convictions received by the respondent. Respondents were asked how often they have ever been convicted of: stealing or trying to steal something worth more than \$50, buying or selling stolen goods or tried to do either of these, carrying a weapon other than a pocket knife, attacking someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing him or her, selling illegal drugs, having or trying to have sexual relations with someone against their will, using force or weapons to take money or things from someone, breaking or trying to break into a building or vehicle to steal something or to look around.

Finally, I control for four demographic variables. Race is represented by a dichotomy (due to data limitations) for whether or not the respondent is a minority – “not white” – with “white” as the reference category. Cao, Zhao, and Van Dine find a significant and positive relationship between race and the receiving of disciplinary tickets, and Harer and Steffensmeier find that “[b]lacks are more than twice as likely to be found guilty of violent misconduct [in prison] than are whites” (339). Like religion, race has been in inconsistent predictor of prison misconducts (Goetting and Howsen). I also include a measure of the inmate's age and his educational achievement (both continuous variables). Research has also shown that age “is the most consistent and reliable predictor of both minor and severe rule violations in prison” (Cao et al.: 111; Goetting and Howsen), and is inversely related to prison misconduct. The results for the role of education have been mixed (Goetting and Howsen), but it is hypothesized that the more education an inmate has, the more likely he is to act in a pro-social manner. Finally, this study controlled for marriage, which Clemmer suggests is associated with the “forming of group relationships in prison” (Goetting and Howsen: 52).

### **Data Limitations**

There are a few limitations that must be considered before results are presented. First, some will take issue with the use of behavioral intentions as a proxy for behavior, instead of using official or self-reported measures of actual behaviors. Based on Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action, “intention is the immediate antecedent of actual behavior” (194), and a number of meta-studies have shown that “intentions can be predicted with considerable accuracy from measures of attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control” (196). Religion is a source of values and attitudes toward a number of different behaviors, both pro- and anti-social. Combined with the situational statements that provide a way for researchers to infer the attitudes and beliefs held by the respondent, we can argue that behavioral intentions are a reasonable proxy for actual behavioral measures.

The second limitation is that there may very well be sampling bias. Participants in the original study (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) were recruited by “staff members, usually the chaplain” (24), creating a convenience sample. This issue may be present as seen in the descriptive statistics for dependent variables in that a majority of the respondents in all three situations examined generally exhibit “not code” responses. This further highlights the challenge facing prison staff of knowing which inmates are religiously sincere and who is just faking it for the material benefits one may obtain by participating in religious life.

Third, the data is dated and is no longer based on a nationally representative sample. Therefore, findings cannot be generalized to all prisoners and prisons in the U.S., especially not to the prisons with weaker religious programming. Between 1992 and 2008, the number of male inmates incarcerated increased from 880,000 to nearly 1.5 million (Beck and Gilliard; West and Sabol). Surely the prisoner culture has changed, given increases in racial disparity in religious diversity (Dix-Richardson and Close), and how the teachings of various religions, especially Islam, could impact intrinsic motivations.

Another challenge is that regional information is missing from the sample (Clear, personal communication; Sumter, personal communication). At the time of data collection, region had a mediating effect on the impact of religion on both prison adjustment and disciplinary infractions (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro), so it stands to reason that it may have an impact in this study.

One other threat to the validity of my results is the constant risk of desirability bias in the responses to any question posed to inmates (Ramirez). Because inmates can perceive outsiders, especially academics, as individuals with “power” (though typically these outsiders have no impact on the inmate’s situation), there is the possibility that prisoner respondents may answer survey questions based on their perceptions of what the researcher wants, or to represent themselves in a way so that researchers will have favorable opinions of them and may intercede with the administration on their behalf.

### Data Analysis

In order to compensate for the limitations, it was important to use as much of the existing data as possible. From a starting sample size of 464 cases, I removed cases that are missing data on *any* variable of interest. This reduced my sample size in final models to 375. However, in order to gain as much statistical power as possible, I used multiple imputation methods<sup>5</sup> to estimate missing responses and obtain a final sample size of 456 respondents. To provide an estimate for fit statistics for the imputed models, I calculated the log-

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<sup>5</sup> Multiple imputation allows me to create multiple sets of plausible values that represent a distribution of plausible values (Rubin) using Stata’s ICE program (Royston). Stata’s “mim” command displays parameter estimates (obtained by Rubin’s rules) and their standard errors, taking into account between- and within-imputation variation. Confidence intervals and test statistics for regression coefficients are based on the t-distribution with estimated degrees of freedom (DoF) obtained using the method of Barnard and Rubin.

likelihood ratio and pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> by running all models on the non-imputed data, and these are statistics reported in the findings<sup>6</sup>.

For all analyzes, six nested models are calculated. Independent and control variables were entered in stages. Starting with bivariate models, I first examine the outcome of interest regressed on just the intrinsic motivation score, and then just on the extrinsic motivation score. Then these items were included together, along with the remaining religion variables in the next model. The next three models add control variables. I present data and discuss only the results of my final model (all tables available upon request). Additionally, select non-significant results were removed from the tables, as noted in footnotes.

### Multivariate Results

This study explores the association between measures of religiosity and behavioral intentions of inmates. Most importantly, it is hypothesized that inmates with stronger intrinsic motivations for religion will be less likely to have behavioral intentions reflecting the norms of the prisoner culture. The three behavioral intention situations represent one of the most important focal concerns of inmates: *how you are perceived by others*. Behavioral intentions are classified as either in accordance with the prisoner culture (“pro-inmate code”) or conflict with the norms of the prisoner culture (“not code”).

It was hypothesized that intrinsic religious motivations would be associated with “not code” responses to the various in-prison situations. Overall, intrinsic motivations are associated with all measures for the focal concern of *how you are perceived by others*. The results indicate a reduction in the odds of a “pro-inmate code” response in situations in which the inmate was victimized (Table 3), faced with an emotional, angry inmate (Table 4), and observed an inter-racial fight (Table 5). As hypothesized, the respondent’s extrinsic motivations are not associated with behavioral intentions. Finally, with the exception of four statistically-weak findings, no other measure of religion is predictive of an inmate’s behavioral intentions in prison.

Table 3 shows that intrinsic motivations for religiosity are associated with how an inmate will respond to being the victim of a theft. Neither extrinsic motivations nor other measures of religiosity are associated with this behavioral intention to respond in a pro-code or “not code” manner. The stronger the respondent’s intrinsic motivations, the more likely he is to talk to the offender and try to get the item back (odds multiplied by 2.80) or forgive and forget (odds multiplied by 4.143), as opposed to trying to get even with the offender. The respondent is more likely to forgive rather than to try and get the item back (odds multiplied by 1.475).

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<sup>6</sup> When effect sizes between this non-imputed data and the imputed data are compared, the former exhibits slightly stronger effects than the latter, but direction, standard error, and p-value are similar. Thus, my imputed log-likelihood ratios are liable to be biased downward when compared to those from the non-imputed data.

Table 3: How Inmate Would Respond to being the Victim of Theft Regressed on the Religiosity Measures and Controls (Multinomial Logistic Regression Parameter Estimates,  $\beta$ , and Odds Ratios; standard error in parentheses; N=456)

	Try to get the item back vs. Try to get even			Forgive and forget vs. Try to get even			Try to get the item back vs. Forgive and forget		
	$\beta$	Odds	FMI	$\beta$	Odds	FMI	$\beta$	Odds	FMI
<i>Religiosity Measures</i>									
Intrinsic motivations	1.033** (0.406)	2.808	0.021	1.422** (0.418)	4.143	0.014	-0.389* (0.181)	0.678	0.025
Extrinsic motivations	0.092 (0.392)	1.097	0.131	0.151 (0.402)	1.163	0.128	-0.058 (0.167)	0.943	0.042
Importance of Religion compared to Others	-0.022 (0.548)	0.978	0.161	0.440 (0.557)	1.553	0.157	-0.462* (0.200)	0.630	0.029
Hellfire Hypothesis	-0.447 (0.373)	0.640	0.022	-0.183 (0.383)	0.833	0.016	-0.264 (0.211)	0.768	0.007
Protestant	0.549 (0.728)	1.731	0.027	-0.001 (0.753)	0.999	0.042	0.549 (0.348)	1.732	0.071
Other Faith	-0.098 (0.814)	0.906	0.068	-0.844 (0.832)	0.430	0.060	0.746+ (0.385)	2.108	0.076
Frequency of attendance at worship	-0.085 (0.391)	0.918	0.125	0.260 (0.403)	1.297	0.144	-0.345* (0.145)	0.708	0.061
Participation in Religious Groups	0.014 (0.208)	1.014	0.060	0.006 (0.208)	1.007	0.033	0.007 (0.075)	1.007	0.083
<i>Prison Life Measures</i>									
Infractions	-0.223* (0.108)	0.800	0.026	-0.232* (0.115)	0.793	0.038	0.008 (0.064)	1.008	0.012
Adjustment to Prison	0.085 (0.060)	1.089	0.154	0.104+ (0.060)	1.110	0.124	-0.019 (0.026)	0.981	0.084
Participation in Prison Groups	0.277 (0.225)	1.319	0.064	0.058 (0.229)	1.059	0.064	0.220** (0.083)	1.246	0.010
<i>Criminal History Measures</i>									
Criminal Propensity	-0.226 (0.141)	0.798	0.071	-0.241+ (0.144)	0.786	0.057	0.014 (0.056)	1.014	0.023
<i>Demographic Controls</i>									
Age	0.077 (0.048)	1.080	0.097	0.028 (0.050)	1.028	0.110	0.049** (0.016)	1.050	0.019
Intercept	-3.565+ (2.662)	0.028	0.072	-5.242+ (2.707)	0.005	0.062	1.677 (1.090)	5.350	0.033

\*\*\*  $p < .005$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; +  $p < .10$  (minimum DoF = 253.4; no faith/no religion is denomination control group; non-significant variables removed: minority, married, education, number of convictions, time served, disp. confinements; FMI = estimate of fraction of missing information).

Table 4: Intended response toward an emotional, violent inmate regressed on Religiosity measures and controls (Multinomial Logistic Regression Parameter Estimates,  $\beta$ , and Odds Ratios; standard error in parentheses; N=456)

	$\beta$	Odds	FMI
<i>Religiosity Measures</i>			
Intrinsic motivations	-0.610** (0.219)	0.543	0.031
Extrinsic motivations	0.264 (0.213)	1.303	0.051
Importance of Religion Compared to Others	-0.170 (0.272)	0.843	0.141
Hellfire Hypothesis	-0.253 (0.261)	0.776	0.071
Protestant	-0.389 (0.402)	0.677	0.03
Other Faith	0.152 (0.445)	1.164	0.065
Frequency of attendance at worship	0.118 (0.188)	1.125	0.051
Participation in Religious Groups	-0.147 (0.106)	0.863	0.095
<i>Prison Life Measures</i>			
Adjustment to Prison	-0.092** (0.032)	0.912	0.106
<i>Criminal History Measures</i>			
Criminal Propensity	0.130+ (0.072)	1.138	0.037
<i>Demographic Controls</i>			
Age	-0.051* (0.025)	0.950	0.022
Education	0.215+ (0.127)	1.239	0.027
Intercept	1.173 (1.400)	3.230	0.069

\*\*\*  $p < .005$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; +  $p < .10$  (minimum DoF = 305.9; no faith/no religion is denomination control group; non-significant variables removed: minority, married, time served, infractions, confinement, participation in prison groups, number of convictions; FMI = estimate of fraction of missing information).

Two control variables are significant, but none are as strong as intrinsic religious beliefs. The number of infractions is negatively associated with the decisions to try and get the item back and forgiving and forgetting rather than getting even, but the number of infractions is not associated with the decision to try and get the item back rather than forgiving. The respondent's adjustment to prison is only (borderline) significant for the decision to forgive rather than to get even. Finally, the respondent's view of how important religion is to him compared to how important he thinks religion is to other inmates is negatively associated with the intention to get the item back, rather than forgiving, and age is positively associated with this same intention. The stronger the respondent's perception of his own religiosity compared to others, the more likely the inmate will forgive. Additionally, the older the inmate, the greater the odds he will try to get the item back (barely 0.5 percent increase in

the odds). The log-likelihood ratio<sup>7</sup> declines to -264.59 from a score of -350.98, indicating that I have good fit as I add controls to the model. The pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> for the final model, which includes all controls, is 0.178.

The second measure related to the focal concern of *how you are perceived by others* is the use of violence by the respondent and presented in Table 4. It was hypothesized that the intrinsically motivated inmate would respond in a “not code” manner to the intention of responding to an emotional, violent inmate: either with violence (including self-defense), or by attempting a non-violent solution (the pro-code and non-code responses, respectively). Overall, an intrinsically motivated inmate is less likely to resort to the pro-code response, and none of the other measures of religiosity are associated with the intention to offer a non-code response, which supports my second hypothesis. The odds of an intrinsically motivated inmate adhering to the inmate code are decreased by more than half. The intrinsically motivated inmate is less likely to follow the tenets of the prisoner culture, instead choosing to try and talk the emotional inmate down, or just walking away.

As for the control variables, both the prisoner’s adjustment to prison and age are negatively associated with a pro-code response, but reductions in odds are small compared to the strong effect of the intrinsic motivations for religiosity. Finally, inmates’ criminal propensity and level of education are associated with a positive increase in the intention to intend to behave in this situation in a pro-inmate code manner, but the effects are weak. The log-likelihood ratio declines to -146.62 from a score of -200.20, indicating that I have good fit as I add controls to the model. The pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> for the final model, which includes all controls, is 0.171.

Finally, I examine nested multinomial logistic models to explain the association between religiosity and behavioral intentions that do not reflect an adherence to the inmate code in the event of witnessing an inter-racial fight. Once again, three comparisons are explored: the inmate trying to get someone to stop the fight vs. staying out of it; trying to stop the fight himself vs. staying out of it; and trying to get someone to stop the fight vs. trying to stop it himself. Results are presented in Table 5.

It was also hypothesized that inmates with strong intrinsic motivations for religion would get involved in an inter-racial fight. The evidence suggests that intrinsic religious motivations are positively associated with trying to get someone to stop the fight (odds multiplied by 1.601) or trying to stop it himself (odds multiplied by 1.82), rather than staying out of it. Intrinsic religious motivations are not associated with the decision to get someone to stop it rather than trying to stop it himself.

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<sup>7</sup> Log-likelihood and pseudo-R<sup>2</sup> were computed from the non-imputed data, N=365

Table 5. Intended response to an inter-racial fight regressed on the Religiosity Measures and Controls (Multinomial Logistic Regression Parameter Estimates,  $\beta$ , and Odds Ratios; standard error in parentheses; N=456)

	Try to get someone to stop it			Try to stop it yourself vs. Stay out of it			Try to get someone to stop it vs. try to stop it yourself		
	$\beta$	Odds	FMI	$\beta$	Odds	FMI	$\beta$	Odds	FMI
<i>Religiosity Measures</i>									
Intrinsic motivations	0.471* (0.206)	1.601	0.035	0.604** (0.235)	1.829	0.027	-0.133 (0.234)	0.876	0.033
Extrinsic motivations	0.110 (0.191)	1.116	0.041	0.254 (0.219)	1.289	0.027	-0.144 (0.221)	0.866	0.039
Importance of Religion Compared to Others	-0.159 (0.234)	0.853	0.04	-0.125 (0.267)	0.883	0.046	-0.034 (0.260)	0.966	0.072
Hellfire Hypothesis	0.332 (0.233)	1.394	0.021	0.135 (0.295)	1.145	0.005	0.197 (0.297)	1.217	0.024
Protestant	1.114** (0.382)	3.047	0.048	0.749+ (0.443)	2.114	0.026	0.365 (0.473)	1.441	0.052
Other Faith	-0.039 (0.426)	0.962	0.049	0.202 (0.473)	1.224	0.022	-0.240 (0.519)	0.786	0.052
Frequency of worship attendance	0.044 (0.167)	1.044	0.073	-0.061 (0.190)	0.941	0.054	0.105+ (0.184)	1.110	0.066
Participation in Religious Groups	0.043 (0.090)	1.044	0.097	0.139 (0.100)	1.149	0.08	-0.095 (0.094)	0.909	0.091
<i>Prison Life Measures</i>									
Time Served on Current Sentence	-0.074 (0.060)	0.929	0.033	0.096+ (0.054)	1.100	0.014	-0.169** (0.060)	0.844	0.036
Infractions	-0.031 (0.069)	0.970	0.017	-0.163+ (0.088)	0.850	0.006	0.132 (0.088)	1.141	0.015
Confinement	-0.100 (0.136)	0.905	0.026	0.157 (0.136)	1.170	0.008	-0.257+ (0.149)	0.773	0.024
Adjustment to Prison	0.057* (0.029)	1.059	0.037	0.110** (0.035)	1.116	0.015	-0.052 (0.034)	0.949	0.023
Participation in Prison Groups	0.131 (0.096)	1.140	0.006	0.176+ (0.105)	1.193	0.003	-0.045 (0.100)	0.956	0.006
<i>Demographic Controls</i>									
Education	-0.296** (0.107)	0.743	0.019	-0.163 (0.120)	0.850	0.036	-0.134 (0.111)	0.875	0.016
Intercept	-2.000 (1.282)	0.135	0.022	-6.870 (1.471)	0.001	0.014	4.871 ** (1.445)	130.4 0	0.007

\*\*\*  $p < .005$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; +  $p < .10$  (minimum DoF = 473.3; no faith/no religion is denomination control group; non-significant variables removed: minority, married, age, criminal propensity, number of convictions; FMI = estimate of fraction of missing information).

This is the only situation in which denomination might play a role. Protestants are more likely to get involved in an inter-racial fight. Protestants are more likely to attempt to get someone to stop the fight or to try to stop it themselves, compared with those who would ignore the fight. The odds of the Protestant inmate attempting to get someone to stop the fight increased by over 200% and the odds of this respondent trying to stop it himself increased by over 100%, compared to just ignoring the fight. However, we cannot determine which is more likely to happen, as seen by the lack of a significant result in the third analysis, examining the two “non-code” responses against each other. No other religion measures are associated with the intention to respond to an inter-racial fight.

Also associated with inmates’ intentions related to an inter-racial fights is adjustment to prison and level of education. The better adjusted to prison life, the more likely he is to try to stop a fight than to stay out of it; he is also more likely to try and get someone else to stop the fight rather than stay out of the situation. Education is negatively associated with stopping or engaging in a fight. The more educated the respondent, the less likely he is to be involved with an inter-racial fight in prison. In other words, the higher the inmate’s education, the more likely it would be that he would not get involved in this situation at all (the “inmate code”).

Other controls are associated (at the  $p < .10$  level) with the respondents’ intentions to stop the fight rather than to stay out of it. Participation in prison groups and the time served increase the odds of the inmate trying to stop the fight himself. The more groups an inmate participates in and the number of years the inmate has served increase the odds that the inmate will try to stop the fight rather than to stay out of it. Finally, the number of inmate infractions is negatively associated with the respondents’ intentions to try to stop the fight. This suggests that the more disciplinary infractions the inmate received, the lower the odds that he would get involved in an inter-racial fight.

The log-likelihood ratio declines to -332.81 from a score of -452.70, indicating that I have good fit as I add controls to the model. The pseudo- $R^2$  for the final model, which includes all controls, is 0.160.

## Discussion

This study provides evidence for the association between a male inmate’s religiosity and his behavioral intentions within the prison setting. What may be most important in trying to capture prisoner religiosity quantitatively is to look for measures that describe the individual’s intrinsic motivations for being religious. The evidence presented here indicates that in some situations intrinsic motivations for religiosity lay the groundwork for an alternate base of norms and values inmates can use to navigate the prison environment. This research explored the centrality of religious beliefs and their association with the behavioral intentions of inmates, using four in-prison situations representing situations in which an intrinsically-motivated religious inmate stands out in the social environment as different (as perceived by his fellow inmates) – he would act in ways contrary to what would be expected of him by the prison culture.

As with other studies of religiosity and deviant behavior, both in and out of prison, the results were mixed. Overall, there is an association between intrinsic religious motivations

and aspects of the focal concern *how you are perceived by others*. First, the results indicate a willingness to try non-inmate code sanctioned behaviors in order to address having been the victim of a theft. The intrinsically motivated inmate is much more likely to either try and talk to the offender to get the item back, or to just forgive and forget, when compared to those who would try and “get even” with the offender. Additionally, the respondent is more likely to forgive, instead of trying to get the item back through talking. There was also a negative association between the numbers of disciplinary infractions for those who would try to get the item back, indicating a small increase in the likelihood of a “get even” response. Infractions and the respondent’s criminal propensity indicate small increases in trying to “get even,” as opposed to forgiving. Finally, age and participation in prison groups indicate an increase in the likelihood of trying to get the item back instead of forgiving. No other religiosity indicators were associated with this measure of the focal concern of respect.

There is also a relationship between intrinsically motivated religious inmates and the use of violence when confronted with an emotional, angry inmate. In this situation, the cultural response is to look tough – to be part of the confrontation. However, intrinsic religious motivations indicate a possible way to insulate oneself from needing to resort to violence. No other religiosity measures were associated with the intention to respond violently. This strong finding confirms previous research that religiosity is associated with a reduction in arguing and, indirectly, fighting (Kerley, Matthews, and Blanchard; Kerley, Matthews, and Schultz). Thus, if violence in prison is instrumental (Tedeschi and Felson) and even normative, then there would be a situational opportunity for religion to influence the intention to respond violently to an emotional, angry inmate. However, not responding to violence with violence can make an inmate seem weak and create trouble for him as other inmates may try and test him or “get one over on him.” But Clear and his colleagues (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) find that the truly religious inmate commands respect from others when he is seen to act in accordance with his religious faith. So, through a strong intrinsic motivation for religion and the implied change in one’s self-concept, religion may insulate the inmate from the socially stigmatizing impact of acting in a way that does not typically “maintain face” among one’s fellow inmates.

Finally, there was an association between intrinsic religious motivations and the behavioral intention of an inmate who comes upon an inter-racial fight. The intrinsically motivated religious inmate is much more willing to either try to get someone to stop the fight, or try to stop the fight himself, instead of staying out of it. The interesting thing about this situation is that it asks the inmate to behave in ways counter to no less than 2 out of 3 different prisoner culture norms. Getting involved oneself violates the prison norms of minding one’s business and racial segregation. Getting someone else to stop the fight violates the prison norms of minding one’s business and not snitching. For the intrinsically motivated inmate, evidence suggests that religion can provide a basis for behavior that can overcome the number one rule of prisoner culture: “mind your business.” While the result is not statistically significant, the results also suggest that the respondents are more likely to intend to stop the fight themselves, rather than try and get someone to stop it. Perhaps

issues of race are less important than the “us vs. them” mentality of the prisoners toward the administration (Sykes).<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, time served, the inmate’s adjustment to prison, and his participation in prison groups increases the likelihood that he would try and stop the fight instead of staying out of it. The number of disciplinary infractions has a small negative effect. This makes sense. In the prison environment, inmates almost never win a misconduct hearing (Moore). If guards were to discover a fight, everyone involved would get in trouble. The Good Samaritan would get mixed up with those who actually participated in the fight. Because the number of prison infractions one incurs comes with varying levels of punishment, those with existing infractions would probably be less willing to risk involvement for fear of receiving another infraction.

The dependent variables are key. By providing a theoretical social situation for the respondent, this study is able to infer an inmate’s attitudes and values regarding a behavioral decision in the prison context. This is the first step in finally understanding *why* an inmate behaves the way he does in prison. Ultimately, understanding the *why* of inmate behavior could lead to programs and policies that aim to combat institutional deviance at the level of individual social interaction (such as having guards automatically break up any argument they come upon in an attempt to quickly defuse the situation). Future research should, with the help of prison inmates, re-create these situational statements for the prison culture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Additionally, the survey instrument should follow up the situational question with an open-ended question asking the inmate respondent *why* he picked a particular choice over others. This way, short of ethnographic observation of these various types of situations, we may be able to obtain information from the respondent about his decision-making process, and learn whether or not religious belief played a role in his decision, from *his* perspective.

The original research (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro) should be replicated. Drastic changes have occurred in population size since this original research was conducted which leads to drastic changes in the prisoner culture. As there have been no recent ethnographies that would meet the standard for strong qualitative research, we can only guess how the prisoner culture has changed over the last 25 years (short of becoming a resident). The religious composition of prison populations, especially the increase of Muslim prisoners, should be addressed by future research. Also, religious tradition/denomination information as well as longitudinal study is needed to provide data that could be useful to designing prison religious programs.

Those evaluating the efficacy of religious programming in prison should remember the advice of O’Connor and Duncan, who note that some studies may not find the effect they are looking for because the programs themselves fail to “follow what are known as the principles of effective correctional treatment” (89). Optimistically, they argue that religiosity can humanize prisons and assist some people in their personal fight against criminal behavior, if we can join faith-based programming with “what works” principles.

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<sup>8</sup> More recent research contradicts the notion of an “inmate vs. staff” dynamic in prison today (Carceral; Ramirez)

## Conclusion

The research presented here extends the literature related to the effect of one's motivation for seeking religion on behavior in prison. The use of the original in-prison situations (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro), created with the cooperation of inmates, provides a unique way of measuring the attitudes and beliefs implicated in inmate decision-making. How inmates behave in prison is of interest to a number of parties: prison administration, policy makers, and the general public. Additionally, research into the prison culture can provide a better handle on the "black box" of American prisons (Tromanhauser). Many studies in criminology utilize "prison" or "incarceration" as an overall, singular experience, an independent variable for a variety of outcomes – from issues surrounding re-entry (Bales, Bedard, Quinn, Ensley, and Holley; Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman, and Shapiro; Johnson; Johnson, Larson, and Pitts; Lanza-Kaduce, Parker, and Thomas; Sumter 1999; Thomas) to the long-term health effects of incarceration (Massoglia) – but fail to dig deeper into the inmate's experiences during incarceration for the effect of those experiences on the outcomes in question. There is nothing wrong with this approach and it provides valuable information. But perhaps better policies could be developed if we open the "black-box" of the prison and better understand how an inmate's experience in dealing with the prison culture influences his future outcomes.

As the use of faith-based programming continues to rise in prisons, policy makers and the general public should pay attention to the evaluations of this kind of rehabilitative programming for inmates. Policies allowing for faith-based correctional programming are spreading; there are now prison wings run by religious organizations, and in Florida one entire prison has become faith-based (Goddard). This raises serious questions about the separation of church and state. Yet it also reminds us that our response to crime has a long history with religion.

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