Public college students' academic experiences and performance in Utah's religious enclave

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PUBLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES AND PERFORMANCE IN UTAH'S RELIGIOUS ENCLAVE

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Educational Leadership
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May 2006

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Public College Student's Academic Experience and Performance in Utah's Religious Enclave

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

Public College Students’ Academic Experiences and Performance in Utah’s Religious Enclave

By

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Many American colleges were established in “religious enclaves,” regions dominated by somewhat homogeneous religious cultures that were formed when co-believers experienced socially inhospitable conditions and removed themselves from the culturally diverse mainstream and gathered into more homogeneous cultural strongholds. Through modernization and urbanization, many former religious enclaves have evolved into pluralistic social settings; however, one large enclave remains. In Utah, students at public colleges and universities experience a cultural environment where the LDS (Mormon) religion has overwhelming demographic dominance (77 percent of Utah’s population in 2000, Grammich, 2004, p. 20).

This dissertation explores the influence of the enclave milieu on the lived experience and academic performance of college students at a publicly funded Utah college where many Mormon students feel that they belong to an entitled majority, and many religiously diverse students feel they are part of a beleaguered minority.
The dissertation describes the processes through which students and faculty identify one another’s religious affiliation and negotiate with the predominant value system.

The dissertation employs three methodological components to describe the influence of the religious enclave on students’ performance and academic experience. First, a quantitative survey of 285 students gathers descriptive information about students’ religious participation and intrinsic religiosity. Using regression analysis techniques, the study shows that religious affiliation influences academic performance as measured by cumulative GPA, with Mormon students achieving higher grades. Second, the author uses Masland’s (1985) paradigm to analyze religious elements in the college’s campus and culture. This analysis shows a consistent pattern of religious influence on campus symbols, rituals, and crisis narratives. Third, the author reports results of in-depth qualitative interviews with twelve students, including Mormon students and students with varied religious beliefs and affiliations, and students with high and low levels of religiosity. These interviews reveal students’ methods of engaging the campus religious culture and illustrate Mormon students’ sense of entitlement and diverse students’ sense of alienation. Finally, using concepts from identity theory (Mael & Ashforth, 2001; Brewer, 1999), the dissertation suggests that in religious enclaves homogeneity pushes the religious dimension of identity to the fore, where it dominates all other dimensions of identity.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.......................................................................................................................................... iii

LIST OF FIGURES .............................................................................................................................. viii

LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................................... ix

CHAPTER 1  INTRODUCTION........................................................................................................... 1
  Religion in America’s Religious Enclaves ......................................................................................... 1
  The Need for Further Research......................................................................................................... 16
  The Continuing Influence of Utah’s Religious Enclave on Public Higher Education .................. 18
  Statement of Problem and Research Questions ............................................................................. 22
  Purpose, Limitations, and Significance of the Study ....................................................................... 24
    Purpose ...................................................................................................................................... 24
    Limitations ............................................................................................................................... 24
    Significance ............................................................................................................................... 25

CHAPTER 2  REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ............................................................................... 27
  College Student Religiosity ............................................................................................................. 29
    Emerging Adulthood .................................................................................................................. 29
    Socialization ............................................................................................................................. 32
    Religious Mobility .................................................................................................................... 33
    Religious Mobility for Mormons ............................................................................................... 38
  The Interaction of the National and Enclave Religious Environments ........................................ 40
    Sects’ attitudes toward other religious and secular entities ......................................................... 41
    Sects, “Strictness” and the Problem of the Free-Rider ................................................................ 44
    Secularization Theory and Ideological Conflict ......................................................................... 47
    Religious “Distinctiveness” and Church Growth ......................................................................... 48
    Rational Choice Theory and Religious Competition ................................................................... 50
    Pluralism, Religious Competition, and Denominational Growth .............................................. 52
    Mormonism’s De Facto Religious Monopoly in Utah ................................................................. 54
    Competitive Strategies of Mormonism ......................................................................................... 55
    The Impacts of Pluralism and Homogeneity in Utah ................................................................. 59

Student Religiosity, College Religiosity, and Educational Outcomes .............................................. 61
  The Association between Educational Attainment and Religiosity ........................................... 62
  Strength and Direction of the Association between Religiosity and Educational Attainment ....... 66
  Ideological “Erosion” ................................................................................................................... 67
  Educational Attainment and Religious Mobility .......................................................................... 68
  The Association of Educational Attainment and Conservative Religiosity ................................ 68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with Key Employees about Institutional Culture</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Indicators of Welcome and Belonging</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Enclave Culture on Academic Outcomes</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Students' Lived Experience</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam: “School Is A Lot Easier When You Have Things Figured Out”</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawna: “You Weren’t Raised Like Us”</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaron: “But that’s Local Culture, and I Just Deal With It”</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill: “You Lose Your Identity”</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom: “I’m Ready to Get Out”</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy: “Everyone Has the Same Beliefs and Standards”</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake: “I Struggle, You Know”</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet: “It Broke My Mother’s Heart”</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen: “People Get Freaked Out about the Stupidest Stuff”</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY, INTERPRETATION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS ........ 379

Summary ............................................................................................................ 379
Interpretation ...................................................................................................... 385
Recommendations .............................................................................................. 421

APPENDIX A SURVEY INSTRUMENT .................................................................... 427

APPENDIX B INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY .............................................................. 431

APPENDIX C EXERPTS FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS .................................... 436
Excerpt from Bill’s Interview ........................................................................... 437
Excerpt from Janet’s Interview ........................................................................... 441
Excerpt from Shawna’s Interview ........................................................................ 445
Excerpt from Jake’s Interview ............................................................................. 451
Excerpt from Tammy’s Interview ........................................................................ 456
Excerpt from Pam’s Interview ............................................................................ 462

REFERENCES .................................................................................................................. 468

VITA ................................................................................................................................... 491
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1  Embeddedness of Individual Student’s Religiosity ........................................28
Figure 2  Rates of Religious Mobility by Age for Mormons ........................................35
Figure 3  Population Trends in Utah .............................................................................162
Figure 4  Bronze Placcard, Encampment Mall ..............................................................178
Figure 5  Statues in the Encampment Mall .................................................................180
Figure 6  Pioneer Names, Encampment Mall ..............................................................181
Figure 7  Placard, the "D" on the Hillside ....................................................................186
Figure 8  Mosaic - Indigenous Peoples and Father Escalante ......................................187
Figure 9  Mosaic, the Mormon Family ...........................................................................188
Figure 10 Statue-Fountain, "The Family" .....................................................................189
Figure 11 Statue, "Resurrection Series - Awakening" ..................................................190
Figure 12 Paintings with Religious or Mormon Themes ..............................................191
Figure 13 Responses to Accreditation Survey about Autonomy ..................................200
Figure 14 Institute Building Placard ............................................................................204
Figure 15 Campus Map, Showing Institute Building Locations ....................................207
Figure 16 Institute Building (Left) and Business Building (Right) ...............................208
Figure 17 Institute of Religion T-Shirt .........................................................................210
Figure 18 Organizational Religiosity, Frequency Histogram .........................................215
Figure 19 Nonorganizational Religiosity, Frequency Histogram ...................................216
Figure 20 Intrinsic Religiosity (God’s presence), Histogram .........................................218
Figure 21 Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in approach to life), Histogram .........................219
Figure 22 Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in other dealings), Histogram .........................220
Figure 23 Religious Coping (Problem Solving), Histogram .........................................222
Figure 24 Religious Coping (Loneliness), Frequency Data .........................................223
Figure 25 Satisfaction with Religious Climate (Respect), Histogram ............................225
Figure 26 Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Enjoy Climate), Histogram .......226
Figure 27 Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Best Friend), .......228
Figure 28 Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Favorite Professor), Histogram ...........................................................................................................230
Figure 29 Religiously-Based Network Resources (Endogamy), Histogram ....................233
Figure 30 Embeddedness of Individual Student’s Experience at a College ....................240
Figure 31 Educational and Religious Aspects of College Culture ..................................387
Figure 32 Network without Closure ..............................................................................389
Figure 33 Network with Closure ..................................................................................391
Figure 34 Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces in the Enclave Culture .............................421
### LIST OF TABLES

| Table 1 | Schuller's Framework For Considering The Relationships Between Human And Social Capital | 93 |
| Table 2 | Case Summaries - Demographic Variables | 121 |
| Table 3 | Case Summaries - Academic Variables | 122 |
| Table 4 | Case Summaries - Religious Variables, Questions 1-5 | 123 |
| Table 5 | Case Summaries - Religious Variables, Questions 6-10 | 124 |
| Table 6 | Case Summaries - Religious Variables, Questions 11 & 12 | 125 |
| Table 7 | Research Questions and Methods | 142 |
| Table 8 | Utah Population, Percent LDS | 163 |
| Table 9 | Descriptive Statistics, Demographic Data | 212 |
| Table 10 | Descriptive Statistics, Academic Data | 212 |
| Table 11 | Frequency Data, Organizational Religiosity | 214 |
| Table 12 | Frequency Data, Nonorganizational Religiosity | 216 |
| Table 13 | Intrinsic Religiosity (God’s presence), Frequency Data | 218 |
| Table 14 | Intrinsic Religiosity (approach to life), Frequency Data | 219 |
| Table 15 | Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in other dealings), Frequency Data | 220 |
| Table 16 | Religious Coping (Problem Solving), Frequency Data | 222 |
| Table 17 | Religious Coping (Loneliness), Frequency Data | 223 |
| Table 18 | Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Respect), Frequency Data | 224 |
| Table 19 | Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Enjoy Climate), Frequency Data | 225 |
| Table 20 | Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Best Friend), Frequency Data | 228 |
| Table 21 | Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Favorite Professor), Frequency Data | 230 |
| Table 22 | Religiously-Based Network Resources (Endogamy), Frequency Data | 232 |
| Table 23 | Correlations, "Whether LDS" and Demographic Variables | 235 |
| Table 24 | Correlations, "Whether LDS" and Academic Variables | 236 |
| Table 25 | Correlations, "Whether LDS" Organizational, Nonorganizational, and Intrinsic Religiosity | 238 |
| Table 26 | Correlations, "Whether LDS," Network Resources, Coping and Climate | 239 |
| Table 27 | Comparison of Means, Feeling of Respect and Enjoyment of Campus Religious Climate | 257 |
| Table 28 | Group Statistics, Mormon Students' Rates of Return, with Varying Cut Scores | 259 |
| Table 29 | Group Statistics, Comparison of GPA Means | 262 |
| Table 30 | Independent Samples Test Statistics, Comparison of GPA Means | 263 |
Table 31  Group Statistics, Comparison of History Course Grade and Return Means .......................................................... 263
Table 32  Independent Samples Test Statistics, Comparison of History Course Grade and Return Means .......................................................... 264
Table 33  Group Statistics - Age, Year in School, Ethnicity, and Sex .......................................................... 265
Table 34  Coefficients, Multiple Regression - Returned Following Year ..................................................................................... 266
Table 35  Simple Regression Model Summary - "Whether LDS" and Cumulative GPA ............................................................................................................ 267
Table 36  Simple Regression ANOVA - "Whether LDS" and Cumulative GPA ............................................................................................................ 267
Table 37  Multiple Regression, Religious Variables and Cumulative GPA ..................................................................................... 268
Table 38  Backward Stepwise Regression - Model Summary ..................................................................................... 270
Table 39  Regression Model Coefficients and Observed Significance ..................................................................................... 271
Table 40  Correlation, Whether LDS and Religiously-Based Network Associations ............................................................................................................ 398
Table 41  Correlation, Whether LDS and Problem Solving and Social Support ..................................................................................... 401
Table 42  Religious Coping, Comparison of Means ............................................................................................................ 401
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Religion in America's Religious Enclaves

In what follows, I examine the effect on college students of a general sociological process that occurs in regions where coreligionists gather and become demographically dominant. Throughout the history of American higher education, many American colleges were established in what I call "religious enclaves," regions dominated by somewhat homogeneous religious cultures. Because they often experience socially inhospitable conditions within the cultural mainstream, believers

---

1 In the field of human and cultural geography, the term "enclave" is technically defined as "a small piece of territory lying within a [political] state but which does not fall within its jurisdiction" (Johnston et al, 2000, p. 206). While this definition suggests that enclaves are politically defined, I use the term in a less technical sense, as defined here: An enclave can be culturally defined as a region or territory dominated by a particular culture lying within the boundaries of a larger and more diverse mainstream culture. In this sense, it may be referred to as a "cultural stronghold." Such an enclave may vary along three important dimensions: First, the size of the geographic region may vary. An enclave may be as small as a group of urban neighborhoods. Or an enclave's geographic region may encompass a city, a county, an entire state, or even large parts of several states, as is the case of Mormonism in the Intermountain West. Second, the ratio of the enclave members to non-members may vary. One might measure this dimension as the percentage of the total population that affiliates with the enclave religion, and the concentration of an enclave's members may be as high as eighty or ninety percent in a particular region, as is the case in Utah County. And third, religious enclaves may vary in their attitudinal posture related to outsiders, their acceptance of diversity, and their willingness to accommodate non-members who function socially within the region.
remove themselves from the diverse mainstream setting and gather into a homogeneous cultural stronghold, where they initiate a new community that beckons to fellow believers, who in turn gather to the community, thus compounding the demographic concentration and buttressing the regional power of the enclave’s religious culture.

With its newfound regional influence, the enclave culture then establishes and operates a college to advance its purposes. At some point, non-affiliated and non-believing students seek educational services at the enclave’s college, forcing the college to address whether and how to accommodate pluralism. As regional diversity increases, the absolute prerogative of the religious enclave culture often comes under question, and the college begins to back away from its partnership with the enclave’s religion. All of these phenomena create a cultural milieu that impacts the lived experience of both believing and non-believing college students.

In colonial America, the religious and the public spheres were tightly integrated, and religion infused the culture and curricula of early American colleges, creating unique learning environments that must have profoundly influenced students’ experiences. For example, the Puritans in Massachusetts Bay Colony who founded Harvard in 1636, Cohen writes, “saw no contradiction in preparing young people to take their place as public officials and as ministers in a community where church and state were closely aligned” and Virginia Colony Anglicans founded the College of William and Mary in 1693 “to prepare clergymen for service in the Anglican church” (1998, p. 17). A number of religious enclaves founded colleges: “The College of New Jersey, later Princeton, by the Presbyterians; the College of
Rhode Island, later Brown, by the Baptists; Queen's College, later Rutgers, by the Dutch Reformed Church; and King's College, later Columbia, by the Anglicans...” (pp. 18-19). However, over time the cultural setting of these religious colleges changed as the religious and civic spheres separated themselves, and the original religious purpose and influence in most of these institutions waned. These changes also must have profoundly influenced the texture of the college experience for students.

In broad terms, the sociological process I'm interested in has five stages:\(^2\)

First, religious dissenters break off from an existing religious mainstream, forming a separate schism with unique beliefs and practices. While the schism may attempt to practice its distinctive brand of religion while embedded within the communities of the mainstream pluralistic majority, often the schism finds that existing social conditions are inhospitable. Thus, in a second stage, the schism’s dissent evolves into separatism, and believers break away into colonies that are sometimes in remote geographic regions where they establish an enclave of coreligionists, an independent social order with a high concentration of believers. Isolated from the mainstream, the group freely advances a lifestyle that beckons to fellow believers, who gather to the enclave, reinforcing the demographic concentration and strengthening the cultural stronghold of the enclave.

---

\(^2\) The process described here is loosely based on the famous church-sect typology developed by Troeltsch (1931) and Weber (1904). The discussion here overlays an educational dimension on the religious dimensions identified by Troeltsch and Weber.
If the gathering of co-believers results in a highly concentrated population of those who affiliate with the particular religion, in a third stage, the enclave matures and becomes itself a kind of regional mainstream, and its ways become the accepted norms of the enclave's establishment. In this phase, the schism which may formerly have been a persecuted minority within a larger mainstream establishes enough numerical dominance to gain a modicum of cultural control within a geographic region. Ironically, the once persecuted minority finds that it has become the regional majority, the local mainstream. Within the region, the enclave culture's ways become the standard of behavior, the norm by which "deviance" is regionally defined and measured.

In a fourth stage, the enclave group, with its new-found supremacy, designs and launches various social services to meet its needs. Because they are established by and for the religionists, the enclave's public enterprises—including protective services, utilities infrastructure, commerce, and educational institutions—may bear the sometimes subtle, sometimes explicit imprimatur of the religious group. Because of the political dominance of the religion, it often establishes a college that advances its own particular concept of the good. In the enclave's sectarian college, the children of the community find curriculum and instructors that conform to the religious group's views.

The religion and its college may flourish together without controversy. Often, however, a fifth phase may challenge the enclave's public enterprises—the phase of pluralism, when non-affiliated or non-believing populations move into the enclave's region, and religiously diverse students enroll at the enclave's sectarian college. The
group that had once been a persecuted minority may now face the question of whether, and how, to accommodate non-affiliated or non-believing students. In this stage, regional enclaves struggle to define the limits of toleration and inclusion. The group may try to maintain strict boundaries of separation. The group may also develop policies and attitudes that tolerate a limited range and type of diversity. Or the group may become completely tolerant of a broad range of diversity.

Because religious enclaves throughout American history established colleges and universities, early American higher education enjoyed a particularly strong partnership with religion, but over time that partnership has weakened. In colonial America, eight of the nine colleges were strongly affiliated with particular religions (Cohen, 1998), and by the Civil War, 175 of America’s 182 permanent colleges were under religious control (Kohlbrenner, 1961). Along the eastern seaboard colonial colleges were distinctly Puritan: “Culturally, ethnically, and religiously homogeneous, [the colleges of colonial America] provided Puritan men with membership in a community designed to strengthen the relationship between piety and the intellect and their commitment to religiously sanctioned paradigms of knowledge” (Aleman, 2001, p. 486).

What is the influence of these five stages on the cultural and learning environment for students at colleges within religious enclaves? Religious values have a strong potential to both bind people together and alienate people from each other. Those who gathered to religious enclaves undoubtedly did so because they shared the group’s religious ideology and identity. Religion served as the basis of a sense of community, uniting individuals through their shared religious values. Certain types
of values, Strike (1999) explains, are "constitutive values," forming the basis of a
group's identity. Other values with lesser importance, while shared, do not form the
group's identity. For example, most people value serviceable plumbing; however,
this value is too "thin," Strike argues, to be part of a group's basic constitution.
Religious values are especially constitutive—"thick" enough to form group identity
and bring coreligionists together into a well defined community. At the religion's
college a strongly cohesive religious culture would likely have measurable impact on
students' experiences there.

Students who are fellow believers would likely find on campus a basis for
community that doesn't exert a similar influence at colleges that lack these
religiously-based constitutive values. While constitutive values serve to unite a
community, they also serve as the basis for exclusion. "No community," Strike
writes, "can be united by shared values and be infinitely inclusive. . . . Either
nonsharers will be excluded from membership altogether, or they will in some way be
second-class members" (p. 54). Thus, constitutive values have benefits and costs.
They create solidarity, unity, and shared goals—and they exclude.

This dilemma underlies the problem of pluralism: with few exceptions, the
stronger the bonds of religious community, the greater the exclusivity. By means of
its shared religious values, a religious enclave establishes unity within the community
and exerts formative pressure on its college (Arum, 2000) such that the college
becomes a symbol of the religious community's solidarity and an embodiment of the
community's religious views; however, by means of those same constitutive values,
the religious enclave identifies "in-group" and "out-group" persons and alienates
outsiders. When faced with politically powerful pluralistic forces, America's religious colleges have struggled to resolve this difficult predicament, the conflict between solidarity and exclusion. At a college established by a religiously cohesive culture, a student who attends classes as one of the very few non-believers would probably feel a sharp sense of exclusion.

Through American history, as sectarian colleges encountered students with alternative concepts of the good, they confronted the inherent "tension between shared values and inclusion" (Strike, 1999, p. 46) and wrestled with questions related to whether and how to accommodate non-affiliated and non-believing students. Because pluralistic forces became politically powerful in America's early religious enclaves, many chose to sacrifice religious unity in favor of tolerant inclusion, and others were unable to maintain religious control of their colleges (Dawsey, 1999; Glenn, 2001). Many altogether excluded religious perspectives from their academic cultures and curricula and banned "all expressions of religion as it is actually lived today" (Glenn, 2001, p. 136). In fact, "all of the earliest colleges founded by Protestant groups anxious to maintain a form of religious orthodoxy subsequently severed their religious ties and foundations" (Adrian, 2003, p. 18). Again, these changes must have had a measurable impact on students' college experience.

American colleges and universities faced this dilemma quite early in their histories. As early as the mid-1700s, rising pluralism "challenged traditional forms of [religious] governance at the colleges in the English colonies of North America" (Herbst, 1976, p. 53). Because of this pluralism, a form of religious toleration
evolved into what religious historians have called “denominationalism,”\(^3\) the cultural concept that no single religious entity possesses sole divine legitimacy, but that multiple religious entities were members of a shared brotherhood of truth.

This limited tolerance of religious diversity is perhaps surprising, given the fact that early Puritan colonizers were decidedly non-tolerant of religious diversity. In the 1640s, for example, one early Puritan bluntly refused to give ground: “There is no Rule given by God for any State to give an Affirmative Toleration to any False Religion, or Opinion whatsoever; they must connive in some cases but may not concede in any” (Nathaniel Ward, as quoted in Mead, 1963, p. 18). However, later New Englanders recognized that such rigidity was impractical: “By around the middle of the eighteenth century toleration was universally, however reluctantly, accepted in all the English colonies. Within fifty years complete religious freedom was declared to be the policy of the new nation formed from these colonies” (Mead, 1963, p. 18).

Pre-Revolution colleges that were established by and for religious denominations – in which a particular religious perspective prevailed in matters of mission, curriculum, and personnel – faced an important adjustment when their somewhat homogeneous cultures diversified (Herbst, 1976). Initially, the various religious groups established colleges with a less than tolerant purpose, “to preserve

\(^3\) See, for example, two chapters in Mead’s 1963 history, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* – “From Coercion to Persuasion: Another Look at the Rise of Religious Liberty and the Emergence of Denominationalism” and “Denominationalism: The Shaping of Protestantism in America.”
their particular form of Christianity” (Adrian, 2003, p. 18), and some religious groups wielded their colleges as propaganda weapons or strategic gambits against other religious movements:

Harvard was founded to help the Puritans escape Anglican Oxford and Cambridge, and Yale appeared in 1701 when a group of New Haven ministers, influenced in part by distrust of the liberal heresies that were coming to dominate Harvard, established a competing college to preserve the old social and religious order in Connecticut. Again, the Congregationalists who founded Amherst were in part moved by objections to the Unitarianism that shook Harvard in the early 19th century, and the Yankee Methodists who set up Boston University at the time of the Civil War felt that Harvard’s classical curriculum and aristocratic values were destroying the ethos of pious dissent. The same era also saw the Jesuits establish Boston College, to help the new Boston-Irish community maintain its religious and social integrity in a Protestant society. (Sanford as quoted by Adrian, 2003, p. 18)

However, by the mid-1700s, as Herbst (1976) notes, “toleration meant the tacit recognition that the dominant church in each province was the established ecclesiastical authority,” and in this atmosphere, “members of minority denominations were guaranteed religious liberty while attending the college of the dominant religion” (p. 53). As it existed among colonial Protestant groups, denominationalism was a limited toleration that conceded the possibility of other religious groups’ truth claims, and as such it amounted a limited cultural acceptance of inclusion and rejection of intolerance, granting a limited (even if sometimes
grudging) acceptance of other religious groups’ values. In this environment, Presbyterians, for example, might say of Congregationalists that . . . well, after all Congregationalists have much in common with Presbyterians, and, like all good Protestants, Congregationalists deserved certain cultural deference. Thus, Protestant groups created a cultural environment that facilitated cultural mobility within the various colonial religious enclaves.

Denominationalism, however, had its limits, and even through the nineteenth century, denominationalism’s tolerant openness was withheld from non-Protestant groups. A Protestant hegemony accepted the qualified legitimacy of traditional Protestant groups, but viewed other religious groups as distinctly outside the brotherhood of truth: At first Catholics and later Mormons (or members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints4) were viewed as foreign, “Other” (Grow, 2004, p. 140), and outside the limits of denominationalism’s tolerance (Chen, 2003).

Colleges established by and for religious enclaves faced difficult questions. In general, how should the enclave’s predominant religious culture respond to increasing cultural heterogeneity? In particular, should students be required to pass some religious test for admission? Should the curriculum accommodate diverse religious

---

4 The term “Mormon” refers to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or the LDS Church. During the 1990s, the Church asked that the term “Mormon” not be used in reference to the Church or its members – that the terms “Latter-day Saints” or “LDS Church” be used in its place; however, writers have discovered that in both scholarship and popular usage, the term refuses to be replaced: In the popular media and in day-to-day communication, the term “Mormon” is pervasively used both inside Utah and the Mormon culture and outside, has continued popularity, and is universally understood. The term perseveres even in the Church’s own organizations, including the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.
perspectives or even non-religious perspectives? Should college faculty and employees be required to adhere to religious behavioral conventions and ideological tenets?

Herbst (1976) narrates how Yale University in the 1740s fought a losing battle in the maturing years of the Great Awakening under its rector, Thomas Clap, to maintain the university under the authority and control of Connecticut’s Presbyterian churches. The Great Awakening itself was a milestone in the development of American denominationalism. By its very nature, “as an evangelical movement welcoming students and teachers from all Protestant denominations” it was “in opposition to the idea of an established-church order in colony and college” (p. 54). Rather than embrace denominationalism’s growing toleration of religious diversity, Rector Clap asserted Presbyterianism’s exclusive legitimacy and sought to consolidate the religious culture’s control of the university. After diverse revivalists visited Yale’s campus, students “began to question the piety of their ‘Old Side’ teachers and ministers,” which led Yale trustees to issue an injunction against any expression of religious dissent: “... If any student of this college shall directly or indirectly say that the rector, either of the trustees or tutors, are hypocrites, carnal or unconverted men, he shall for the first offense make a public confession in the hall, and for the second offense be expelled” (p. 55). When Rector Clap sought to discipline a student who he believed had violated this rule, there was a general student rebellion, and Clap sent the entire student body home (p. 55).

Also, in 1753, Clap responded preemptively to the opening of an Anglican church in nearby New Haven. He sought to keep students away from Anglican
influence by building a Presbyterian chapel on campus at Yale and requiring all students to participate in its chapel services, regardless of whether or not they were Presbyterian. In general, Thomas Clap’s aim was to consolidate Presbyterian control of the institution; however, because of the growing denominationalism in Colonial America, these and other protectionist actions eventually led to Clap’s downfall at Yale. Unlike Yale, other pre-Revolution institutions had implemented denominationalism’s evolving philosophy and policy of “toleration” whereby “the denomination in nominal control on each board of trustees . . . emphasized its stewardship rather than its possession of the institution” and endorsed varying degrees of religious nondiscrimination (p.57). Even when local citizens asked Connecticut’s legislature “to turn your eyes upon the society you have founded, and nourished, and for the honor of what is good, great, and noble, subject it to such like visitation as other collegiate schools in this land or devise some method of redress,” Clap “refused to budge” (p. 64). Frustrated by Clap’s resolute religious paternalism, in 1763 the visitors granted themselves power to dismiss the rector, and Clap was fired (p. 66). Herbst concludes that the series of events illustrates “the colonies’ changing social structure and increasing ethnic and religious heterogeneity” (p. 67). Little attention, however, has been paid to how these changes impacted the lived experience of both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian students at Yale.

These events at Yale illustrate the “tension between shared values and inclusion” that Strike (1999) describes – a tension that has continued through history and is still unresolved in many regions today. Despite the influence on higher education of the evolving legal principle of separation of church and state (Keller,
2000; Robbins, 1985; Peterson, 1980; Wybraniac and Finke, 2001), from the time of the Revolution through the nineteenth century, many of America’s public institutions were “strongly Protestant in orientation,” and many Catholics thought of them as “religiiously alien territory” (Brereton, 1998, p. 281). As a dominant religious culture, Protestant denominationalism employed colleges as tools for consolidating the power of Protestant culture in America, with the goal of creating a “homogeneous, moral, and politically enlightened democracy” (Brereton, 1998, p. 282). The experience of a Catholic student at such a college would likely differ significantly from the experience of a Protestant student.

Secular perspectives became more predominant in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the development of land-grant institutions and the political prohibition of public support for sectarian instruction (Cohen, 1998). German-educated professors brought further secularization, and by the turn of the century, many formerly denominational institutions further distanced themselves from religious influences, introducing varied and complicated relationships between religion and education (Marsden, 1994).

By the turn of the nineteenth century, many public colleges and universities followed the pattern of the University of Illinois, which was founded in 1865 by a Baptist minister (Johnson, 1992). In 1905, the institution’s fifth president, Edmund James, questioned the tenability of the university’s relationship to the Baptist Church and convened a conference of educators to discuss the following issue:

What to do with religious content and practice at the college and university level in a country whose rapidly expanding institutions of higher learning,
public as well as private, had once been “avowedly and impliedly Christian” and in which “Christian life” was, many claimed, still “real and pervasive.” (p. 552)

The answer, Johnson notes, was “to remove religion to the periphery of the campus. . .” (p. 552). As happened in many cases, the university backed out of its religious partnership with the community. Rather than viewing religion as a collaborative venture between university and community, the university asserted that the community, not the institution, must be responsible for fostering students’ religious values: “The burden of conducting [religious education],” wrote the dean of students, “must fall upon the religious organizations which are found in the community in which the University is located” (p. 553).

These changes at the University of Illinois were precipitated by changes in the Baptist Church itself. Through the last decades of the nineteenth century, Johnson (1992) asserts, the Baptist Church’s religious and educational philosophies changed in three important ways: First, religious commitment philosophically separated itself from the intellect; second, while previously, religion had undertaken interpretation of the totality of human experience, with rising secularization, religion placed its emphasis on helping individuals, and withdrew its consideration of broader social or moral concerns; and third, religion relinquished the goal of religious consensus, the goal of unity based on shared values, and conceded to greater openness and toleration. America, the Baptist Church conceded, was profoundly pluralistic, and to pursue the goal of religious unity was an impractical and quixotic venture. Thus, at the University of Illinois, science was “enthroned” (p. 560), chapel services were
closed, and officials communicated that religion, while important, was “the responsibility of the student himself” (p. 561), defined as “a personal concern” (p. 564). The university saw these changes completed in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Through history, American education has “changed partners” from religion to government, divesting itself of most of its historically prominent sectarian influences (Glenn, 2001, p. 133). In effect, the ideological purpose of higher education has changed from unity to toleration – from preparing students to be committed religionists to preparing students to be tolerant citizens of a diverse nation. Today, “schools are an island of secularity in a sea of varied but frequently dynamic religious expressions” (p. 137). Today, the “ideologies of churches and schools are different” (Sacerdote and Glaeser, 2001, p. 13). Today, public schools function “to transform disparate, often troublesome groups into a unified, patriotic, well-informed citizenry” . . . [replacing] the old identification with the Church with a newer identification with the state” (p. 14). This secularism, however, is not due to modern Americans’ lack of religiosity, which, as Finke and Stark (1992) demonstrate is as fervent and energetic now as it has ever been. Instead, current secularism can be attributed to pluralism and dilemmas associated with the interaction of diverse religious views (Strike, 1999; Glenn, 2001). Again, this cultural milieu probably has measurable impact on college

5 Finke and Stark (1992) show that Americans’ level of religious adherence has steadily climbed through American history. While many believe that the America of the Founding Fathers was dominated by a hyper-religious hegemony, in fact only seventeen percent of Americans claimed religious adherence in 1776. By 1860, that rate had risen to 37 percent. By 1906 it had climbed to 51 percent. And by 1980, it had reached 62 percent (p. 16).
students’ experience. Secularism’s current cultural influence in higher education undoubtedly makes today’s students’ lived educational experience quite different from that of students attending colleges within religious enclaves that existed through American history.

The Need for Further Research

Higher education’s general shift from sectarian to secular philosophy has been thoroughly documented from several perspectives—including the academic, historical, policy and institutional perspectives (i.e., Marden & Bradley, 1992; Marsden, 1994); however, one important perspective has been somewhat neglected—that of the individual student. Few scholars have probed the impact of the individual student’s religious affiliation on his or her educational experience at an institution where, given the local religious milieu, the student is either an “insider” or an “outsider” to a dominant religious enclave. Particularly neglected is the experience of such students in a public college or university that is situated in a region that continues to function as a cohesive and viable religious enclave, a region with a numerically dominant religious perspective.

Over the years, many interesting and compelling questions have been left unexplored. Within the overarching history of religion and higher education,

6 Recently, Riley (2005) has completed a qualitative study focused on the experiences of students at institutions that continue to have a strong sectarian affiliation; however, Riley’s study includes very few of the views of non-adherent students, and no study that I know of examines the qualitative educational experiences of students at public institutions situated in regions with numerically dominant religious perspectives.
individual students have faced difficult dilemmas. For example, what was it like to be a non-Presbyterian student at Yale in the 1740s when Thomas Clap was attempting to consolidate Presbyterian control over the university? How did a Catholic student in the nineteenth century negotiate with the Protestant religious climate at a college situated in a strongly Protestant region? When the University of Illinois divested itself of its connections to the Baptist Church in the last decades of the nineteenth century, how did this change impact the lived experience of believing Baptist students—or the lived experience of non-Baptist students? Within a particular religious enclave, how was the qualitative educational experience different for adherents and non-adherents? Were colleges in some enclaves more demanding of diverse students than colleges in other enclaves? Why? As formerly religious colleges divested themselves of religious influence and became public institutions, did vestiges of their previously religious institutional culture continue to impact individual students? If so, how? By what process did students negotiate the cultural environment of these newly public colleges in religious enclaves?

Answering these questions is difficult today because many of the cultural environments in which students' experiences occurred no longer exist. In many cases, the religiously homogeneous communities that founded many of America's colleges and universities have become diverse, with few traces of their former homogeneity. Yale's community is no longer predominantly Presbyterian, and the University of Illinois' community is no longer predominantly Baptist. However, even today, particular religions continue to dominate certain geographic regions in the
of all regional religious enclaves, however, none dominates to the extent that Mormonism dominates the state of Utah.

The Continuing Influence of Utah’s Religious Enclave on Public Higher Education

Utah’s comparative homogeneity has important implications for public higher education in the state. As Phillips notes (1998), the Utah cultural environment tends to conflate significant aspects of the public and the religious spheres. A recent case study of Utah’s higher education (Bracco & Martinez, 2005) observes that “when most people first think of Utah, they probably think of a conservative culture and a state dominated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS Church), characteristics that are, in fact, true” (p. 3). Further, “The homogeneity of the demographics is reflected in the state Legislature, where approximately 75% of the legislators in both houses are Republicans and almost 90% of legislators are members of the LDS Church” (p. 4). As Merrill, Lyon, and Jensen (2003) note, “Utah provides an important population for [the study of religion’s impact on education] because it represents the highest level of religious concentration by a single denomination; the highest percentage with at least a high school diploma (94 percent vs. 89 percent nationally); the highest percentage who attend church weekly (56 percent vs. 44 percent nationally); and the largest number with one or more child in the home (50.0 percent vs. 39.2 percent nationally)” (p. 122).

The popular opinion of Utah as a conservative state dominated by Mormons is quite widespread. Chen (2003) notes that at the time of the 2000 Salt Lake City winter Olympics, the national press characterized the state as “a Dullsville populated
by teetotaling missionaries” (p. 40). These negative characterizations, Chen suggests, are based in a persistent fear of Mormons’ financial and proselytizing successes, their political influence, and their unrelenting insistence on being separate and distinct from the American mainstream.

In a Utah educational setting, because of strongly shared religious values, students who are fully integrated Mormons may have a very different educational experience from those who are less integrated in Mormon culture, or from those who are not Mormon. In a website that offers students the ability to post their evaluations of American colleges and universities, several students have recently written about the prevalence of Mormon cultural and religious influence at the University of Utah, a public institution. For example, a political science major reported that, while some aspects of Utah’s recreational life are good (the skiing), mostly Utah is “dull,” and people in the state are “closed-minded”:

The education you'll get from the [University of Utah] is good. Profs are great actually, but if you are looking for any sort of college experience, look elsewhere. The city is dull and empty; students are pretentious and very closed-minded. The skiing is great. However, as I found out after a year in SLC, skiing can't always take the place of friends and a social life, which this place has none of. Final reaction: Stay out of the "Happy Valley" unless you can put on some fake smile and walk around pretending that you are something we all know you are not. . . .

An anthropology major is attentive to Utah’s hyper-religiosity, noting the social challenges for a student who is not affiliated with Mormonism:
As many have noted, Salt Lake City is a sort of insulated, Mormon city. To that end, most of the students at Utah are overly religious types who object to any sort of intellectual challenge. In many a history or anthropology class, I witnessed students get up and leave the classroom when they found something objectionable. As others have said, pockets of (for lack of a better term) liberalism do exist, but they must be sought out. In my time at Utah, I was Greek and found a good deal of kinship in that community. In addition, many of the students work or have served Mormon missions for two years; as such, the student body is older than would be typically found in similar institutions.

. . . Most of the city shuts down around ten. Bars are open weekends to around one A.M. Regardless of what many of the natives claim, the nightlife around Salt Lake City is pretty dull. Most small college towns have much more going on in a typical weekend than does Salt Lake City. Still, the skiing is good and there isn't too much opportunity to get into trouble in SLC.

Another anthropology major characterizes the University of Utah campus as a small and somewhat liberal sub-culture embedded within a conservative religious milieu:

. . . Notice that I've discussed only academics thus far. That's because there is NO NIGHT LIFE and NO SOCIAL LIFE in Salt Lake City. It's the nature of the place; the entire state of Utah is very devoutly Mormon and as such, things such as drinking or even going to a PG-13 movie after 10:00 PM are frowned upon, really in an almost Puritanical way. The University of Utah is easily and by a large margin the most liberal few square miles in the entire state of Utah, and you will find that there is a lot of dislike and distaste for "those liberals at
the University of Utah" in the suburbs surrounding Salt Lake City. For most residents of the state, the respected school is the less rigorous, but much more conservative rival school, Brigham Young University (BYU) whose students are not even allowed to wear shorts or have facial hair!

A political science major notes the predominance of Mormon influence on many aspects of Utah life, including political life, social life, and ethnic diversity:

The problems that besiege Utah in general also plague the U. The most obvious one, being the omnipresent nature of the Mormon religion. The LDS religion and its culture pervade into every area of the University of Utah. From dating, to the social scene . . . to the uncomfortable anti-gay/ leftist/environmentalist nature of the student body. While a non-Mormon can still find fun on the weekends, the reality is that SLC nightclubs and 3.2% keggers really aren’t that enjoyable. Secondly, the total LACK of any diversity on campus really isolates what few minorities that go to the U into ethnic cliques. . . . I’ve decided that the negative aspects of the U are simply too unbearable and have decided to transfer out to Northwestern University.

While most of the students quoted above criticize Utah’s religious culture, one fine arts major defended it:

Whatever your interests you can find a way to indulge them at the [University of Utah]. As for the student body being close-minded and “too Mormon,” I think this is also an unfair categorization. I found a diverse array of ideas and viewpoints inside and outside of the classroom. If anything there was a conscious effort to compensate for prevailing Utah conservatism by leaning
more to the left. Especially amongst faculty and staff who have been recruited from all walks of life and all regions of the country and world. Mormon does not = close-minded. If you disagree with me on this point I think you need to open your mind and make friends with an LDS person so you can see they are as independent-minded and tolerant as any other religious group. One of the so-called negatives mentioned in a previous review was that many of the students are "old" because they have served 2 year missions for the LDS church. These are students who have spent 2 years completely immersed in the culture of foreign nations. When they return to Utah they bring with them a wider view of the world, appreciation for different ways of life, and two years of priceless experience. I spent many a fascinating night sitting in the dorms talking to students who had lived in counties like Sweden, Russia, France, Japan, the Philippines, and South Africa. My only regret about my time at the University of Utah is that I spent too much time partying and having fun and not enough time hitting the books.

(Student Reviews of the University of Utah, Retrieved May 5, 2005 from http://www.studentsreview.com/UT/UU_c.html)

Statement of Problem and Research Questions

Because Utah’s population is dominated by one religious culture, its public colleges and universities probably have a cultural environment unlike that found in other public institutions in other states – an appropriate environment in which to address the impact of religion on students attending a college that, while publicly
funded, is located in a community with a numerically dominant religion that has outspoken religious views.

In this study, I examine the impact of lower division students’ level of integration in a religious community (either Mormon or other) on those students’ academic outcomes and educational experiences at a public college in Utah. I am particularly interested in understanding the mechanisms by which students of all religious identities and practices negotiate with Utah’s cultural environment. I explore the following questions:

1. At a public college located within a religious enclave, what association is there between integration in the enclave’s religious community (as measured by variables such as affiliation, participation, intrinsic religiosity, and association with coreligionists) and educational outcomes (as measured by variables such as course grades, cumulative college GPA, and freshman students’ returning for the subsequent academic year)?

2. At a public college located within a religious enclave, what impact does religion have on institutional culture in ways that students are aware of or in ways that influence students’ sense of belonging or welcome at the college?

3. At a public college located within a religious enclave, how do students of diverse religious backgrounds negotiate with the enclave environment and with one another?

4. At a public college located within a religious enclave, in what ways do the “lived experience” of religiously integrated students and those who are not religiously integrated differ?
5. At a public college located within a religious enclave, to what extent do students draw upon social and cultural capital developed in the family, the community, and the religious organization in order to achieve educational benefits? And if so, how?

Purpose, Limitations, and Significance of the Study

Purpose

My aims are the following: a) to explore and describe the religious aspects of the social environment at a Utah public college and their impact on diverse types of individual students; b) to create a theory or a body of theory that accurately describes the social forces and processes within which these students function; and c) create a theory or body of theory that accurately describes the social processes whereby students respond, adapt, and succeed or fail. The above purposes are primarily descriptive — to understand and portray accurately the lived experiences of religiously diverse students in a unique higher education setting, one that has a strongly religious background and atmosphere — and only secondarily to offer recommendations. While some may question the propriety or legality of religious influences in a publicly funded institution, my primary purpose is not to suggest policy revisions or cultural changes. Rather than concentrating on institution-level culture or policy, the study's focus is the individual student.

Limitations

Even though it has a descriptive quantitative component, this study is primarily qualitative. It is more ideographic than nomothetic, and therefore the

24
analysis related to the particular students and the particular setting under study have somewhat limited applicability to other settings. The study has the strengths and weaknesses common to all qualitative research: It portrays the subtle nuances of attitudes and behaviors of particular individuals in a particular social setting. It contributes to a more detailed understanding of religious aspects of Utah’s higher education environment. However, qualitative studies rely on personal observation and are subject to personal interpretation, giving them limited reliability. Even though the study may shed light on important issues related to higher education (the impact of diversity, the role of religion in the academy, the subtle or latent processes through which religion influences public education, etc.), the study has somewhat limited generalizability. I characterize a small number of students’ experiences in depth, leading to understanding of individual cultural processes; I do not characterize larger aggregates, and my research probably does not lead to inferences about aggregate groups such as “all Mormon (or non-Mormon) students in Utah.”

Significance

Through American history, many colleges and universities have functioned within relatively homogeneous religious communities, and individual students, whether affiliated with the environing religion or not, have found ways to negotiate with the religious environment. This negotiation continues today. Currently, higher education’s general shift from sectarian to secular philosophy has been thoroughly documented from several perspectives, including the academic, historical, policy and institutional perspectives (i.e., Marsden and Bradley, 1992; Marsden, 1994; Phillips, 1999); however, one perspective has been somewhat neglected – that of the
individual student. No study that I know of explores the qualitative educational experiences of students, both adherents and non-adherents, in a public institution that is situated in a region with a numerically dominant, outspoken religious perspective. Because of general neglect of the qualitative experiences of students in public colleges that are situated in regions with numerically dominant religious perspectives, the proposed study addresses an important need in the scholarship. Clearly, the study is significant for the particular institution under study, and probably for other public institutions in the Mormon culture region, particularly institutions in Utah, but also possibly in neighboring states such as Idaho or Arizona. Furthermore, while no other setting exhibits the precise demographic characteristics as Utah’s, where Mormons dominate, the study yields findings that are relevant and explanatory in other settings where other religious entities dominate.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What is the influence of religion on college students in institutions that, while publicly funded, are located in religious enclaves, where religionists are both numerically dominant and outspoken? More particularly, what is the impact of Mormonism on freshman students at a public college in Utah? Is there an association between freshman students' level of integration in their religious groups (either Mormon or non-Mormon) and their educational experiences and outcomes?

Literature that is relevant to these questions is multi-dimensional. In order to organize my review of this literature, I will borrow some aspects of Granovetter's (1985) concept of "embeddedness" – that human behavior is embedded in a web of social relationships – as illustrated in the following figure. As can be seen, individual students' religiosity is embedded in both the college's religious environment and the national religious environment. Also, the enclave's religious environment is embedded within the national religious environment. Individual students' religiosity is embedded in both the college's religious environment and the national religious environment. Also, the enclave's religious environment is embedded within the national religious environment.
Because the enclave's influence is so pervasive, within the enclave's geographic region no student of any religious affiliation is completely free from the enclave's influence; however, in order to show that some students in the college community are integrated within the enclave religion while other students are not similarly integrated, I have depicted the college's religious environment as overlapping the enclave's environment. Because of this pattern of "embeddedness," entities at each level – the individual, the college, the enclave, and the nation at large – react against, respond to, and adapt with the entities at other levels. The review of literature that follows will show that many of the social interactions that occur because of this embeddedness are characterized by competitiveness, tension, and conflict.

I include the above figure and the discussion of "embeddedness" to provide an organizational context for the review of literature that follows; however, because a
great deal of literature treats the interaction of entities at different levels, I am not able to separate all material into four discrete sections. Instead, I first begin with a section related to individual college students' religiosity. Second, I include a section related to the national religious environment, the enclave's religious environment, and the interaction between the two. Third, I summarize literature related to the association between student religiosity and educational attainment. Fourth, I review literature related to social capital – the concept that, through religious participation, students gain social resources that they use in an academic setting.

College Student Religiosity

Emerging Adulthood

Traditionally aged college students are in a stage that developmental psychologists call “emerging adulthood” (Arnett, 2000; Cohen, Kasen, Chen, Hartmark, & Gordon, 2003), a stage that is neither adolescence nor adulthood. Arnett, Ramos and Jensen (2001) note that Americans’ average age of marriage and average years of participation in higher education have both increased dramatically in recent decades. Arnett (2000) asserts that American youth “postpone the entry into adult roles and responsibilities well past the late teens,” allowing persons between 18 and the late-twenties a “moratorium” that is characterized by independence, change, and exploration of three issues – love, work, and worldview – before they finalize choices that will have enduring implications (p. 478). The period of time between

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7 The median age at first marriage, for men, rose from 23.2 in 1970 to 26.8 in 2000. For women, it rose from 20.8 in 1970 to 25.1 in 2000 (Eshleman, 2003, p. 235).
when a young person leaves the "family of birth" and enters the "family of reproduction" is on average longer and less structured for young persons today than as recently as the 1970s. The years between 18 and the mid- to late-twenties has become a time when individuals have more "independence from social roles and from normative expectations" that allows them to explore life possibilities and emerge into adulthood (p. 471).

Importantly, emerging adulthood is characterized by exploration of worldview, with attendant ideological searching (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, Ramos & Jensen, 2001; Arnett & Jensen, 2002). Most American emerging adults practice religion in ways that are quite independent of their parents, often constituting "a congregation of one" (Arnett & Jensen, 2002). For these young people, emerging adulthood is a time when religious beliefs are tentative and open to change, and American youth increasingly believe that individuals should form their own religious beliefs free of too much institutional or familial influence. As a part of this process, emerging adults re-evaluate the religious beliefs of their families and attempt "to form a set of beliefs that is the product of their own independent reflections" (Arnett, 2000, p. 474).

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8 Not all data, however, suggest that college students are attentive to ideological or religious matters. While Arnett (2000) argues that emerging adulthood is a period of values exploration, Astin (1998) shows that in the past three decades, students have given less importance to the goal of "developing a meaningful philosophy of life," placing higher importance on the goal of "being very well off financially."

9 Arnett, Ramos, and Jensen (2002) argue that emerging adults are governed by Shweder's ethic of autonomy, which "defines the individuals as the primary moral authority, unrestricted in choices except by his or her own preferences" (p. 70).
Some evidence suggests that, in a materialistic consumer society, emerging adults’ interest in ideology has declined over the past three decades. Astin (1998) shows a thirty year decline in college students’ interest in “developing a meaningful philosophy of life,” and a thirty year increase in college students’ interest in “being very well off financially.” For college students since the late 1960s, “these two values have basically traded places, with being very well-off financially now the top value . . . and developing a meaningful philosophy of life now occupying sixth place. . .” (p. 124), reflecting “increases in materialistic values” (p. 125).

Arnett (2000) cites American Mormondom as a culture that, even though embedded in an industrialized nation, shortens and structures the period of emerging adulthood:

In the United States, members of the Mormon Church tend to have a shortened and highly structured emerging adulthood. Because of cultural beliefs prohibiting premarital sex and emphasizing the desirability of large families, considerable social pressure is placed on young Mormons to marry early and begin having children. Consequently, the median ages of marriage and first childbirth are much lower among Mormons than in the American population as a whole. (p. 478)

Nevertheless, Smith & Denton (2005) note that Mormon teens are “most likely among all U.S. teens to hold religious beliefs similar to their parents’ . . .” (p. 35); therefore, Denton conjectures that, compared to emerging adults in the U.S. population at large, the developmental stage is characterized by less independence for Mormons. Nelson (2003) confirms that emerging adulthood is both shorter and more
structured for Mormons because they are urged to marry sooner, and they have “clear roles and responsibilities” during the period, roles that often include a two-year mission and lay service in the Mormon Church (p. 37). Compared to the broader American trends, Mormon emerging adults experience a “shortened period of identity exploration,” and Mormons engage in fewer “risk behaviors” (p. 37). Mormon emerging adults, Nelson writes, “differ from emerging adults in the majority culture in a number of ways, including the structure they have been given during this period, the criteria they have for adulthood, the questioning of some identity-related issues, and the extent to which they engage in risk behaviors” (p. 43).

Socialization

Most socialization occurs within the family; however, as Cornwall (1989) explains, by “channeling” the young person into particular settings, the family influences post- and extra-familial socialization. Families channel young into the college setting, where, as Weidman (1989) explains, the college environment further socializes young people. In the college setting, Weidman asserts, a number of forces (family, peers, and aspects of the institution itself) interact in the college student’s socialization. The influence of parental socialization wanes, and the influence of peers and the educational institution rises.

While most religious socialization occurs within the family, a good deal of it occurs within the college setting. Agreeing with Berger (1967), Cornwall posits that plausibility structures are created in the college student’s network of associations. Those associations may be with persons within the student’s own religion (in-group), with persons outside of the student’s religion (out-group), or with persons marginal to
the religion (marginal). However, for many students the college environment is quite different from their home environment, and college is a time when students form more “out-group” associations that present them with alternatives to their familial religious socialization and their childhood world views: “It is therefore logical to assume,” Cornwall writes, “that introduction to alternative realities via conversations with significant others whose subjective reality does not mirror the reality of the group will negatively influence the adoption of the group reality” (p. 574).

If the socialization that occurs in the college setting undermines the socialization that occurs in the family setting, it may be because of the difference between “broad” and “narrow” socialization (Amett, 1995). The function of socialization, Amett argues, is to “define the limits of what is desirable, ‘normal’ individual variation” (p. 618). Broad socialization promotes a broad range of options that support individualism and self-expression, while narrow socialization promotes a more constricted range of options, enforcing obedience and conformity. Socialization that occurs in the college setting tends to be broad, while traditional religious socialization tends to be narrow. Broad socialization, Arnett suggests, can lead to greater recklessness (violation of norms) among young people, and broad socialization leaves more latitude about timing of “role transitions” such as marriage and parenthood. It may well be that a key difference among students in Utah’s religious enclave is the breadth of their socialization.

**Religious Mobility**

Religious mobility occurs when a person changes religious affiliation. Sociologists use several terms to describe religious mobility, including the terms
“switching,” (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995), “apostasy” (Hadaway & Roof, 1989),
dropping out” (Hoge, 1988) “disaffiliation” or “disengagement” (Albrecht, Cornwall
& Cunningham, 1988). Because emerging adulthood (the typical age of a traditional
college student) is characterized by identity and values exploration, rates of religious
mobility are much higher during this developmental period than either before or after,
since, as Allport notes, this is a time when “the person must transform his religious
attitudes from secondhand to firsthand fittings of his personality” (as cited by

A person is more likely to change religious orientation at the age of a
traditional college student than either before or after. Additionally, one’s level of
education impacts religious mobility, with higher rates of switching for the more
highly educated and lower rates for the less educated. Sherkat and Ellison’s review
of literature (1999) summarizes research that shows:

Higher levels of education have a negative impact on measures of traditional
religious belief; however, education also spurs participation in religious
organizations. . . . Educational attainment increases the likelihood of
relinquishing affiliation with religious organizations, and exceeding the
educational attainment of peers in the denomination of origin prompts
apostasy and religious switching (p. 368).

Like other populations, Mormons change religious orientation by either
switching or dropping out at a higher rate for college-aged persons than for persons
either older or younger. Albrecht (1998) studied the age at which Mormons
“disengaged.” As his figure “Dropout Rate: Lifelong Members” shows (p. 264),

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religious mobility for Mormons is highest at about twenty or twenty-one years of age, at a traditional age of college attendance:

![Graph showing rates of religious mobility by age for Mormons.](image)

**Figure 2** Rates of Religious Mobility by Age for Mormons

In their study of "Apostasy in American Churches," Hadaway and Roof (1988) observe three categories: (a) "apostates," those who stop participating and identifying with a religion; (b) "religious nones," the unchurched, persons who never identified with a religion; and (c) "invisible affiliates," those who identify with, but never participate in a religion. These scholars argue that rates of apostasy are increasing in America, and they argue that apostasy is associated with higher education:

... Socioeconomic status is a relatively unimportant determinant of apostasy.

... What is important is education, even when we control for age cohort. Higher education tends to expand one's horizons and may also mean greater exposure to countercultural values. For many persons, such exposure has worked to erode traditional plausibility structures, which maintained the
poorly understood religious convictions that seem so typical of American religion. (p. 36)

Young people leave their religions for a variety of reasons. In a study of Catholic college students, Hoge (1988) identified the six most prevalent reasons for leaving the religion: (a) family-tension dropouts, (b) weary dropouts, (c) lifestyle dropouts, (d) spiritual-need dropouts, and (e) anti-change dropouts, or those who oppose Vatican II changes (pp. 93-96).

Hoge, Johnson and Luidens (1993) show that the membership of most Protestant churches has declined in recent decades, and college-aged people account for most of the decline. These scholars explain this decline by referring to two theories that have been used to describe young people’s religiosity: (a) social learning theory, the idea that parents, peers, and teachers reinforce religious attitudes and behaviors; and (b) cultural broadening theory, the idea that experiences in late adolescence and young adulthood, especially higher education, give young people “liberalized social attitudes, greater cosmopolitanism, religious skepticism, and a sense of moral and religious relativity” (p. 243). Both theories can be thought of as parts of Berger’s (1967) “plausibility structures” theory. As young people go to college, they lose the religious support of family and religious peers. Lacking “networks of persons in constant contact who hold to a common worldview and a set of moral commitments,” young people experience the cultural broadening of college and lose religious commitment (p. 243). The thesis that Hoge, Johnson and Luidens articulate emphasizes the importance of support mechanisms or “plausibility structures” (Berger, 1967), and thus, one would expect that the density of
coreligionists in a region would reduce the rate of intergenerational religious mobility, and one would expect that in Utah Mormons have higher rates of religious retention than elsewhere.

Because individuals identify with religious groups, changing one’s religious orientation often means changing one’s personal identity. “Religion,” Warner (1993) notes, “is constitutive for some American subcultures” (p. 1060), and Phillips (n.d.) notes that Mormon identity is, like Jewish identity, a quasi-ethnic identity (p. 31). Hadaway and Roof (1988) emphasize that religious identity is especially important for Americans. They point out that, while a majority of Europeans disavow affiliation with any religion whatsoever, 93 percent of Americans identify themselves as belonging to a particular religion. Religious identity is so important for Americans that many have become what these scholars call “invisible affiliates,” persons who identify themselves as members of a religion, but who never participate in that religion in any way whatsoever. A person who previously identified with a religion but who now identifies him- or herself as a “religious none” (not having any religious affiliation) is what Hadaway and Roof term “apostate,” a status that implies a rejection of both identity and culture. American apostates tend to be a) young, b) male, c) highly educated, d) committed to “new morality,” and e) having “greater exposure to cultural changes.” Thus, amount of education correlates with the rate of apostasy (pp. 33-35).

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10 The percentage of the U.S. population identifying itself as a “religious none” has been rising in recent years. The numbers of persons claiming no religious affiliation “have increased from 3 percent and under in the 1950s (2.7 percent claiming no religious affiliation in 1957) to 7.1 percent in 1982” (Johnstone, 2004, p. 80, citing Condran and Tamney).
Sherkat and Wilson (1995) explain that "intergenerational religious mobility" (when children assume a religious affiliation that differs from their parents' religious identity) is positively associated with educational attainment: The more educated one's children, the more likely they are to switch religious affiliation. Family religious socialization, Hadaway and Marler (1993) write, is an effective antidote to apostasy: "For Americans who were socialized in a single denominational tradition by religiously active parents and who marry someone within that same tradition, switching is very unlikely" (p. 110; also Hoge, 1988). Wilson and Sherkat (1994) write that "the effort and commitment the parents have invested in raising their children, their diminishing influence over them, as well as their recognition of their own mortality make it important that the next generation 'carry on.'" Because of familial socialization, even after some young people have changed their religious affiliation, many "return to the fold," especially if their relationship to their parents is close (pp. 149-150).

Religious Mobility for Mormons

Different religious groups display distinctive patterns of religious mobility. For Mormons, the "dropout rate" rises through early adolescence and peaks at about

11 For example, Hoge (1988) reviews others' and his own research on Catholic dropping out, "defined . . . as the cessation of Catholic Mass attendance" (82). Because young people drop out more than old people, almost all studies were conducted using college students. Nearly all studies find that family experience (loving, supportive, religiously active socialization) relates most negatively to dropping out. Comparing Catholics to Protestants, Hoge writes that, with the exception certain ethnic enclaves within American Catholicism, the church "is well along the path of assimilation to the American middle-class way of life" (p. 83). The Catholic church differs in that a) its parishes are larger than Protestant congregations, and lay Catholics have much less involvement than Protestants; b) parishes are "less
age twenty, at which age nearly twelve per one hundred Mormons “drop out” (Albrecht, 1998, p. 264). Thus, the peak dropout age for Mormons occurs during what is often the first year or two of college. For Mormons religious change is often incremental— involving stages of “disengagement,” “drift” and “displacement” (Albrecht, Cornwall, & Cunningham, 1988), and communal involvement is an important hedge against dropping out. “Communal identification” or social participation with other Mormons within the Mormon ward, the basic unit of the Church, Bahr and Albrecht (1989) assert, is an important element that reduces dropping out rates for Mormons. Most of those who do drop away from the religion were “marginal saints” who “were never truly ‘in’ the faith” (p. 194).

For several decades, the Mormon Church, as though recognizing that higher education threatens the religious identity of Mormon youth, has instigated several religious programs aimed at consolidating and fortifying young Mormons’ religious commitment before they leave the household of birth, attempting effectively to inoculate them against religious mobility. Most recently, the Church initiated a program called “For the Strength of Youth” (2001) which outlines Church mores related to many behavioral and creedal issues — modesty in dress, premarital sex, unwholesome entertainment and music, church attendance, faith, honesty, repentance, etc. — and provides a structured program of activities aimed at reinforcing those norms. These programs sent out from Church headquarters are continuously

democratic and participatory, [and] thus they elicit less personal investment from laity; and c) the Catholic church has doctrines related to sexuality that “are very widely opposed by laity,” (p. 83) and Protestants have no corollary. These distinctions affect patterns of disaffiliation for Catholics.
reinforced by standardized activities in Mormon wards and activities within individual families. Albrecht (1998) notes that for Mormons even though “the period of greatest risk [of dropping out or disengagement] is between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five,” most Mormon dropouts eventually return: “... By age sixty-five, approximately two-thirds [of those who dropped out] will be active...” (p. 263).

A summary of literature reviewed thus far includes these relevant ideas: First, the college years are associated with exploration of world views and identity formation. Second, the highest rates of religious mobility (switching, apostasy, dropping out, etc.) occur during the college years. Third, among all factors, the family’s religious socialization has greatest impact on religious mobility. Fourth, Mormonism encourages a shortened period of exploration and identify formation and provides structured norms of behavior (a religious mission and other religious service) along with religious programs to consolidate familial religious socialization. Analyzing the interplay of these conditions at a public college in Utah—where a majority of students are Mormons, but a significant number are not Mormon—may be difficult and complicated.

The Interaction of the National and Enclave Religious Environments

A religious enclave or gathering of coreligionists often forms because adherents sense tension or conflict with the broader, mainstream culture. Thus, religious enclaves involve an interesting interplay between religious homogeneity and religious pluralism. Reacting against broader religious pluralism, enclaves may develop enough concentration of coreligionists that there is regional religious homogeneity within the national pluralism.
Scholars agree that the religious pluralism or homogeneity of a social setting has a significant impact on higher education that occurs in that setting (Cohen, 1998; Brereton, 1998; Herbst, 1976; Glenn, 2001; Arum, 2000). In particular, pluralism undermines the historically strong connection between religion and higher education (Marsden, 1994). If successful religious colleges prospered in conditions of religious homogeneity, and if pluralism creates conditions that weaken those colleges, the relative dominance of one religious entity within a social setting can have profound influence on the nature and culture of higher education. In what follows, I describe several ongoing debates about the influence of religious pluralism or homogeneity. Argument is vigorous, and I'm convinced that scholars do not yet fully understand the underlying social mechanisms. In what follows, I review some of the scholarly debates about the impact of pluralism and homogeneity in the national religious environment and in religious enclaves.

**Sects' attitudes toward other religious and secular entities**

Religious entities, according to long-standing sociological theory (Treolsch, 1931; Weber, 1970), exhibit varying attitudinal postures toward other religious entities and toward secular institutions such as higher education. A religious group's attitude toward other religious groups, McGuire (2002) writes, can be measured by "the extent to which the religious group considers itself to be uniquely legitimate" (p. 154). A claim of sole legitimacy (i.e., that all other groups' assertions are false and unacceptable) tends to place the religious group into a state of high tension and conflict with environing culture. A religious group's attitude toward secular entities is "the relationship between the religious group and the larger society," which
sometimes “reflects a basic tension between values derived from religious sources of authority and other values in the society” (p. 154). In other words, regarding other religious groups and secular institutions in society, a religious entity can assume attitudes along the “church-sect continuum” from, at one extreme, tolerant acceptance and accommodation and, at the other extreme, tense repudiation and conflict (Johnstone, 2004, pp. 86-110).

The sociology of religion distinguishes between these two types of religious organizations – “churches” and “sects” – based on their level of tension with other religious entities and environing social institutions (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Tension is defined as “disagreement with the dominant surrounding culture and social institutions” (Miller, 2002, p. 437). Churches are relatively staid institutions that are quite integrated with other social institutions in their cultural environment, including government and education. Appealing to large groups, churches have less tension with other social institutions and enjoy high levels of general approbation and reputation. While a church-like stance can involve a claim of sole legitimacy, generally such a stance involves little or no negative tension with society at large.

The medieval Roman Catholic Church exemplifies the church-like stance. Even while claiming sole legitimacy, it was more or less integrated with other social institutions, including government, education, and the arts.

However, sects tend to be small schisms that break off from churches (Hamilton, 2001, pp. 229-246). A sect-like stance involves a claim of sole legitimacy, but also involves high levels of negative tension with society at large. The nineteenth-century Mormon Church exemplifies the sect-like stance, claiming sole
legitimacy, and rejecting many elements of American society both religious and secular. Sects tend to renounce "the world" and its institutions and turn inward, promoting intense fellowship and sometimes separatism. Sects often grow up under the influence of charismatic leaders, and often require some distinct kind of conversion experience or religious test for membership. Sects, Iannaccone (1994) writes, are "exclusive, demanding that members be committed, adult converts" (p. S242).

Among sociologists, Mormonism is often cited as an example of the sect-like stance (Wilson, 1970; Iannaccone, 1994) that exhibits both high tension with other religious entities (O'Dea, 1957; Iannaccone, 1994; Iannaccone, 1997; Mauss, 1994) and cycles of repudiation of various secular institutions (Anderson, 1937; Mauss, 1994; Beaman, 2001; Chen, 2003; Grow, 2004; Phillips, 1998). With a notable strain of the Protestant work ethic and a worldly attitude, Mormonism combines elements of two of Wilson’s (1970)seven types of sects, the conversionist type (emphasizing a religious awakening or "change of heart" that distinctly separates believers and nonbelievers) and the introversionist type (emphasizing participation in a community of believers as a means for achieving salvation). Thus, Mormonism’s tension with environing institutions, according to Wilson, is based largely on the existence of a religious test or initiating experience that distinctly separates believers and nonbelievers, and on a strong, internally directed, communal emphasis that promotes participation in the religious community as a primary means of salvation (1970, pp. 38-39).
A religion's stance, however, does not remain static through time. Often, sects reduce their level of tension with environing culture and transform themselves into more church-like organizations: "The end result is a gradual replacement of otherworldly theologies and a salvation oriented mission with more worldly philosophies and a focus on secular concerns" (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999, p. 383). Over the past century, Mauss (1994) explains, Mormonism has gone through successive stages of assimilation and retrenchment, cyclically approaching and distancing itself from American culture. With the practice of polygamy, a theocratic government in the Territory of Utah, and distinctive and innovative doctrinal peculiarities, nineteenth-century Mormonism saw itself as a radical departure from mainstream America (O'Dea, 1957) and was not inclined to capitulate to the American mainstream (Mauss, 1994). However, Mormonism's rejection of polygamy in 1890 and the removal of the ban on black males holding the Church's priesthood in 1978 were assimilative developments; also movements to gain control of Mormon intellectuals in the early 1990s were, according to Mauss, retrenchment developments that distanced Mormonism from the mainstream (1994). Thus, while overall Mormonism has been characterized by negative tension with mainstream culture, throughout its history the religion has gone through cycles of increased and decreased levels of tension.

Sects, "Strictness" and the Problem of the Free-Rider

In addition to the concept of "tension," many sociologists have explored the religious quality of "strictness," defined as "the degree to which a [religious] group increases the cost of nongroup activities" (Miller, 2002, p. 437). Strict religious
groups, Iannaccone (1994) argues, have the following three qualities: (a) absolutism rather than relativism, (b) emphasis on conformity rather than toleration of diversity, and (c) fanaticism rather than allowance of open dialogue. Using economic concepts to analyze religion, sociologists note that, in effect, strict religions impose a higher cost of membership than less strict religions.

Interestingly, in the United States high religious growth rates correlate with high levels of religious strictness (Iannaccone, 1994; Iannaccone, 1997; Kelly, 1972). To explain this correlation, scholars observe that because religious production is collective, religious persons are simultaneously consumers and producers: Religion is organized “as collectives in which all members are, to varying degrees, coworkers and coconsumers” (Iannaccone, 1997, p. 39). In the collective production of a religious group, “My religious satisfaction . . . depends both on my ‘inputs’ and on those of others” (Iannaccone, 1994, p. 1183). For a religious activity to be fully satisfying, all participants must sing enthusiastically, pray with commitment, and respond appropriately to sermons and testimonials. In this way, religious production is a collective process.

A key concept is that for any religious producer/consumer the enthusiastic participation of other worshippers has positive externalities. To maximize these positive externalities, a religious entity must both encourage enthusiastic participation and avoid the “free-rider” problem. A free-rider is one who uses a collectively produced good without making a proportional contribution to production. “Strict religious groups,” Sherkat and Ellison (1999) assert, “weed out unproductive members who free ride on the collective production efforts of more committed
members” (p. 383). “Strictness makes organizations stronger and more attractive because it reduces free riding. It screens out members who lack commitment and stimulates participation among those who remain” (Iannaccone, 1994, p. 1180). By “[demanding] exclusivity to mitigate the free-rider problem” (Iannaccone, 1997, p. 38), strictness turns the religion into an either/or proposition: Either adherents are fully committed and enthusiastic participants, or they leave.

The competitive strategy of strict churches is to eliminate the “seductive middle ground” (Iannaccone, 1997, p. 36) where participants can be “somewhat” affiliated. Instead, strict churches require an all-or-none commitment by imposing seemingly “gratuitous costs—sacrifice and stigma—such as burnt offerings, which destroy valued resources; distinctive dress and grooming that invite ridicule or scorn; dietary and sexual prohibitions that limit opportunities for pleasure” (p. 35). This stigma and sacrifice increase the cost of non-church activities “such as socializing with members of other churches or pursuing ‘secular’ pastimes” (Iannaccone, 1994, p. 1182), and “increasing the price of an activity reduces the demand for it, but increases the demand for its substitutes, that is, for competing activities” (p. 1187). Thus, strict religion increases demand for itself. In other words, “... a high-cost group maintains its strict norms of conduct precisely because they limit participation in competing activities and thereby raise levels of participation within the group” (p. 1197).

Mormonism, Iannaccone (1997) notes, is ranked by a panel of 21 sociologists as among the very most strict of American religions (along with Adventists and Jehovah’s Witnesses, p. 1191), requiring a host of sacrifices—a ten-percent tithing of
all income, strict abstinence from all extramarital sex, rigorous observance of the Sabbath, adherence to a stringent health code that forbids alcohol, tobacco, coffee and tea, not to mention drugs. If sociologists are correct that strictness creates an “all-or-none” culture in which persons are either “in” or “out,” what impact would such a culture have on both Mormon and non-Mormon students in Utah, where seventy-seven percent of the population is Mormon? How would these cultural elements impact the qualitative experience of those students?

Secularization Theory and Ideological Conflict

Peter Berger (1967) articulated an influential early version of secularization—that, because religious beliefs are created and maintained socially through “plausibility structures” (networks of believers who reinforce one another’s views), in historic eras that were not as pluralistic as today’s society religious belief was easier to sustain. However, in today’s rapidly changing, pluralistic society, many plausibility structures coexist (religion, science, philosophy, etc.), and each must deal with the truth claims of the others. Later (1977), Berger wrote that forces of modernity would undermine religion’s plausibility and make religion irrelevant and inconsequential in people’s lives. Berger’s work built on previous predictions that because of various social changes, religion’s symbols and meanings would decline and disappear, culminating in a society without religion.

Facing empirical evidence that modernity had not undermined Americans’ religiosity, Berger recanted much of his early theory. In 1997, he wrote,

The world today . . . is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature
written by historians and social scientists over the course of the 1950s and '60s, loosely labeled as "secularization theory", was essentially mistaken. In my early work I contributed to this literature and was in good company so doing – most sociologists of religion had similar views. There were good reasons for holding these views at the time, and some of these writings still stand up. (p. 4)

Even if science and philosophy have not rendered religion obsolete or inconsequential, still truth claims compete for legitimacy, establishing tension between religion and higher education. Education is associated with a decline in measures of religiosity as students progress through college; however, those same measures increase as students graduate and “enter adult society . . . suggesting that attending college causes only a temporary decline in commitment” (Petersen, 1994, p. 122). In ideological conflicts, a religion’s willingness to capitulate to modernism is an index of that religion’s tension with education (Iannaccone & Miles, 1990).

Religious “Distinctiveness” and Church Growth

For optimal growth, a religion should be neither too accommodating nor too intransigent (Stark and Finke, 2000). The similarity or difference between a religion’s ideological stances and those of the secular environment impacts tension. For optimal growth, a religion should maintain a level of “distinctiveness” from environing culture. A religion that adopts ideological stances that differ significantly from secular ideological stances will have greater tension with the broader social environment, as Iannaccone and Miles argue (1990). Some religious and secular ideas are quite similar and do not pose a dilemma for a person who wants to be both

48
religious and secular. For example, in the 1950s ideological stances related to the role of women were not significantly different in religious and secular settings; however, by the 1990s, the religious and secular ideologies had separated themselves, creating a difficult dilemma for a person who wanted to be both religious and secular. By making their ideologies distinct from secular ideas, religions are able to create a forced choice. To grow, religions should create an optimal level of dissimilarity with secular society. "Rapid growth," the Iannaccone and Miles (1990) assert, is "a consequence of being sufficiently (but not overly) unlike society at large," and "although a totally unresponsive religion must eventually lose its power to convert, a religion that upholds no distinctive values lacks credibility and discourages commitment" (p. 1247).

In a competitive religious environment, Mormonism's doctrinal innovation and exceptional growth rate have not gone unnoticed by American mainstream religious groups, many of which have declared that Mormonism is not, in fact, a Christian faith. 

[chiding] Mormons for not really being Christian and not truly believing the Bible" (Johnson and Mullins, 1992, p. 51). For their part, Protestant groups with congregations in Utah respond to Mormon competitiveness by being more vigorous themselves: "Utah serves as a very unusual case in that it features a very effective and challenging 'monopoly' faith, able to energize even liberal Protestant groups" (Stark and Finke, 2004, p. 297).

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This “distinctiveness” (Iannaccone, Olson & Stark, 1995, p. 726) accounts for a large part of Mormonism’s growth: “Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses, long regarded as highly deviant groups, continue to double their membership every 15 to 20 years, and now outnumber all but the largest five for six Protestant denominations in America” (Iannaccone, 1998, pp. 1471-2). Iannaccone and Miles (1990) argue that, on one hand, mainline Protestant religions have been so accommodating of social change that they have ceased to be distinctive and have therefore declined in membership. They argue that, on the other hand, Mormonism’s initial refusal to capitulate on polygamy created so much tension that the religion’s existence was in jeopardy.

Rational Choice Theory and Religious Competition

During the 1990s, a controversial theoretical debate within the sociology of religion revolved around the extent to which individuals’ religious choices are motivated by rational self-interest. By 1993, Warner hailed the dominance of a “new paradigm” that reconceptualized the religious experience at both the micro and macro levels. At the level of the individual, rational choice theory asserts that “people approach all actions in the same way, evaluating costs and benefits and acting so as to maximize their net benefits” (Iannaccone, 1997, p. 26). In other words, “Within the limits of their information and understanding, restricted by available options, guided by their preferences and tastes, humans attempt to make rational choices”—even regarding religion (Stark & Finke, 2000, p. 85).

While classical economic theory has described material choices as being rationally self-interested, rational choice theory extends beyond the material to the
other-worldly: “Rewards are always limited in supply, including some that simply do
not exist in the observable world” such as eternal life and religious exaltation (Stark
& Finke, 2000, p. 88), and according to rational choice theorists, individuals’
religious behavior was similar in many ways to their economic behavior.

If individuals’ religious choices are rationally self-interested, then their
collective religious behavior will have “market-like” qualities. At the macro-level,
the theory compared churches to firms, analyzed the “supply-side” strategies of
different “religious firms,” and described “winners and losers in our religious
economy” (Finke & Stark, 1992). Sociologists argued that the First Amendment’s
official disestablishment of American religion in fact amounted to “religious
deregulation,” creating a competitive and open “religious market” (Finke & Stark,
1992). Because American religion was not regulated, a multiplicity of firms was able
to occupy religious niches and more efficiently meet Americans’ religious needs, and
thus Americans’ rates of religious affiliation and participation have steadily climbed
through American history13 (Finke & Stark, 1992).

In America’s disestablished and pluralistic setting, religious “firms” thrive in
competition, and their “fate” depends on “(a) aspects of their organizational structure,
(b) their sales representatives, (c) their product, and (d) their marketing techniques”

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13 Finke and Stark (1992) argue that, while many believe that the America of
the Founding Fathers was dominated by a hyper-religious hegemony, in fact only
seventeen percent of Americans claimed religious affiliation in 1776. By 1860, that
rate had risen to 37 percent. By 1906 it had climbed to 51 percent. And by 1980, it
had reached 62 percent (p. 16). Finke and Stark argue that the increase in Americans’
religiosity is attributable to diversity in a free religious market.

51
religious firms: "... the benefits of competition, the burdens of monopoly, and the hazards of government regulation are as real for religion as for any other sector of the economy" (p. 128).

**Pluralism, Religious Competition, and Denominational Growth**

Historians assert that America's sectarian colleges and universities initially flourished in conditions of religious homogeneity, but declined in conditions of religious pluralism (Cohen, 1998; Kohlbrenner, 1961; Aleman, 2001; Dawsey, 1999; Glenn, 2001; Herbst, 1976; Adrian, 2003). Marsden (1994) describes how Christian higher education responded to rising religious pluralism and official "disestablishment." This process, he writes, occurred in three phases: (a) In its beginning, American higher education was strongly allied with Protestant Christianity; (b) in the latter half of the nineteenth century, American higher education began to specialize and professionalize, and the modern research university began to evolve, and liberal Protestants and secularists began to eliminate traditional Christian views from academia; and (c) what Marsden terms "established unbelief" resulted from aggressive secularization, and a post-modern openness to diverse forms of ideology developed, except that the openness did not extend to traditional Christianity, for fear that "Christians would simply attempt to reassert their past hegemony" (p. 253). Thus, "established unbelief" meant that, while theoretically American higher education welcomes all ideologies, religious ideologies are marginalized and not welcome on campuses of publicly funded colleges and universities.
Comparing religion in Europe and the United States, several scholars have used economic theory to characterize a “religious market.” For example, Finke (1997) uses supply-side theory when he argues that the European religious market is characterized by state regulation of religion in two forms – suppression and subsidy. In Europe, this regulation controls the costs, opportunities and incentives for religion, which allows European religious “firms” to survive, despite their lack of responsiveness to people’s actual religious needs. Thus, the European religious market is moribund, with rates of affiliation and participation as low as three percent (Stark & Iannaccone, 1994). In the American religious market, religion was “deregulated” with the separation of church and state, and when religious regulation was removed, American religious competition flourished and the more popular and effective religious groups survived. This competition leads to pluralism, which leads to market efficiency, which is “the ratio of total production to total costs” (Finke, 1997, p. 50). Therefore, unlike the European religious market, the American market is characterized by multiple firms that met religious “niches” (Finke, 1997, p. 51). While participation rates in European countries are as low as three percent, in the United States rates have climbed to as high as 62 percent (Finke & Stark, 1992, p. 16).14

14 Relevant to Mormonism, Finke (1997) notes that in regions where a single group predominates, there is less pluralism, and there may not be options available for religious consumers, who “may be induced to consume types or levels of religious goods that conflict with their preference.” Here, Finke gives his theory that Mormonism has found “effective ways to allow for competition and pluralism within the organization” (p. 58).
Using concepts from classical economics, sociologists describe the level of pluralism or homogeneity in a particular social setting as “market share” (Phillips, 1998; Stark & Finke, 2004). Just as economic diversity in the free market leads to a competition among a multiplicity of firms, with the end result of market efficiency, sociologists theorize that religious homogeneity is a form of “monopoly” that usually fails to meet the diverse needs of religious consumers in a religious market (Stark & Finke, 2004). Thus, sociologists theorize that in the national religious environment, American religious pluralism and “free-market” religious competition have increased the level of American religiosity (Stark & Finke, 2000), leading many to suggest that religious competition leads to religious vigor and growth (Iannaccone, 1997; Stark, 1997; Phillips, 1998; Phillips, 1999; Sherkat and Ellison, 1999; Phillips, 2004).

Mormonism’s De Facto Religious Monopoly in Utah

Sociologists also assert that, because it enjoys a *de facto* religious monopoly in Utah, Mormonism within the state faces comparatively low levels of religious competition (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995; Phillips, 1998). Stark and Finke (2004) review the hypothesis of rational choice theorists that “individual religious groups will be more energetic and generate higher levels of commitment to the degree that they have a marginal market position [or] lack market share” (p. 294). Because of this and another hypothesis—that “monopoly” religions that enjoy a huge market share will become lazy and lose affiliates—some sociologists expect that the homogeneity of Utah’s religious market would cause Utah Mormonism to become unresponsive and inefficient, leading to a decline in Mormon religious commitment within Utah. However, Stark and Finke (2004) note that this is not the case: For Mormons, “their
commitment is higher the more Mormon the area” (p. 294). Whether or not there is a lack of a competitive environment in Utah’s religious enclave\(^{15}\), in the United States and internationally Mormonism is among the fastest growing and most vigorous religious entities (Stark, 1984; Shipps, 1985; Phillips, 1999).

**Competitive Strategies of Mormonism**

If the rational choice paradigm is correct that religious groups function competitively for dominance within a religious market, what are the competitive strategies of Mormonism related to emerging adults or persons of traditional college age? In this section, I suggest that the Church employs four strategies that impact the cultural environment within Utah: (a) endogamy (prohibition of inter-faith marriage), (b) promotion of traditional family values with traditional gender roles, (c) a strong proselytizing program, and (d) a practice of intense communion with a small, tight-knit religious organizational unit called the “ward.”

First, the Church communicates a strong norm of endogamy, with associated sanctions against marriage with person outside Mormondom. In the U.S., all religious persons demonstrate a strong statistical tendency to marry within their own religious groups, with Protestant endogamy rates as high as “80 to 90 percent”\(^{15}\).

\(^{15}\) Stark and Finke (2004) point out that Mormonism faces little religious competition within Utah; however, other religious entities in the state face nearly overwhelming competition from Mormonism, and therefore, they expect that those Utah non-Mormon religious entities would be more vigorous and energetic because they face competition from Mormonism. Using data from six of nine non-Mormon faiths with more than ten congregations in Utah, their paper argues that non-Mormon faiths indeed react to Mormonism’s vigorous religious competition. On 14 of 16 comparisons, non-Mormon faiths had higher participation in Utah than in the nation at large. “Utah,” the authors write, “serves as a very unusual case in that it features a very effective and challenging ‘monopology’ faith, able to energize even liberal Protestant groups” (297).
Further, “the degree of heterogeneity in the community will influence the rate of intermarriage” (Eshleman citing Blau, p. 232). Mormons within Utah have an extremely high endogamy rate; however, in states such as Florida, where Mormons comprise less than one percent of the population, “about two-thirds of the Mormons living there had married non-Mormons” (Eshleman citing Barlow, p. 232). In Utah, where population homogeneity allows it, Mormon endogamy is a strong cultural norm.

As Arnett, Jensen, and Ramos (Arnett & Jensen, 2002; Arnett, Ramos & Jensen, 2001; Arnett, 2000) point out, one of the three primary concerns of emerging adults is finding love and establishing intimacy. Inter-faith marriage is positively related to religious switching (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995), and Phillips asserts that endogamy accounts for much of Mormonism’s overall growth (1999).

Peculiarities of Mormon doctrine constitute a large religious incentive for endogamy. Mormons’ view is that heaven has a three-tiered and hierarchical structure, and the top-most tier (called the Celestial Kingdom) is restricted to faithful Mormon couples who have married in a Mormon temple via a special ceremony. The ceremony of “eternal marriage” is performed only within Mormon temples in behalf of Mormon couples who have met a list of religious criteria. Most active

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16 To understand the importance of Mormon endogamy, one should understand the distinction between Mormon *chapels* and Mormon *temples*. Mormon chapels are buildings for common weekly religious services, open to all persons of all ages, whether believing or not; however, Mormon temples are restricted to adult Mormons who observe a list of religious norms of belief and behavior. Marriages that occur within Mormon chapels are for “time” (i.e., dissolved when a member of the couple dies); however, marriages that occur in temples are “eternal” (continuing in the hereafter).
Mormon youth are warned against forming romantic alliances with non-Mormons, with the implicit threat of being assigned to a “lesser kingdom” in heaven. Thus, one of Mormonism’s competitive strategies involves marriage “outside the fold.” Mormon students who are closely integrated in their religious community may exercise certain forms of social exclusivity based on their devotion to this doctrinal belief.

The Mormon Church promotes traditional family values, with traditional gender roles. In 1995, the Mormon Church issued a proclamation, “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (Ensign, 1995, 25, 102). For Mormons, a “proclamation” is a major communication of church policy, similar to a Papal Bull. Mormon Church authorities have issued proclamations on only two occasions, both related to family—in 1890, disavowing the Mormon practice of polygamy, and in 1995. This proclamation explicitly defines gender roles, with possible influence on Mormon students’ choice of career goals and commitment to academic achievement: “By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”

Churches grow through two primary means—fertility and proselytizing—and Phillips (1999) attributes Mormon growth to both. Noting that “religious movements will grow to the extent that they can generate a highly motivated, volunteer religious labor force, including many willing to proselytize,” Stark (1998) notes that in 1994,
there were 48,567 Mormon missionaries (p. 56). Indeed, about a third of Mormon males serve two-year, full-time missions (Phillips, 2004, p. 155). Pairs of Mormon missionaries can commonly be seen throughout the world. “The reason for this is simple,” Phillips (2004) writes: “. . . failing to serve a mission has a number of serious negative consequences for young men in Utah that do not affect young men in other parts of the nation. First and foremost, failing to serve a mission can severely damage a man’s chances in the Utah Mormon marriage market” (155-156). Young Mormon women are encouraged to marry within the faith, and to insist that their mate be a returned missionary.

As Johnstone (2004) points out, increased size is a basic problem for any religious group. When groups become large, interpersonal contact is more difficult to maintain, close and caring relationships become strained, and religious norms are difficult to maintain. Even though the Mormon Church has a higher growth rate than almost any religion, it is able to maintain a pattern of close interpersonal relationships through the basic social unit of the Church, the ward, a grouping of three to five hundred individual Mormons who live in some proximity. When the ward grows beyond about five hundred persons, it is divided. Thus, the intimacy of Mormons relationships is maintained. At colleges and universities, especially in the West, Mormon students are organized into “student wards” that mirror their “home wards” in some aspects. Headed by a volunteer lay minister (the bishop) who is often a prominent member of the community or even an employee of the college, a student ward will ask Mormon college students to serve in volunteer religious positions as Sunday school teachers, “home teachers,” and leaders of other religious activities. By
duplicating the ward experience on college campuses, the Mormon Church maintains close connection with college students.

The Impacts of Pluralism and Homogeneity in Utah

As discussed previously, Utah’s religious demography is unique in the United States. While rising religious pluralism characterizes most other regions, through the past century in terms of religion, Utah has become progressively more homogeneous, not less. In 1920, 60 percent of Utah’s population was Mormon, but by 2000 that percentage had increased to 77 (Phillips, 2004, p. 144). As a state, Utah’s population has greater religious homogeneity than that of any other state, and no other state exhibits such a “numerical predominance of one denomination in the geographical area” (Warner, 1993, p. 1056). In short, Utah has less religious pluralism, more religious homogeneity, than is found in any other state.

Over the past half century sociologists have debated the impact of religious pluralism. One faction argues that religious homogeneity promotes religious vigor; the other argues, conversely, that homogeneity leads to a general decline in levels of religiosity such as has occurred in Europe. Phillips (n.d.) summarizes this debate well:

The effect of religious pluralism on religious vitality is hotly debated among sociologists of religion. . . . Classic works in the field assert that religion is most vital when all members of society share a common faith. In such settings, religion is a “sacred canopy” integrating and legitimating all aspects of social life. Beneath this canopy, church claims are uncontested and public life is suffused with religious significance. Religious pluralism erodes
the sacred canopy's integrity by exposing the relativity of church claims and compartmentalizing religious and public life (Berger, 1967). The sacred canopy thesis is primarily based on observations of European religion, particularly mediæval Catholicism (Warner 1993). Until recently, these ideas about religious pluralism dominated the sociology of religion (Stark & Finke, 2000).

However, a growing number of social scientists argue that the sacred canopy thesis cannot explain United States religion. These critics contend that throughout US history, increasing religious pluralism has accompanied rising church membership rates, stable church attendance rates, and abundant religious innovation (Finke & Stark 1992). To account for this discrepancy, some scholars advance the notion that religious pluralism actually promotes and sustains religious vitality in the US (Iannaccone, 1995).

Proponents of this view assert that a tradition of religious liberty and an aversion to established churches in the United States foster an open, unregulated "religious economy" where numerous churches compete with one another for members (Finke & Stark, 1992). Competition promotes religious revival and innovation, as each church seeks to establish a market niche. The more churches striving in a given marketplace, the more likely potential adherents are to find a church to meet their needs. Thus, religious pluralism promotes religious vitality by satisfying a large share of a given market's demand. . . . Conversely, markets dominated by a monopoly church satisfy little demand, since one church cannot simultaneously meet the needs of every
market segment. Moreover, since monopoly churches are less vulnerable to defection and apostasy, they have few incentives to efficiently serve their members. . . . This “religious economy” model is based largely on observations of US religion since the Second Great Awakening, and while some scholars assert the theory’s general utility. . . , others surmise that this economic metaphor may not be applicable outside the US (Warner 1993). (pp. 15-16)

As the discussion above illustrates, there are many ongoing disputes about religious pluralism and its impact on religious culture and higher education. Because of Utah’s unique demographic characteristics, the state is frequently cited to either confirm or invalidate theoretical viewpoints. My analysis of student culture at a publicly funded college in Utah will contribute to the debate about pluralism’s impact on higher education. Because of their affiliation and participation in the dominant religion—or lack thereof—students in a publicly funded Utah college are to varying degrees integrated with the regionally homogeneous Mormon culture. Aspects of their experience will shed light on the preceding debates.

Student Religiosity, College Religiosity, and Educational Outcomes

I began this review of literature by pointing out that the individual student’s experience is embedded within the college’s religious environment. Because so many factors can influence educational attainment – SES, family structure, ethnicity, gender, etc. – it is particularly difficult to isolate and analyze religion’s effects. Thus, the literature about the interaction of religion and educational attainment is complicated, varied, and often contradictory, containing statistical analyses that
employ dozens of independent variables, multiple models, and complex analytical techniques. Many studies conclude with tentative findings accompanied by several limitations. Some researchers conclude that the relationship between religion and educational attainment is positive; others that it is negative, and still others that it is positive in some respects, and negative in other respects (e.g., Albrecht & Heaton, 1984; and Zem, 1989). The net result is that no clear consensus emerges from the literature about religion’s effects on educational attainment. Regardless of this complexity, following are key concepts in the literature:

**The Association between Educational Attainment and Religiosity**

Current literature seems about equally divided between studies that posit some limited negative relationship between educational attainment and religiosity, and studies that posit some limited positive relationship. Many scholars find a negative association (Zem, 1987; Burton, Johnson & Tamney, 1989; Hoge, Johnson & Luidens, 1993; Johnson, 1997; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). “The most prevalent view in the literature. . . ,” assert Albrecht and Heaton (1984) “seems to be that educational achievement impacts negatively on religious commitment and that increased levels of education often lead to apostasy as individuals encounter views that deemphasize spiritual growth and elevate scientific and intellectual achievement” (p. 46). Loveland’s (2003) analysis of General Social Survey (GSS) data shows that “education significantly increases the likelihood of switching [away from one’s religion or from one religion to another], with each additional year of schooling increasing the log-odds of switching by 6 percent” (p. 154).
Berger's (1967) plausibility structures theory asserts that for religious beliefs to resist erosion in secular society (and especially in higher education), the believer must remain in contact with a network of similar believers. Roberts, Koch, and Johnson (2001) find that the college environment usually undermines religiosity; however, if college students interact with a social network of highly religious friends, education may actually reinforce religiosity, and students will maintain the patterns of religious commitment they developed in their families. In a similar way, marriage to a person within one's faith can reduce the negative influence of education on religiosity. Petersen (1994) asserts that education's ability to diminish religiosity is offset by "homogamy" (where married partners have similar religious views and affiliations). Marriage to a homogamous partner, Petersen argues, is an influential part of the "plausibility structures" that resist secular influence of education (p. 131). In a subsequent study, Petersen (2001) explores how religious variables—church attendance, religious affiliation, and religious belief—condition students' attitudes toward elective abortion. This analysis shows that religious participation and belief can counteract education's erosion of traditional religious values. Using data from the GSS, Petersen demonstrates that church membership and church attendance slow education's wearing away of traditional religious values, especially for Catholic and conservative Protestant students.

Other studies find a positive relationship between levels of education and religiosity. For a sample of students at a liberal arts college, the relationship of both current and former religiosity to college GPA was negligibly positive (Zern, 1989); however, students who had recently become more religious (i.e., students whose
survey results showed they had undergone a religious conversion of sorts) had significantly higher GPA’s, and Zern speculates that the same characteristics that lead to religious change also underlie academic motivation, and therefore, religious change is positively related to academic achievement.

In the U.S., church attendance and educational level are positively associated, Sacerdote and Glaeser (2002) find. Fifty percent of college graduates report that they attend church often, while only six percent of high school dropouts report that they attend often. Despite this positive relationship for individuals, when the unit of analysis is denominations, the relationship is negative: Denominations that have on average the most highly educated members (for example, Episcopalians) also have the lowest church attendance rates. Thus, religious attendance rises with education “across individuals,” but religious attendance falls “across denominations” (p. 1). This “micro-macro coefficient switch” suggests there is an “omitted factor,” the “degree of religious belief,” that operates across groups but not across individuals (p. 2). Accordingly, Sacerdote and Glaeser assert that “education increases church attendance but decreases the extent of religious belief” (p. 3).

Sacerdote and Glaeser conjecture that these effects can be attributed to the fact that education and religion require a similar skill set—the abilities of “sitting still, listening, being interested in abstract ideas, and putting future gains in front of current gratification” (p. 3). Persons with these skills will be inclined both to pursue higher education and to attend church, accounting for the positive relationship between attendance and higher education. However, Sacerdote and Glaeser also assert that secular education often opposes religious belief, and therefore educated persons'
beliefs are often less religious, accounting for the negative relationship between religious belief and higher education. Thus, education leads to more attendance, but lower rates of belief. This “micro-macro oddity” is based on the fact that religion, which is “linked both to the formation of ideological beliefs and to social involvement,” provides both “spiritual returns and more earthly social returns” (p. 4). These dual functions of religion lead educated persons, they write, “to attend church more often and to believe less in the things preached from the pulpit” (p. 4).

Another scholar, Regnerus (2000), also finds a positive association between education and religiosity. His study analyzes the impact of religious involvement on high school students’ educational expectations (measured by students’ highest degree aspirations) and performance (measured by math and reading exam scores) and finds that, after controlling for several variables, involvement in religion increases students’ expectations by one-quarter of a level and students’ performance by 2.32 exam points: “The results indicate that involvement in church activities has a positive relationship with both educational expectations and math and reading achievement among sophomores in metropolitan public high schools in the U.S.” (p. 369). While many previous studies have focused on religious sub-cultures, Regnerus asserts that the positive relationship holds “across many faith traditions and identities” (p. 370). The study suggests that religion is a supportive form of socialization that reinforces values that promote goal-setting and achievement . . .” and supports educational attainment (p. 363).

Some scholars expect to find a negative relationship between educational attainment and religiosity, but find evidence of a positive relationship. Lee (2002)
sets out to determine to what extent education actually precipitates a decline in college student religiosity and to analyze its causes. Using data from the 1994 HERI Freshman Survey and the 1998 College Student Survey, Lee uses stepwise regression to analyze the impact of seven blocks of independent variables on a single dependent variable—"self-rated change in religious beliefs" (p. 374). Contrary to Lee's initial expectations, more than a third of college students report that they experience a strengthening of religious convictions. Among the many independent variables, peer-group influence was most strongly related to increased religiosity.

A major challenge in studies of religiosity and educational attainment is isolating religious variables from a host of confounding variables (family educational background, neighborhood SES, ethnicity, etc.). Loury (2004) uses a complicated means of eliminating nuisance variables in her attempt to isolate the impact of church attendance on years of schooling. The study employs proxy variables (whether or not there is a library card in the home, the years of schooling of older siblings, etc.) and convoluted two-stage least squares analysis to isolate the effect of church attendance from parental socialization and reference group variables. Loury finds that "church attendance increases both the likelihood that individuals will complete high school and the likelihood that they will attend college" (p. 125).

**Strength and Direction of the Association between Religiosity and Educational Attainment**

Many consider the association between religion and educational attainment to be quite weak: "The amount of variance explained by religion, without controls, is never greater than eight percent and with controls, it is never greater than two
percent" (Mueller, 1980, p. 146). Expecting to find that Christian fundamentalism is negatively related to years of education, Burton, Johnson and Tamney (1989) found only a "modest" negative relationship (-0.22) between fundamentalism and education (p. 352). For Presbyterian college students, "the net impact of higher education on church attendance was near zero" (Hoge, Johnson & Luidens, 1993, p. 253). The direction of causality, as well, is open to interpretation: "Of course, the most obvious explanation [of a limited negative relationship] is to argue that religious people are not bright; or alternatively, since the data do not imply any given direction, to argue that smarter people do not become religious" (Zern, 1987, p. 893).

**Ideological "Erosion"**

Several authors theorize that when young people are socialized within their families, they build up a stock of religious values, and that the effect of the college environment is to "erode" these values incrementally. The erosion metaphor suggests that sustained exposure to secular ideas creates a "gradual falling away" that occurs "by degrees" (Johnson, 1997, p. 232). During college, students encounter ideas that erode "plausibility structures" and reduce levels of religious belief and commitment and influence changes in religious orientation (Berger, 1967; Hadaway & Roof, 1988; Johnson, 1997). Contact with liberal ideas or countercultural influences diminishes religiosity: "... Increased levels of education often lead to apostasy as individuals encounter views that deemphasize spiritual growth and elevate scientific and intellectual achievement" (Albrecht & Heaton, 1984, p. 46). Some conservative religions have norms and values that conflict with educational norms and values, and these groups assume postures that "defend against the assimilative influences of
secular education,” developing a kind of “alienation from public schools, which are viewed as alien, hostile institutions steeped in ‘secular humanism’” (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999, p. 377).

**Educational Attainment and Religious Mobility**

The erosion metaphor also suggests that educational attainment will be associated with high rates of religious mobility, leading to apostasy, dropping out, switching, disaffiliation, or disengagement. “Educational attainment increases the likelihood of relinquishing affiliation with religious organizations, and exceeding the educational attainment of peers in the denomination of origin prompts apostasy and religious switching” (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999, p. 368). Loveland’s (2003) analysis of GSS data shows that “education significantly increases the likelihood of switching, with each additional year of schooling increasing the log-odds of switching by 6 percent” (p. 154).

**The Association of Educational Attainment and Conservative Religiosity**

While the scholarship seems about equally divided between studies that show a positive relationship between educational attainment and religiosity and studies that show a negative relationship, when studies restrict themselves to conservative or fundamentalist religions, they consistently show a negative relationship between educational attainment and religiosity – sometimes a strongly negative relationship. As Iannaccone (1998) notes, religious movements referred to as “fundamentalist” or “sectarian” do “draw a disproportionate share of their members from among the poorer, less educated, and minority members of society . . .” (p. 1470). Johnstone (2004) notes that sects, as religious entities that exist in tension with society at large,
tend to be conservative and tend to attract persons of low socio-economic status and low educational attainment, which may account for the negative relationship between membership in conservative or fundamentalist groups and educational attainment (p. 87).

An early study (Burton, Johnson, & Tamney, 1989) uses survey research to analyze the relationship between education and Christian fundamentalism. The authors view fundamentalism as a reaction against modernity, hypothesizing that that fundamentalism is negatively related to education, and that converts to fundamentalism will be less educated than persons socialized as fundamentalists since youth. Survey results, however, show a “modest” negative relationship between fundamentalism and education (p. 354).

Rejecting Weber’s “Protestant ethic” thesis, Darnell and Sherkat (1997) argue that the cultural values of fundamentalists and conservative Protestants discourage educational pursuits. They theorize that “opposition to secular education by conservative Protestants is rooted in their unwavering conviction that the Bible is inerrant . . . ,” and “education serves to undermine both secular and divine authority” (p. 307). The study divides respondents from a panel interview survey administered in 1969, 1973, and 1982, into three groups: (a) conservative Protestants, (b) Biblical inerrantists, and (c) others. They interpret the study’s results to show that conservatives and inerrantists have lower educational aspirations, are less likely to take college preparatory classes, and do not attain as much education as “others.” Also, they show that parents who are not conservatives or inerrantists had higher educational attainment, and, as might be expected, so did their children.
Iannaccone (1992a) uses economic analysis to explain the negative relationship between educational attainment and religiosity for conservative religious groups. These groups, he argues, impose seemingly gratuitous sacrifices and stigma on their believers. Why, he asks, would rational persons accept religious requirements that seem apparently gratuitous — shaved heads, avoidance of certain foods, celibacy, arranged marriage, and so forth? The answer, Iannaccone asserts, lies in the collective nature of religious production: hymns, ceremonies, testimonials, prayers, and rituals are a form of collective production that is most satisfying when all participants are enthusiastic, committed, and fully engaged. Religious production requires, in addition to the individual's inputs, all participants' enthusiastic inputs. When one individual enjoys the religious experience without making a full contribution to inputs, the satisfaction of the group is diminished—the problem of the free-rider.

Sacrifice and stigma, Iannaccone asserts, are conservative religion's way to overcome the problem of the free-rider by increasing the costs of alternative, non-religious activities. A shaved head and pink robe, for example, makes negotiating business contracts more costly. Also, by creating small and intimate congregations such as a Mormon ward, conservative religion effectively monitors compliance with the required stigma or sacrifice. Under these conditions, "potential members are forced to choose: participate fully or not at all. Paradoxically, those who remain find their welfare increased. It follows that perfectly rational people can be drawn to decidedly unconventional groups" (p. 276). Because the cost of alternative secular activities is higher for members of conservative religions, those persons tend to have...
lower incomes and fewer years of education (pp. 284-285). “Sect members are the poorest and least educated, and members of the nonsectarian denominations are the richest and most educated” (p. 287).

In a subsequent article, Iannaccone (1994) gives an economic explanation for the reduced involvement in secular activities, including higher education, of members of “strict” churches. He notes that “increased strictness . . . leads to higher levels of church attendance and church contributions, closer ties to the group, and reduced involvement in competing groups” (emphasis added, p. 1197). In other words, “Sect members do indeed forgo secular memberships” (p. 1198), including participation in higher education. “Sects that isolate their members socially must provide alternative social networks with ample opportunities for interaction, friendship, and status” (p. 1204). Because of these patterns, the educated are less likely to join sects: “. . . Those most likely to join are those with the least to lose. Losses grow in proportion to both the quantity and quality of one’s ties to the outside world” (p. 1200).

Basically, persons with high secular opportunities, such as the educated, are less likely to join sects: “There is little chance that a successful business executive will forsake all for a strict sect . . .” (p. 1201).

Religious Effects on Education by Denomination

The variable impact of denominational affiliation on educational attainment has been controversial in the sociology of religion, especially since 1904, when Max Weber argued that that doctrinal aspects of Protestantism lead to educational attainment and economic prosperity for Protestant believers. The “Protestant work ethic” – hard work, belief in progress, a conviction that work is a calling, and faith
that labor and acquisition are not only condoned, but commanded by God – has been a matter of considerable debate, especially intense during the 1960s when sociologists argued about whether Protestants or Catholics were more given to secular pursuits and educational attainment. Data show that the difference between Catholic and Protestant educational attainment, regardless of Weber’s thesis, is negligible (Darnell & Sherkat, 1997, p. 306). While Catholics lagged behind the educational attainment levels of Protestants through the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth, more recently differences between the two groups have become difficult to detect (Mueller, 1980).

As a religious group, Jews exhibit high educational attainment (Mueller, 1980) and seem to thrive in public school settings (Brereton, 1998). Using an economic methodology, Lehrer (1999) writes that “demand side influences are dominant in explaining the high educational attainment of Jews” (p. 375), and Tomes (1985) writes that Jewish history explains their tendency to invest in human capital: Because of “their past cultural history of the expropriation of material wealth, Jews make greater investments in human capital” (p. 246).

**Mormon Educational Attainment and Religiosity**

Scholars generally expect that, because of tension between religious sects and secular society, educational attainment and measures of religiosity will be negatively associated for strict and conservative religions. As a conservative religion, Mormonism contradicts the trend that members of conservative religions have lower levels of educational attainment. Instead, Mormonism exhibits a strong positive relationship between educational attainment and religiosity. “... In stark contrast to
the pattern evident in these national survey data,” Albrecht (1998) writes, “our studies
of Latter-day Saints samples demonstrate a strong positive relationship between level
“overall, higher levels of education support rather than obstruct or discourage
religiosity for Mormons” (p. 54). Albrecht (1998) asserts that, while higher
education often has an “erosion” effect on religiosity, “the secularizing influence of
higher education simply doesn’t seem to hold for Latter-day Saints” (p. 286).

For Mormons, Cornwall (1989) writes, education is positively related to
religious behaviors. That is, education correlates positively with prayer, church
attendance, and weekly religious observance (family home evening). On average,
Albrecht and Heaton (1998) state, Mormons have more years of education than is
average in the United States, and Mormons with college experience are more likely to
attend church services than those without college experience.

Merril, Lyon, and Jensen, (2003) contend that, just has higher education does
not decrease Mormons’ subjective religiosity, likewise, higher education does not
decrease parity (the number of children born to a woman) among Mormons. Using
data from Gallup Organization and Center for Disease Control (CDC) polls, the
authors demonstrate that in Utah high levels of educational attainment are not related
to decreased church attendance among Mormons, as is the case among non-Mormons
and non-religious persons. Likewise, the authors demonstrate that in Utah low levels
of educational attainment are not related to high levels of parity, as is the case among
non-Mormons and non-religious persons.
Bahr and Forste's 1998 review of literature is generally critical of social science scholarship about contemporary Mormonism, asserting that "exploratory" and "sensitizing" scholarship predominates; however, they write that:

Among the findings that seem to merit being called facts . . . are these:

- Mormon adults in the U.S. and Canada are much more likely to have had post-high school education than are adults in the U.S. population as a whole.
- The Mormon advantage in years of formal education completed also applies to graduation from college. However, there is a sizable gender difference favoring Mormon men, who are much more likely than U.S. men generally to have finished college, while Mormon women are only slightly more likely than other women to have finished college.
- Although most studies of correlates of religiosity among U.S. adults reveal an inverse relationship or no relationship between higher education and religiosity, among Mormon adults the relationship is direct: college-educated Mormons are more apt to attend church and to exhibit other manifestations of "high" religiosity than are less-educated Mormons. (p. 157)

Scholars propose two explanations for this positive relationship: (a) status attainment, and (b) transfer of religious skills to an educational setting. Scholars note that some educational skills improve Mormons' religious status and standing in the community. In Utah, Phillips (1998) writes, "denominational ties pervade work, family, neighborhood, and friendship networks," and "these consolidated social ties
conflates significant aspects of religious and public life in Utah, and increase Mormons’ stake in conformity to church standards, since high status in the church is tantamount to good standing in the community” (p. 127). Peculiarities of Mormon culture, according to Merril, Lyon, and Jensen, (2003), account for high Mormon educational attainment. The incentive of high-status participation as lay clergy reinforces educational attainment among Mormon believers, and doctrine and culture encourage Mormons to marry early and bear many children.

Because highly skilled members are chosen as Mormon lay religious leaders, religious status provides an incentive for ordinary Mormons to develop skills in higher education (accounting, public speaking, interpersonal and leadership skills, etc.). Having the kinds of skills that higher education provides makes educated Mormons more effective lay church leaders and brings them status within their religious community (Merrill, Lyon & Jensen, 2003). This amounts to transferring educational skills to a religious setting.

Scholars also note that religious skills can improve Mormons’ educational performance. Rather than transferring educational skills to a religious setting, according to these scholars, Mormons transfer religious skills to an educational setting, improving their educational performance. Asserting that religiosity makes Mormon adolescents “more sensitive to interpersonal expectations,” and more able to “develop goals” and “[identify] personal abilities needed to achieve those goals,” Thomas and Carver (1998) suggest that these skills are “transferable to an educational setting, which assists the religious person in becoming a better student” (p. 382).
While the status attainment theory and the transfer of religious skills to educational settings theory have been popular, Albrecht and Heaton (1998) discount both and postulate other explanations. Perhaps the relationship is due to the fact that many Mormons receive higher education in Mormon-controlled colleges and universities such as Brigham Young University or Ricks College (now BYU-Idaho). Perhaps in Utah secular ideas are less able to erode Mormons’ religious beliefs because “the culture there is permeated with religious influence” that diminishes the influence of secularism (p. 309). Perhaps aspects of Mormon culture “[make] the compartmentalization of scientific and religious attitudes somewhat easier” (p. 310). It suffices to say that there is consensus that the relationship between higher education and Mormon religiosity is strongly positive.

This review of literature has illustrated that human behavior is embedded in a web of social relationships. At a publicly funded college in Utah’s religious enclave, individual students are embedded in the college’s religious environment, which overlaps and interacts with the enclave’s religious environment. The enclave’s environment is embedded within the national religious environment. The individual student is shaped by socialization, religious mobility, ideological searching, and other social processes. The religious enclave’s relative homogeneity responds to and interacts with the national religious environment’s relative pluralism. These relationships, as I’ve asserted above, are not fully explained in the literature, and much work remains to understand the social mechanisms fully. The literature lacks consensus, and its contradictions may at times conceal rather than illuminate. This
study makes an important contribution, focusing on the experiences of specific individual students who are embedded within the various religious influences.

Social Capital as Religion’s Mechanism of Influence

For Mormons, religiosity and educational attainment are positively associated. On average, the higher a Mormon’s religiosity, the more he or she has been educated. In Utah, as Phillips (1998; n.d.) points out significant aspects of religious and public life are conflated, and high standing in a religious sphere is often tantamount to high standing in various public spheres as well. These findings from the literature lead one to ask if Utah Mormons use their religious values and interpersonal connections – the associations they make in a religious setting – to help them succeed in other public settings, including work settings and educational settings. By adopting Mormon religious values and participating in the intensely interpersonal religious communities (the Mormon wards), do Utah Mormons develop what scholars call “associational resources” (Alder & Kwon, 2000), “cultural resources” (Driessen, 2001), or “social resources” (Granovetter, 1973) that they can use to improve their educational experiences? Do Mormon college students in Utah adopt values and build a web of social connections that they can exploit to succeed in a Utah public college?

In a 1999 review of literature, Sherkat and Ellison noted that:

A growing literature suggests that religious communities . . . may provide members with ‘social capital’ that can be mobilized toward instrumental ends. . . . Social capital can contribute to positive outcomes by (a) providing values and norms that channel behavior in certain directions and away from others, (b) promoting the circulation of information, and (c)
encouraging both long-term investments of time and energy and exchange relations, within contexts governed by norms of reciprocity, trust, and mutual obligation.

Recent research has revived interest in the connection between religion and educational attainment by focusing on values that might promote or proscribe educational pursuits. One recent study based on a national sample of high school students found that those who participate regularly in religious activities tend to devote somewhat more time to school work, cut classes less often, and are more likely to graduate than their nonreligious counterparts.

A growing body of research examines distinctive forms of social capital within Catholic school communities and documents their positive effects on a wide range of educational and social outcomes. In addition, mounting evidence indicates that religious involvement promotes educational attainment among urban African American and immigrant youths and may divert them from oppositional youth cultures. (p. 372)

In this study, I investigate whether Utah students’ level of integration in a religious community, either Mormon or non-Mormon, is associated with differences in educational outcomes and differences in their qualitative experience in a publicly funded Utah college. If there is some association between these variables, social capital is a possible mechanism by which this impact occurs, particularly the constructs of social capital as articulated by Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and James Coleman (1988).
Many argue social capital is poorly conceptualized and applied, leading to several problems in the literature (Alder & Kwon, 2000; Foley & Edwards, 1999; Greeley, 1997; Morrow, 1999; Portes, 1998; Robinson, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). Keeping in mind the dangers of using a theoretic construct about which there is considerable theoretical disagreement, I nevertheless see potential benefits in social capital as an analytical framework with which to investigate the influence of religion on students in one of Utah's publicly funded colleges, and thus some of my analysis rests on the theory of social capital. In particular, the following are concepts from the literature that provide a relevant analytical framework for analyzing the data I have collected:

**Definitions of Social Capital**

Social capital is social resources that can be used for educational and economic benefits (Loury, 1997; Putnam, 1995; Coleman, 1988; Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital has been defined as (a) "the resources that emerge from one's social ties" (Astone, 1999, p. 1, quoting Portes & Landolt); (b) "the set of resources that adhere in family relations and in community social organization . . . that are useful for the cognitive or social development of individuals" (Loury, 1997, p. 3); (c) "the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (Portes, 1998, p. 6); (d) "networks, norms and trust, and the way these allow agents and institutions to be more effective in achieving common objectives" (Schuller, 2001, p. 20); (e) "contacts and memberships in networks which can be used for personal or professional gain" (Walpole, 2003, p. 49); (f) "a resource for individual and collective actors located in the network of their more or less
durable social relationships” (Alder & Kwon, 1999, p. 1); and (g) “the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively” (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 226).

Social capital has much in common with human capital. Before the 1960s, the economic concept of “capital” referred to currency, equipment, and physical assets; however, in 1964, economist Gary Becker first articulated the concept of “human capital,” which included the notion that despite the fact that something as intangible as workers’ “skills” and “knowledge” cannot be held in one’s hands, nevertheless, those entities can be thought of as capital. Just as physical assets and currency have an impact on production, workers’ skill and knowledge have economic outcomes. Just as investments in “tangible” capital bring economic returns, investments in human capital, according to theory, can explain apparent inequalities in personal income, and increased wealth for both the individual and society at large.

Near the time of Sputnik, Sweetland (1996) writes, Gary Becker devised a method for calculating return on educational investments and applied his method to determine whether national investments in higher education brought higher returns than other investments, concluding initially that “a firm judgment about the extent of underinvestment in college education is not possible” (p. 347). Economic behavior associated with physical capital, Becker noted, also applies to human capital: People are willing to invest in it, to maintain it, and it is fungible, or useful in a variety of economic settings. Importantly, according to Becker, even though it is intangible, human capital accounts for a portion of a nation’s revenue and wealth. In the 60s, economists using conventional means could not account for all national wealth, and they turned to human capital theory to explain the “residual” (Sweetland, 1996, p.
Human capital theory thus legitimizes educational expenditures and supports educational policies.

Like human capital, social capital is an intangible form of capital that can lead to both economic and educational benefits. Just as human capital can increase productivity, certain social resources can lead to improved educational and economic outcomes. For example, within a network of associations (friends, neighbors, coworkers, and coreligionists) a person may be able to enjoy benefits that are not generally available such as access to important and limited information, understanding of norms and sanctions, or facility with symbolic expression that leads to cultural approbation, social status, and economic advancement. Lin (1999) reports that Bourdieu and Coleman “have proposed that social capital helps produce human capital,” and “well-connected parents and social ties can . . . enhance the opportunities for individuals to obtain better educational, training, and skill and knowledge credentials” (p. 484).

In his famous essay “The Forms of Capital,” Bourdieu (1986) defined “capital” as “accumulated labor” in a “materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form” which allows people to “appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (p. 46). Arguing that classical economic theory had overemphasized the material forms of capital and neglected the non-material forms, Bourdieu then suggested that many exchanges involve capital that has undergone “transubstantiation” into nonmaterial forms. Capital, he said, may take three primary forms:
... As economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title or nobility. (p. 47)

For Bourdieu, social capital is an intangible form of resource that one derives from participation in a group that “provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital.” Members of the association are bound by mutual benefit, and profits lead to group solidarity. Rites of passage mark individuals’ adoption into these networks, and while social capital enjoys the authority of tradition, new members may change the group’s rules. Conversions from one form of Cultural capital, Bourdieu wrote (1986), can take three forms: First, it may be “embodied” cultural capital, or “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” that can’t be transferred immediately. When one lives within a culture for a long time, through effort, one learns values, modes of living, and ways of thinking that may or may not facilitate harmonious living within that community. The individual must invest time to acquire this form of capital, such as in formal or informal education. Second, it may be “objectified” cultural capital, or the objects of intellectual creative energy – books, paintings, machines, etc., which can be transmitted or appropriated immediately. And third, it may be “institutionalized” cultural capital, or academic credentials, which depend on the “magic” of academic authority to convey certificates of achievement and a kind of recognition that opens access to certain kinds of opportunities. Much of cultural capital is initially developed in the family setting in the form of values, expectations and aspirations; however, Bourdieu asserted that education validates and certifies cultural capital outside the family. Also, because much of cultural capital has symbolic significance, to gain its benefit the user must develop facility in a system of symbols. Cultural capital, Bourdieu wrote, even though generated by the family, becomes useful in the market only when validated by educational institutions, giving “rights to occupy rare positions” (p. 55).
capital to another are possible but often problematic. Some goods may be acquired through economic capital only; others require forms of capital that "cannot act instantaneously . . . unless they have been established and maintained for a long time" (p. 54).

Bourdieu asserts that, while not "entirely reducible" to economic capital, intangible forms of capital are effective and operational because of their relationship to economic capital. Thus, Bourdieu posits a law: " . . . profits in one area are necessarily paid for by costs in another" (p. 54). Acquiring social capital requires "apparently gratuitous expenditure of time" (p. 54). In strictly monetary terms, time spent building these network associations may appear wasted; but in terms of social exchange, the time is an investment in some future potential benefit that may grow out of mutual obligation. Also, investments made to acquire social capital (gifts, time, services, visits, etc.) are inherently risky, since the person or group may not always reciprocate or acknowledge the investments with gratitude.

At about the same time Bourdieu was developing his theories, an American sociologist, James Coleman (1988), was formulating another version of the theory of social capital that, while differing in some regards, shared much with Bourdieu, principally the notion that certain types of inequality grow out of unequal access to social resources. Building on Becker's theory of human capital, Coleman (1988) asserts that social capital plays a role in creating human capital. Whereas physical capital is comprised of tools, materials, or equipment used in production, human capital is comprised of capacities used in production, or skills that make humans more productive. Like human capital, social capital increases productivity. Social capital
is "changes in the relations among persons that facilitate action," or social relationships that aid in production.

For Coleman, social capital takes three primary forms: First, "obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of structures": When a person does something in behalf of another person, there is both the expectation and obligation of future reciprocal behavior. If persons observe these obligations, the social structures are worthy of trust. "... Individuals in social structures with high levels of obligations outstanding at any time have more social capital on which they can draw" (p. S103). Second, "information channels": Relationships constitute conduits for productive communication, information that has practical and economic benefit, and group memberships and network associations bring access to instrumentally useful information. And third, "norms and effective sanctions": Norms and sanctions are a kind of social capital that allows for general safety (the ability to walk alone at night), promotes prosocial behavior, and constrains antisocial behavior. From them comes the social order that is necessary for productivity.

Bourdieu and Coleman "have proposed that social capital helps produce human capital," and "well-connected parents and social ties can . . . enhance the opportunities for individuals to obtain better educational, training, and skill and knowledge credentials" (Lin, 1999, p. 484). In light of these theories, one wonders, do Utah Mormons have greater social resources that lead to greater human capital?

Since Bourdieu and Coleman first introduced the concepts, scholars have debated about what social capital is and how it functions, resulting in a huge body of scholarship that includes, according to Alder and Kwon (1999), "the good, the bad,
and the ugly.” In their attempt to provide “theoretical clarity,” Alder and Kwon compare social capital to other forms of capital, noting that capital in its various forms shares many common characteristics. Like other forms of capital, social capital involves:

- **Investment**: “... social capital is a resource into which other resources can be invested with the expectation of future, albeit uncertain, returns.”
- **Appropriation**: The same resource can used for a variety of purposes – friendship, information, power, etc.
- **Conversion**: Social resources can be “converted” from social capital to economic capital.
- **Substitution**: Social resources “can compensate for a lack of financial or human capital.”
- **Complementarity**: Social researches “can improve the efficiency of economic capital by reducing transaction costs.”
- **Maintenance**: Social resources must be “periodically renewed and confirmed”; however, unlike other forms of capital, rather than depreciating through use, social resources often grow through use.
- **Ownership**: Rather than owned by the individual, social capital is often the property of the group.

**The Family as Source of Social Capital**

To some extent, social capital is produced and maintained within the family. The family invests in social capital in behalf of the child (Astone et al, 1999). Within
the family, social capital is created, maintained, and used to increase the child’s human capital and improve the child’s educational and economic outcomes (Coleman, 1988)\(^{18}\).

When investigating the influence of social capital in a Utah public college, one must be attentive to family as source of the social capital. Several studies have noted that it is difficult to isolate the influence of “family effects” from “neighborhood effects” or “religious effects” on educational outcomes\(^{19}\), and given the importance of the Mormon ward, a neighborhood-based community of practitioners, the “neighborhood effect” may be particularly important in a Mormon context. Of these effects, Ellen and Turner (1997) assert that neighborhood effects “are much smaller than the effects of family…” (p. 854). In this same vein, Hofferth

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\(^{18}\) According to Coleman’s classic 1988 article, a family has three types of capital that it can use to influence a child’s academic performance: a) financial capital, b) human capital, and c) social capital. Parents who possess human capital can pass it along to their children, but only if the parent-child relationship is a good one. If parents are not part of their children’s lives, their human capital may be irrelevant to the child’s achievement. Thus, single parents or working parents are less able to pass on their human capital to their children. Coleman demonstrates this with a study of the relationship of dropping out of high school to various factors: (a) single-parenthood, (b) number of siblings, (c) mother’s expectation for child’s education, (d) and combinations of the above.

\(^{19}\) One interesting study illustrates the lengths to which scholars sometimes go to isolate family effects from community and other effects. Rose et al (2003) discuss the difficulty of separating familial and nonfamilial environmental effects (schools, neighborhoods, and communities). To isolate family effects, their study uses data related to identical twins and one unrelated classmate for each twin. Twins share the same family environment and genes, and their classmates share the same school environment (but not always the same neighborhood). A questionnaire asked 12-year-olds behavior questions such as if they ever drink alcohol without their parents around, and use a probability modeling method to isolate familial from nonfamilial effects. Authors write, “We suggest that our results reflect variations across communities, neighborhoods, and schools that exert direct causal effects on children’s behavioral development” (277).
(1999) explores whether social capital functions primarily within the family as kinship exchanges or between families as friendship exchanges. In a survey, Hofferth found greater levels of reciprocity and support within the family than between families: About 80 percent of his survey’s respondents felt they had access to help from family if needed; however, only about 20 percent felt they had access to help from friends if needed. Thus, a good deal of the social capital that operates in a setting like a Utah public college will likely derive from students’ families.

Aspects of family structure, write Coleman and Hoffer (1987) determine the amount of social capital that is available for children. Many families have “structural deficiencies” such as “the physical absence of family members” (single-parent households) and “functional deficiencies” such as “the absence of strong relations between children and parents” (p. 224). Increasingly, children come from families with parents who are well educated, with parents having a good deal of human capital, “but for a variety of reasons . . . the resources of the adults are not available to aid the psychological health and the social and educational development of the children,” and thus the family fails to provide needed social capital (p. 225).

Several studies build on Coleman and Hoffer’s emphasis on family structure and family processes in creating social capital. Israel, Beaulieu, and Hartless (2001) assert that the structure of the family (one or two parents, the number of siblings, etc.) and family processes (the quality of parental involvement, the amount of helping with homework, the valuing of education, the promotion of high aspirations, etc.) give the child social capital that influences educational achievement (p. 45). Also, Painter and Levine (2000) cite evidence that “on average, youths living with a single mother are
roughly twice as likely as other youths to drop out of high school, become pregnant, and be arrested” (p. 524) and tentatively put forward the idea that divorce is causal:

“These results suggest that most of the apparent effects of parental divorce and remarriage during a youth’s high school years are not due to preexisting disadvantages, leaving room for the effects to be causal” (p. 546). Noting the academic achievement gap between black and white students, Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999) argue that most variation is due to family background and structure, and less variation is due to social capital resources. Such resources, they write, “have only a small mediating effect on the gap in black-white achievement” (p. 158).

**Neighborhood or Community As Source of Social Capital**

Regardless of the fact that the family is the source of much of the social capital that operates within an educational setting, the community or neighborhood is also a significant source. Because America’s schools initially emerged at the local community level, in their beginnings schools were strongly influenced by community effects, and as I’ve discussed in Chapter One, communities have used religion to influence the ideology of their schools.

Various studies (Arum, 2000; Duncan & Radenbush, 2001; Ellen & Turner, 1997; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) show that neighborhoods and communities have an important impact on such things as crime, racial segregation, resource inequality, school discipline, etc. Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley (2002) note the recent increase in publications about neighborhood effects as they relate to “problem behavior among young people” (p. 444). In their review of 40 published articles
about community effects, they note that assumptions of this scholarship are that (a) there is “social inequality among neighborhoods,” (b) “social problems tend to come bundled together at the neighborhood level,” and (c) social problems are associated with social inequality (p. 446).

Arum (2000) argues that Coleman’s social capital theory reconceptualized the relationship between schools and communities. Students are influenced by peers and by other neighborhood and community associations, and “When schools were in communities that were socially disintegrated in terms of the amount of adult contact with other adults or their children, the monitoring and constraining of youth misbehavior was more difficult” (p. 398). Coleman and Hoffer (1987) write that schools that are not “grounded in a functional community” produce students who “lack social integration,” which leads to poor academic performance and high dropout rates (p. 215). If students are integrated in functional communities, these associations provide students with resources they use to improve educational outcomes. Families in these communities have a rich network of association that assist in children’s socialization. Social capital, Coleman and Hoffer note, “resides at least in part in the norms and sanctions that grow in such communities” (p. 222). In their review of literature, Ellen and Turner (1997) write that “the bulk of empirical studies find that neighborhoods do matter,” especially for “individual outcomes” such as “educational attainment, criminal involvement, teen sexual activity, and employment” (p. 834).

Because Mormons practice their religion in small, intensely interpersonal, neighborhood-based communities called “wards,” the Mormon community may be a
particularly important source of social capital. As noted earlier, Stark (2004) cites a study in which Duke asserts that, because of the intensely interactive nature of Mormon wards, “the average congregation receives 400 to 600 hours of voluntary labor per week, or the equivalent of ten to fifteen full-time employees,” and much of this energy is directed toward socializing Mormon youth (p. 21). This activity may provide the youth with significant social resources that they can use in a variety of settings.

**Intergenerational Social Capital**

If the neighborhood and community have an important influence on students’ educational success, by what processes do these results occur? Students’ associations with one another are obviously important, but student-student relationships are most often with persons of their same age and persons with approximately the same number and kinds of social resources; however, the “intergenerational” associations, or “adult-youth relationships” (Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001, p. 48) are very influential because they provide students with social resources that may not be available among their peers. Such relationships:

- may develop through church- and community-based groups, [and] offer an opportunity to shape youths’ norms, values, and aspirations. When these activities involve more highly educated adults, youths are surrounded by positive role models that illustrate the importance of educational achievement.
- The most distinctive property of community social capital is that adults’ involvement creates a ‘caring community’... , where a social support system
is in place for local youths and where adults seek to maximize youths' development (p. 48).

The religious organization can be an important source of intergenerational associations (Coleman, 1988; Greeley, 1997). Individual motivation is often socially conditioned, and religion can provide the context for developing it. Motivation is often "generalized reciprocity" or "internalized norms" that are "engendered through socialization in childhood or through experience later in life, specifically by the experience of a shared destiny with others" (Alder & Kwon, 1999), and religion often provides the conditions for individual motivation: "Social capital stems in part from the availability of a common belief system that allows participants to communicate their ideas and make sense of common experiences. Such communicative abilities allow common world-views, assumptions, and expectations to emerge among people and facilitate their joint action" (p. 6).

These are the main ideas about social capital reviewed thus far: (a) The family is a primary source of social capital, but (b) the community and neighborhood are important secondary sources, and (c) religion can be an important means by which communities provide intergenerational social capital for their young people.

Fungibility Of Social Capital

Capital is often developed for a particular purpose in a particular setting. Fungibility is the ability to apply capital that was developed for one purpose to other purposes, in other settings. Bourdieu (1986) refers to this quality as "transferability," arguing that capital of one form can be "converted" or exchanged from one form to another form. Transferability of form and purpose, for example, is seen when
university students exchange some of their economic capital to pay tuition for an education, to increase their human and social capital. This increased human and social capital then enable the students to gain new employment which in turn increases their economic capital. While currency is readily converted into other forms of capital, social capital is somewhat less fungible, but still transferable: Social resources developed in the family, the neighborhood, or the religious organization can be used for educational and economic benefits.

Schuller (2001) asks “how far are [social and human capital] fungible/convertible one into another, and how does growth in one impact on the other?” (p. 18). His paper offers this comparison of social capital and human capital. As Schuller’s table illustrates, the two forms of capital are very different. Human capital inheres in the individual agent and is measured by duration of schooling and other qualifications, while social capital inheres in social relationships and is measured by attitudes, values, memberships, participation, and trust. However, as Coleman (1988) pointed out, people commonly convert social capital into human capital.

Because capital in its various material and nonmaterial forms is convertible from one form to another, scholarship in the social sciences has seen a profusion of articles about other types of capital, including “religious capital” (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999; Iannaccone, 1997) and “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1986; Driessen, 2001; Throsby, 1999). Coleman (1988) cites Gluckman as saying that members of churches can use their church associations for a variety of purposes not directly connected with the church or even with religion. Borrowing from Max Weber’s The Protestant Ethic
### Table 1  Schuller's Framework For Considering The Relationships Between Human And Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Capital</th>
<th>Social Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Attitudes/values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>Membership/participation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Social cohesion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Economic achievement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>More social capital</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Interactive/circular</td>
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*and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904), Bourdieu asserts that behavior seemingly motivated by religious belief can also have ‘this-worldly’ or economic motives. Religion is subtly connected to power (Swartz, 1996, p. 74). Therefore, “Religious capital” for Bourdieu is a form of power that is fungible or “interchangeable with economic capital” (p. 75).

In a similar way, “cultural capital” is a form of power interchangeable with economic capital. It includes “a wide variety of resources, such as verbal facility, general cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences, scientific knowledge, and
educational credentials" (Swartz, 1996, p. 75). Bourdieu’s point, Swartz writes, was that “culture . . . can become a power resource” (p. 76).

Important for my study is the possibility that social capital developed in a religious or cultural setting for religious or cultural purposes may be transferred to other settings and purposes, especially educational settings and purposes. In other words, do Utah’s Mormon college students bring social resources from their communities that they use to be successful in college? Agreeing with Coleman’s (1988) original thesis that families use social capital to develop human capital, Foley and Edwards (1999) assert that while social capital’s “associations are created for specific purposes” such as religious purposes, those associations “can also be turned to other uses” such as educational purposes (p. 154).

Because of the concentration of the Mormon population in Utah, as Phillips (n.d.) writes, “social networks at school, work, in neighborhoods, and in public space . . . are all consolidated with denominational ties” (p. 31). If social capital is fungible from one setting and one purpose to other settings and purposes, it may well be that Utah’s Mormon college students have access to resources that are unavailable to students who are not integrated in Utah’s primary religious culture. Students who have a rich set of associations developed within the dominant religious culture may have social capital that they are able to “convert” to educational purposes—capital that is not available to other students.

Social Capital, Inclusion, and Exclusion

In Utah, Mormonism is an intensely bonded community with a complex web of strong connectedness, friendships, and associations, leading some to suggest (as
I’ve noted in Chapter One) that the community is “closed-minded,” “insular,” or even “separatist.” These assertions can lead one to question the costs and benefits of group solidarity. On one hand, the network of association that creates social capital can lead to bonding of primary groups, creating cohesiveness, trust, reciprocity, and solidarity (Alder & Kwon, 2000; Burt, 2000). On the other, if the nature of the association is overly compulsory or binding, the group may become parochial or narrow, leading to tension between in-group and out-group members (Dudley, 2004; Portes, 1998; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Burt, 2000).

In an important early article, Granovetter (1973) discussed this dilemma, and asserted that there was “strength” in “weak ties.” Associations, he wrote, are of two types – “strong” associations to members of one’s primary in-group and “weak” associations to out-group persons. He further asserted that “strong ties,” while emotionally satisfying, do not introduce new social resources into one’s primary group. “Weak ties,” however, bring new social resources into the group, therefore strengthening the group, and thus there is “strength in weak ties.”

Later scholars developed new vocabulary for strong and weak ties, calling them “bonding” and “bridging” associations (Dudley, 2004): Bonding associations are those that are “applicable to acquainted individuals within circles of reciprocal trust,” and bridging associations are those that are “applicable to unacquainted strangers in a broader group . . . across such circles of trust . . .” (p. 6) Putnam (2000) notes:

Bridging social capital refers to social networks that bring together people of different sorts, and bonding social capital brings together people of
a similar sort. This is an important distinction because the externalities of groups that are bridging are likely to be positive, while networks that are bonding (limited within particular social niches) are at greater risk of producing externalities that are negative. (p. 22)

The Risks Of Bonding

As mentioned above, social resources that are compulsory, binding, and narrow can lead to parochialism, divisiveness, or what Alder and Kwon (2000) call “overembeddedness” (p. 113). Because of social capital’s ability to bring new information into a group, too much bonding capital can reduce “the flow of new ideas into the group, resulting in parochialism and inertia,” and increasing “feuding, [blocking] access to new information, and [increasing] vulnerability of whole network to extinction from large-scale changes in the environment” (p. 91). Further, “. . . a group with strong internal ties but only few external ties may become insular and xenophobic. . .” (p. 92). Excessive bonding social capital, Woolcock and Narayan (2000) warn, may result in an inward orientation that closes individuals off from participation in broad social spheres, “where communities or networks are isolated, parochial, or working at cross-purposes to society’s collective interests” (p. 229). Perhaps this dynamic explains much of the “Unspoken Divide” that the Salt Lake Tribune reported in 2001 (see Chapter One).

As Woolcock and Narayan (2000) write:

. . . Social capital is a double-edged sword. It can provide a range of valuable services for community members, ranging from baby-sitting and house-minding to job referrals and emergency cash. But there are also costs in
that those same ties can place considerable noneconomic claims on members’
sense of obligation and commitment, with negative economic consequences.
Group loyalties may be so strong that they isolate members from information
about employment opportunities, foster a climate of ridicule toward efforts to
study and work hard, or siphon off hard-won assets . . . (p. 231)

The Bridging Function of Social Capital

Social capital can bridge separated groups. An individual who is a member of
two or more groups can serve as “broker” between the groups (Burt, 2000), gaining
access to new social resources (Granovetter, 1973; Lin, 1999). Burt refers to
“structural holes” in networks, where persons have associations to other persons
outside their primary groups. “The structural hole argument is that social capital is
created by a network in which people can broker connections between otherwise
disconnected segments” (p. 1). Because information is an important benefit of social
capital, and because information is available within a group before it is available
outside the group, a person who is a member of two networks is able to “broker the
flow of information between people, and control the projects that bring together
people from opposite sides of the hole” (p. 5).

The benefits to the person who bridges two networks are information access
and ability to control information release. Within the group, information sources are
redundant to each other, since most group members have access to the same
information; however, between groups, information is nonredundant and brings
greater potential benefit to the person who bridges two networks. “Network
constraint,” Burt says, “is an index that measures the extent to which a person’s
contacts are redundant” (p. 5). Burt then reviews correlation studies that show a negative association between “network constraint” and performance criteria, indicating that for adult management employees, structural holes correlate to measures of successful performance.

Bridging associations may also bring enhanced social status. Wuthnow (2002) distinguishes between two forms of bridging social capital: a) identity bridging, in which associations introduce persons of different culturally defined characteristics (race, sexual preference, religion, for example); and b) status bridging, in which associations introduce persons of different “vertical arrangements of power, influence, wealth, and prestige” (670). Wuthnow explores the relationship of religious involvement and “status bridging associations”: “The central question to be addressed, then, is whether religious involvement is associated with status-bridging social capital involving ties with political officials, corporation executives, scientists, and persons of wealth” (673). Wuthnow finds that “. . . Membership in a religious congregation is generally associated quite strongly and positively with . . . having friends who represent various kinds of elite power or influence” (p. 678). Also, holding a leadership position in one’s congregation is strongly associated with status-bridging social capital.

Within Utah, where 77.1 percent of the population is Mormon, bridging social capital may be especially important, particularly the type of bridging social capital that Wuthnow (2002) calls “identity bridging” social capital that brings together persons with differing religious identity. A non-Mormon’s success in an educational or work setting may depend, in part, on his or her ability to penetrate networks that,
while not religious in nature, nevertheless exhibit the strong cultural influence of what Phillips calls the “quasi-ethnic” character of Utah’s Mormon culture (p. 40). Non-Mormons who are able to bridge the “unspoken divide” (Salt Lake Tribune, 2001) may gain access to important social resources that lead to educational and economic success.

Network Closure

The structure of social networks, Coleman (1988) pointed out, can be either open or closed: An open network is one in which the persons within the network do not know each other; a closed network is one in which most of the persons within the network know each other. Networks in which all members are acquainted are more cohesive and facilitate collective sanctions not possible in open networks.

Importantly, networks with closure allow extra-familial socialization of young persons. In such networks, non-family adults collaborate with parents in reinforcing norms and providing positive educational role models (Burt, 2000; Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001). Extra-familial socialization occurs especially where there is intergenerational closure, networks in which children have positive associations with non-family adults. Where there is intergenerational closure, parents of different families are able to support one another in a larger communal effort to reinforce norms (Coleman, 1988) and children enjoy “nonfamilial adult support” (Rose et al, 2003) or “extra-familial, trusting relationships of care and accountability” (Smith, 2003a, p. 25). If a student’s friends’ parents know the student and the student’s parents, then non-family adults are able to collaborate with the parents in socializing.
the student. Parents in a system with closure have social connections that supplement and reinforce their own sanctions for their children (Coleman, 1988, p. S108).

Intergenerational closure may lead to positive educational outcomes.

Adult-youth relationships, which may develop through church- and community-based groups, offer an opportunity to shape youths’ norms, values, and aspirations. When these activities involve more highly educated adults, youths are surrounded by positive role models that illustrate the importance of educational achievement. The most distinctive property of community social capital is that adults’ involvement creates a ‘caring community’ [citing Lerner 1995], where a social support system is in place for local youths and where adults seek to maximize youths’ development (Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001, p. 48).

Closed networks allow collective sanctions not possible in open networks. In an interesting way, a recent Nevada advertising campaign illustrates how open network structures’ are not able to impose collective sanctions. The ad campaign includes billboards with the following motto: “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas!” The sub-text of the ad campaign is that associations one makes in Vegas and associations one maintains at home outside of Vegas are two separate networks that will never have closure. Because one’s Vegas associates will never become acquainted with one’s home associates, there can be no collective sanction on one’s Vegas behavior. The home network and the Vegas network are “open” and cannot collaborate in enforcing norms of appropriate behavior or even communicate. Therefore, one’s Vegas behavior will have no impact on one’s standing outside of
Vegas, and one's home network will have no impact on one's behavior while in Vegas.

**Religion's Role in Network Closure**

Religious associations lead to network closure, improve socialization, and promote educational outcomes (Burt, 2000; King & Furrow, 2004; Regnerus & Elder, 2003; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999; Smith, 2003a; Smith, 2003b; Wuthnow, 2002). Religious communities constitute Americans' most common and effective form of intergenerational closure; further, if they are integrated in a religious community, students enjoy a kind of social capital that is lacking among students who are not integrated in a religious community (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Smith, 2003a; Smith 2003b; King & Furrow, 2004).

Showing that levels of social capital (as measured by parent interaction, parent acquaintances, and parent volunteering) are higher in religious schools than public schools, Fritch (2001) finds that “. . . Religion offered a common bond for building community and a time and place for sustained regular social interaction, resulting in social networks that the schools could use for their own purposes” (abstract). Smith (2003b) accepts the proposition that “parents of American youth who together with their adolescent children regularly participate in the life of religious congregations will manifest higher levels of network closure than those who do not participate together or do not participate at all” (p. 260). Religious networks, Smith (2003b) notes, are “relatively dense networks . . . involving people who pay attention to the lives of youth, and who can provide oversight of and information about youth to their
parents and other people well positioned to discourage negative and encourage positive life practices among youth” (p. 260).

The typical Utah Mormon ward – a small, neighborhood-based congregation – illustrates the impact of a dense, religiously-based network. Such a network has closure, since all active members of a Mormon ward know one other well and become involved interpersonally. The ward requires the voluntary involvement of nearly all ward members: As Nelson (1993) writes, the typical Mormon ward “staffs as many as 200 different [lay] positions that support a plethora of activities” (p. 668), and as Duke asserts, in a typical Mormon ward “the average congregation receives 400 to 600 hours of voluntary labor per week, or the equivalent of ten to fifteen full-time employees” (as cited by Stark, 2004, p. 21). Crapo (1987) writes:

... The degree to which Mormons are involved in the organizational and leadership activities of their ward is greater than that of Protestants in their congregations or of Catholics in their parishes. In a typical Mormon ward as many as thirty to fifty percent of the members may be requested by the bishop, himself a lay minister, to fulfill duties in the day-to-day programs of the ward. In fact, when one includes ad hoc and part-time assignments, virtually all active members of a ward are likely to have at least one assignment. ... (p. 480)

Thus, the Mormon ward is a busily interpersonal organization. To illustrate the network closure of the Mormon ward, imagine that within a typical Utah Mormon ward’s boundaries live four young people in four separate households. Two of the young people are active Mormons; the other two are not Mormons. Because all four
of the young people go to the same high school, they are members of a school network. In one way, this high school network is “open” because the four sets of parents are not acquainted with one another. Because the parents of the two young non-Mormons do not participate in the Mormon ward, they do not have even a passing acquaintance with each other or with the parents of the two young Mormons.

Conversely, the parents of the two young Mormons know each other and each other’s children intimately. The ward is a closed network because ward members interact so intensively. For the young Mormons and their parents, the ward is a network with intergenerational closure, providing the venue for many non-family adults to become involved as scout masters, religious counselors, and youth-group leaders, offering support and collaboration in enforcing the parents’ social sanctions. In light of these patterns of association, one wonders if Utah Mormon youth are beneficiaries of a type of religiously based network closure that is uncommon or unavailable to other youth, either non-Utah youth or Utah youth who are members of churches with less numerical superiority within Utah.

Bourdieu’s “Reproduction Thesis”

In addition to “associational resources,” Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) assert that persons who develop literacy and facility with the subtle symbolic language and the esoteric value system of a location will have cultural advantages that they called “cultural capital.” Fluency with these symbols and values constitutes a kind of capital that can have economic and educational implications. Education, Bourdieu and Passeron assert, contributes to the “reproduction” of these kinds of symbolic systems and value systems from one generation to the next. In effect, the educational
establishment determines which skills and knowledge are valuable, then awards credentials to students who conform to the educational establishment's value system. The educational system, they write, privileges certain cultural preferences over other preferences, and thus education may contribute to the reproduction of social inequality.

Education, Bourdieu and Passeron theorized, reproduces class structure from one generation to the next. Essentially, education privileges and rewards certain cultural preferences such as affinity for classical music, literature, and museum art, and by rewarding those preferences education ensures that certain social groups maintain class dominance. In other words, education plays a central role in the cultural transmission of inequality (Driessen, 2001). According to Bourdieu, schools are not neutral institutions; instead, their preferences value "high-brow cultural participation," and possession of knowledge and skills associated with these preferences gives cultural capital and "exclusionary character" (as cited in Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999, p. 159). On one hand, "reproduction" occurs in an educational system that duplicates the class system from one generation to the next; on the other hand, "cultural mobility" occurs when the educational system does not evaluate the student according to such pre-existing preferences (Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999, p. 161).

Education helps society create and promulgate "status collectivities" or "groups that form around affinities of cultural consumption" (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 577), and educational institutions "facilitate group membership through the provision and certification of cultural competencies" (p. 578). Bourdieu stated that
"the educational system's ability to reproduce the social distribution of cultural capital results from 'the educational norms of those/social classes capable of imposing the... criteria of evaluation which are the most favourable to their products'" (as cited in Lareau & Weininger, 2003, pp. 578-579).

Educators may believe that the value systems they are reproducing have status apart from their preference – as objective reality rather than preference. According to Swartz (1996) Bourdieu argues that in the cultural domain, actors' self-interest is "misrecognized" as disinterest. Through cultural means, the powerful are able to create a sense that their values are objective and independent values with legitimate status, and therefore, the culturally empowered are only being "disinterested" when they pursue their particular values in an educational setting. They are able "to benefit from the transformation of self-interest into disinterest" (p. 77). This "symbolic capital" is a form of power not recognized as power, but portrayed as objectively legitimate values. Religious specialists are key in transforming "relations of power into forms of disinterested honorability" (p. 77).

Naidoo (2004) cites Bourdieu's assertion that, even before coming to school, students are socialized to have a certain "habitus," a set of dispositions and behaviors. If the student is a member of the dominant group, those dispositions and behaviors are "valourized" and rewarded (p. 459). Thus, the schooling system reproduces cultural power structures. Higher education also "reproduces" class structures:

The educational system... designates those endowed with cultural capital, which is generally inherited as a result of social origin, as 'academically talented.' In this way, higher education establishes a close correspondence.
between the social classification at entry and the social classification at exit without explicitly recognizing, and in most cases denying, the link between social properties dependent on social origin (such as class) and academic selection and evaluation. (p. 459)

Many have noted that Mormons have a unique cultural "vocabulary" and a value system that is often confusing to outsiders. For example, Care (2005) points out that:

One of the major difficulties . . . is that [Mormons] speak a unique language. Not only have they coined numerous words and expressions unique to Mormonism, but they have also given unique definitions to commonly used words and expressions. Some have called the language "Mormonese."

In everyday conversion one hears terms that are unfamiliar and baffling to outsiders, terms such as the following: stake house, general authority, the brethren, the burning of the bosom, celestial marriage, consecration, deacon, Deseret Industries (more commonly, "The D.I."), the Ensign, extraction, family home evening, the first presidency, free agency, garments, genealogy, gentiles, golden plates, home teacher, institute, Jack Mormons, the JST, the line of authority, the Melchizedek Priesthood, the missionary discussions, Moroni, the MTC, outer darkness, stake patriarch, probation, recommend holder, Relief Society president, an R.M., the saints, a seer, spirit prison, the Stick of Ephraim, to be sustained, the Telestial Kingdom, tithing settlement, the triple combination, the visiting teachers, and Zion (excerpted from Care, 2005). For Mormons, each of these terms evinces a complicated matrix of symbolic meaning.
In Utah, the above expressions are seamlessly woven into many everyday conversations, and college students who are outsiders are bewildered on hearing their Utah classmates say sentences like, “My friend who is a G.A.’s daughter saw him smoking over by the stake center with a bunch of the local Gadiantons, and she told one of his home teachee’s that, even if he is an R.M., he’ll probably be X’ed if he acts like that.” For college students in Utah, such language is a marker of insider status, and to a great extent this system of esoteric language and values is interwoven in the educational culture of publicly funded Utah colleges.

When one is fluent with the esoteric language of a religious enclave, one may gain quick trust and access to limited resources. A friend has told me that, while at a job interview, he saw the flag of a foreign country hanging in the office of an academic administrator in a Utah public university. When my friend asked about the flag, the administrator announced that he had “served a mission” in that country, and suddenly my friend’s conversation included terms like “investigator,” “golden question,” and “branch president.” At that point, my friend says, the administrator stopped discussing his qualifications as an applicant. Later that day, my friend was hired.

Religion’s Impact on Peer Associations in Utah

Fritch (2001) offers a logic model to describe how individuals use social capital to achieve benefits: (a) Shared values and common links form community; (b) community activities create face-to-face social interaction; (c) the interaction provides the opportunity for social networks; (d) networks form social capital which
includes trust, information sharing, and norms and sanctions; and (e) trust, information, and norms lead to educational success.

Hartley (2004) studies the role of religious faith and practice in freshman students' returning for the sophomore year, and in the social integration during the first year of college. He hypothesizes that students with greater religiosity are more likely to be integrated in the campus community, regardless of whether or not the campus is secular, and thus religious students are more likely to persist. Religious involvement, he hypothesized, was a form of involvement or "psychosocial engagement" (p. 7). However, within a religious enclave, through cultural means, the powerful are able to create a sense that their values are objective and independent values with legitimate status, and therefore, the culturally empowered are only being "disinterested" when they pursue their particular values (Swartz, 1996). They are able "to benefit from the transformation of self-interest into disinterest" (p. 77).

Swartz writes:

No less than other arenas of cultural and social conflict, religion is a resource of power over which some individuals, groups, and organizations feel it is important to struggle. The struggle for the right to impose the legitimate definition of religion is in the final analysis a political function. 'Religious power' or 'religious capital,' Bourdieu writes, 'depends on the material and symbolic force of the groups and classes the claimants can mobilize by offering them goods and services that satisfy their religious interests . . . .' Moreover, the struggle for legitimation within the religious
field tends to reproduce the relations of domination within the established order" (pp. 82-83).

**Shared Values and Exclusivity**

Social capital creates an environment of shared values that can be both inclusive and exclusive (Strike, 1999; Alder & Kwon, 2000; Fritch, 2001; King & Furrow, 2004). Groups with a set of coherent and shared values develop what Portes (1998) calls “bounded solidarity,” in which individuals share common challenges, tasks, and problems, and form sympathy and altruism toward one another and become mutually supportive (p. 7); however, those same groups produce “more in the way of negative externalities” (Fukuyama, 2001, p. 8). These negative externalities derive from the fact that “group solidarity in human communities is often purchased at the price of hostility toward out-group members” (Fukuyama, 2001, p. 8) and groups with high solidarity “are afflicted with an absence of . . . ‘weak ties’, that is, heterodox individuals at the periphery of the society’s various social networks who are able to move between groups and thereby become bearers of new ideas and information” (p. 9). The Mormon Church, Fukuyama writes, illustrates that greater in-group cohesiveness leads to greater distrust of outsiders:

Strong moral bonds within a group in some cases may actually serve to decrease the degree to which members of that group are able to trust outsiders and work effectively with them. A highly disciplined, well organized group sharing strong common values may be capable of highly co-ordinated collective action, and yet may nonetheless be a social liability. . . . The Marines and the Mormon Church are examples. But the very strength of those
internal bonds creates something of a gulf between members of the group and those on the outside. Latitudinarian organizations, like most contemporary mainline Protestant denominations in the USA, by contrast, easily co-exist with other groups in the society, and yet are capable of a much lower level of collective action. (pp. 14-15).

Conclusion

This review of literature includes four sections. First, it reviews literature related to individual college students' religiosity. Second, it gives an overview of the national religious environment, the enclave's religious environment, and the interaction between the two. Third, it summarizes literature related to the association between student religiosity and educational attainment. Finally, it reviews literature related to social capital – the concept that, through religious participation, students gain social resources that they use in an academic setting.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Three Methodological Components

The setting for this study was Dixie State College of Utah, in St. George, Utah, a publicly funded state college. Data collection for the study spanned over eight months from mid-2005 through early 2006. The study’s methods and instruments were designed to address the research questions – to examine the influence of an enclave culture on the educational outcomes and qualitative experiences of college students of varying integration in Utah’s dominant religious culture.

As I settled on methods and instruments, I focused on my questions and sought methods that were most likely to provide relevant and useful data. What procedures and measures would most likely lead to useful understanding and conclusions about the following questions: What association or relationship exists between students’ level of integration in the enclave culture and students’ academic outcomes? How do students of varying religious backgrounds and perspectives negotiate with the enclave culture and with one another? How does the enclave culture impact institutional culture? And, if the enclave culture impacts institutional culture, how does the resulting institutional culture impact students’ sense of belonging and persistence? In what ways do religiously integrated students’ lived
experiences at the college differ from those of students who were not similarly integrated? Do students draw upon social and cultural capital to achieve educational benefits?

Early on, I determined that no single methodological approach would suffice for this group of research questions. To address the questions, I developed three primary methodological approaches that, in combination, would provide descriptive data that I could interpret, bringing me to tentative answers. First, I developed and deployed a quantitative survey that would allow me to compare students' religious variables with their academic variables, showing patterns of correlation and linear regression. Second, I deployed an analysis of institutional culture that rested on observations of heroic institutional narratives and institutional heroes, institutional symbols, and institutional rituals. In particular, I noted the influence of the enclave culture on these dimensions of institutional culture. Third, I developed and deployed a protocol for in-depth qualitative interviews with twelve students who epitomized traits of interest to my research questions.

After I had designed this mixed-method approach, I took training in human subjects research, and I applied for and received research approval through UNLV's Office for the Protection of Research Subjects. As I implemented all phases of research, I carefully followed this office's mandated protocols, observing all ethical and procedural aspects for research involving human subjects. In what follows, I describe each of the three methodological components in further detail.
Descriptive Quantitative Survey and Academic Data

Determining whether there is an association between the level of students’ integration in the enclave culture and their academic outcomes requires data about students’ religiosity and data about students’ academic performance. To gather religious data, I developed and deployed a survey that collects information about students’ religious backgrounds, the degree to which they are integrated with their religious communities, the rate at which they participate (attend religious activities), and the degree of their belief. To gather academic and demographic data, I gained access to the institution’s student database gathering data about students’ grades, whether or not they returned for the subsequent academic year, and other demographic data such as age, sex, permanent mailing address, etc.

The quantitative survey combined with the academic data allowed me to explore the first question in the problem statement: At a public college located within a religious enclave, what association is there between integration in the enclave’s religious community (as measured by affiliation, participation, intrinsic religiosity, and association with coreligionists) and educational outcomes (as measured by course grades, cumulative college GPA, and freshman students’ returning for the subsequent academic year)?

The survey (See Appendix A, Survey Instrument) focuses on variables that contribute to an understanding of students’ level of integration in the enclave culture. First, I needed to know if students considered themselves members of the dominant religion. Rather than providing a “yes/no” survey format, on the survey form I used a “fill-in-the-blank” format in which students declared their religious affiliation. This
format was consciously chosen to avoid bias. A “yes/no” format focuses exclusively on the enclave religion and draws attention to it as the center of attention, introducing a kind of bias. A format that provides a list of possible affiliations imposes what some students may consider to be preconceived or biased category labels. Using a “fill-in-the-blank” format allowed students to use their own vocabulary and create their own labels. In fact, several students annotated their answers with short explanatory notes. In addition giving a binary indication of whether individual students consider themselves to be affiliated with the enclave religious group, the format provides data that is more rich than a simple binary yes/no answer, showing not only how many students are not LDS, but also what categorical labels they use to describe themselves. Students listed their own particular affiliation labels – Mormon, Latter-day Saint, Catholic, Buddhist, Methodist, none, etc. Interestingly, the most frequent non-integrated answer was “none,” followed closely by “Catholic.”

The rest of the survey contains twelve items that measure six dimensions of students’ religiosity. Wanting to rely as much as possible on reliable question formats and content, I took some of the individual questions from two tested instruments that are prominent in literature about religious measurement (Storch et al, 2002; Hill & Hood, 1999; Sherman et al, 2000). Five of the questions come from the Duke Religion Index (DUREL), and two of the questions come from the Systems of Belief Inventory (SBI-15R). Using the question format of these tested sources, I developed an additional set of five questions.

With the particular research questions in mind, I decided that the survey should concentrate on six religious dimensions, as follows:
Organizational Religiosity (coded as OR): “Public or organizational religious behavior (e.g., church attendance)” (Sherman et al, 2000). The following survey item from the DUREL measures this dimension: “How often do you attend church or other religious meetings?”

Nonorganizational Religiosity (coded as NOR): “Private or nonorganizational religious behavior (e.g., prayer or meditation)” (Sherman et al, 2000). The following survey item from the DUREL measures this dimension: “How often do you spend time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or scripture study?”

Intrinsic Religiosity (coded as IR): “Intrinsic religious motivation (e.g., involvement of religion in all of one’s dealings in life)” (Sherman et al, 2000). The following survey three items from the DUREL measure this dimension: (a) “In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God)”; (b) “My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life”; and (c) “I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.”

Religious Coping (coded as RC): The extent to which one uses religion to cope with stress in one’s life (Holland, 1998). The following survey items from the SBI-15R measure this dimension: (a) “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to”; and (b) “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.”

115

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Campus Religious Climate (coded as CRC): The students’ assessment of the campus’s religious climate, including whether they feel their religious views are respected and the extent to which they enjoy the campus’s religious climate. The following self-developed survey items measure this dimension: (a) “I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs”; and (b) “I enjoy the religious climate at this college.”

Religiously Based Network Associations (coded as RBNA): Whether or not the student has religiously based network associations, and whether the student views those associations as important. The following self-developed survey items measure this dimension: (a) “Think of your best friend at this college. Do you and that friend share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same religious group?”; (b) “Think of your favorite professor at this college. Do you and that professor share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same religious group?” (c) “For you, how important is it to be married to a person who shares your religious affiliation or belongs to the same religious group?”

While the first three dimensions (OR, NOR, IR) have been tested and found to exhibit high reliability and validity for uses in psychiatric settings (Koenig, Parkerson, & Meador, 1997), the last three dimensions have not been tested, and the last two (CRC and RBNA) are of my own device. The DUREL and SBI-15R are measures of religiosity that were originally developed and deployed for uses in medical research. Other measures of religiosity that were developed for educational settings (i.e., Smith & Denton, 2005; HERI, 2005) are quite long and complicated,
did not lend themselves to the particular research questions, and posed logistical problems that I could not overcome, not the least of which was gaining access to the hour of students’ time required for deployment, and being confident that there would be a return-rate that would allow use of the data if the survey was administered through mail.

I chose to use a comparatively short survey for three reasons: First, because the DUREL was a short instrument that had been tested and shown to have high reliability and validity and yet still provide usable data for statistical analysis (Koenig, Parkerson, & Meador, 1997); second, because a short survey would require only about ten minutes’ of students’ time to administer, allowing me to consider potentially effective settings for survey implementation; and third, because I would not have to risk a potentially low return rate through the mail.

Before implementing my survey, I reviewed its format and content with three scholars with background in survey techniques and sociology\(^20\) to ensure that its format was effective and that it had content validity. Also, I field tested the survey with two focus groups composed of a small number of high school and college students and asked for their feedback on format and ease of use. After I had reviewed the survey instrument and was confident that it would bring me useful data, I began the process of implementing the survey.

Giving the survey involved several steps. First, I gained institutional access to the research population and access to the institution’s academic database. This was a

\(^{20}\) With thanks to Dr. Mimi Wolverton, UNLV; Dr. Jan Carpenter, DSC; and Dr. Donald Carns, UNLV for their useful pointers on survey content and format.
matter of seeking and receiving permission from the institution’s registrar, who is also the institution’s FERPA officer. This institutional officer provided written notification that my request for research access had been approved. As a longtime user of the academic database at the institution, I am able to access data and perform basic database queries, and the institution trusts that I am an ethical and responsible user of academic data.

Second, I settled on a method for sampling students. At first, I considered a sampling approach that would involve a randomized list gathered from the population of all students enrolled at the institution. Even though generating such a list would be relatively easy for me, I determined that, while such a sample would provide some protection against bias, because it would require students to return surveys through the mail, it also would be a source of selection bias that would seriously threaten the validity of the data. Mailings to a random selection of currently enrolled students, I thought, would result in a very low response rate, especially among students who were marginalized or in the process of dropping out from individual classes or dropping out of degree programs. In my study, I am particularly interested in students whose sense of belonging at the institution and whose will to persist at the institution might be in jeopardy. The institution’s registrar informed me that these students would not be either easy to contact or likely to return mail, even after mailed follow-up reminders. Therefore, rather than subject the data to the risk of selection bias from a poor response rate, I rejected a sampling technique that, even though scientifically random, would involve mailings.
Instead, I chose a convenience sample that I thought would introduce the least amount of selection bias – a single-course general education requirement taken by the great majority of students at the institution. In Utah, the state legislature has passed a law that all college students must take a course in American Institutions. At the institution under study, students meet this requirement by taking one of two courses: either a course in American history or a course in American politics. More than ninety percent of the students at the institution choose to take the American history course. In any given term, a broad spectrum of students enrolls in the American history course, and these courses provided me a setting in which to find a convenience sample that would likely be representative of the broad range of students at the institution.

Faculty members teaching all eight sections of HIST, the introductory-level American history course, granted me permission to use class time for the survey. Having gained approval from UNLV’s Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, I administered the surveys in all sections of HIST 1700 (American History) at Dixie State College of Utah during a single week, eight sections in all, resulting in a sample size of 285.

After students had completed the survey forms, I used the institution’s academic database to gather academic information about survey completers. I collected the students’ cumulative GPA as of the end of the term in which I administered the survey. I collected the students’ course grade in the history course. And in the fall of the following academic year, I determined whether or not students had returned for the subsequent academic year.
After entering all data into SPSS 11.5, I had developed a complex database that I could use to run a variety of statistical analyses. Not sure initially what variables would prove to be important in later analysis, I collected the religious and academic variables described above, as well as a wide range of demographic variables that might shed light on research questions, including age, sex, ethnicity, and the home town of students' permanent address. The following SPSS output tables give examples of the variables and the data for the first five data cases.

It's important to note that in addition to using survey data to address the association between students' level of integration in the dominant enclave culture and students' academic outcomes, I also intended to use the data to identify appropriate students for the third phase of research, the in-depth interviews. These two uses of data are quite different. The first use, determining the relationship between integration and academic outcomes, is a nomothetic process, relating to the discovery of general patterns of association. The second use, identifying appropriate students for in-depth interviews, is ideographic, relating to the description of individual cases. To illustrate that the survey was useful for both purposes, I will review the variables and the data for five student cases. The tables below show student ID labels and different sets of variables, indicating the range of variables that were used in SPSS and showing how they provide a profile of individual student cases. The tables illustrate that in addition to providing a corpus of data for statistical analysis, the data also facilitate characterization of individual cases.

The first student case listed in the tables presents an interesting individual profile. The ID label shows that the first student in the table, a young Catholic
woman, was the tenth student enrolled in section one of the history course. She is a twenty-six-year-old, non-white, non-LDS student who was not a permanent resident of Utah. At the time of the interview, she was a junior at the college.

Table 2  Case Summaries – Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Summaries a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student ID Label</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total N</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Limited to first 5 cases.*

The Table 3 shows student academic variables. The young Catholic woman, received a C-minus in the American history course, had a cumulative college GPA of 2.42, had a total of 89 earned credit hours, and, even though still only a junior, did not return to school the fall semester after the survey was administered.

Table 4 shows some of the religious variables. The young Catholic woman indicated that she attended church “once a year or less”; that she spent time in private religious observances (prayer, meditation, or scripture study) on average “once a week”; that she did not share the religious affiliation of her best friend at the college; that she did not know the religious affiliation of her favorite professor at the college;
and that it was “somewhat important” to her to be married to a person who shares her religious affiliation.

Table 3  Case Summaries – Academic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID Label</th>
<th>Course Grade in Hist</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA</th>
<th>Earned Hours</th>
<th>Returned following year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1.70</td>
<td>2.423</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 HIST1700 0112</td>
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<td>3.561</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Limited to first 5 cases.

Table 5 shows more student religious variables. For example, it shows that the first student in the table, the young Catholic woman, expressed mixed signals about her intrinsic religiosity. On one hand, she indicated it was “definitely true of me” that “In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine.” On the other hand, it shows that she indicated it “tends not to be true of me” that “My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life,” and she is “unsure” about whether this statement is true of her: “I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in my life.” The young Catholic woman also reported mixed signals about her reliance on religion to cope with problems and loneliness. She
Table 4  Case Summaries – Religious Variables, Questions 1-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID Label</th>
<th>1: Org-Rel: How often do you attend church or other religious meetings?</th>
<th>2: Non-Org Rel: How often do you spend time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or scripture study?</th>
<th>3: Rel-Network, College Friend: Do you and your [best friend at this college] share the same religious affiliation?</th>
<th>4: Rel-Network, Professor: Do you and your [favorite professor at this college] share the same religious affiliation?</th>
<th>5: Rel-Network, Endogamy: For you, how important is it to be married to a person who shares your religious affiliation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIST1700 0110</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST1700 0111</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST1700 0112</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST1700 0113</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST1700 0116</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Limited to first 5 cases.

reports that it “tends to be true of me” that “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.” However, she reports that it “tends not to be true of me” that “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.”

Table 6 shows even more student religious variables related to the students’ opinions about the campus religious climate. For example, it shows that the young Catholic woman indicated that it “tends to be true” that “I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs”; however, she also indicated that it’s “definitely not true” that “I enjoy the religious climate at this college.”

123
Table 5  Case Summaries – Religious Variables, Questions 6-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Summaries*</th>
<th>6: Intrin-Rel, God's Presence: In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God).</th>
<th>7: Intrin-Rel, World View: My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life.</th>
<th>8: Intrin-Rel, Life Dealings: I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.</th>
<th>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.</th>
<th>10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>HIST1700 0110</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Total N</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Limited to first 5 cases.

With these variables built and entered into SPSS, I ran correlation analyses, looking for associations in all data collected, revealing some interesting relationships that I used to answer research questions. Later, I ran three types of regression analyses, including simple linear, multiple, and backward stepwise regression, to explore the predictive influence of variables on academic success as measured by cumulative college GPA. In these regression analyses, I experimented with different dependent variables, including whether or not the student returned for the subsequent year and the students' grades in the history course; however, I found that cumulative college GPA was the most useful dependent variable for the various regression
analyses. Using simple regression analysis and multiple regression analysis, I looked for the predictive influence of religious variables on academic outcomes. Partly because I was not satisfied that these analyses led me to conclusive inferences, I employed backward stepwise regression analysis to explore the predictive influence of various predictive models that involved different combinations of religious variables and their predictive influence on students’ cumulative GPA. This analysis led to some interesting results. In all of this, I was looking for the predictive influence of religious variables on academic variables, but I was open to relationships involving other demographic variables as well.
Analysis of Institutional Culture

As described above, the quantitative component of the mixed-method design explores the interaction between religious variables and academic variables and contributes to an understanding of the influence of religion on students’ academic outcomes. However, this component does not contribute significantly to an understanding of the cultural aspects of students’ experiences at a publicly funded college located in a religious enclave. While quantitative data may shed some light on the relationship between religious and academic variables, quantitative approaches are probably not well adapted to rich and detailed studies of religious culture and institutional culture.

The individual student’s college experience occurs within the context of the institutional culture, and the institutional culture is embedded within the community culture, which is embedded within the national culture. In this case, the community culture is strongly influenced by a particular religious culture, the enclave culture. I reasoned that there would likely be cultural interaction from one level to another, and from the community’s religious culture to the institutional culture. If the enclave culture indeed has some influence on institutional culture, an important question that this study aims to answer is whether the enclave culture influences students’ sense of welcome or belonging at the publicly funded college located within the enclave’s region.

Before arriving at an answer to this question, one must address three more foundational questions. Because the study of culture outlined here is conceptually sequential, with later questions relying on answers to previous questions, three
preliminary questions must be addressed each in turn. Before one can determine whether or not the enclave culture influences students’ sense of welcome or belonging, one must first gain a general sense of the institutional culture. Thus, the first question to be addressed is this - what is the nature of the institutional culture? Second, assuming that one already has an understanding of the enclave culture, one must determine the extent to which the enclave’s culture influences the institutional culture. Third, once having determined the extent of the enclave culture’s influence on the institution’s culture, one must then determine if students are aware of the enclave’s cultural influence, if in fact there is some influence. Finally, one must determine if an awareness of the enclave’s cultural influence on the institutional culture influences students’ sense of welcome or belonging at the college. Again, these issues must be addressed sequentially.

This portion of the mixed-method design addresses two preliminary or foundational questions in the sequence described above. First, this portion of the research design seeks to characterize the institutional culture and, second, to determine the extent of the influence of the enclave’s culture within that institutional culture. However, the final questions of whether students are aware of the influence and whether their awareness influences their sense of welcome and belonging will be addressed by the third component in the research design, the in-depth qualitative interviews, a component that is discussed below. Thus, the two purposes of this second component, the analysis of institutional culture, are to characterize the institution’s culture and to determine if there is evidence that the enclave’s culture influences the institutional culture.
Research about organizational and institutional culture in higher education has a long tradition. Many scholars (Clark, 1970; Kuh & Witt, 1988; Kempner, 1990; Kuh, 1990) suggest methods for inventorying and describing institutional culture that include observation of institutional processes, documents, symbols, and narratives—particularly those that scholars consider to be emblematic or indicative of culture. After reviewing several suggested methods for inventorying and understanding institutional culture, I decided that an early paradigm (Masland, 1985) was best suited to my purposes.

Masland’s (1985) method is based on document analysis and observation that searches for four aspects of institutional culture: (a) institutional saga, or informal histories of institutional crises and their resolutions, including “a unique accomplishment” that “codifies what sets a college apart from others” (p. 161); (b) institutional “heroes or Saints”, who “represent ideals and values in human form” (p. 161); (c) institutional symbols, which “represent implicit cultural values and beliefs” (p. 162); and (d) institutional rituals (graduation exercises, institutional planning meetings, etc.), which “demonstrate that old values and beliefs still play a role in campus life” (p. 162).

Over the course of a year’s observation, I sought for these four types of cultural manifestations and gained a broad sense of the institutional culture at Dixie State College of Utah. In my observations, I made more pointed follow-up investigations when I saw evidence of religious influence on institutional culture. Through this analysis, I was able to determine the extent of religious influences that appear in these four aspects of institutional culture.
To supplement the cultural analysis that Masland suggests, and in keeping with Kuh's suggestion (1990), I used qualitative interviews of a small number of key institutional employees, both staff and faculty, to assess religious culture. This part of my research helped me answer the two preliminary or foundational questions about culture: (a) What is the nature of institutional culture? and (b) Does the culture of the religious enclave influence the institutional culture?

Qualitative Interviews

Some researchers note that, by themselves, quantitative methods are not sufficiently "thick" (James Spradley as cited by Warren, 2002, p. 85) to explore and explain a phenomenon as complicated as religion. Many studies of religion use both quantitative and qualitative methods, stressing the importance of the qualitative methods. According to Holcomb and Nonneman (2004), when the topic involves religion, "only person-to-person interviews can get at the 'why' and 'how' behind the 'what'" (p. 94). Another researcher, Mark (2004), also stresses the importance of qualitative interviews for religious research:

Until recently, the vast majority of data on religion and families were obtained through quantitative methods . . . However, interview-based qualitative approaches to family research can "give us windows" . . . and "lift the veils" . . . to meanings, processes, and relationships that are difficult to obtain through other approaches. . . . (p. 219)

And still another researcher who studies the impact of religion on gerontology, advocates methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Krause, 2002):
A growing number of investigators are calling for studies that combine qualitative and quantitative research methods. By allowing people to talk freely without imposing a researcher's prior assumptions on the study, qualitative methods provide an excellent opportunity for getting direct access to a substantive domain, such as religion. Listening while older adults share their experiences and feelings about religion gives researchers an improved understanding of this construct from the participants' perspective. As a result, investigators are in a better position to uncover broad themes and content areas that more accurately reflect the ways that elders themselves think about and practice religion in daily life, thereby making it possible to identify key dimensions of a phenomenon that have not appeared previously in the literature. (pp. 2263-5264)

Because I am interested in studying phenomena as complex as the interaction of religion and education in a public college that is in a religious enclave, I used in-depth interviews as the primary source of data. Interviews afforded me access to information about how students with differing levels of integration in the enclave culture experienced the college, their peers, and their professors. Interviews provided a means of exploring in depth how students at a public college located in a religious enclave negotiate with the enclave environment and with one another. In the interviews, students discussed their awareness of the enclave culture's influence on other students, on faculty, and on the general cultural milieu at the college, and they described their access to associational resources or social capital that they were able to use to achieve educational benefits.
This third component of the mixed-method research design relied on information gathered in the previous two methodological components, the quantitative interviews and the analysis of institutional culture. After analyzing data from the survey instrument described above, I used the results identify a small number of individual students for in-depth personal interviews. The results of the survey allowed me to form a partial profile of students, but only the interviews provided the rich and more complete portrayal of the cultural phenomena under study. From the survey data, I knew, for example, that a Mormon student was eighteen, female, a Utahan, a college freshman, with a cumulative GPA of 3.43. I knew that she had returned to school the fall term after the survey was given. I knew that she reported that she attended church weekly and participated in private religious observances daily. I knew that she expressed high levels of intrinsic religiosity, that her best friend at the college was also Mormon, and that her favorite professor at the college was Mormon. I knew that she felt that her religious views were respected, and that she expressed a high level of satisfaction with the college’s religious climate.

However, only the in-depth interview allowed me to explore her feelings about her non-LDS roommates and their occasional beer drinking, her response to the secular instruction she received in her biology classes, and her feelings about the lyrics of the music she was hearing at school dances. Only in the interview did I learn that she was talking an LDS-based religion class at a Mormon “Institute of Religion” that was located adjacent to campus, and only in the interview did I learn of religious counsel that her Institute teachers were giving her about the professors on campus and their classes.
As Glaser and Strauss (1967, 1999) point out, a qualitative researcher should choose interview participants who represent “dissimilar, substantive groups from the larger class” (p. 54). The items in the quantitative survey help to characterize individual students’ academic and religious backgrounds, allowing me to focus on attributes that help me initially to identify important sub-samples and, for the later qualitative stage of the research, choose participants that exemplify characteristics of interest.

Also, interviews relied on information I had obtained in the analysis of culture. After analyzing data, I was able to identify influences of the enclave culture in campus documents, narratives, symbols, and rituals. With this information, I was able to ask students about their awareness of, and feelings about particular influences I had found in my analysis of campus culture. In these ways, the in-depth interview research component relied on data gathered in the other two previous components.

During my experiences interviewing students, my approach was, as Glauser and Strauss (1967) suggest, inductive, and I found that my methodological decisions matured as interviews progressed. Initially, I developed the notion that students I interviewed would be of four neat categorical types. I planned to interview students of these four broad types:

- Non-Mormon students with low measures of religiosity, or students who express very low levels of organizational, non-organizational, and intrinsic religiosity on the survey;
Non-Mormon students with high measures of religiosity, or students who express very high levels of organizational, non-organizational, and intrinsic religiosity on the survey;

Mormon students with low measures of religiosity, or students who express very low levels of organizational, non-organizational, and intrinsic religiosity on the survey; and

Mormon students with high measures of religiosity, or students who express very high levels of organizational, non-organizational, and intrinsic religiosity on the survey.

Additionally, I was interested to explore the views of students who are, and who are not, long-time residents within Utah’s religious enclave. In particular, I was interested to interview students who had traveled into Utah from distant locations to explore their reaction to Utah’s religious enclave. Thus, I sought out students whose home address was within Utah and other students whose home address was in some distant location.

Creating a profile from responses to the survey, I identified students for interviews who I thought fell into the four categories described above. However, it wasn’t until I was completing the actual interviews that I realized the complexity of students’ religious identities, the varied nature of their religious attitudes, and the richness of their relationship to the enclave culture and to one another. I realized that the complexity of students’ relationship to the enclave culture resisted simple categorization and rendered my initial four-celled typology ineffective.
For example, the survey responses of one forty-eight-year-old male student had indicated highest levels of private religious observance and intrinsic religiosity, but he also the lowest level of organizational religiosity — indicating that he attended church services less than once a year. On the survey, he indicated that his religious affiliation as “none.” Initially, I chose to interview this student because I thought he represented a categorical type — a non-Mormon with somewhat high levels of religiosity. However, during the interview, I learned that he was a recovering narcotic addict who had spent eleven years in prison, that he was raised in a Mormon home, but that he had left the church and its culture because he had been the victim of child abuse at the hands of Mormon neighbors and friends. In short, the in-depth interviews brought me information that rendered my initial four-celled typology inadequate.

I realized that the four categories were perhaps too neat and that this categorization would not do justice to students’ experiences and views. Throughout the interview process, I chose to interview students who epitomized characteristics of interest to my study because, as Rubin and Rubin (2005) point out, “the credibility of . . . findings is enhanced if [the researcher has] interviewed individuals who reflect a variety of perspectives” (p. 67). However, I was not able to impose neat and distinct typological labels on many of the students I interviewed.

Therefore, I later sought to interview students with wide-ranging responses from the survey. Indeed, I followed Warren’s (2002) advice to choose “respondents who seem likely to epitomize the analytic criteria in which [I am] interested” (p. 87),
but was not surprised when I found that the interviews' details portrayed a multifaceted person who defied simple categorization.

Also, early on, I developed a semi-structured interview plan, and I thought that the plan would suffice for exploring the issues about which I was interested. However, as I conducted interviews, to a great extent, my methods were inductive and responsive to the material students told me, and I found myself wandering away from my original plan. Even though I began my research with certain theoretic interests, with the notion that students would fall into certain categories, and with a sense that my interview protocol would suffice for most interviews and be more or less mechanically executed, before I had completed many of the interviews, I had fully adopted a "grounded theory" approach with "constant comparative qualitative methodology" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 1999; Babbie, 2002). I believe Charmaz (2002) describes my experience well:

Researchers cannot know exactly what the most significant social and social psychological processes are in particular settings, so they start with areas of interest to them and form preliminary interviewing questions to open up those areas. They explore the research participants' concerns and then further develop questions around those concerns, subsequently seeking participants whose experiences speak to these questions. This sequence is repeated several times during a research project. Hence grounded theory methods keep researchers close to their gathered data rather than to what they may have previously assumed or wished was the case. . . . All variants of grounded theory include the following strategies: (a) simultaneous data
collection and analysis, (b) pursuit of emergent themes through early data analysis, (c) discovery of basic social processes within the data, (c) inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesize these processes (e) sampling to refine the categories through comparative processes, and (f) integration of categories into a theoretical framework that specifies causes, conditions, and consequences of the studied processes. (pp. 675-677)

The setting and the amount of time for the interviews were important considerations in my interviewing technique. I chose a setting for interviews that would be both convenient for students and neutral in terms of its symbolic power. Classrooms, offices, and certain other institutional spaces are often associated with instructional power relationships, with professors in the dominant position of control and students in a position of compliance or submission. Wanting to avoid a space that students would associate with academic power relationships, I avoided doing interviews in institutional offices or classrooms. I did not want the persons I interviewed to think of me as one of their professors, to whom they were obligated. Privacy was also a consideration when I chose the setting. For interviews to proceed well, students needed a sense of privacy, a sense that no other persons could or would overhear their comments. Considering all of these elements – convenience, symbolic power, and privacy – I chose to conduct interviews in a private study room in the campus library. Because many students spend time studying or researching in the library, they come to think of it as a student-dominated space, a facility specifically set aside for unsupervised study, and a location where most students feel comfortable.

136

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The symbolic power relationships are, I believe, somewhat muted in the campus library.

The amount of time required was important to students. When I contacted students to arrange interviews, their first question was quick and predictable: “How much time will it take?” I knew that there were limits to what I could ask of them, and I told them I would only ask one hour’s time. Once the interviews began, however, students seemed to enjoy the process, and at the end of the hour several of them volunteered more time. One interview lasted more than an hour and a half.

Interviews were recorded on audiotape and later transcribed for analysis. At the beginning of the interviews, I asked for and received students’ permission to audiotape their comments. A few students seemed initially nervous about the tape recording, but warmed to the conversation, and before interviews ended, all students spoke openly and enthusiastically about their experiences and views, and the tape recorder did not seem distracting.

Using what Rubin and Rubin (2005) call “responsive interviewing” techniques, I began by introducing my research interests and gaining participants’ confidence, and then proceeded to focus on what the participants had to say. I followed up on issues and themes that arose as part of the conversation. Indeed, my interviewing method was a form of “continuous redesign” as Rubin and Rubin (2005) have described it (p. 62). Rubin and Rubin’s model of “responsive interviewing” has much in common with Glaser and Strauss’s grounded theory:

In the responsive interviewing model, theories are induced from the data to discover how different concepts and themes mentioned in interviews...
relate to one another. To successfully work out such a theory, you have to recognize the concepts and themes central to your research while you are still collecting data and then modify your questions to make sure you obtain more detail on what each of the concepts and themes mean, get examples of each, and learn how they relate to one another (p. 36).

As I conducted and transcribed interviews, I kept in mind Glaser and Strauss’s (1967, 1999) advice that interviewing should continue to a point of “saturation” – the point at which “no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category” (p. 61). I sensed that, for many of the issues discussed, I had interviewed until I had reached “saturation” – that is, until much of the material I heard became repeated information, with comparatively little new information. Nevertheless, despite the repetition of several significant themes, because of the variation in students’ experiences, I have the sense that I did not totally saturate the subject – the sense that more interviews will bring other insights. The total number of interviews I completed was twelve, resulting in approximately 240 pages of single-spaced transcripts.

After conducting interviews, I analyzed the data, forming typological categories and noting repeated themes, as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967, 1999) and Charmaz (2002). With these categories and themes in mind, I coded interview data to analyze similarities, differences, and prevalence of themes. My initial coding was, as Glaser and Strauss suggest, more specific, and later coding became more general, leading to the formulation of overall theories. When coding was complete, I finalized theory generation before writing and presenting results. My
intent was to discover patterns in the data that lead to theory with implications both in Utah and, perhaps, other settings where public higher education occurs in populations with shared religious values that form the basis of the community.

Like Charmaz (2002), Rubin and Rubin (2005) identify two basic philosophical approaches of qualitative interviewing – the positivist (or what Charmaz terms “objectivist”) and the “interpretive constructionist” (or what Charmaz terms “constructivist”). They characterize the positivist as being the methodology of “hard sciences” – strongly committed to neutrality and empirical detachment. Rubin and Rubin much prefer the interpretive constructionist approach, since “the research is human, not an automaton” (p. 21). Constructionists focus on “shared meanings held by those in a cultural arena – a setting in which people have in common matters such as religion, history, work tasks, confinement in prison, or political interests” (p. 28). Because of this emphasis on shared meaning, Rubin and Rubin advocate what they call “responsive interviewing” that recognizes and utilizes the humanness of both researcher and participant.

Because I am a life-time resident of Utah and a participant in the state’s enclave culture, through all phases of the qualitative interviews, I was attentive to issues related to my role as interviewer and my participation in the culture under study. My background and participation in the culture may, as some scholars suggest, have important benefits for my research. My approach is what Rubin and Rubin (2005) term “interpretive constructionist” and Charmaz (2002) terms “constructivist.” Because such a philosophical approach aims at in-depth description of cultural phenomena and requires sensitivity to shared meaning, Rubin and Rubin
(2005) point to many advantages for researchers who are participating members of the community under investigation and suggest that, if not researchers are not participants in the culture being studied, researchers should find ways to become involved in some way. Sometimes, they assert, it's both necessary and preferable to "cross the boundary" and reveal oneself as a member of the group being studied. They write, "In creating a relationship with interviewees, researchers often have to cross the boundary from being an outsider to being an insider" (86).

In the interviews I conducted, almost without fail the students asked me about my religious affiliation. My response was always that because I was asking so many pointed and personal questions of them, they had every right to ask similar questions of me. However, I told them that I really wanted to hear their views without any influence from my views. I promised to answer all of their questions, but asked them if it would be all right if I delayed answering till the end of the interview. Students agreed, and when the interview was concluding, I told them about my religious affiliation. Often, this information stimulated further conversation and exploration of ideas, and sometimes the interview continued for quite some time after I had discussed my religious affiliation.

Obviously, I took great care about how I revealed myself as participant. When the interviewer crosses the boundary and becomes a participant in the culture that is being studied, there may be danger that the interviewer would "be caught up in the cross-currents of a group or an organization" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p.86). However, many scholars believe that "the role of an insider is better because interviewees assume that the researcher is sympathetic and understands their
language, concepts, and experiences” (87). In the past, Johnson (2002) notes, “the professional ideal was that of ‘detachment’ and ‘objectivity,’ which was taken to mean that actual lived experience or actual membership status could ‘taint’ the research or its findings”; however, “lived experience and member status are no longer stigmatized among social scientists, and some even extol their relative merits . . .” (p. 107). Because of the diversity of persons interviewed, it was difficult to establish this commonality with all participants, but where possible, I took advantage of my familiarity with the culture.

This last part of my research, the qualitative interviews, addressed important aspects of my research questions. At a public college located within a religious enclave, in what ways do the “lived experience” of religiously integrated students and those who are not religiously integrated differ? At a public college located within a religious enclave, to what extent do students draw upon social and cultural capital developed in the family, the community, and the religious organization in order to achieve educational benefits?
Summary of Methods

It may be useful to summarize research questions and methods in tabular format, as follows:

Table 7 Research Questions and Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
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| 1. At a public college located within a religious enclave, what is the association between integration in the enclave's religious community (as measured by affiliation, participation, intrinsic religiosity, and association with coreligionists) and educational outcomes (course grades in HIST 1700, college GPA, and freshman students' returning for the subsequent academic year)? | Survey-based methods: To measure integration in the enclave, I first use the survey to ask students to indicate their religious affiliation. Also, in the survey I collect data about several religious variables:  
    - religious affiliation,  
    - religious participation,  
    - private religiosity,  
    - intrinsic religiosity,  
    - association with coreligionists,  
    - religious coping, and  
    - satisfaction with the campus religious climate.  
    
    Using the institution's academic database, I collect data about three academic variables:  
    - course grades in HIST 1700,  
    - cumulative GPA, and  
    - whether freshman students return for the subsequent academic year after an academic year has passed.  
    
    To address this research question in its simplest form, I first run correlations among three religious variables –  
    - religious participation,  
    - intrinsic religiosity, and  
    - association with coreligionists – and three academic variables –  

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<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
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| 2. At a public college located within a religious enclave, what impact does religion have on institutional culture in ways that students are aware of or in ways that influence students’ sense of belonging or welcome at the college? | • course GPA in HIST 1700,  
• cumulative college GPA, and  
• freshman students return for subsequent year.  
To determine whether other measures of religious integration add important insights, I run multiple regression analysis, exploring relationships between the students’ cumulative GPA’s and several religious variables:  
• course grade in HIST 1700,  
• cumulative college GPA, and  
• freshman students return for subsequent year.  
Finally, using backwards stepwise regression, I evaluate the predictive influence of a variety of models on students’ cumulative GPA’s, with each model composed of different variables.  
Analysis of Culture: Through document analysis, interviews, and observation, I note religious influences on the four aspects of institutional culture in Masland’s model of cultural analysis (1985): (a) institutional saga, (b) institutional heroes, (c) institutional symbols, and (d) institutional rituals.  
Survey-based methods: I ask students whether they “enjoy the religious climate at this college.” I run correlation between their response to this question and the return of freshman students for the subsequent academic year.  
Interview-based methods: In interviews of LDS and non-LDS students, I ask the following questions:  
• Are you aware of any influence of religion on the history of this college? |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>college? If so, tell me what you know.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are you aware of any influence of religion on important persons at this college?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, tell me what you know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have you ever noticed religious themes or ideas in any of the artwork,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>statues, mosaics or monuments around campus? If so, tell me what you’ve noticed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Follow-up, if they’ve noticed something] How does what you’ve noticed make you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In your opinion, does religion influence this college too much, too little, or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about right? Explain your opinion.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have you ever seen religious behaviors at this college? [Follow-up, if they’ve</td>
<td></td>
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<td>noticed something] How does what you’ve noticed make you feel?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Do you like the religious climate at this college? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If you are aware of religious influences at this college, please tell me how</td>
<td></td>
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<td>those influences make you feel. [Possibly follow-up with] Do those influences</td>
<td></td>
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<td>make you feel at home and welcome, or the opposite?</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Research Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. At a public college located within a religious enclave, how do students of diver</td>
<td>Interview-based methods: In interviews of</td>
</tr>
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<td>se religious backgrounds negotiate with the enclave environment and with one another?</td>
<td>LDS and non-LDS students, I ask the following questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For All Interviewees:</td>
<td>• Some people are really religious, and other people are not very religious. On a scale of one to ten, how religious would you say you now are? Explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some people have very religious upbringings, and other people do not. While you were growing up, on a scale of one to ten, how religious would you say your upbringings was? Explain.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Here at this college, are your best friends members of your religion? And [whether the answer is yes or no] how does having friends of the same religion [or not having friends of the same religion] impact your experience at this college?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Here at this college, does your favorite professor share your religious affiliation? And [whether the answer is yes or no] how does having professors of the same religion [or not having professors of the same religion] impact your experience at this college?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Would you say that your level of religiousness helps you to be academically successful at college, or the opposite? How so?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Would you say that people of different religious backgrounds generally get along well at this college? What makes you think so?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• While you've been a student at this college, have you ever heard anybody -- whether another student, a faculty member, or some other</td>
</tr>
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<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
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<tr>
<td>college employee – say anything derogatory about persons of a particular religion? If so, without mentioning names, tell me what happened?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• On a scale of one to ten, how well do you think people of different religious backgrounds get along at this college?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Is there anything you think people of different religious backgrounds can do to get along better with one another at this college?</td>
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<tr>
<td>For LDS Interviewees:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Would you say that most of the professors are respectful of the LDS religion at this college?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Would you say that most of the students are respectful of the LDS religion at this college?</td>
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<tr>
<td>For Non-LDS Interviewees:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Would you say that most of the professors at this college are respectful of your religious views? What makes you have that opinion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Would you say that most of the students at this college are respectful of your religious views? What makes you have that opinion?</td>
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4. At a public college located within a religious enclave, in what ways do the “lived experience” of religiously integrated students and those who are not religiously integrated differ?

**Interview-based methods**: In interviews of LDS and non-LDS students, I ask the following questions:

- What’s it like to be a person with your religious views at this college? Is this college a good place for a person with your views? How so?
- Would you say that a student who is LDS is more likely or less likely to get good grades at this college? Or would you say that the students’
<table>
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<th>Research Questions</th>
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<td>religion would have no impact on the students' grades?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• In your answer to previous questions, you said that you [are/ are not] an involved and committed member of the dominant religion in this state. Tell me – how do you think your experience here at this college would be different if your religious affiliation and commitment were other than it is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In your opinion, how are the experiences of LDS and non-LDS students different here at this college?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Questions | Research Methods
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5. At a public college located within a religious enclave, to what extent do students draw upon social and cultural capital developed in the family, the community, and the religious organization in order to achieve educational benefits? And if so, how? | Interview-based methods: In interviews of LDS and non-LDS students, I ask the following questions:

- Think of five or six people who have helped you the most in your life. [Pause until the student is ready to proceed.] Do you have them in mind? Good.
  - [Follow-up] How many of those people are members of your family?
  - [Follow-up] How many are neighbors, friends, employers, or other members of your community?
  - [Follow-up] How many are members of your religious organization?
- How important have members of a religious organization or church been in your academic success? Explain.
- The people that students know well might be able to help them succeed at college. Can you think of people in your religious organization that could help you succeed at college? If so, how could those people help?
- When it comes to academic success, would you say that other students at this college have had more or less help from members of their religion, or about the same as you? Tell me about it.

The three components of this research design – the quantitative component, the analysis of institutional culture, and the in-depth interviews – allowed me to analyze my research questions well. I used the quantitative survey to identify sub-
samples of interest within the sample of study, such as whether there is an association between integration in a religious community, either Mormon or non-Mormon, and indicators of academic achievement. I used the analysis of institutional culture to observe the impact of the community’s religious culture on institutional culture and on students. With these steps completed, I determined the types of students for qualitative interviews and the specific individuals to be interviewed. I wrote an interview protocol, located the students and conducted in-depth qualitative interviews. After transcribing all interviews, I coded and analyzed interviews, generated theory, and wrote the report of my findings.
CHAPTER 4

RELIGIOUS CULTURE AT A PUBLICLY FUNDED COLLEGE IN UTAH’S ENCLAVE – SAGA, HEROES, SYMBOLS AND RITUAL

At a public college located within a religious enclave, what influence does the enclave’s religion have on institutional culture? This chapter describes the influence of the enclave culture on institutional culture. The chapter begins with a brief history of Utah Mormonism as a religious enclave, followed by a discussion of how Utah continues to function as a religious enclave. Then the chapter describes the influence of Utah’s religious culture on the culture at Dixie State College, a publicly funded institution. The following chapter provides an analysis of the influence of the enclave culture on institutional culture.

A Brief History of Utah Mormonism as Religious Enclave

Utah Mormonism illustrates the five stages discussed in chapter one. First, it was a religious group that broke off from mainstream American religion. Second, it became separatist, removing itself from what it viewed as inhospitable social conditions. Third, it became itself a regionally dominant culture—in effect, a regional mainstream. Fourth, it launched several social services, including institutions of higher education. And fifth, it faced problems related to pluralism,
including questions about whether and how to accommodate non-believing students in its colleges.

The history of the State of Utah, it may be said, is coterminous with the history of the Mormon Church. The religion's founder, Joseph Smith, wrote that when he was a fourteen-year-old boy in 1820, he observed the religious enthusiasm of his neighbors and family and decided to pray to determine which of all the competing churches was God's true church. He reported that in answer to his prayer, God and Jesus Christ appeared to him and told him that none of the existing churches was true. Further, according to Smith, Christ criticized existing Protestant religions that were active along the eastern seaboard. Mormonism's founder flatly rejected the trend of American denominationalism toward a limited acceptance or toleration of other religious groups' truth claims, categorically refusing to join forces with the American religious mainstream. Instead, from its inception, Mormonism has asserted its sole and exclusive legitimacy, insisting that there was in fact only one true religion - that there was, in fact, no brotherhood of truth that included multiple religious entities.

Through its history, this posture has placed the LDS culture into tension with environing American culture. In the first half of the nineteenth century as Mormons gathered together into a religious community, their exclusivity incited the sometimes violent disapproval of their neighbors and created inhospitable social relationships. Mormons brought upon themselves the disapproving attention of the nation at large, and the Mormon Church's early history is marked by conflict at a series of failed settlements in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Mississippi. In each successive Mormon settlement, Mormons domesticated the wild land in the region, came into conflict
with their non-Mormon neighbors, and, when the conflict rose in intensity, felt compelled to remove to another settlement.

Through this series of conflicts, Mormons became increasingly isolated and separatist, and in 1847, Joseph Smith’s successor, Brigham Young, led members of the Church into territory of the unsettled American frontier, where they established a final Mormon stronghold. Through the nineteenth century, Mormon doctrinal and familial peculiarities brought them to the attention of eastern politicians and religious leaders. The Mormon Church promoted the “doctrine of the gathering,” the concept that God had commanded Mormon converts around the world to come to the Mormon stronghold in Utah. Thousands of converts traveled to Utah, effectively establishing the numerical superiority of Mormons in the region. As the enclave became more powerful, the size and concentration of the Mormon population became increasingly viewed as a threat. In American political campaigns, Protestant politicians dubbed slavery and Mormon polygamy as “the twin relics of barbarism” (May, 1987, p. 123).

At the same time that Mormons established their numeric superiority, however, various economic activities—the railroad, mining, agriculture, the military—brought non-Mormon easterners into Territorial Utah. Because of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, the year 1869 is a benchmark in the Utah Territory’s rising pluralism. Writing letters back to “the states,” Non-Mormon newcomers reported about the eccentricities of the “saints,” and the conflicts that had occurred in earlier Mormon settlements began to reappear within Utah Territory.
Partly because of the flaws of Mormons' early educational system, eastern Protestants came to think of education as a way to convert Mormons. Rather than sending missionaries to Africa or some other remote region, the Protestant Home Mission Movement of the nineteenth century identified Mormons in Utah (and Catholics elsewhere, see Yohn, 1991) as non-Christian and therefore suitable objects for Protestant proselytizing efforts. Protestant "home missionaries" assumed that Mormonism was the result of ignorance – that as soon as Mormon youth were educated, they would see the errors of their ways and convert to other, more enlightened religions.

In fact, Mormons experienced what other immigrants to the American frontier experienced: "The people who moved to the frontier spent their first generation building their communities. Even though they often started colleges as emblems of community pride, higher education was not essential for solving problems of subsistence..." (Cohen, 1998, p. 101). As evidence that such was the case in Utah, Banker (1993) points to the fact that even fifteen years after arriving in Utah Territory, only 32 percent of school-aged Mormon children were actually enrolled in school (p. 51) and by 1878, average attendance was only 44.5 percent of the small percentage of students who had enrolled (Lyon, 1962, p. 69). Further, schools in Utah, as Buchanan (1982) points out, "were not... destined to become seats of learning," largely because the energy of Utah pioneers was diverted while they "contended with Indians, drought, isolation, and eventually, the U.S. Army" (p. 446).

This assumption can be seen, for example, in the 1877 campaign for Utah Territorial Superintendent of District Schools (the incumbent office holder for which had recently become the Mormon prophet, John Taylor). A non-Mormon candidate for the position wrote:

The final and absolute emancipation of serfdom from Utah must be eventually achieved through the education of the masses. We who are now on the stage can only hope to ameliorate the condition of the down trodden, secure good schools for the youth, and impart to them moral courage and individual heroism. Pervading liberty will abide in Zion when education becomes universal. Every child brought into being has rights which no honorable public will ignore, and one of these rights is the right to a liberal education—liberal in the broad acceptance of the term where knowledge is not distilled from the
Protestant home missionaries had found that traditional religious exhortation was not an effective means of converting Mormons, and therefore, they turned to providing education. While their intent to "redeem" the Mormons was based on religious issues, it may be said that it included cultural values across the spectrum of social institutions – political, familial, social, and economic. If they could bring Mormon youth under the tutelage of enlightened teachers, they reasoned, a more general conversion would be initiated, a conversion to the more general culture of American culture and Protestant denominationalism. This general conversion, it was reasoned, would enlighten the students and eventually draw them away from Mormonism. They reasoned that "if we put liberty and education into the Territories now dominated by Mormonism, liberty and education will solve the Mormon problem... We can leave them their Temple, so long as we overtop it with the schoolhouse and the college" (Winship as quoted by Buchanan, 1983, p. 159).

For their part, as Goodykoontz (1939) notes, Mormons recognized Protestant schools for what they were – institutions established for the purpose of instructing and converting Mormon children – and one can find evidence of Mormon ambivalence about these educational efforts. Regardless of the fact that Protestants spent millions of dollars to establish mission schools, hardly a single Mormon converted away from Mormonism.

Reacting to the educational successes of some of the Protestant home mission schools, in 1888, the Mormon Church initiated its own, more aggressive effort to

*pest brain of a theocratic leper [Brigham Young].* (Buchanan, 1982, pp. 440-441, emphasis added)

154
provide Mormon higher education in the territory (Lyon, 1962; Moffit, 1946), founding several “academies” in Mormon stakes (regional Mormon organizations). Three of these stake academies evolved into institutions that today are publicly funded, part of the Utah System of Higher Education: Weber State University, Snow College, and Dixie State College. These now publicly funded institutions in Utah had their beginnings during the 1880s and 1890s as institutions established by and for Mormons, as counter-strategy against denominationalism in general and Protestant schools in particular. Through the first decades of the twentieth century, these three institutions existed as Mormon Church colleges, funded by the Church and administered by ecclesiastical leaders. However, by the 1930s Protestant groups conceded that the home mission schools were ineffective in converting Utah Mormons and began to focus efforts elsewhere. The Church no longer perceived the home missionaries as credible threats to Mormon dominance in Utah. Facing its own financial problems in the 1920s and 1930s, the Mormon Church withdrew financial support from the former stake academies, and they became public institutions.

Once again, scholarship has focused on the cultural, institutional and policy aspects of Territorial Utah’s emerging colleges, and the experiences of individual students within those institutions have been largely disregarded. What was it like, for example, to be a Mormon student in a Presbyterian day school? What was the lived experience of a Catholic student attending the University of Deseret in nineteenth-century Utah? How did the conversion of church-related academies to publicly funded institutions influence the educational experience of the students there, both
Mormon and non-Mormon? Again, these questions are difficult to address because the social settings no longer exist.

Utah Mormonism as a Religious Enclave Today

A body of literature in human and cultural geography deals with how enclaves function, with particular emphasis on what is called the “Mormon culture region” as an enclave. An early article (Meinig, 1965), notes that nineteenth-century Mormons believed in what scholars call “the doctrine of the gathering” (p. 198). Basically, Mormons believed that God had commanded Mormons to come together in demographically concentrated regions and, through various types of communal relationships, establish “a Zion society” in which, because of their demographic predominance and political power, they would be able to create social structures that fostered and nurtured Mormonism. This doctrine resulted in what later scholars called a “headquarters culture” (Quinn, 2002, p. 135)\(^2\) – a situation in which there

\(^2\) Quinn (2002) has noted that Mormonism has a “headquarters culture” – a tendency to gather together into its regional enclave. This tendency to identify a single location for gathering also establishes that geographic region as the source of culture, authority, and religious council, a single location for concentration and cultural fortification. Quinn writes:

... Before Joseph Smith’s martyrdom in 1844, LDS headquarters manifested various characteristics. Some of these remained constant. First, living at church headquarters involved abundant opportunities to see God’s ‘living prophet,’ both in church settings and in routine activities of daily life. Second, headquarters provided its residents with access to newly announced doctrines and with frequent opportunity of hearing church leaders discuss any doctrines as ‘deeply’ as they wished. Third, the LDS church gave the rank-and-file at headquarters the option of membership in special organizations that were unavailable to Mormons living far distant. Fourth, headquarters provided its residents with access to sacred ceremonies that were unavailable to other Mormons. Fifth, Mormons at church headquarters experienced political power unavailable to Mormons living as a minority elsewhere. Sixth, because Mor-
was a geographic cultural “core” that was (as Meinig puts it) “a centralized zone of concentration, displaying the greatest density of occupancy, intensity of organization, strength, and homogeneity of the particular features characteristic of the culture. . .” (p. 213).

In the West, Meinig notes, the “core” of the Mormon culture region\(^4\) lies along a north-south range of mountains known as the Wasatch Front (p. 214). Surrounding the cultural core is a cultural “domain,” or a region “in which the particular culture under study is dominant, but with markedly less intensity and complexity of development than in the core” (p. 215). The Mormon cultural domain has expanded and contracted through history, but is generally recognized to extend into most western states.

Mormons were usually the dominant population wherever LDS headquarters was located, they confronted the challenges faced by any majority which must coexist with minorities and with dissent. Seventh, certain aspects of the physical and material culture at headquarters were distinct. (p. 137)

\(^4\) Jan Shipps (2000), a prominent religious historian and analyst of Mormon culture, refers to “the western Mormon enclave” (p. 299). Shipps notes that Mormonism’s growth as a worldwide church has changed the Mormon culture region. Before World War II, the doctrine of the gathering lead to a quasi-ethnic Mormon identity that Shipps calls “peoplehood”: “Mormonism was such an enclave culture that being born Mormon in the 1940s was analogous to being born Jewish.” However, in the last half of the twentieth century when Mormonism evolved “from being primarily western to being a worldwide faith,” the culture has transformed from being a “people,” to being a culture with a looser and more inclusive identity based on church membership (p. 30). Today, although “U.S. Mormons now constitute less than half the total number of Saints worldwide,” still “people continue to live in LDS communities where Mormon ethnicity, although often attenuated, is alive and well” (p. 37). Outside of the Mormon culture region in the Intermountain West, Mormon identity has lost its quasi-ethnic component such that now “only belief and practice . . . set them apart” (p. 38).
The doctrine of the gathering resulted in a very large and very concentrated religious enclave that persists today. Citing a 1958 census of religious adherents, Meinig writes,

Indeed, in the most recent religious census there were eight counties within [the Mormon culture region] which reported no adherents whatsoever of any other denomination, an astonishing homogeneity for any American region. (pp. 215-216, emphasis added)

Because of the doctrine of the gathering and the resulting Mormon tendency toward demographic concentration, relations with "gentiles" (any non-Mormon of any religious affiliation) have been strained. Within the Mormon culture region, status as a cultural insider or outsider serves as a sort of shorthand way to communicate one's stance on a variety of politically and culturally sensitive questions. Yorgason (2003) puts it this way:

Regional inhabitants' Mormon or non-Mormon identity came close to determining their stances on various sociocultural debates. . . . Mormon and non-Mormon sociocultural structures were considered incompatible, and most members of each group expended considerable energy trying to establish the regional dominance of their structures. The stakes were so high that they seemingly had little choice. Non-Mormons worried that Mormons would establish an anti-American society in the heart of the western United States, while Mormons, who felt they were implementing American ideals, feared for the existence of their church and their faith. Regional inhabitants thus viewed virtually all social questions through this prism. They structured issues
seemingly far removed from the debate . . . around regional efforts to either establish or break down Mormon power. (p. 4, emphasis added)\textsuperscript{25}

Even though religious groups continue to be concentrated in some American localities (i.e., Catholics in Rhode Island or Amish in parts of Pennsylvania), no religious group enjoys the overwhelming numeric domination of an entire state that Mormons enjoy in Utah. Rather than following other regions’ trend toward increased religious pluralism, Utah has become progressively more homogeneous through the twentieth century. Because of three factors—(a) the traditionally large Mormon family\textsuperscript{26}, (b) a tendency for Mormons to “gather” to a cultural “headquarters” (Tony, ...)

\textsuperscript{25} Because of this decades-long cultural phenomenon, within the Mormon cultural region, all persons, both Mormon and not, are very attentive to the Mormon/non-Mormon divide. People in Utah care deeply about whether or not another person is or is not Mormon, and they go to extreme ends to establish this status early on in their relationship with other persons. Beyond the Mormon/non-Mormon divide, further details about religious affiliation are relatively unimportant. For persons in Utah, after finding out that another person is not Mormon, it doesn’t really matter what brand of religion the other person espouses – Methodist, Buddhist, Christian Scientist, Catholic, atheistic or agnostic, etc. Nothing matters so much as the Mormon/non-Mormon issue.

In subtle ways, today both Mormons and non-Mormons are still trying to, as Yorgason (2003) wrote, “establish the regional dominance of their structures” (p. 4). The Mormon structure favors homogeneity and promotes the rights of the local majority. It continues to accept at least one important assumption of the old “Zion society” concept – that coreligionists ought to be able to gather together in a geographic region and, because of demographic predominance, establish social forms that are amenable to their religious beliefs. The non-Mormon structure favors diversity and promotes the rights of a host of minorities. It continues to accept perhaps the most important assumption of American constitutional culture – that a majority that fails to accommodate minorities and extend a range of latitude for minority cultural expression is a tyrannous majority.

\textsuperscript{26} Sherkat & Ellison (1999) write, “Mormons have the highest total fertility rate of any major religious grouping . . .” (p. 372). Eschleman (2003) cites 2000 U.S. Census data that shows that Utah's birth rate per 1,000 women was the highest of any state's at 21.9 births. The lowest states were Maine (10.8 births per 1,000 women) and Vermont (10.9 births per 1,000 women, p. 366).
McKewen, & Kan, 1983; Heaton, 1998; Quinn, 2002), and (c) a tendency for non-Mormon persons to out-migrate from the state—through the past century the state has become demographically more Mormon, not more diverse. In 1920, 60 percent of Utah's population was Mormon (Phillips, 2004, p. 144), but by 2000 that percentage had increased to 77.1 (Grammich, 2004, p. 20). As a state, Utah's population has greater religious homogeneity than that of any other state, and no other state exhibits such a "numerical predominance of one denomination in the geographical area" (Warner, 1993, p. 1056).

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27 Toney, McKewen, & Kan (1983) examined patterns of immigration and out-migration in the State of Utah. Their study finds that "although Mormons comprise less than one percent of the sending population [i.e., less than one percent of the non-Utah United States population was Mormon at the time of their study], they constitute up to 70 percent of Utah's immigrants [sic]." Heaton (1998) notes, "Utah Mormons are somewhat less likely to move to another state, and those born in Utah are more likely to return to their state of birth in a subsequent move than are Mormons born elsewhere" (p. 116). In addition to the fact that Mormons tend to "gather" to Utah, non-Mormons have a higher tendency to leave the state: "Non-Mormons are more likely to express intentions to out-migrate than are Mormons."


29 According to the Adherents.com web site (http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_343.html, downloaded on April 21, 2005), the current percentage of Utah that is Mormon is variously cited, from a low of 67% to a high of 76.1%. The most common figure cited in recent media and demographic publications is 70%. One 1998 source claims, "Yet [from 1940 till 1997], the membership in Utah increased from 350,000 in 1940 to 1,551,000 in 1997, a 443 percent increase. In 1940, some 64% of Utah residents were LDS, while 76.1 percent of Utah residents in 1997 were LDS" (*Deseret News 1999-2000 Church Almanac*. Deseret News: Salt Lake City, UT [1998], pg. 122). Phillips (2004), a sociologist studying Mormon dominance in Utah, sets the percentage at 75 (p. 144).
A phenomenal growth rate of the LDS Church has impacted the ratio of Utah to non-Utah Mormons\(^{30}\). No longer are Mormons urged to gather to Utah; instead, they are urged to remain in their communities of origin. Phillips (n.d.)\(^{31}\) compares the percentage of Utahns that are Mormon to the percentage of American Mormons who live in Utah and shows that at the same time that Utah's population has become progressively more Mormon, the percent of American Mormons living in Utah has declined precipitously. In 1920, seventy percent of American Mormons lived in Utah, but that percentage has dropped to near thirty percent in the past two decades, as the following figure illustrates (from Phillips, n.d., p. 12):

\(^{30}\)At the same time that Mormons have increased their numeric dominance within Utah, the Mormon Church has enjoyed phenomenal growth within the United States and worldwide. Sociologist Rodney Stark (1984), for example, demonstrates that the Church's growth rate makes it perhaps the fastest growing American religion, leading him to the striking assertion that "the Mormons will soon achieve a worldwide following comparable to that of Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and the other dominant world faiths" (p. 18). Stark attributed the phenomenal growth of Mormonism (over fifty-percent growth per decade) to the Church's effective missionary effort, with 40 percent of Mormon young men serving full-time, two-year missions. In the century between 1880 and 1980, the Church's membership grew from 160,000 to over five million. If the same growth rate persists through the coming century, Stark declared, there will be 260 million Mormons in 2080.

A decade after making this striking prediction, Stark (1996) reexamined the phenomenal growth of the Mormon church and declared that the growth pattern had persisted, despite the objections of other sociologists: "... it was clear that [the objections were] coming to me mainly from people who were utterly horrified at any conceivable possibility that a century hence there might be more than 260 million Mormons on the planet" (p. 176). To those who couldn't believe the possibility of a fifty-percent per-decade growth rate, he responded, "so far, so good" (p. 178). He shows that between 1980 and 1995, membership grew from 4,920,000 to 9,439,000 – a rate higher than fifty percent per decade.

\(^{31}\)When I contacted Rick Phillips about his earlier scholarship on Mormons, he was kind enough to share with me a book-length manuscript that was on contract for upcoming publication, *American Mormon Cultures: Latter-Day Saints in Zion and Babylon*. Also, Dr. Phillips provided useful advice and directed me to a number of sources. I am grateful to Dr. Phillips for his help.
Within the past year, the *Salt Lake Tribune* (Canham, 2005) released information that calls into question the population trend that Phillips describes. Reporting on "normally secret membership counts the LDS Church voluntarily hands over to [Utah's state government]," the Tribune asserted that the "Mormon portion of Utah population [is] steadily shrinking." That same edition of the Tribune provided the following data, showing that, while the LDS population in Utah grew during the past fifteen years by over three hundred thousand, the non-LDS population grew at a higher rate, and the LDS portion of the overall population diminished from 70.44 percent in 1989 to 62.4 percent in 2004:

Whether the LDS portion of Utah's population is increasing as Phillips and Grammich assert, or decreasing as the Tribune asserts, the continuing dominance of the LDS population has at least two important impacts on Mormonism: First, Utah...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Pop.</th>
<th>LDS Members</th>
<th>% LDS</th>
<th>Total Growth</th>
<th>LDS Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1,706,000</td>
<td>1,201,707</td>
<td>70.44%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1,729,227</td>
<td>1,215,098</td>
<td>70.27%</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1,780,870</td>
<td>1,250,485</td>
<td>70.22%</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
<td>2.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1,838,149</td>
<td>1,281,704</td>
<td>69.73%</td>
<td>3.12%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1,889,393</td>
<td>1,312,371</td>
<td>69.46%</td>
<td>2.71%</td>
<td>2.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1,946,721</td>
<td>1,352,098</td>
<td>69.46%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1,995,228</td>
<td>1,364,958</td>
<td>68.41%</td>
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<td>62.40%</td>
<td>2.25%</td>
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</table>

continues to be an important regional enclave for the religion; second, however, the Mormon Church no longer encourages Mormons to gather to Utah and thus faces the challenge of incorporating large numbers of American Mormons who have no cultural tie to the state. Paradoxically, Mormonism has become at the same time
more homogeneous and less. According to Phillips (n.d.) and Grammich (2004), the concentration of Mormons within Utah’s population is growing, increasing the religious homogeneity of Utah’s population; however, the concentration of Utah Mormons within the Mormon Church overall is decreasing, diminishing the cultural homogeneity of the Church as a whole and, at the same time, decreasing the cultural influence of the Utah enclave within the Church.

Phillips (n.d.) argues that these demographic trends in effect create two distinct American Mormon cultures—the “Utah Mormon identity” and the “Mormon identity in the mission field” (or the Mormon identity in the non-Utah United States). About the former, Phillips writes:

32 To illustrate the difference between these two Mormon cultures—The Utah Mormon identity and the Non-Utah Mormon identity—Phillips compares two Mormon “wards,” one inside Utah and another in New Jersey. To understand Phillips’ analysis, one must first understand that the Mormon ward is a basic organizational unit within the Church. In a creative way, the Church resolved a basic problem that all religious groups face when they grow—the problem of increased group size. “As [religious] groups increase in size,” Johnstone (2004) notes, “the degree of consensus among members concerning goals, and especially norms, declines” (p. 45). Further, “not everyone can interact with everyone else” (p. 45) and “as the group grows larger, it becomes physically and emotionally impossible to feel or express as much concern about other individual members as was possible when the group was smaller...” (p. 46). Mormons solve this problem by duplicating the Mormon “ward”—a small, geographically defined organization of Mormons containing between three and five hundred individuals. All Mormons are organized into wards, and each ward has a set of lay ministers—everyday Mormons who serve as volunteer religious workers.

Based on a concept similar to the Islamic ummah (that salvation is attained through intense interaction with the community of believers), Mormon wards are busily interactive organizations, putting people into frequent and intimate contact. Stark (2004) cites an unpublished study by James Duke that “the average [ward] receives 400 to 600 hours of voluntary labor per week, or the equivalent of ten to fifteen full-time employees” (p. 21). Moffitt (1946) writes that:

The stake and ward plan of organization made it possible for many people to work in an ecclesiastical capacity which kept them in close touch with the

164

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I assert that because social networks at school, work, in neighborhoods, and in public space in Utah are all consolidated with denominational ties, Utah Mormon identity is better characterized as a subcultural identity than a religious identity, since being identified with Mormonism has relevance not only in church settings, but for all aspects of social life within the state. (p. 31)

Just as American Jews are often viewed as an ethnic group, "Mormon identity in Utah has an 'ethnic' character. . . ." (Phillips, n.d., p. 31). Converts to Mormonism objectives and activities of the church. Organization was a part of the church doctrine, and the support and loyalty to its organization was an index of faithful membership. This method of local control and almost universal participation intensified interest in the church and strengthened the feeling of personal security. The tenets of the church demanded a service creed. Demands were also made that the believers meet together often in the interest of the common welfare; therefore, the Mormon settler who came to Utah for religious purposes could not comply with his church duty and life remotely from this brother. (pp. 34-35)

Because more than three out of four Utahns are Mormon, within the Utah Mormon enclave, a ward’s boundaries are often coterminous with the neighborhood’s boundaries. Phillips (n.d.) writes that a typical Utah ward:

. . . encompasses about five city blocks. The ward house, as these Saints call their church, is easy walking distance from most of the homes in the ward. The [lay minister, or bishop] of the Deseret ward has a large map of the subdivision that comprises the ward in his office. Each lot is displayed on the map, and within the lot the bishop has written the name of the family living there, as well as their phone number and the names of their home teachers. It is clear from the map that less than 10 non-LDS families live within the ward’s perimeter. (p. 139).

Contrariwise, a ward in New Jersey—a state in which fewer than one percent of the population is Mormon—is typical of the non-Utah Mormon ward. Rather than encompassing five city blocks, the New Jersey ward encompasses a six-hundred-thousand-person metropolitan area. For many New Jersey ward members, the ward meeting house is an hour’s drive away. "Because of their sparseness, the Saints in the [New Jersey] ward must go to great lengths to construct a viable religious community in the midst of this heterogeneous, cosmopolitan metropolis" (Phillips, n.d., p. 100).

In his analysis of the achievement levels of students of varying ethnicity, John Ogbu (1978) developed a typology of ethnic groups that included Mormons as a distinct ethnic group. Groups, he asserted, are either involuntary or voluntary.
who do not share Utah's "ethnic" identity sometimes find themselves stigmatized as outsiders: "It's as if," one Greek-American Mormon convert complained, "having pioneers in your background makes you more Mormon" (p. 47). Non-Utah American Mormons who migrate into Utah, according to Barber (1995), "experience some pain on becoming a high-profile majority person, identified and numbered with a mass for the first time in their lives, and in the process, struck by the feeling that they are losing individuality." Barber cites the experience of a California Mormon woman, who upon arriving in Utah finds that "it's like I'm not a person with unique characteristics anymore . . . only a Mormon" (p. 397).

Because of these two fundamentally distinct social settings, Mormon religiosity differs greatly between the Utah and the non-Utah Mormon cultures. Basically, because of Mormon concentration within Utah, the state's Mormon culture maintains itself as a functional enclave. In Utah, Mormon children have no trouble finding other Mormon children with whom to socialize. As Mormon adolescents assume adult roles, the marriage market\footnote{Barlow (1977) compares rates of endogamy (marriage of Mormons within the group to other Mormons) in two social settings, Utah and Florida. He notes that, in Florida where less than one percent of the population is Mormon, about two-thirds of Mormons married outside the group; however, in Utah the probability of meeting} in Utah provides them with ample

Involuntary ethnic groups include groups who are brought to the United States against their will or because of conquest or colonization (African-Americans or Mexicans, for example). Ogbu characterizes involuntary ethnic groups as caste-like. Voluntary ethnic groups include groups who come to the United States to improve their economic or social status (Chinese or Koreans, for example). A sub-category of voluntary ethnic groups are what Ogbu calls autonomous minorities, or groups who are not identified by race, but by religion, groups who are usually not politically or economically dominated. Among autonomous minorities are Mormons, Jews, and the Amish.
opportunities for endogamous matrimony. Mormon adults are more acquainted and more involved in one another's lives than is common in other urban settings.

The intensely interpersonal quality of Utah Mormon culture provides powerful sanctions for social control that are lacking in the non-Utah Mormon culture. Phillips (1998) notes that in Utah “denominational ties pervade work, family, neighborhood, and friendship networks,” and “these consolidated social ties conflate significant aspects of religious and public life in Utah, and increase Mormons’ stake in conformity to church standards, since high status in the church is tantamount to good standing in the community” (p. 127). These “consolidated social ties also fuse church and community norms, making deviance from the former a breach of decorum in the latter” (p. 127).

The density of Utah's Mormon population allows the culture to monitor behavior and enforce religious norms. The following common joke in Utah illustrates this monitoring: “Question: When you're going fishing, why should you take more than one Mormon? Answer: because if you only take one Mormon, he'll drink all of the beer!” The joke illustrates the expectation of conformity and the impact of monitoring. Phillips (n.d.) demonstrates that as the density of the Mormon population rises, there are more opportunities for coercive sanctions:

Because Utah Mormons are in continual contact with other church members, their behavior is being monitored much more often than would be the case in the mission field. For instance, a member of the [New Jersey] ward who decides to break the Word of Wisdom and places coffee in his or her shopping cart risks social sanctions only in the extremely unlikely event that another ward member happens to observe the event. However, a Utah Mormon in this situation must worry about being seen by virtually anyone s/he knows. (p. 153)

Outside of Utah, the diffusion of a minute proportion of Mormons in a heterogeneous social setting leads to anonymity and the absence of Utah's social controls. Therefore, non-Utah Mormons, Phillips (n.d.) asserts, maintain their religious participation because of their “subjective religiosity,” rather than because of coercive social sanctions (p. 164). This fact, Phillips asserts, means that Non-Utah Mormons have generally higher levels of religious commitment than Utah Mormons.
The Religiosity of Mormon Teenagers and College Students

The Mormon Church frequently asserts the millennialist idea that, because “these are the last days,” today’s young people are subject to “greater temptations” than previous generations. Today’s youth, the Church claims, are subject to greater “spiritual tests” than any previous generation faced, and therefore, the Church directs energy and resources to protecting its youth. Through a host of activities and programs, the Church socializes young Mormons with the aim of retaining them “within the fold.” Still many Mormon youth “go inactive” (or drop away), as Albrecht (1998) notes: “Most frequently, the period of disengagement occurs during the teens or early twenties” (p. 262), with the highest “dropout rate” occurring at the age of twenty or twenty-one (p. 264). Perhaps because it recognizes that the college years coincide with the highest defection rates, the Mormon Church has implemented vigorous religious programs aimed at consolidating religious loyalty while adolescents are still living at home and inoculating young people against influences that weaken religiosity.

Intergenerational religious retention is vital for a religious group’s ongoing viability: “Any lapses in the inheritance of religiosity,” Meyers (1996) argues, “jeopardize the future stability of religion as an institution” (p. 868). Data reported by Smith & Denton (2005) suggest that Mormon efforts to retain their youth are more effective than those of most other religious groups. Mormon teens are “most likely among all U.S. teens to hold religious beliefs similar to their parents’ . . .” (p. 35). Among major religious groups, Mormons and Conservative Protestants share the highest retention rate, 86 percent (p. 36).
According to two recent and comprehensive studies of the religiosity of American teenagers (Smith & Denton, 2005) and American college students (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 2005), when compared to teenagers and college students of other American denominations, Mormon teenagers and college students exhibit significantly higher scores on most measures of religiosity. Compared to any other major religious group, Mormon youth attend church and pray more frequently, exhibit greater integration in their religious communities, and express greater subjective religiosity, greater acceptance of Church doctrine, and greater confidence in God.

Among teens of various religions, Mormon teens demonstrate the highest rates on several indicators, at rates that are sometimes twice those of the next highest group, including the following: (a) “ever [having had] an experience of spiritual worship that was very moving and powerful”; (b) “ever [having had] a definite answer to prayer or specific guidance from God”; (c) “[having] taught a Sunday School or religious education class”; (d) “Fasted or denied self something as spiritual discipline”; (e) “Shared own religious faith with someone not of own faith”; and (f) “Read a devotional, religious, or spiritual book other than the scriptures” (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 46). While most American teenagers attend religious services of several denominations, “Mormon teens are the only group that clearly attend only one congregation (or ward), with few exceptions” (p. 38). Further, “Mormon teens appear to pray the most often” (p. 47), and Mormons have the highest participation [church attendance] rate (75 percent)” (p. 54).
Mormon teenagers are more integrated in their religious communities. They share the religious affiliation of their closest friends at higher rates and express their religiosity in school settings more than any other group. In response to the “number out of 5 closest friends who are involved in the same religious group as the teen,” Mormon teenagers had the highest average (2.1) of any group, indicating that, more than other groups, Mormon teens tend to socialize with members of their immediate congregations (p. 57). In response to whether the teenager “openly expresses faith at school,” data show that “only fairly small minorities from each religious group—Mormons being an exception—express their religious faith at school a lot” (p. 59). In contrast to all other groups, Mormon teens bring their religion with them into the public arena. This willingness of Mormon teenagers to speak out about religion in school supports Phillips’ (1998) assertion that “consolidated social ties conflate significant aspects of religious and public life in Utah” (p. 127).

As these details suggest, in nearly every measure Mormon teenagers are more religious than teenagers in other religious groups. The comparisons, Smith and Denton (2005) note, “reveal a noticeable pattern of religiosity, ranging from Mormons at the high end, to conservative and black Protestants, further down to mainline Protestant and Catholic teens, and then to Jewish and nonreligious teens on the lower end” (p. 70).

Mormon teenagers, one can assume, adopt this intensely religious style from role models in their general social milieu. Mormon parents, like their teenage children, are more religious than adults in other groups. Comparing religious groups on “five indicators of current religiosity,” Albrecht (1998) finds that “[Mormons] in
Utah are more religiously active on all of our indicators than any other [religious] category” (p. 273).

Like Mormons overall, Mormon college students exhibit higher levels of religiosity than college students of other denominational affiliation. A recent national survey of “The Spiritual Life of College Students” (HERI, 2005) emphasizes that, among students of varying denominational affiliation, Mormon college students are generally more “extreme” in their religiosity (p. 18). The survey’s administrators assert that Mormon students:

... show one of the most clear-cut patterns of all groups on five of the 12 measures: Religious Commitment, Religious Engagement, Religious/Social Conservatism, Spirituality, and Equanimity. . . .

Several of these scores were substantially higher than the scores of any other group. Thus, fully 71 percent of the Mormons earn high scores on Religious Commitment, compared to 55 percent for the next highest group (Baptist) and 38 percent for students in general. Similarly, 56 percent of the Mormons receive high scores on Spirituality, compared to 36 percent for the next highest group (7th Day Adventists) and only 17 percent for students in general. And when it comes to Equanimity, 42 percent of the Mormons obtain high scores, in contrast to only 31 percent for the second-highest-scoring group (Baptist) and 22 percent for students in general. (p. 18)

In summary, in nearly every comparative study of behavioral and affective religiosity, Mormons overall and Mormon teenagers and Mormon college students exhibit the highest scores. These results certainly lend support to the notion that, as a
Mormons are highly religious − perhaps more highly religious than any other American denomination.

Masland's Paradigm for Describing Institutional Culture

Scholarship about organizational or institutional culture includes various models and interpretive paradigms, or what Masland (1985) calls “windows on organizational culture” (p. 160). Masland proposes that cultural analysts observe four manifestations of culture: “saga, heroes, symbols, and rituals” (p. 160). The rest of this chapter will employ this paradigm to describe the culture at Dixie State College.

The Institutional Saga

Masland’s interpretive paradigm borrows heavily from Burton R. Clark (1972), an early contributor to scholarship on organizational culture in higher education who introduced the concept of the organizational saga, a purportedly historic narrative of institutional crisis or accomplishment that often features the heroic influence of a visionary leader or a group of participants. Further, Clark defines the organizational saga as the “collective understanding of unique accomplishment in a formally established group,” including “publicly expressed beliefs about the formal group that (a) is rooted in history, (b) claims unique accomplishment, and (c) is held with sentiment by the group” (pp. 178-179). The saga, Clark notes, often narrates the challenges of initiating a new institution, of saving an institution in decay, or of guiding an institution through an important evolutionary transition” (p. 180).

Building on Clark’s conceptual foundation, Masland (1985) states that the saga often tells of the intelligent and courageous leadership of “organizational
heroes” who come to “represent ideals and values in human form.” Often, institutional heroes serve as “role models, [setting] standards, and [preserving] what makes the organization unique” (p. 161). Saga and heroism are intangible because they convey institutional values through narrative. They are what folklorists refer to as intangible “mentifacts” rather than tangible “artifacts” (see, for example, Titon, 2003, p. 76). Masland asserts that institutional symbols embody intangible cultural values, or mentifacts, in concrete form. Symbols are concrete artifacts that stand for, or “represent implicit cultural values and beliefs, thus, making them tangible” (1985, p. 162). Like symbols, institutional rituals are concrete and visible, “[translating] culture into action” and “[providing] tangible evidence of culture” (p. 162).

Masland (1985) suggests that “interviews, observation, and document analysis are three basic techniques” of collecting cultural data for analysis (p. 163). Once having gathered cultural data, scholars should look for “recurrent cultural themes in the data” or “the repeated use of symbols and rituals” (p. 165). At institutions with “a strong culture,” analysis is “relatively straightforward because the data are consistent” (p. 165). In this section, I employ Masland’s interpretive paradigm and methods to describe the institutional culture at Dixie State College. This description of institutional culture includes commentary on institutional saga, heroes, symbols, and rituals.

As Clark (1972) notes, institutional sagas narrate some unique institutional accomplishment or the survival of some crisis. Often saga focus on the founding and establishment of the institution, and often they focus on the survival of some dire institutional crisis or renewal after a period of decay (p. 180). Dixie State College’s
institutional saga sets the College’s history within a larger religious narrative of the Mormon exodus into, and dominance over the wilderness of the Rocky Mountains. By nesting the institutional narrative within a larger religious narrative, the college’s claim of unique accomplishment takes on a religious tone and a thematic quality of “calling” or “mission.” In effect, the institutional saga imports the overarching matrix of religious meaning in the Mormon migration narrative, and the college claims for itself the sense of accomplishment and the values of the Mormon pioneers. In effect, by being nested within the larger religious narrative, the college’s founding takes on religious dimensions. It becomes an outcome or end result of the previous religious process.

At Dixie State College, all employees and most students are familiar with the broader Mormon pioneer narratives about the crossing of the plains, the establishment of towns along the Wasatch front, and the extension of settlement southward into the harsh desert landscape of Southern Utah. All employees are also familiar with the more focused Mormon pioneer narratives about the settlement of the community in which Dixie State College is located, and they are aware of the fact that the college was founded as part of the early process of Mormon community-building.

For Mormon culture at large, narratives of the migration of “the pioneers” from civilized regions into inhospitable western territory are permeated with cultural significance. According to these narratives, the pioneers were paragons of endurance, self-sacrifice, faith, and hard work. An implicit and nuanced sub-text of these narratives is that this sacrifice was motivated by faith and commitment to a larger heroic process, the “building up of the kingdom of God.” Setting institutional
narratives within this broader cultural context is a way to ascribe the pioneers' qualities and perspectives to institutional founders. More importantly, it is a way to enjoin current employees and students to practice similar forms of altruism, hard work, and piety that originated in the Mormon conception of faith in God and obedience to His will.

For contemporary residents of Southwest Utah, the story of the Mormon western migration and subsequent domination of wilderness inspires admiration and serves as a continuing reminder that, regardless of current difficulties, the pioneer founders faced far worse conditions. Reverence for the pioneers’ accomplishment is expressed in community rituals such as Utah’s Pioneer Day (July 24), a holiday that in many Utah communities eclipses the Fourth of July as a celebration of deeply held values. Utah children are taught the story of how “the pioneers,” facing religious persecution, were forced from their eastern homes in the dead of winter, crossed the frozen Mississippi River, and made their way westward with only scant provisions. Often these narratives include poignant and reverent accounts of Mormon mothers who buried their children after they had succumbed to exposure in the wilderness. Each year in community celebrations, Utah children convert their toy wagons into covered wagons, and, dressed in pioneer clothing (gingham dresses, blue jeans, cowboy hats, and bonnets), these children parade through Utah’s streets.

With these kinds of celebrations, the sacrifice and heroism of these founders of Mormon culture provides the narrative context, a legendary backdrop that includes “publicly expressed beliefs about the formal group that (a) is rooted in history, (b)
claims unique accomplishment, and (c) is held with sentiment by the group” (Clark, 1972, p. 179).

Within Dixie State College’s institutional culture, the story of the college’s founding attributes to itself many of the implicit values of the Mormon narrative. In a variety of public and religious settings, Mormon speakers tremble with emotion as they tell of pioneer deaths by starvation and exposure, and if Mormon pioneers showed a willingness to endure hardship based on their religious commitment to building a community where aspects of civic and religious culture are interwoven, then, according to the saga, founders of the college likewise were motivated by a similarly fervent conviction. This implicit claim is seen in several of the physical symbols of campus and in official institutional histories.

One of the most salient and central features of the campus is a large, centrally located statue garden and campus quad called the “Encampment Mall,” so named because, according to local history, the very first Mormon pioneers in Southwest Utah camped on that very knoll as soon as they arrived in the valley. In effect, the Encampment Mall memorializes and apotheosizes the first Mormon settlement in the region and connects the College’s sense of destiny to the fervent religious idealism of the pioneers. By pin-pointing the exact location of the first pioneer settlement in the center of the campus, the college’s saga stakes an implicit cultural claim that the college is the historic outgrowth of the pioneers’ efforts, a continuation of their sacrifices.

The statue garden was built in 1997 and dedicated by the LDS prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley. At the center of the statue garden is a stone monument that
includes text on a bronze placard that tells how the second Mormon prophet, Brigham Young, issued a religious “calling” to certain Mormon families, that they leave their comfortable residences in the Salt Lake Valley and colonize the inhospitable St. George wilderness in order to produce cotton. One cultural subtext of the statue garden is that community building and institution building are the same processes. Another subtext is that these are religious “callings” – obligations that involve a quasi-religious sense of moral duty. The fact that cotton production was the first objective for settlement has given the region and the college the name “Dixie.”

The narrative on the bronze placard tells that “on December 1, 1861, the main party of the newly called families arrived and camped near where this monument is located.” The placard tells how the families who first came into the valley faced every sort of hardship, including persistent rains and an unknown fever that came from the water they drank. It further states that, “the first orders of business were getting water to the land, laying out the city, and providing education of the more than 150 who wanted to attend school. These tasks were begun immediately.”

These three processes are given symbolic representation in three statue groupings that surround the monument. The statues are clearly meant to symbolize the pioneer settlement: (a) a man digging a ditch to “[get] water to the land,” (b) a man surveying to “[lay] out the city,” and (c) a woman reading to two children from an open book to “[provide] education.” In addition to the statues’ strong subtext that a woman’s role is to nurture and a man’s is to plan and build, the statues suggest that education and industry were part of the settlers’ religious calling – duties that have an implicit connection with religious virtue. The message to the contemporary student at
Figure 4  Bronze Placard, Encampment Mall

the college is that education and industry continue to be religious duties. The message to faculty and employees of the college is that Mormon pioneers were role
models, and college employees should emulate their lifelong sacrifice in the name of building the community, the college, and the church.

Also included on the bronze placard are the names of several hundred early settlers of the region, and because genealogy is culturally so important for Mormons, it is common for students and their families to go to those names and identify their ancestors. By doing so, contemporary students and citizens tie themselves to the larger settlement narrative and claim both the perceived heroism and the commitment to establishing a religiously based community that are attributed to the original pioneers.

The College publishes a short official history on its website and in several printed publications. This history also situates the founding of the College within the broader Mormon migration and settlement and claims unique accomplishment that sets the College apart from other institutions: “Dixie State College of Utah emerged from the desire for learning of the Mormon pioneers who lived in the remote isolation of Utah's Dixie, a plain on the Virgin River in the heat of the Mohave Desert” (Watson, n.d.). This history tells how in the 1880s the LDS Church began a “stake academy,” or a small educational enterprise sponsored by the “stake,” a regional organization of the church. After struggling with various challenges, the Dixie Academy began offering post-secondary classes in a new building in 1911. Because its services were irregular before 1911, this date is given as the official founding of the college.

Through its first two decades, the college was financially sponsored by the LDS Church. After telling of the heroic founding of the College, the institutional
Figure 5  Statues in the Encampment Mall
saga tells of an institutional crisis that occurred in the early 1930s. Facing financial challenges from the Great Depression, the Mormon Church was unable to continue its financial support of the College. At that time, a variety of institutional heroes campaigned for the state to assume financial support of the College. The accomplishments of many of these institutional heroes are described in sections of the College's history such as the following:

Mathew Bentley undertook a tedious but effective campaign to convince each senator and representative that Dixie College was essential. His quiet and
sincere manner won many friends to the cause. Orval Hafen and Othello Bowman, as well as other community leaders, were influential in the uphill battle. The Governor finally withdrew his objections to State ownership if the bill had no appropriation. So, the State of Utah took ownership in 1933 with the understanding that Dixie Junior College would receive no funding for the duration of the depression austerity. (Watson, n.d.)

During a period of more than two years, the faculty and staff of the college served without salaries. Instead, they took their remuneration “in hay, wood, nuts, fruit, and anything parents and students could contribute for tuition” (Watson, n.d.). Again, institutional heroes are characterized as self-sacrificing, volunteeristic and hard working. In their willingness to work without pay, according to the narrative, these heroes were motivated by a fervent commitment to education as a religious duty. In this narrative, the institution “claims unique accomplishment” (Clark, 1972, p. 179) and attributes the long-suffering patience and persistence of its heroes to their underlying religious ideals.

The term “the Dixie Spirit” is a recurrent expression in the cultural lexicon of the institution. While the term “spirit” is commonly used in academic settings without any religious connotation to describe enthusiasm and energetic support of athletics, etc., at Dixie State College, the term “Dixie Spirit” has a religious dimension that is apparent when the expression is used with other quasi-religious expressions such as “inspiration,” “duty,” “church,” etc. At Dixie State, the “Dixie Spirit” connotes volunteerism, willingness to sacrifice, and fervent commitment to education as duty.
The College's "Hall of Fame" catalogues the accomplishments of contemporary institutional heroes who, according to official college documents, embodied the "Dixie Spirit" and its pioneer-like, quasi-religious commitment. The religious overtones are apparent in College publications that mention the Dixie Spirit. For example, one deceased faculty member, Roene DiFiore, is still widely remembered as "Mrs. Dixie Spirit" because, as the College's web pages note, she wrote music that "expanded the love of country, church, school, home and the love of fellowmen." Another institutional hero, a former faculty member, "loved Dixie College with all his heart, mind and soul. Andrew Karl Larson and his wife, Katherine Miles Larson, were truly part of the wonderful 'Dixie Spirit' that they espoused." The wife of a major donor to the College tells that "Wilma states, 'I love Dixie and have weathered the storm of adversity through my associations with those inspired with the Spirit of Dixie and their focus on excellence.'" Still another long-time College employee is described as "an icon of the 'Dixie Spirit.' His service and dedication to Dixie are heartfelt and generous and have spanned over 40 years."

The institution's "Hall of Fame" includes placards that memorialize eleven institutional heroes, describing their important contributions and giving a short biography of each. Often these biographies use religious vocabulary to describe the heroes' commitment to institution building, including such expressions as "having faith," "being inspired," and "being devoted." Nine of the eleven biographies make explicit reference to the persons' LDS religious background, most often by

36 Downloaded from the College's "Hall of Fame" website, http://www.dixie.edu/fame/index.html, on 6 January 2006.
mentioning an LDS mission. Following are examples of references to these institutional heroes' religiosity:

Orval Hafen: From his earliest adult years, Orval felt a deep faith in the ultimate destiny of the Dixie area, a destiny he tried to help realize through a lifetime of public service. Orval was in the LDS Church Stake Presidency and President of the St. George Chamber of Commerce in 1933, when the LDS Church announced it could no longer pay the operating costs for Dixie College. He, and other local leaders, struggled to keep the college open for two years, until the state took control.

John C. Riding: [His] LDS Church responsibilities have included being a Bishop in Carmel, California and Stake President in Walnut Creek, California.

Dr. Jeffrey R. Holland: He is a former Commissioner of Education from the LDS Church and served as the ninth President of Brigham Young University from 1980-89. He is the author of three books: Christ and the New Covenant, However Long and Hard the Road, and On Earth as It is Heaven... On April 1, 1989, he was called as a LDS General Authority serving as a member of the First Quorum of Seventy. Part of that assignment included being president of the Europe North Area of the Church and first counselor in the Young Men Presidency. He was ordained a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints on June 23, 1994.
Truman Bowler: He spent his entire adult life serving his family, community, church and country. Truman was active in the LDS Church where he served in many positions including Stake President and Regional Representative.37

Religious Influence in Campus Art and Architecture

Several works of art and architectural features on campus reinforce the cultural subtexts of this institutional saga and introduce other religious themes. These artifacts are the physical embodiment of value-laden mentifacts. Near the fountain at the nexus of sidewalks at the center of campus is another bronze placard that is oriented toward a white “D” that is visible on a hillside two miles to the west of campus. This placard has the following text:

The “D” on the hillside has its roots from our early pioneer heritage when leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) colonized Southern Utah for the purpose of raising cotton and was known as the Dixie Mission. Schools were established and the “D” soon after became the symbol for this great group of Dixie pioneers. [Then, after explaining that the land on which the “D” is located was deed to the College by original pioneer citizens, the placard proceeds] . . . The “D” stands as symbol of the spirit of Utah’s Dixie and Dixie College!

37 Downloaded from the College’s “Hall of Fame” website, http://www.dixie.edu/fame/index.html, on 6 January 2006.
A large tile mosaic on the Graff Fine Arts Building just north of the central fountain depicts images of the history of the region and further reinforces values of religious sacrifice, hard work, and dual commitments to community and church building. Again, this mosaic situates the college’s saga within a broader historic and religious epic involving the early exploration and settlement of the American West. The 150-foot mosaic is “read” from left to right, starting with a depiction of indigenous peoples who lived in the area before Europeans arrived, and followed by a depiction of Father Escalante, who in 1776 passed through the region.
Moving further to the right, one sees a depiction of Mormon pioneers’ first migration and settlement in the region, showing a covered wagon drawn by a team of oxen and a Mormon man who looks very much like Brigham Young, along with his wife (only one) and six children. This portion of the mosaic also conveys messages about gender roles. Men are to be protectors and builders, as the man is seen holding a gun and his son is seen with an axe over his shoulder. Women are to be nurturers, as the daughter is seen holding a doll, mimicking the same posture as her mother, who is holding an infant child. Also, the man stands between two very recognizable community symbols of the Mormon religion – the St. George Tabernacle, which was
the historic meeting hall for the original Mormon community, and the St. George Temple, which was built later for solemnizing Mormon marriages and other religious rituals.

Figure 9. Mosaic, the Mormon Family

In addition to the statues in the Emcampment Mall, other campus statues present religious ideas. One hallmark of LDS culture and religious doctrine is the idea that God favors the traditional family. A 1995 official church proclamation states that "marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the
family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children" (The Family: A Proclamation to the World). This cultural theme has been noted in several works of campus art, but is particularly prominent in a fountain-statue installation

![Figure 10 Statue-Fountain, "The Family"

called "The Family" located in a central campus quad. A stylized representation of a traditional family wading in a pool of water, the artwork

189
communicates to students that their highest pursuits, even more important than educational pursuits, are marriage and reproduction.

Another explicitly religious statue in front of the Eccles Fine Arts Building depicts a woman's form rising into the air draped in the grave's shroud. The title of this statue printed on a placard is "Resurrection Series – Awakening."

Figure 11  Statue, "Resurrection Series - Awakening"
At the time of this writing, the college’s annual invitational art show is being positioned in the college’s art galleries. Always containing very traditional and conservative works of art, this year’s show includes several works that develop explicitly religious and Mormon themes. For example, this year one painting portrays Christ speaking to children, and another shows a pioneer woman at the point of arrival to “the valley,” wearing rags to keep her hands warm, but smiling as she contemplates life among the saints.

**Religious Cultural Influence in Institutional Rituals**

Saga, heroes, and ritual come together each year during Homecoming week when the College honors important citizens in a Founders’ Day Assembly. This annual ritual is held in a beautiful Mormon building, the LDS Tabernacle that was

![Figure 12 Paintings with Religious or Mormon Themes](image-url)
constructed by Mormon pioneers in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Standing at the pulpit of this historic building, the College president recalls the
sacrifices of pioneers and attributes the accomplishments of more contemporary
citizens to their understanding of the Mormon settler's tenacity. Again, by setting its
own founding within the context of the Mormon settlement of the region, the College
ties itself to a pervasive cultural legend, attributing to itself most, if not all, of the
religious characteristics of the original settlers.

Other College rituals include explicitly religious practices and content,
including formal denominational prayers. Each meeting of the Board of Trustees and
each graduation ceremony begin with a prayer that usually includes particular
intonation, language and themes that are uniquely Mormon.

In addition to beginning with prayer, commencement often has other Mormon
religious content. Looking in some ways like a "Who's Who of LDS Church General
Authorities," the list of the college's commencement speakers includes members of
the LDS Church's Twelve Apostles and men who later became the prophet: Jeffrey
R. Holland in 1999, an apostle; Steven E. Snow in 1994, later an area authority of the
church; Henry B. Eyring in 1981, later an apostle; Boyd K. Packer in 1978, an
apostle; Paul H. Dunn in 1977, a member of the Church's First Quorum of the
Seventy; Thomas S. Monson in 1975, an apostle; Marvin J. Ashton in 1973, an
apostle; Neal A. Maxwell in 1972, an assistant to the apostles, later an apostle; Harold
B. Lee in 1971, an apostle, later the prophet; Alvin R. Dyer in 1969, an apostle.

A personal anecdote that occurred in 1985 may further illustrate the influence
of religion on institutional culture. When I was hired at Dixie State, a high ranking
academic officer called me into his office for what he called "an interview." He assured me that the job was mine, but stated that he wanted to talk to me about "confidential matters," adding that if anyone asked about this "interview," he would deny having had it with me.

Anxious about this ominous-sounding introduction, I joined him in his office, and he introduced the topic of religion. He told me that, before becoming an administrator at this public college, he had worked for the Mormon Church Educational System (CES), the branch of the Church that provides released-time religious instruction for Mormon youth enrolled in public schools throughout the western United States. With this background, he said he knew the "joys of working in the Lord's vineyard."

He cited demographic information about students at the College: "Did you know that ninety-two percent of our students are Mormon?" he asked. "This percentage is nearly as high as the percentage at BYU, where just more than ninety-six percent of the students are Mormon." I nodded my head, as though weighing the portent of these facts. He then asked, "What responsibility do you think we have here at this college regarding our students' faith?"

I stammered, unsure of how to respond. Immediately, the expected issues came to mind: The Establishment Clause and separation of church and state,

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38 Before 1993, the College's admission forms asked for applicant's religious affiliation, and this information was entered in the College's academic database. In 1994, a new president discontinued collection of this information, and since that time, all data about religious affiliation has been deleted from the database.
academic freedom, tax-payer support of the college. After I had stumbled and hesitated, he continued:

“Well, I believe that, with the number of Mormon students who attend here, we have the same kinds of responsibilities that BYU has. We’re guardians of our students’ faith, and we shouldn’t do anything that harms it or causes our students to lose their faith. Don’t you agree?” Without a lot of reflection, I did agree with him, sensing that disagreement might have had negative implications for me as a barely hired faculty member. He continued: “In the Liberal Arts Building, where you’ll have your office and do most of your teaching, a number of faculty members don’t believe we have responsibilities as guardians of our students’ faith. In fact, these faculty take it upon themselves to confront students’ innocent convictions about gospel principles and spoil their faith. I guess they see it as their personal mission to challenge our students’ religious beliefs in the name of ‘critical thinking.’ They seem to want to replace our students’ religious values with secular values. Now, you wouldn’t do that, would you?”

Again sensing that the wrong answer could have negative implications, I assured him that I would not. “Fine!” he continued. “We’re glad to have you on our faculty.” After some further pleasantries, the “interview” ended.

The above incident occurred in 1985, twenty-one years ago. Has the influence of the enclave culture on institutional culture changed over time? I would say it has, but recently, I interviewed a faculty member whose tenure at Dixie State College spans more than a half century – a faculty member whose tenure at one institution is longer than that of any other faculty member in Utah. Among other things, this
faculty told about the college in the fifties, sixties, and seventies. After explaining that his graduate degree was from the University of Utah, which was considered a "bastion of secularism in those days," he continued,

The Mormon culture permeated Dixie a lot more in the past than it does today. Back in the fifties, honestly the college was more LDS than even Brigham Young University. We had devotional services once a week where local bishops and stake presidents gave sermons to the student body. I mean, these were prayer devotional services in which the student body got together, sang hymns, and listened to sermons. The whole student body! Classes were canceled at that hour - eleven o'clock - and devotionals were held in the old auditorium over in the old building next to the Tabernacle. In addition to our devotionals, all of our other big programs - graduation, commencement, and other meetings - were always held in the Mormon Tabernacle, with prayers to open and close.

When we registered for classes, we would do it in the gymnasium. We'd do it in a big circle - all of the faculty and instructors, including the Institute teachers as well. So students would sign up for their Mormon religion classes right at the same time as they signed up for their English and biology classes. And many of the classes the Institute offered such as the Teachings of the Apostle Paul, for example, counted for college credit. There was no separation of church and state. Institute teachers were involved in every student assembly, faculty meeting, registration, or anything at the college in those days. We always opened with prayer and closed with prayer.
I think, probably, these religious influences started to break down during the sixties. In 1964 when we separated from the high school [the college had previously included the last two years of high school and the first two years of college], that was a turning point. Before that time, everything was BYU here in St. George. Dixie College was a small BYU. As I said, I got a graduate degree from the University of Utah, and there wasn’t much room for us here if we came from that university.

In fact, I remember that sometime during the sixties, the college actually tried to ally itself with BYU. True! In the sixties under President Losee, we came pretty close to becoming a branch of BYU. I mean, it was more than just talking stage. There was a time when we came close to becoming BYU-St. George. We were moving in that direction, but that movement slowed down for some reason.

I don’t see any vestige of those influences today – none whatsoever. Well, we have prayer at graduation. It’s not an ecclesiastical experience, though. It’s a pageant. I would say the only influence we have today is the Institute on our campus. On a scale of one to ten, if the religious culture of the fifties was a ten, today’s religious influence is a two – very, very low, I think.

Assessment of Religion’s Cultural Influence among Current Employees

Even though religious aspects of institutional culture are often found in the college’s saga, heroes, symbols, and rituals, all of the individuals in the campus community are not uniformly comfortable with those cultural manifestations. Several
members of the campus community express misgivings about the pervasive influence of Mormonism on institutional culture.

Masland (1985) also suggests that document analysis can provide important clues to institutional culture. From 2000 till 2002, I served as the accreditation officer for the college and wrote the institutional self-study in preparation for full-scale institutional accreditation, and thus I am familiar with a wide range of institutional documents. During preparation for full-scale accreditation, I conducted a variety of assessment activities and included them as exhibits in support of the institution’s self-study report. One of the regional accreditation association’s standards by which institutions are evaluated is “Institutional Integrity,” defined as “ethical standards in [the College’s] representation to its constituencies and the public; in its teaching, scholarship, and service; in its treatment of its students, faculty, and staff; and in its relationships with regulatory and accrediting agencies” (1995 Northwest Commission Handbook). Evaluators ask for information related to several particular indicators of organizational culture, including diversity, personnel decisions, academic freedom, and honesty in public communications.

In 2001, the college’s accreditation committee conducted a “Survey on Institutional Ethics” to measure institutional integrity. The results of this survey reveal considerable disagreement and cultural tension regarding the religious aspects of institutional culture. The survey’s accreditation exhibit noted that:

This survey was administered throughout the entire month of February 2001 in both hard-copy and online formats. One hundred thirty-four persons took
the Survey on Institutional Ethics . . . , including 66 faculty members, 65 staff employees, and three students.

Further, the exhibit explains that the survey:

Consisted of fourteen statements, along with [Likert scale] options to agree or disagree. Also, persons taking the survey had the option to comment in writing about each statement (accreditation exhibit 9.1 from the College’s Fall 2002 full-scale accreditation evaluation).

The accreditation exhibit reports the results of the survey and includes all of the written comments of the survey takers. In many of their written comments, survey-takers addressed the cultural influence of religion on campus. Following are some of the statements and comments related to religion:

Statement: "Dixie State College has adequate procedures for dealing with discrimination."

Comment: “Agree. . . . The policies are appropriate, but our behavior is something else. Dixie discriminates, and we probably don't even recognize discrimination because it's so subtle in some cases. We hire Mormons over non-Mormons, Caucasians over racial minorities and men over women. This is borne out by the statistics on staffing in our annual report. It's chilling to see that in black-and-white (no pun intended).”

Statement: "Dixie State College promotes academic freedom for faculty and students alike."

198

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Comment: "Disagree: The Mormon Church's influence is a bit too strong. We've made a lot of progress in the past decade – we still have a lot of progress to make."

Statement: "Employee recruitment, hiring, development, promotion, termination, and retirement policies are fair."

Comment: "Agree. Policies are fair. How they are actually carried out often means the good old Mormon boy gets hired over the non-Mormon or minority. Which is the same thing here – non-Mormons ARE a minority."

Statement: "Dixie State College appropriately supports ethnic and gender diversity."

Comment: "Strongly Disagree. I don't think it is intentional nonsupport. It is a result of two factors. Dixie offers very low salaries and is in a primarily Mormon community. Oftentimes the people who are attracted to this area are Mormons who want to be near the Temple, and are willing to put up with the low salaries. In order to truly promote diversity, Dixie will need to be able to offer more competitive salaries. Also, non-Mormons sometimes feel they do not fit in at Dixie and leave."

Among all of the fourteen statements, the one that elicited the greatest number of "disagree" or "strongly disagree" responses was the following: "In general, Dixie State's academic climate is not unduly influenced by outside social, political, economic, or religious influences." The following chart shows the number of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" responses to this item:
Also, this statement elicited the greatest number of written responses, many of which were quite assertive and strident in tone. Following are some of those comments:

Comment: “Strongly disagree. I believe this campus is under a strong LDS influence, and that this influence affects academic freedom.”

Comment: “Strongly disagree. Faculty members are attacked or punished in a variety of ways for any public disagreement with Mormonism.”

Comment: “Disagree. Money talks. Religion talks. Politics talks. People outside the campus are able to influence the campus culture and the academic freedom, by virtue of their powerful positions in the LDS church or the community.”

Comment: “Disagree. Big money (the threats and rewards of donors) inappropriately influences college policy, planning, and academic freedom. Mormon influences are too powerful also. We sacrifice a bit of academic freedom.”
Comment: “Disagree. As with everything in this geological and cultural region, the LDS church unduly influences the ability to have an open academic climate here.”

Comment: “Disagree. It's fine, as long as you're a [sic] LDS republican.”

Comment: “Disagree. Come on. The overwhelming influence of the LDS church is felt all over the place, although pressure on faculty to conform is virtually nonexistent. The pressure is mainly on students, not staff and faculty, but it is certainly present.”

Comment: “Disagree. We live in Utah. Of course there are going to be influences from the LDS religion. I’m LDS and I see the influences everywhere.”

Comment: “Disagree. The Mormon atmosphere surrounds Dixie State College and although this does not bother me, I feel that others are offended by many of the actions or words of religious students.”

Finally, two comments seem to justify or condone the religious influence:

Comment: “Disagree. I think that the LDS religion has a strong influence on the school. I don't think this is necessarily a bad influence, but it is present. I believe that the church’s influence comes to harm us in some cases because people use this as a foothold to bring issues up against the college. People who are not of the LDS religion are able to use this as complaint against the social and conduct policies of the school. It makes no difference that they match the community's standards and are considered feasible, conservative views.”
Comment: “Disagree. I see nothing wrong with our academics being
influenced by the community. This is a community college, so it should be
that way.

Responses to the 2001 survey in institutional integrity show, first, that many
employees sense the cultural influence of Mormonism on the campus culture, and
second, that many are deeply ambivalent about that influence. When I wrote the
College’s 2002 accreditation self-study report, I suspected that evaluators would
quickly detect the cultural influence of the church, if only by reading employees’
responses to the survey above. Therefore, in the self-study, after explaining that the
college was originally a church-sponsored institution, I offered the following
explanation to evaluators about the continuing influence of the church in the
community and on the campus:

Complete independence from the influence of the Mormon Church,
because of the Church's continued predominance in Dixie’s region, is feasibly
difficult, and any institution that intends to serve the population of its region
should be aware of, and appropriately deferential to, strong religious and
cultural heritages of the region. However, since 1933, Dixie State ceased
being a church-sponsored institution and became a public-sponsored
institution, from which point it has evolved toward its present role as a secular
and modern institution.

This history and current general social and cultural milieu require that
Dixie State exercise both sensitivity and balance: On one hand, the College
has made decades-long progress toward traditional secular education. The
College has increased the cultural, gender, and racial diversity of its student body and staff, serving all students, regardless of religious background, and non-Mormon students and employees have contributed to Dixie State's current culture. On the other hand, Dixie State is fully aware that a majority of its students are Mormon.

This balance and this sensitivity are difficult. Some non-Mormon students, faculty, staff, and community members have found it difficult to assimilate into a culture that has been characterized as monolithic. Others find the College's culture remarkably open and accepting. Some Mormon students, faculty, staff, and community members regret Dixie State's secular openness. This issue—the Mormon Church's influence on the community and College's history and culture—continues to be divisive, a topic of active dialog. Part of this sensitivity and balance is creating and maintaining an intellectual atmosphere that is both accepting and respectful of all views, both Mormon and non-Mormon.

The LDS Institute of Religion

One further excerpt from the college's accreditation self-study refers to a "real estate exchange" that provides an interesting case of cultural and administrative interaction between the college and the Mormon Church. Throughout the United States, the LDS church has built classroom facilities contiguous to many college and university campuses where the church conducts religious instruction for Mormon college students. On land directly contiguous to the campus at Dixie State College, the church owns such a facility.
The college's accreditation self-study included these paragraphs:

A recent real estate exchange illustrates both the extent to which the College and the Church are intertwined, and the uneasiness of that relationship. A large proportion of Dixie's students go to an off-campus, but adjacent Mormon facility, the Institute, where they receive religious instruction. In 1998, Mormon officials approached the College with a proposal to exchange real estate. The College would receive the current Institute Building (a large facility with twelve classrooms, two auditoriums, a standard gymnasium, and more than twenty office spaces) and the real estate

Figure 14 Institute Building Placard

204
on which the building sits. In exchange, the College would deed the Mormon Church a portion of undeveloped land on its campus, on which the Church would build a new teaching facility. The terms of the exchange were overwhelmingly to the College's financial advantage: For raw land on the eastern perimeter of campus, the College would receive a piece of real estate of approximate size along with a 34,000-foot teaching facility on the northern perimeter of campus.

After long debate, the College agreed to the exchange. Campus and community persons have reacted with a mixture of approbation and anxiety, and some have suggested that, despite the fact that the contractual exchange was very much to the College's advantage, the reciprocation suggests that the College is not in fact autonomous and completely independent from the Church. (*Accreditation Self-Study, 2002, p. 291*).

Note that, in its published campus maps, the college shows the location of the Institute Building, as though it were an institutional facility. The map below shows the former and current locations of the LDS Institute Building. Before 2000, the Institute was located in the building across the road north of the campus, marked as “7,” and after 2000, it was located within the road surrounding the campus, in the building marked “29” and labeled as “INSTITUTE (LDS CHURCH PROPERTY).”

In this exchange, the boundaries of campus were officially changed, such that the institute building is again technically outside and contiguous to the campus. However, the fact that the new Institute Building is enclosed within the public road that marks the campus' outer boundary gives the building symbolic status as a
“campus building.” In its old location, the Institute Building had been separated from campus by a city street. The new location erased this symbolic separation and placed the Institute alongside other campus buildings in a way that symbolized integration and coordination. The ground-level view of the Institute Building (on the right) and the college’s Udvar-Hazy School of Business (on the left) shows that the two buildings are seamlessly integrated in a common campus landscape:

After taking ownership of the classroom facility that had previously been the Institute, the College renamed it as the “North Instructional Building” or the “NIB.” Students on campus, however, soon joked that “NIB” stood for “Not-Institute Building.” While many faculty and staff thought of the exchange as beneficial to the state and not inappropriate, nevertheless, several faculty and staff were upset, suggesting that the deal demonstrated the inappropriate collusion of the church and the state. The following comments from the 2001 survey on institutional integrity reflect tension related to the new Institute Building’s location:

Comment: “Disagree. I do think that the religious influences play a much more significant role than they should. The fact that the new Institute is part of the campus quad is very unsettling to me personally. It makes it look as if the Church is part of the school or vice versa. I thought we were a state institution - not a church affiliated one.”

Comment: “Strongly disagree. We have a Mormon institute, traded ground – now they will be bigger than ever.”
Figure 15  Campus Map, Showing Institute Building Locations
Comment: "Disagree. Religious influence? That's a mighty big new
‘Institute’ building rubbing shoulders with the campus buildings. Don't some
of 'our' students also refer to their institute teachers as 'professors'? These
things are CERTAINLY indicative of 'something,' and it's a shame (at the
very least) such 'indicators' don't receive more discussion, but seem to be
taken as status quo."

Comment: "Strongly disagree. The LDS influence at Dixie not only exits but
is supported by administration through their actions or lack of actions. Did
you know that the DSC campus tour that is part of new student orientation
now required of every incoming student has an 'Institute' stop? I am embarrassed by this and am disgusted by the lack of integrity the administration shows by letting things like this continue. There are similar incidents on this campus. Student Activities are run like a church camp, and I do not feel that the VP of Student Services or the President have taken the appropriate steps to rectify this situation. They are delinquent and should be held responsible.”

Regardless of disapproval, the Institute exerts a powerful influence on campus life. In addition to the Institute’s religious instruction, through the Institute the LDS church sponsors dances, movies, activities, and a host of other student activities, and its influence can be seen across campus in such things as T-shirts.

The institutional culture at Dixie State College is in many ways an outgrowth of the enclave’s religious culture. The college’s intangible mentifacts and tangible artifacts depict religious themes that are presented with the rhetorical purpose of attributing religious meaning to the process of institution building. By means of the institutional saga, institutional heroes, symbols, and rituals, the enclave lays claim to the college as “our college,” an educational institution that was built as a result of the sacrifice of persons motivated by a sense of calling or sacred duty.
Figure 17  Institute of Religion T-Shirt
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It begins with descriptive statistics related to the sample, followed by four sections that are related to the main research questions. The first question relates to the association between integration in the enclave culture and academic outcomes. The second question relates to the influence of the enclave culture on institutional culture. The third and fourth questions deal with the qualitative elements of college students’ lived experience as affiliates or non-affiliates of the enclave culture and their cultural negotiation in the campus culture and the enclave culture.

Descriptive Statistics

The qualitative survey was administered in eight sections of a required history course. Before students took the survey, I reviewed informed consent information with them. Eleven students declined to take the survey, and 285 completed it. Following are basic demographic data for the sample:
Table 9  Descriptive Statistics, Demographic Data

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<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year in School (1=FR)</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21.70</td>
<td>4.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (1=F)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah Origin (U=1, NU=0)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample of students was composed of mostly freshmen with an average age of just under 22. The sample was nearly perfectly divided between men and women. The great majority were white, and more than four out of five of them had listed a Utah permanent mailing address. Following are basic academic data for the sample:

Table 10  Descriptive Statistics, Academic Data

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Course Grade in Hist</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.5526</td>
<td>.96846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative GPA</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>4.000</td>
<td>2.97335</td>
<td>.668148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned Hours</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>42.30</td>
<td>21.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned following year</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students’ grade in the history course averaged just higher than a C-plus, and their cumulative GPA’s averaged just under a B. The institution’s Institutional Research Office informed me that the overall average cumulative GPA for all students at the institution was 2.91 for the 2004-2005 academic year, so this sample’s average cumulative GPA was almost exactly the same as that for all students at the institution.
Two-thirds of the students in the sample returned to school in the subsequent fall term.

The survey’s primary purpose was to gather religious data. The first question, a fill-in-the-blank item, asked students to indicate their religious affiliation, and their responses were coded as either LDS (Mormon) or other. Of the 285 survey responses, 246, or more than eighty-six percent, indicated that they were Mormon. Only 39\textsuperscript{39} students, or less than 14 percent, indicated that they were not Mormon. Of those indicating that they were not Mormon, following are the labels that they applied to themselves: Baptist (3 students), Calvary Church (1 student), Catholic (12 students), Christian (1 student), Lutheran (1 student), Methodist (1 student), Muslim (1 student), none (17 students), Seventh-Day Adventist (1 student), and Southland Bible Church (1 student).

By virtue of the fact that nearly nine of ten students in this sample were Mormon, one would expect that this sample’s general religious profile would be roughly consistent with national studies of Mormon youth’s religiosity — which is in fact the case. Consistent with Smith & Denton’s (2005) study of American teenagers’ religiosity, which found that Mormon teens exhibited higher rates of religiosity than teens from any other religious group on most of the religious behaviors and attitudes studied (p. 46), this survey’s results portray a group of college students who have very high rates of public and private religious observance and who have very high

\textsuperscript{39} As the number of individuals in the sample size shrinks, the distribution is not guaranteed to be normal. This sample is small; however, most statistics texts give n<30 as cutoff. The larger the sample, the more sure one can be that sample characteristics truly reflect the population; however, 39, while a small sample size, fulfills the most typical criterion for use.
rates of intrinsic religiosity. Consistent with the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI, 2005) study of "The Spiritual Life of College Students," which finds that Mormon college students are generally more "extreme" in their religiosity than other college students (p. 18), the results of this survey portray a group of college students whose spiritual life is vigorous, active, and central in various aspects of their lives.

**Organizational Religiosity**

This survey's 12 questions collected data about six dimensions of religiosity. The first dimension was organizational religiosity, or "Public or organizational religious behavior (e.g., church attendance)" (Sherman et al, 2000). After asking how often the student attended church, the survey offered the students the following scaled options: (1) More than once a week, (2) Once a week, (3) A few times a month, (4) A few times a year, (5) Once a year or less, or (6) Never. As can be seen in the following frequency data, students report a high level of organizational religiosity, with almost 72 percent reporting that they attend church once a week or more frequently:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>109</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

214

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Nonorganizational Religiosity

The second of the survey’s six dimensions was nonorganizational religiosity, or “Private or nonorganizational religious behavior (e.g., prayer or meditation)” (Sherman et al, 2000). After asking how often the student “[spent] time in private religious activities,” the survey offered the students the following scaled options: (1) More than once a day, (2) Daily, (3) Two or more times/week, (4) Once a week, (5) A few times a month, or (6) Rarely or never. As can be seen in the following frequency data, almost 64 percent report that they practice some sort of private religious observance at least daily, and interestingly, more than 13 percent report that they rarely or never participate in private religious activities:
Table 12  Frequency Data, Nonorganizational Religiosity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>27.7</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19  Nonorganizational Religiosity, Frequency Histogram

Intrinsic Religiosity

The third of the survey’s 12 dimensions was intrinsic religiosity. This dimension is defined as “Intrinsic religious motivation (e.g., involvement of religion in all of one’s dealings in life)” (Sherman et al, 2000). The following three survey items from the DUREL measure this dimension: (a) “In my life, I experience the
presence of the Divine (i.e., God); (b) “My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life”; and (c) “I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.” For these items, the survey offered the following scaled response options: (1) Definitely true of me, (2) Tends to be true, (3) Unsure, (4) Tends not to be true, or (5) Definitely not true. As can be seen in the following frequency data, for each of these three questions, the great majority of students reported that the statements were “definitely true of me.”

Survey data portray a group of students with very high intrinsic religiosity. In fact, more than 70 percent reported that it was definitely true that they felt God’s presence in their lives. Almost 60 percent reported that it was definitely true that their religious beliefs “are what really lies behind [their] whole approach to life.” And more than half reported that it was definitely true that they “try hard to carry [their] religion over into all other dealings in life.” Furthermore, in each of these three items, one might be surprised at the very low levels of students reporting that the statements either tended not to be true or were definitely not true. For example, less than three percent reported that it was not true that they felt God’s presence in their lives.
Table 13  Intrinsic Religiosity (God's presence), Frequency Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>18.2</td>
<td>88.8</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20  Intrinsic Religiosity (God's presence), Histogram
Table 14  Intrinsic Religiosity (approach to life), Frequency Data

7: Intrin-Rel, World View: My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21  Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in approach to life), Histogram

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Table 15  Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in other dealings), Frequency Data

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22  Intrinsic Religiosity (religion in other dealings), Histogram

Religious Coping

The fourth dimension about which the survey collects data was “religious coping.” This dimension, the extent to which students use religion to cope (Holland et al, 1998), is adapted from an instrument called the System of Beliefs Index, or the SBI-15R. Unlike the three previous dimensions (organizational religiosity, nonorganizational religiosity, and intrinsic religiosity) which came from the Duke
Religion Index, or the DUREL, this dimension has not been tested for validity and reliability. However, because I thought it offered an important glimpse into how students' religiosity might impact their academic experiences, I included the survey items.

This dimension is measured by two survey statements: First, “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to”; and (b) “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.” Again, for these items, the survey offered the following scaled response options: (1) Definitely true of me, (2) Tends to be true, (3) Unsure, (4) Tends not to be true, or (5) Definitely not true. I included these two items and this dimension because of my assumptions that the college experience is inherently stressful and that for many students the college experience involved a removal from the familiar social setting of high school and home and entry into a somewhat foreign and new social environment that might involve new social arrangements. I wanted to see to what extent that students reported that they turned to association with persons within their religious groups for help in problem solving and for supportive companionship.

As can be seen in the following frequency data, nearly 83 percent of students report that it is “definitely true” or “tends to be true” that “when [they] need suggestions on how to deal with problems, [they] know someone in [their] religious group that [they] can turn to.” Almost 72 percent report that it is “definitely true” or “tends to be true” that “when [they] feel lonely, [they] rely on people who share [their] religious beliefs for support.”
Table 16  Religious Coping (Problem Solving), Frequency Data

9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>64.9</td>
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<td>85.3</td>
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<td>91.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>8.8</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 23  Religious Coping (Problem Solving), Histogram

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Table 17  Religious Coping (Loneliness), Frequency Data

10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 24  Religious Coping (Loneliness), Frequency Data

Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate

The fifth dimension about which the survey collects data was “satisfaction with campus religious climate.” I should note that this dimension’s survey items are self-developed, and therefore they are previously untested. This dimension includes two items: “I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs” and “I enjoy the religious climate at this college.” Again, for these items, the
survey offered the following scaled response options: (1) Definitely true of me, (2) Tends to be true, (3) Unsure, (4) Tends not to be true, or (5) Definitely not true. Data portray a group of students who are very satisfied with the campus religious climate. As can be seen, 86 percent indicate they it's definitely true or it tends to be true that they feel that “most of the students at this college respect [their] religious beliefs,” and 73 percent report that it’s true or tends to be true that “[they] enjoy the religious climate at this college.”

Table 18  Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Respect). Frequency Data

11: Campus-Rel-Climate, Respect: I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 25  Satisfaction with Religious Climate (Respect), Histogram

Table 19  Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Enjoy Climate), Frequency

Data

12: Campus-Rel-Climate, Enjoy: I enjoy the religious climate at this college.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
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<td>17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I Enjoy The Religious Climate

Figure 26  Satisfaction with Campus Religious Climate (Enjoy Climate), Histogram

Religiously Based Network Associations

The last of the six dimensions was “Religiously Based Network Associations.” In particular, I was interested in whether students were able to draw upon associational resources, or social and cultural capital (Coleman, 1988; Bourdieu, 1986; Loury, 1997; Putnam, 1995) to achieve educational benefits. I wanted to know the extent to which their religious associations were carried over into the academic and social settings of the publicly funded college. To explore these questions, I developed three survey items. Two of the items that asked students whether they shared the religious affiliation of their best friends and their favorite professors. Specifically, the text of these items was “Think of your best friend at this college. Do you and that friend share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same religious group?” And “Think of your favorite professor at this college. Do you and that professor share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same religious group?” The survey offered students the following response options: (1) Yes, we share the
same religious affiliation; (2) No, we do not share the same religious affiliation; and (3) I don’t know that friend’s religious affiliation. These two items, I thought, would provide two important kinds of information, including how many students shared the religious affiliation of their friends and professors, and how many students actually knew the religious affiliation of their friends and professors.

The data related to these two items portray a group of students who almost always report that they are informed about the religious affiliation of their best friends, and very frequently that they share that affiliation. Only four percent of the students reported that they do not know their best friends’ religious affiliation. This, perhaps, is not surprising, given the fact that best friends usually know intimate details about one another. However, four out of five students reported that they share their best friends’ affiliation. This particular phenomenon may be possible only within a religious enclave or a geographical region where there is a strong demographic representation of a particular religious group. True – where there is greater religious pluralism, perhaps the different groups could be exclusive in their social relationships, resulting in a high ratio of in-group dyadic friendships and a low ratio of cross-group friendships; however, I believe I am somewhat safe to speculate that where there is a greater religious diversity, there is lesser likelihood that college students will share the religious affiliation of their friends at college. An interesting question for further study is whether similar rates of shared affiliation occur at any non-Utah public college or university.
Table 20  Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Best Friend).

**Frequency Data**

3: Rel-Network, College Friend: Do you and your [best friend at this college] share the same religious affiliation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td>80.4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 27  Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Best Friend),

**Histogram**

While students report that they know about and share their friends' affiliation, as might be expected, they do not know about their favorite professors' religious affiliation at the same rates. Obviously friendship involves intimacy and familiarity with personal matters, while the faculty-student relationship does not involve the same kind of familiarity and closeness. In fact, one might expect that because
American higher education is increasingly secular in its culture (Marsden & Bradley, 1992), faculty members tend to avoid discussion of either their religious affiliation and personal religious views. Thus, it was surprising that nearly half the students in this sample reported that they knew the religious affiliation of their favorite professor, and that more than a quarter shared their favorite professor’s religious affiliation.

Several elements contribute to this phenomenon, not the least of which is the percent of faculty who are Mormon. While I have not collected data about the affiliation of faculty at the public college under study, there is some evidence suggesting that the percent of faculty members who are Mormon, while not as high as the percent of the population in the region (77 percent, as reported by Grammich, 2004) is nevertheless somewhat high. For example, the institution’s 2002 Accreditation Self-Study reports that among the 80 full-time faculty then employed, 40 or half had received their highest academic degrees from one of the universities in Utah, and 13 had those degrees from Brigham Young University.

Given academe’s general antagonism for divulging personal religious information in the college curriculum, it is surprising that nearly half the students know their favorite professors’ affiliation. From interviews, I have noted a general concern about faculty’s religious views. Students repeatedly expressed curiosity about their teachers’ personal religious views, as though this were a key part of their attempt to interpret and process what they were learning from their professors.
Table 21  Religiouslv-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Favorite Professor), Frequency Data

4: Rel-Network, Professor: Do you and your [favorite professor at this college] share the same religious affiliation?

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 28  Religiously-Based Network Resources (Shared Affiliation/ Favorite Professor), Histogram

An intimate, sexual, or love relationship is a particular type of associational resource that is important for many college students. Since, as Arnett (2000) points out, one of the three principle developmental processes that occur during the period of "emerging adulthood" (between about 18 and the late twenties) is exploration of love,
I wanted to examine the influence of the enclave culture on students' attitudes toward love. Also, as Eshleman (2000) writes, most Americans tend to marry within their religious groups, with Protestant endogamy rates as high as “80 to 90 percent” (p. 242).

More particularly, I wanted to examine the influence of the enclave culture on students’ attitudes toward marriage. As I’ve noted elsewhere, Mormons advocate traditional forms of marriage with comparatively conservative forms of love relationships. For Mormons, only those who are married to other Mormons in a Mormon temple can go to the highest level in a multi-tiered conceptualization of the hereafter. I wondered how important marriage within one’s religion was for students who are integrated with the enclave culture, and whether those not similarly integrated had similar attitudes. Because of the enclave’s doctrinal and cultural preoccupation with traditional marriage, I wanted to determine the importance of the issue for students taking the survey.

Eshleman (2000) writes that “the degree of heterogeneity in the community will influence the rate of intermarriage” (citing Blau, p. 232). Further, Eshleman explains that Mormons within Utah have an extremely high endogamy rate; however, in states such as Florida, where Mormons comprise less than one percent of the

---

40 In 1995, the LDS Church issued what is known as the Proclamation on the Family, the first line of which is as follows: “We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”
population, "about two-thirds of the Mormons living there had married non-Mormons" (citing Barlow, p. 232). Thus, one would suspect that for college students who are integrated in the religious culture of an enclave, marriage to a person who shared their religious affiliation would be very important. I suspect that the importance of endogamy for Mormons will be an incentive for Mormons to form relationships with other Mormons, thus impacting their relationship to college students who may not be integrated in the enclave culture.

Therefore, I developed a survey item that asks "For you, how important is it to be married to a person who shares your religious affiliation or belongs to the same religious group?" The survey offers students these response options: (1) Very important, (2) Somewhat important, or (3) Not important. The following frequency data show that for nine of ten students, marriage to a person who shares their religious belief is either very important or somewhat important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22  Religiously-Based Network Resources (Endogamy), Frequency Data

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Correlation of Variables

Correlations among variables may shed light on several of my research questions. For example, first I focus on the correlations between students' religious affiliation as a binary variable (Mormon=1, Other=0) and other variables. For example, will Mormon students have higher cumulative GPA's on average than non-Mormon students? Do Mormon students in this sample report higher intrinsic religiosity than non-Mormon students? Will Mormon students share the religious affiliation of their favorite professors at higher rates than non-Mormon students?

Other correlation relationships will also be important for answering several of the research questions. Since these correlations will be useful as descriptive statistics, for now, I will only report bivariate correlations (Pearson's $r$) among variables,$^{41}$ and

---

$^{41}$ Readers should note that the question format employed used low numbered responses to indicate high levels of religiosity, and high numbered responses to
I will reserve analytical comment for later sections of this chapter where I address specific research questions. First, I will list correlations among the “Whether LDS” variable and other demographic variables. Second, I will list correlations among the “Whether LDS” variable and academic variables. Third, I will list correlations among the “Whether LDS” variable and religious variables. Finally, I will list correlations among the academic variables and the religious variables.

The correlations among the “Whether LDS” and other demographic variables are reported below. As can be seen from data below, there was greater likelihood that a Mormon student was young, white, and had a Utah permanent address than a non-Mormon student.

The correlations among the “Whether LDS” and academic variables are also reported below. The correlations in this table will be a starting point for addressing the first research question – What association is there, at a public college located in a religious enclave, between college students’ integration in the religious community and educational outcomes. As can be seen from data below, the relationship between whether students are LDS and their grades (both course grades and cumulative GPA) is significant at a p value of .001.

___

indicate low levels of religiosity. To derive useful bivariate correlations, I had to reverse-score the responses (i.e., a response of 1 was scored as 6, etc.).
### Table 23 Correlations, "Whether LDS" and Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS) Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Year in School (1=FR)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex (1=F)</th>
<th>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</th>
<th>Utah Origin (U=1, NU=0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-.205**</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.374**</td>
<td>.235**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.996</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.299**</td>
<td>.171**</td>
<td>-.117*</td>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year in School (1=FR)</strong></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.299**</td>
<td>.171**</td>
<td>-.117*</td>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.966</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>-.205**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.959</td>
<td>.627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex (1=F)</strong></td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-.111</td>
<td>1.041</td>
<td>.150*</td>
<td>.150*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.238</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</strong></td>
<td>.374**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utah Origin (U=1, NU=0)</strong></td>
<td>.235**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.150*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.627</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 24  Correlations, "Whether LDS" and Academic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>Course Grade in Hist</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA</th>
<th>Earned Hours</th>
<th>Returned following year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.268**</td>
<td>.234**</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Grade in Hist</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.268**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.725**</td>
<td>.215**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative GPA</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.234**</td>
<td>.725**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.337**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned Hours</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.337**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned following year</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.132**</td>
<td>.147**</td>
<td>-.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
The correlations among the “Whether LDS” and other religious variables are reported below. The correlations in this table may lend some support to an analysis of how students of diverse religious backgrounds negotiate with the religious climate and with one another. They may characterize differences in the level of religiosity of students on different religious variables. Three tables show correlations. The first shows correlations among “Whether LDS” and three of the six dimensions from the survey – organizational religiosity, nonorganizational religiosity, and intrinsic religiosity. From the table, one can see that all of these religious variables are strongly and positively correlated to “Whether LDS” – further evidence that, as HERI (2005) asserts, Mormon college students are more “extreme” in their religious practices and attitudes than students from any other religious group (p. 18).

Also, correlations in the following table show relationships among “Whether LDS” and the other dimensions of the survey. These data will lend support to analysis of several research questions. One can see that the correlations to “Whether LDS” are significant at p values of either .001 or .005. The positive relationships are strong for most relationships, but they are particularly strong for the relationships between “Whether LDS” and two variables related to satisfaction with campus religious climate – number eleven, which asks if the student feels that most other students respect the students’ religious views, and number twelve, which asks if the student enjoys the campus’s religious climate.
Table 25  Correlations, "Whether LDS," Organizational, Nonorganizational, and Intrinsic Religiosity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>1: Org-Rel: Reverse Scored</th>
<th>2: Non-Org Rel: Reverse Scored</th>
<th>6: Intrin-Rel, God's Presence: Reversed</th>
<th>7: Intrin-Rel, World View: Reversed</th>
<th>8: Intrin-Rel, Life Dealings: Reversed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.566**</td>
<td>.414**</td>
<td>.372**</td>
<td>.502**</td>
<td>.441**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Org-Rel: Reverse</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.566**</td>
<td>.735**</td>
<td>.625**</td>
<td>.749**</td>
<td>.746**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scored</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Non-Org Rel:</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.414**</td>
<td>.735**</td>
<td>.621**</td>
<td>.661**</td>
<td>.721**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse Scored</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Intrin-Rel, God's</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.372**</td>
<td>.625**</td>
<td>.621**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.709**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence: Reversed</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Intrin-Rel, World</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.502**</td>
<td>.749**</td>
<td>.661**</td>
<td>.709**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View: Reversed</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: Intrin-Rel, Life</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.441**</td>
<td>.746**</td>
<td>.721**</td>
<td>.679**</td>
<td>.850**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealings: Reversed</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 26  Correlations, "Whether LDS, " Network Resources, Coping, and Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Analysis of Institutional Culture

In a previous section, I described the influence of the enclave's religious culture on the institution's culture. To what extent are students aware of that influence? And if they are aware of the influence, to what extent does their awareness affect their sense of belonging or welcome at the college? In a previous chapter, I borrowed Grannovetter's (1985) concept of cultural embeddedness, that human behavior is embedded within social contexts of differing ranges of influence, from local, to regional, to national. I used the following illustration to represent this embeddedness:

![Diagram showing the embeddedness of individual student's experience at a college]

Figure 30  Embeddedness of Individual Student's Experience at a College

The individual student's college experience occurs within the context of the institutional culture. I represent the institutional culture as overlapping the enclave culture and the non-enclave or national culture, because within the institution,
students may be influenced by elements of the enclave culture and/or by non-enclave cultural elements that derive from regional or national sources. Also, individual students are to varying degrees integrated in the enclave’s culture, and therefore, the two X’s in the illustration represent one student who is affiliated with the enclave religion and another who is not.

This conceptualization posits the following chain of influence: Both the enclave culture and the national culture exert an influence on the institutional culture, and the institutional culture exerts an influence on the individual student’s college experience. The ultimate concern of this study is the student’s lived experience at the institution. If the enclave culture indeed has some influence on institutional culture, how does the enclave’s culture affect students’ sense of welcome or belonging at the publicly funded college located within the enclave’s region? Before one can address this question, one must answer the following more foundational questions in sequence:

1. First, what is the nature of the institutional culture?
2. Second, to what extent does the enclave culture influence the institutional culture?
3. Third, assuming that the enclave culture in fact has some influence on institutional culture, are students aware of that influence?
4. Finally, assuming that students are in fact aware of the influence, does this awareness influence students’ sense of welcome and belonging at the college?

In the preceding description of institutional culture, I addressed the first and second question above. In the following analysis, I address the third and fourth questions.
Interviews with Key Employees about Institutional Culture

In their proposed methodologies for analyzing institutional culture, Clark (1972), Kuh (1990), and Masland (1985) suggest that one conduct interviews with key employees. In this section, I report on seven interviews I conducted with key college employees, including interviews with two members of the president’s administrative cabinet (vice president and dean level administrators), and interviews with five faculty members. Of these five faculty members, two were department chairs. Three of the persons interviewed identified themselves as Mormon, and four identified themselves as non-Mormon.

In my interviews, I asked these key employees three questions: First, to what extent does the religious culture of the local community influence institutional culture? Second, if there is some influence, are students aware of it? And third, if they are aware of the influence, how does their awareness influence their sense of welcome or belonging at the college? There are areas of distinct agreement among these seven persons. All of them asserted that the enclave’s religious culture has a profound influence on institutional culture. All said that non-Mormon students are more aware of the enclave culture’s influence than Mormon students, and all suggested that Mormon students experience a greater sense of welcome and belonging at the institution. Nevertheless, most of the underlying sentiments and value-judgments were quite different among persons interviewed.

Faculty members spoke about the influence of religion on classroom instruction. A Mormon faculty discusses the inevitability of religious content in musicology courses:
The Mormon culture comes into the institution, in my classes, when I have to talk about other religions’ ideas – for example, the Protestant or Catholic ideas – and I have a classroom filled with Mormon kids, and I have to relate what I’m talking about as far as the musicality of the other religions. I have to relate other religions to Mormon kids’ religion somehow, or they won’t understand. It’s pretty touchy to do. The kids in my class don’t know if I’m a Catholic, or an atheist, or a member of the church. In fact, when they find out, they’re surprised. I might say something like, “The predominant religion in this classroom is Mormon, and from your religious point of view . . .” For example, I might talk about the Catholic credo, and I might ask, “What’s your credo?” Sometimes they have to think, and I have to push them along by saying something like, “Well, how about your Articles of Faith?” And they’ll recognize what I’m talking about. I always express it in terms of “your credo,” and not in terms of “our credo.” And so, religion comes into play.

A non-Mormon professor discusses the tense exchanges that occur in classes regarding evolution:

When you have more than eighty percent of the students who are LDS, that influences how they respond to what you’re teaching and whether or not they accept what you’re teaching them. It’s particularly evident in science when we cover evolution. I’ve had some students who have been resistant to even learning about evolution. They come with a closed mind. I’ve had some tell

42 This is a reference to a list of thirteen religious principles that are meant to summarize Mormon doctrine.
me I’m going to go to hell – in class, right there in front of other students – when I talk about evolution. But I do find that the Mormon culture overall is more accepting of topics like evolution than some other religious cultures. I taught at Auburn University in Alabama, and the Southern Baptists were much more opposed to evolution. In fact, they didn’t even come to class, and so, I’d lecture to pretty much an empty classroom. So I appreciate that the Mormon students will at least come and listen, even if they do think I’m going to hell.

Another faculty member was astonished at the differences between the college student culture he had known as an undergraduate and the student culture at Dixie State:

I could hardly believe the influence of Mormonism on these students, especially when I first got here ten years ago. Very few of the students here ever drink or party. Now that seemed just plain strange. You don’t hear of big college parties like you hear about at virtually every other institution I’ve ever been close to. And I don’t think Dixie’s students ever have any sex either. I mean, how do they go for years with no sex? And so, in my science classes I get these incredibly naïve questions, you know, coming from twenty-one-year-olds – questions that I would think they should already know, either from their own sexual experiences or the sexual experiences of friends they’ve talked with. Every other college I’ve been at the twenty-year-old students knew a whole lot about sex – mostly by personal experience. But here, that’s not true. So one influence of the Mormon culture is little knowledge about
sex. Except of course for the married students. They, of course, have all kinds of knowledge about sex. And many Mormons get married very young, which is part of the LDS culture. I mean, if the alternatives are no sex or marriage, I guess they choose marriage.

This faculty member continued:

To be honest, when I was in college practically everyone was the same as I was religion-wise. There was almost no religion in our lives. I mean, if you went home on weekends, maybe you went to church with your parents, but most people didn’t. And everybody — I mean everybody! — was partying and having sex on the weekends. I mean, everybody! Anybody I knew who wasn’t having sex ever, I either didn’t know about it, or they were sort of a social outcast. But here at this college, everybody goes to church — I mean everybody! — and nobody has sex — nobody! What’s up with that? At any of the colleges I attended nobody went to church and everybody had all kinds of sexual partners — it’s not necessarily a good thing, but it’s what happened — and everybody got drunk on the weekends. This place is extremely different from any college I ever knew about.

A student services officer was also attentive to the influence of the enclave’s religious culture on student sexuality:

Another important consideration for students’ sense of welcome at the college is the dating scene and sexual relationships. Normally, the college years are a big experimentation period regarding sexuality and intimacy, and those who are trying to be good Mormons are on a very different page than those who
are thinking about sexual experiments like they’ve seen in the movies in
*Animal House* or on TV on *90210* or whatever. I mean, Mormons are worried
about who you date and what it means. If you date this other kind of person
who’s not Mormon, what does it mean? And, “I’m not here to experiment
with sex, but this guy certainly is.” So this theme influences students’ sense
of welcome. If you’re here to experiment with sex, and nine out of ten
women on campus are committed to remain virgins until they day they marry,
then you might not feel welcome here.

After noting the influence of the enclave culture on institutional culture, all
persons interviewed said they believed that some students are keenly aware of that
influence. They differed, however, in how they characterized students’ response. At
one extreme, a Mormon faculty member suggested that “no one is ever offended by
the religious influence” and “non-LDS students – the ones that I know – seem not to
be offended and not to feel they’re being left out.” When I asked if this professor had
thought about the influence of artwork with Mormon themes, he responded:

> You know, the LDS themes and ideas in the college’s art work – in music, and
> paintings, and sculpture – honestly, I don’t see how anyone could be offended
> by that. It tells about how through history Mormon pioneers came here from
> across the world, clear from the Ohio Valley and even from Europe. We need
to understand that these are the people that settled this country around here –
we need to appreciate what they did for us – so of course we want to know
who they were and what they thought. We’re not pushing or pressing the
dogmas, but educating students about the settlement of this country around here.

However, most persons interviewed contended that Mormon students, because they are fully socialized and adapted to the environment, are unaware of the enclave’s influence, but non-Mormons and certain types of nonconformist Mormons, especially those raised outside of Utah and those who are in some way marginalized, are acutely aware of the religious culture on campus. After noting that, “Absolutely, the regional religious culture has a strong influence on institutional culture,” a non-Mormon faculty member suggested that:

The predominance of the religious culture is kind of invisible to LDS people. That’s the nature of social influences that are so embedded culturally that people are unaware - they aren’t even noticed by the LDS employees and students here. They don’t see it as a problem or an issue that a public institution should be representing one religious group and no other religious groups. It’s invisible, I should say, to most Mormons. The ones who have lived outside Utah and made professional friendships and relationships with people who are not LDS – those people have a strong sense of the spirituality of other kinds of people, and they appreciate other people’s spiritual practices. A classic example is this – just out of the blue, I asked in class, “Which church has the most people in the world?” And many of my students piped up, “LDS!” because they’re simply so pervasively influenced by the local culture that they have no sense of the outside culture.
However, this faculty member noted that certain types of Mormon students do become sensitive to the enclave culture's influence:

You know, some LDS students seem to be very aware of the religious influence on our campus culture, especially the students who are LDS but grew up in other places. They're aware of the element of cliquishness that's offensive to people who have lived outside Utah and have had a normal, multi-cultural experience before they come here. So, LDS students from California or Florida or some other place are acutely aware of the influence of the religious culture on this campus's culture.

A high-ranking student services officer at the college also noted that students who are "in the majority" are less aware of the religious influences on campus culture:

Some students are more aware of Mormonism's cultural influence on the college culture than other students, I think. Painfully, I think that those who are not of the dominant faith are the ones who are most acutely aware of the religion's influence here. I guess it's just plain easier to be in the majority. And it's easier not to know you're in the majority when you're in the majority. Lots of Mormon students have not been sensitized about the religious culture's role here. My own feeling is that it's not because of Mormon students' prejudice, but because of their ignorance. They might say, "I went through elementary school, and all my friends were with me in Primary on Sundays. I went to high school, and most of them were with me in
Seminary\(^{43}\) every day and in church on Sunday. Now, I get to college, and I'm just not used to thinking of these other people as not-Mormon.”

Mormon students just have a habit of thought that perceives all other students as Mormons. Yeah, from my experiences with students, non-Mormons are the ones who will talk about the religious influences here more and point out the problems more.

Without exception, all persons interviewed claimed that Mormon students experience a greater sense of welcome and belonging at the institution, and with only one exception, they said that this greater sense of belonging reinforces and compounds the demographic concentration of Mormon students at the institution. In effect, they suggested that because Mormon students feel more welcome, more of them remain at the institution, which creates a stronger Mormon culture, and further reinforces the students’ sense of welcome and belonging, driving away non-Mormon students. Only one Mormon faculty member claimed that the religious culture does not “offend” or drive away non-Mormon students:

I really think that the kids I’ve known over the years, they’ve felt welcome, both Mormon and non-Mormon. The social climate reaches out to people and tries to include them, whether they’re Mormon or not. Well, maybe there are some returned missionaries who get a little pushy about religion, trying to convert non-Mormons, but I think, for the most part, it’s a wonderful experience for the non-Mormons to come here. And now that I think about it,

\(^{43}\) A reference to released-time religious instruction that occurs at church-owned educational facilities that are located beside public secondary schools throughout the West.

249
you know, many of the non-Mormon students have left here as members of the LDS Church.

A non-Mormon faculty said that non-Mormon students may be alienated, and she suggested that the same phenomenon impacts employees of the college:

I think LDS students feel very welcome here because the majority of students here are LDS. There may be some instances where students who aren’t Mormon – you know, on the outside looking in – feel alienated. That can be remedied, if they make friends with Mormon students. If they go to some of the dances and functions at the Institute, then they’ll feel more belonging.

I’ve been here for thirteen years now, and I can see that there are more non-Mormon students coming here, and I see more non-Mormon faculty too. When I first came here, there was only one other non-Mormon faculty member in my department. In fact, that person left, because he felt he was on the outside of the culture in the town.

Another non-Mormon faculty member said that, while most Mormon students feel welcome here, marginalized and non-Utah Mormons find the environment to be stifling:

LDS students feel right at home here. The only thing I’ve seen that contradicts that is that some students who are LDS and not from Utah feel like – “Wow! This culture is very unusual! I’m from, say, California, and I’m LDS, and yet, holy cow! I’m under a microscope.” That’s the impression I get from LDS students who are from somewhere else. A few years ago, I knew a student who was looking for another school, and I asked why, and he
said, "There are too many Mormons here." And I pointed out, "You know – you’re a Mormon!" [He laughs.] And the guy says, "Yeah, I’m Mormon, but not like a Utah Mormon." So I really think that there’s a very powerful microscope on all the LDS students here – people examine their behaviors and make judgments. You know, I’m free from that because I’m not Mormon and my wife’s not Mormon, and nobody expects anything good from me anyway! [Again laughs.] So, I don’t have the problem of being under the microscope. But if I was a student and I was trying to make friends here, and I was not Mormon, this would sure not be my first choice of school. Well, I know non-Mormons who do fine here, and they have plenty of friends and love the school, but I also know others who never seem to fit in and they just disappear. So there is some evidence of students who got here and said, "Holy crap, let me out of here!" I’ll bet that’s pretty common.

Asserting that non-Mormon students “feel like a fish out of water” at the college, and that marginalized or nonconformist Mormons feel a “judgemental-ness” in the culture, a non-Mormon faculty member commented,

If a student is a very conservative Mormon, their sense of welcome is reinforced, but if a student is a not a conservative Mormon, they feel like they’re being judged by their attitudes and behavior, and they react against that judgment, and they are repelled by the institutional culture. They feel judged and they can’t wait to get away.

Because his college employment involves student recruitment and retention, the student services officer made what might have been the most cogent and well

251

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developed comments about students’ sense of welcome and belonging. He pointed out that, in some ways, the institution recognizes that the enclave culture can be used instrumentally for the institution’s utilitarian purposes. The enclave culture’s congregational organization can be used both to recruit and to retain students. In effect, the religious culture saves the college from having to perform a host of student services that are typical at other institutions:

Certainly, a sense of belonging in the culture has a lot to do with getting students to come here and getting students to stay here. At other non-Utah colleges where I’ve worked, the colleges expend a lot of effort to bring students into small groups, to provide activities where they can socialize, and to help them feel that sense of welcome and belonging. If I’m a student services officer at a college where students come in from all over the United States, I try to structure ways for individual students to meet other students and feel connected to one another and to the institution. However, for the Mormon students, the church provides a ward of a hundred and fifty students, and the first Monday night after they arrive on campus, they are meeting with some adult role model, the bishop of their student ward, in a small Family Home Evening group and making the kinds of bonds that, frankly, I can’t duplicate through student service activities. They’re being organized in Home Teaching groups and they’re being told to visit other Mormon students – to teach them the gospel, and pray with them. They’re working on Sunday School lessons together. They’re baking cookies. They’re singing together.

He continues:
Then throughout the students' first semester these student wards are constantly having activities— they're going out and throwing water balloons at each other, doing service projects, having barbecues—whatever. Those are things that the institution would normally try to do for students at a college outside of Utah, but here, the college doesn't have to do those kinds of activities as much because the Mormon students are too busy doing the activities in their student wards.

He points out that these church-based activities are designed for religious purposes, but they also bring cultural advantages to the institution:

If the college sponsored these group-forming activities, they'd certainly have a different flavor. The students in the Mormon majority rely more on the religious culture to supply social support systems than they rely on institutional activities. I mean, at the college we sponsor a dance and fifty students show up, and the church sponsors a dance over at the Institute, and three hundred students show up! In that way, students who are not at the Institute dance—students who might be non-Mormon or inactive or angry Mormon students—come to the college sponsored dance and think, “Gosh, nobody’s here—I kind of feel lonely at this place.” You know, I'm sure it’s not meant to exclude non-Mormons. I mean, they're certainly invited over to the Institute’s dance, but because religion is a part of the Institute, those non-Mormon students feel less welcome. The circle is not drawn around them—instead, a wall is built between them, or whatever.
Finally, he notes that, because of the dominance of the enclave’s culture on society in the college’s service region, the religious culture is unavoidable. He implies that, if the college is to succeed, it must be somewhat deferential to the local religious culture:

We are up against demographics. Utah students who graduate from high school are highly, highly skewed toward the LDS faith. You may have heard that Washington County is less LDS than the state at large, but that’s not the case among high school graduates. Folks who move in without children are changing the county’s demographics away from Mormon dominance, but I don’t think the college can ever pretend that Mormons aren’t going to be the great majority. We have to live with that reality.

**Statistical Indicators of Welcome and Belonging**

All of the college employees interviewed indicated that they believed (a) that the enclave’s religious culture exerts a powerful influence on institutional culture; (b) that non-Mormon students are more aware of this cultural influence than Mormon students, (c) that the enclave’s cultural influence on institutional culture increases Mormon students’ sense of welcome and belonging, but diminishes those affective responses for non-Mormon or nonconformist Mormon students, (d) that the religious influence on institutional culture increases the demographic concentration of Mormons in the student body, and (e) that non-Utah Mormon students and Mormon students who are “dissident,” “marginalized,” or “nonconformist” are more aware of and critical about the enclave’s cultural influence on institutional culture than are conservative or traditional Utah Mormons.
In effect, this is a self-reinforcing loop: Person's interviewed suggested that because the enclave's influence is so powerful, non-enclave individuals are driven away, which increases the demographic dominance of enclave affiliates, which increases the power of the enclave's influence, which further alienates non-enclave individuals. At this point, one might ask if there is any statistical support for these assertions in survey or demographic data.

First, one compares the portion of LDS students in the sample to demographers' estimates for the portion of LDS persons in Utah's overall population. If the sample's portion is higher than the state population's portion, this may suggest support for the college employees' opinion that the attrition rate at the institution is higher among non-Mormon students, thus increasing Mormon students' concentration in the student body. Demographers and scholars disagree about the current portion of Utah's population that is LDS: Grammach's (2004) estimate is 77 percent; Phillips' (n.d) is 75 percent; and the Salt Lake Tribune's (2005) is 62 percent. Despite this disagreement of estimates, the portion of the sample that is LDS (86 percent) is considerably higher than any of the demographer's estimates. Given that the sample was a convenience sample, one should be tentative and careful in making inferences; however, the comparatively high portion of Mormons in the student sample lends some support to the assertion that the college's student body has a higher concentration of Mormons than the environing population.

Second, one might analyze sample data related to return for the subsequent fall semester. I've noted above that 68 percent of Mormon students returned for the
subsequent fall semester, but only 59 percent of non-Mormon students returned; however, a T-test shows that this difference is not statistically significant.

Third, one might explore other survey items for evidence that Mormon students express a greater sense of welcome and belonging at the institution. In particular, two survey questions may shed light on students' sense of welcome and belonging. These questions ask about students' agreement with the following two statements: (a) "I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs" and (b) I enjoy the religious climate at this college." The emotive content of these survey questions (feeling that one's beliefs are respected and enjoying the campus's religious climate) may contribute to students' sense of belonging and welcome. As can be seen in the following table, for LDS and non-LDS students, the differences between mean responses to these two survey items were statistically significant, with LDS students reporting that they felt a greater sense of respect for their religious views and a greater sense of satisfaction with the religious climate at the college.

All of the college employees who were interviewed made two other assertions that can be explored statistically. They suggested that two kinds of Mormon students are more aware of, sensitive about, and critical of the enclave culture's influence on institutional culture: First, non-Utah Mormon students who have had greater exposure to religious and cultural diversity, and second, Mormon students who are "angry," "marginalized," "dissident," or "inactive." The survey was not designed to test these claims, and therefore, at best, analysis of the survey's data can provide very tentative support for these assertions.
Table 23  Comparison of Means, Feeling of Respect and Enjoyment of Campus

Religious Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11: Campus-Rel-Cllmate, Respect: Reversed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.042</td>
<td>.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12: Campus-Rel-Cllmate, Enjoy: Reversed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Campus-Rel-Cllmate, Respect: Reversed</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 246 Mormon students in the sample, only 36 had non-Utah permanent mailing addresses. To analyze whether non-Utah Mormon students are more aware of, and critical about the enclave’s cultural influence on institutional culture, I ran an independent samples T-test that showed no statistically significant difference between the return rate for Utah and non-Utah Mormon students (69 and 64 percent, respectively). Also, I ran T-tests that showed no statistically significant differences between Utah and non-Utah Mormon students’ mean responses to two survey items: (a) “I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs” and
(b) I enjoy the religious climate at this college.” Thus, these analyses did not support
the idea that non-Utah Mormons are more aware of, sensitive about, and critical of
the enclave culture’s influence on institutional culture.

To analyze whether marginalized Mormon students are more aware of, and
critical about the enclave’s cultural influence on institutional culture, I used the
organizational religiosity variable (the frequency of attending church) as a proxy for
marginalization, with the assumption being that marginalized Mormons students
attend church less often than those who are not marginalized. I then analyzed the rate
of return for the following fall term for those who reported that they attend church “a
few times a month” or less frequently. However, in this test, the cut score that
divided Mormon students was ineffective, since, as the following group statistics
indicate, of the 246 Mormon students in the sample, only 7 reported that they
attended church “a few times a month” or less frequently, showing again the
extremely high level of organizational religiosity of the Mormon students in the
sample. Only a cut score of 5, dividing the Mormon students between those who
attend “once a week” or more, and those who attend “a few times a month” or less
gave a workable comparison group, with 50 reporting that they attend less frequently
than “once a week.” However, the differences between the mean rates of return were
not significant, perhaps suggesting that the retention rate of marginalized Mormon
students is not lower than that of other Mormon students. Again, these inferences
must be very tentative.
Table 24  Group Statistics. Mormon Students' Rates of Return, with Varying Cut Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Returned following year</th>
<th>Org-Rel: Reverse Scored</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 3</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.468</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.488</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Returned following year</th>
<th>Org-Rel: Reverse Scored</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 5</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.466</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.479</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the preceding section of this chapter, I have relied on Masland’s paradigm of institutional culture (1985). Using interviews, observation, and document analysis, I have explored four dimensions of institutional culture – saga, heroes, symbols, and ritual – looking for recurrent religious themes. Building on this analysis, I’ve attended to four questions in sequence: First, what is the nature of the institutional culture? Second, to what extent does the enclave culture influence the institutional culture? Third, assuming that the enclave culture in fact has some influence on institutional culture, are students aware of that influence? Finally, assuming that students are in fact aware of the influence, does this awareness influence students’ sense of welcome and belonging at the college? In summary, I’ve found that because the College is situated in a religious enclave with strong demographic predominance of co-religionists, the community’s religious culture extends into the campus and exerts influence on the institutional culture that is both implicit and contextual, and explicit.
I have not yet fully answered the fourth question above – whether awareness of religious culture influences students’ sense of welcome and belonging. An upcoming section of this chapter explores how individual students culturally negotiate with the campus culture. This section relies on in-depth interviews with twelve individual students. In it, I use individual students’ comments to analyze the impact of the enclave’s culture on their sense of welcome and belonging at the institution. In this section, one sees evidence that Mormon students indeed express a greater sense of welcome and belonging at the institution and non-Mormon students feel alienated and marginalized at the institution.

Influence of Enclave Culture on Academic Outcomes

At a public college located within a religious enclave, what association is there between integration in the enclave’s religious community (as measured by variables such as affiliation, participation, intrinsic religiosity, and association with coreligionists) and educational outcomes (as measured by variables such as course grades, cumulative college GPA, and freshman students’ returning for the subsequent academic year)?

Many researchers have found that conservative religiosity and educational attainment are negatively associated (Burton, Johnson, & Tamney, 1989; Iannaccone, 1992a; Darnell & Sherkat, 1997; Johnstone, 2004). My review of literature points out that researchers have found that Mormon religiosity is incongruous with this general pattern. Even though sociologists rank Mormonism as among America’s most conservative religions (Iannaccone, 1997), yet, as Bahr and Forste (1998) assert, “among the findings that seem to merit being called facts” are the following:
Although most studies of correlates of religiosity among U.S. adults reveal an inverse relationship or no relationship between higher education and religiosity, among Mormon adults the relationship is direct: college-educated Mormons are *more* apt to attend church and to exhibit other manifestations of "high" religiosity than are less-educated Mormons. (p. 157)

In what follows, I report on statistical analyses I ran to examine the influence of religious variables on academic variables for the sample of 285 students who took my survey. These analyses included comparisons of means and a variety of regression analyses. The most important findings for this sample are these: First, that Mormon students in the sample receive higher grades than non-Mormon students. Second, that the rate of return for the subsequent fall term was not significantly different for Mormons and non-Mormon students. Third, in a variety of regression models explored, two religious variables emerged as having greatest influence - "Whether LDS" and another variable that I interpret as an indication of religious self-reliance.

The first of these variables, "Whether LDS," is binary, and therefore as an expression of religious identity and solidarity with the enclave culture, it is not a measure with great sensitivity. Nevertheless, it provides a rough measure of religious identity. The second of these variables is derived from a survey question that asks students if it is true that "When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to." I interpret their answers as an expression of religious independence and self-reliance.
From the analyses, I make two tentative interpretative conclusions: First, that identification with the enclave culture (being affiliated and having a sense of belonging) has a positive impact on academic success as measured by grades, and second, that religious self-reliance (expressing individualism and religious independence) has a positive impact on academic success as measured by grades. These two variables have paradoxically contradictory influence: It seems that as religious identification rises, cumulative GPA also rises; however, as religious independence rises, GPA falls. I struggle to sort out this apparent contradiction. It is something that I explore in later interviews with students, and it is a good question for future research.

My initial analysis was a comparison of means, a two-tailed t-test with independent samples, using “Whether LDS” as the grouping variable, and using cumulative college GPA as the independent variable. The following group statistics for this t-test show that the LDS students’ average cumulative GPA was above 3.0, and the non-LDS students’ average was about 2.6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative GPA 1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>3.03541</td>
<td>.657949</td>
<td>.041949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.58190</td>
<td>.602629</td>
<td>.096498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the null hypothesis that $\mu_1 - \mu_2 = 0$, one tests whether this difference in means is statistically significant. The following independent samples test statistics show that the difference is indeed significant at $p<.05$, and one therefore rejects the null.
Table 26  Independent Samples Test Statistics, Comparison of GPA Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative GPA Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>4.043</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.45352</td>
<td>.112167</td>
<td>[.232729, .674305]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>4.310</td>
<td>53.424</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.45352</td>
<td>.105222</td>
<td>[.242508, .664526]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar t-tests can be performed to compare the means of the other academic variables, including students' course grades in the history class (HIST 1700) and whether or not students returned to the institution in the subsequent fall term. The following group statistics and independent samples test statistics show that, in the case of course grades for the history class, the means are significantly different, with LDS students receiving much higher grades than non-LDS students. However, even though 68 percent of LDS students returned the following year, compared to 59 percent of non-LDS students, this difference was not statistically significant at $p<.05$.

Table 27  Group Statistics, Comparison of History Course Grade and Return Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Grade in Hist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>2.6557</td>
<td>.90906</td>
<td>.05796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.9026</td>
<td>1.08591</td>
<td>.17389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned following year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.468</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.498</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 28  Independent Samples Test Statistics, Comparison of History Course Grade and Return Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Grade in Hist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>4.675</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>4.109</td>
<td>46.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned following year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.095</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>1.046</td>
<td>49.215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus far, data show an interesting and provocative pattern: The relationship between affiliation in the enclave religious group and grades (both individual course grades and cumulative GPA’s) is positive, with Mormon students receiving grades that are significantly higher than non-Mormon students. However, the relationship between affiliation in the enclave religious group and persistence at the institution, as measured by returning for the subsequent fall semester, is neither positive nor negative, and the difference between the two groups’ rates of return is not statistically significant. This pattern raises unavoidable questions: Why is it that Mormon students receive higher grades? And, while one might expect that these higher grades would be encouraging for Mormon students, providing greater incentive for persistence at the institution, why is it that Mormon persistence is not statistically higher than non-Mormon persistence? In other words, it appears that identifying with the enclave culture is associated with higher grades, but that this identification and this positive reinforcement do not translate into higher rates of persistence. This
pattern suggests that identification with the enclave culture does not translate into identification with, and persistence at, the institution itself.

At the present time, I cannot offer a definitive answer to these questions, and they are an interesting subject for future research. However, one may look at other demographic variables for clues. The following group statistics show that even though the average year in school of non-Mormon students was the same as the Mormon students', the non-Mormon sample was quite a bit older, somewhat less white, and more male than the Mormon sample. Of these variables, age stands out as a variable that may have an impact on students' returning for the subsequent fall. Older students may be more goal-oriented and committed than younger students, more motivated by economic and familial commitments. The possible influence of age, of course, is only conjectural, but age may account for the fact that non-Mormon students, even though receiving lower grades, return to the institution at a rate that is not significantly different than Mormon students.

Table 29 Group Statistics - Age, Year in School, Ethnicity, and Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>21.36</td>
<td>3.529</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23.85</td>
<td>6.730</td>
<td>1.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in School (1=FR)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.582</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (1=F)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To test whether age is related to return for the subsequent fall term, I ran a multiple regression analysis, using “Returned following year” as dependent variable, and using “Whether LDS,” age, ethnicity, year in school, and sex as independent variables. As the following table of coefficients shows, age is the only independent variable with a somewhat large positive coefficient and statistical significance at p<.05; however, the model’s adjusted R square was only .009, and thus even the influence of the non-Mormon students’ age may be negligible:

Table 30  Coefficients, Multiple Regression - Returned Following Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>1.492</td>
<td>.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>1.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.524E-02</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>2.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (1=F)</td>
<td>2.365E-03</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</td>
<td>5.940E-02</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in School (1=FR)</td>
<td>-7.61E-02</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>-.108</td>
<td>-1.676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Returned following year

Setting aside the variable of return for the following year, the next question one must address is this: What might account for the fact that Mormon students receive grades that are significantly higher than grades given to non-Mormon students at this publicly funded institution? To explore this question, I ran other regression analyses, exploring relationships between students’ cumulative GPA’s and several religious variables. First, a simple regression using cumulative GPA as dependent variable and whether LDS as predictor gives the following model summary and
ANOVA, with an adjusted R square of .051, showing that students’ religious affiliation, while having a statistically significant influence on their cumulative GPA’s, did not explain a large proportion of GPA variance:

Table 31  Simple Regression Model Summary - "Whether LDS" and Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.650794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Whether LDS (1=LDS)

Table 32  Simple Regression ANOVA - "Whether LDS" and Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>6.924</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.924</td>
<td>16.348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>119.860</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>.424</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>126.784</td>
<td>284</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Whether LDS (1=LDS)
b. Dependent Variable: Cumulative GPA

If religious affiliation’s predictive influence on cumulative GPA’s was significant but not large, what about other religious variables collected? What is the magnitude of their predictive influence on students’ cumulative GPA’s? To explore this question, I ran several multiple regression analyses that included all other variables in differing combinations. Following is an example of one such analysis. It employs two variables that are composites of survey items, summing the responses of
a single survey dimension. This composite variable adds the three scores, providing a single score for the dimension. As one can see in the following model tables, the overall model was significant at \( p < 0.05 \), but no individual variable was significant at that level, and the adjusted R square shows that the model’s explained variance is quite small:

Table 33  Multiple Regression, Religious Variables and Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.650511</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Campus Religious Climate Sum, 2: Non-Org Rel: Reverse Scored, Religious Network Sum, Whether LDS (1=LDS), 1: Org-Rel: Reverse Scored, Intrinsic Religiosity Sum

ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.144</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.524</td>
<td>3.601</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>117.640</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>.423</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>126.784</td>
<td>284</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Campus Religious Climate Sum, 2: Non-Org Rel: Reverse Scored, Religious Network Sum, Whether LDS (1=LDS), 1: Org-Rel: Reverse Scored, Intrinsic Religiosity Sum

b. Dependent Variable: Cumulative GPA

---

44 For example, the variable “religious network sum” is a composite of three survey questions about religious network resources.

45 I should note that all “composite variables” are self-created, intuitively designed, speculative, and exploratory. They have not been tested in any way, and I present them here with a great deal of caution. Initially, I created and explored their influence because I thought they might lead to some insight. Readers should not assume that their validity or reliability have been closely examined.
To understand the influence of religious variables on cumulative GPA, one should explore several models or combinations of variables to determine which model has the greatest goodness of fit, or which contributes best to the explanation of variance. A common method for exploring many models is backward stepwise regression. In this procedure, cumulative GPA remains the dependent variable, and other variables are entered into the equation as possible predictors. Through a series of regression analyses, variables with the least partial correlation (the correlation of two variables while controlling for other variables) and the least contribution to the model’s goodness of fit are sequentially removed from the model, leaving variables that have the most predictive influence on the dependent variable. The variable with the smallest partial correlation with the dependent variable is removed first, and other variables are removed in sequence. As the following model summary shows, the tenth iteration of this stepwise process provided the model with the highest adjusted R square and greatest explained variance:
Table 34  Backward Stepwise Regression - Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.524&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.590317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.524&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.589207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.524&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.588111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.524&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>.587028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.524&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.585953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.523&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.585109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.522&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>.584518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.521&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>.583875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.519&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.269</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.583613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.517&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>.238</td>
<td>.583286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>.514&lt;sup&gt;k&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.583629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>.510&lt;sup&gt;l&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>.583941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>.508&lt;sup&gt;m&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>.583888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>.502&lt;sup&gt;n&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.252</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.585139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>.495&lt;sup&gt;o&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>.586725</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the regression constant, the tenth model includes these predictors: (a) whether or not the student returned the following year, (b) whether the student shares the religious affiliation of his or her favorite professor, (c) year in school, (d) ethnicity, (e) nonorganizational religiosity, (f) satisfaction with campus religious climate, (g) whether LDS, (h) whether the student knows a person in his or her religious group to turn to when facing a problem, (i) organizational religiosity, (j) the number of earned credit hours, and (k) whether religion underlies the students’ world view. Following are coefficients and observed significance for this tenth model:
Table 35 Regression Model Coefficients and Observed Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model</strong></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (Constant)</td>
<td>1.830</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>5.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in School (1=FR)</td>
<td>-.281</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>-.282</td>
<td>-2.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>2.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (W=1, NW=0)</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>1.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned Hours</td>
<td>1.782E-02</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.581</td>
<td>5.359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned following year</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>2.378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Org-Rel: Reverse Scored</td>
<td>5.393E-02</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>1.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Non-Org Rel: Reverse Scored</td>
<td>3.528E-02</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>1.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Rel-Network, Professor: Reversed</td>
<td>4.913E-02</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>1.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Intrin-Rel, World View: Reversed</td>
<td>6.765E-02</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>1.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: Reversed</td>
<td>-.102</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>-.196</td>
<td>-2.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Campus-Rel-Climate, Respect: Reversed</td>
<td>-6.393E-02</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>-.092</td>
<td>-1.224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When interpreting regression models, an unavoidable question is which predictors are more important? There are two common approaches to this question, the first having to do with coefficients and the second having to do with observed significance. One approach to determining which variables are most important is to examine the magnitude of the coefficient, with higher magnitudes having greater predictive influence. The problem with this approach is that a particular variable's underlying scale influences the variable's predictive effect. For example, if age were entered in months instead of years, that variable's influence would change. SPSS attempts to solve this problem by providing standardized coefficients, a method that eliminates or reduces the influence of underlying scales.

As measured by magnitude of the standardized coefficients, the following variables in this model have greatest predictive influence on cumulative GPA (listed

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in order of coefficient magnitude): (a) number of earned credit hours, (b) year in school, (c) whether the student knows a person in his or her religious group to turn to when facing a problem, (d) whether LDS, and (e) whether or not the student returned the following academic year. Among these five variables, three are academic variables (credits earned, year in school, and return for following year) and two are religious variables.

The first method for interpreting the importance of variables within a regression model relies on the standardized coefficient. The second method relies on the observed significance of the variable as measured by p value. Keeping in mind the distinction between statistical significance and practical significance, one can see that the variables with most statistically significant predictive influence are the same as the variables whose coefficients have the greatest magnitude.

In interpreting the importance of the influence of these variables, one must be careful to understand the meaning of the differing coefficient signs (positive or negative). Because the original survey format gave lowest scores to highest religiosity, I chose to reverse the scoring for the survey (i.e., I awarded 5 points to a student who chose “1. Definitely true of me,” and I awarded 1 point to a student who chose “5. Definitely not true”). Thus, students with highest religiosity received highest scores. Knowing this, one can see that the negative coefficient for the religious variable of whether the student knows a person in his or her religious group to turn to when facing a problem indicates that a decrease in this variable is associated with an increase in cumulative GPA. In other words, as this measure of religiosity decreased, grades increased.
This particular variable, I believe, is an expression of students’ individuality and independence, and its influence within the model suggests that self-reliance, particularly religious self-reliance, is associated with higher cumulative GPA’s. If this variable is an expression of independence and self-reliance, one next asks how Mormon and non-Mormon students compare in their responses to this question. Did the non-Mormon students in the sample express higher levels of self-reliance? An independent samples t-test comparing means shows that the mean response for Mormon students was 4.50, and the mean response for non-Mormon students was 2.59 (with 5 being high, indicating that is “definitely true” that students know someone in their religious group to whom they can turn when they have a problem). This difference was significant at p<.05, showing that non-Mormon students express greater self-reliance, lending support to the interpretation that as students’ response to this question decreases, self-reliance increases, and as self-reliance increases, students’ cumulative GPA’s also increase. Of course, this interpretation is somewhat speculative, and it should be a matter of further research. Also, in the qualitative interview portion of my research, I explore issues related to religious independence.

The influence of religious self-reliance is measurable within the model, and non-Mormon students express higher self-reliance. However, the magnitude of this predictor’s influence is not sufficient to change the overall pattern that Mormon students receive higher grades. The only religious variable whose positive association was of a magnitude large enough to be included in the model was “Whether LDS.” This fact suggests to me that, among other cultural phenomena, a student’s identification as an affiliate, or a student’s sense of belonging to the enclave’s...
religious culture, has an important positive influence on the student’s academic success as measured by cumulative GPA.

Having completed these statistical analyses, I return to the research question at hand: At a public college located within a religious enclave, what association is there between integration in the enclave’s religious community (as measured by affiliation, participation, intrinsic religiosity, and association with coreligionists) and educational outcomes (as measured by course grades, cumulative college GPA, and freshman students’ returning for the subsequent academic year)? The statistical analyses bring me to an apparent paradox. The two most important religious variables seem to be antitheses of one another, and one might expect that their respective influences would cancel each other out.

The most important finding is that Mormon students in the sample receive higher grades than non-Mormon students. From the backward stepwise analysis described here, it appears that higher cumulative GPA’s are positively associated with being Mormon. Even though this is a binary variable (1 = LDS, 0 = non-LDS), this variable is perhaps a rough expression of religious identity that indicates a sense of belonging to a functional community, an expression that one associates with, connects to, and culturally participates in the enclave culture. Having this sense of belonging, it appears, has a positive influence on students’ academic success as measured by cumulative GPA.

However, another important religious variable suggests that a high level of religious self reliance also has a positive influence on students’ academic success as measured by cumulative GPA. Students with high scores on this variable reported
that it was "definitely true of me" that "When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to," and as this variable decreased, cumulative GPA's increased. This religious self-reliance seems to be the antithesis of religious belonging, communion, and solidarity. Therefore, one might expect that the two most important religious variables would cancel one another's influence. In later research components, especially the qualitative interviews, I look for evidence to further interpret this phenomenon. In future research, I may further analyze the statistical behavior of these variables, exploring the possibility of a variety of interaction effects and/or multicollinearity.

From the analyses above, I make two tentative interpretative conclusions: First, that identification with the enclave culture (being affiliated and having a sense of belonging) has a positive impact on academic success as measured by grades, and second, that religious self-reliance (expressing individualism and religious independence) has a positive impact on academic success as measured by grades. Sorting out the interaction of these two influences through statistical methods will be matter for future research.

Individual Students' Lived Experience

And at a public college located within a religious enclave, in what ways do the "lived experience" of religiously integrated students and those who are not religiously integrated differ? At a public college located within a religious enclave, how do
students of diverse religious backgrounds negotiate with the enclave environment and with one another? In what follows, I report on nine students.\(^{46}\)

While certain general patterns emerged in interviews with all students, I'm impressed by the individuality and distinctiveness of students' experiences at the college. On one hand, Mormon students generally found the campus environment to be a recognizable, familiar, welcoming cultural milieu. Mormon students differed, however, in their abilities to empathize with what some called the "outsiders" among them. Some were able to empathize fully with the outsiders, finding sympathy for what they reasoned must be an awkward "other-ness." Other Mormon students, however, had no sense whatsoever that anyone felt hesitation, unease, or mistrust of the prevailing culture. On the other hand, non-Mormon students generally were aware that, within the campus's religious homogeneity, they stood out as distinct and separate. Nevertheless, their emotional responses to this "other-ness" differed widely. Some were angry, bitter, and resentful, and others were willing to acknowledge that "it's their school, and they should be able to do what they want

\(^{46}\) I interviewed twelve students, but I do not include profiles for three of them for the following reasons: Two students interviewed were a young LDS man and a young LDS woman whose interviews, while somewhat unique, did not vary significantly from other LDS students profiled below, especially Pam and Tammy. Another student, a young Hispanic man, did not return for school the subsequent Fall term. Through an Internet phone book, I found him in a community about two hundred miles from St. George, and with the help of my secretary, I administered the informed consent document via the mail. Unfortunately, I tape recorded the interview using a speaker phone, and big sections of the interview were unintelligible. Perhaps because I was not able to speak with this young man face-to-face, I was not able to establish any sense of trust with him, and in the interview he was generally very reticent and reserved.
here.” Each student was unique, expressing multifaceted, if not unfathomable, individuality.

Of the twelve students interviewed, seven had been enrolled in colleges and universities outside of Utah, and these students had given the most thought to the enclave’s cultural influence on Dixie State College. They used their experiences elsewhere as a touchstone, a reference for noting cultural differences at the two institutions. Several of the students in cases highlighted below, both Mormon and non-Mormon, had experiences at other colleges that sensitized them to elements of Dixie State’s institutional culture.

Pam: “School Is A Lot Easier When You Have Things Figured Out”

Nineteen-year-old Pam is a bit torn between her very traditional faith and her growing awareness of secular culture, or what Mormons call “the world.” Among all students interviewed, Pam’s responses were most traditionally Mormon. With long blond hair and dressed in a dark button-up shirt and a plain skirt, Pam seemed very eager to satisfy my expectations. Was it an imposition to come to the library? I asked. Not at all. Did she mind if the interview lasted an hour? No, she said, inviting me to take all the time I needed. And further, as she finished answering each question, she asked, “Is that good? Do you need anything more on that? Just let me know if you want me to say anything more.”

A sophomore at Dixie State College preparing to enter the elementary education baccalaureate program, Pam lives with her parents in the home where she was raised from the time she was six years old. Before then, her family lived in Las Vegas. When I asked her if any family members still lived there, she responded, “No
— thank goodness, they’ve got away from there too, to places like Logandale and Missouri.” She is the youngest of six children, and with a 3.29 cumulative GPA and a “B” grade in HIST 1700, she is a solid, but not high achieving student.

As I was setting up the tape and reviewing informed consent information, like three or four other students, Pam asked me what my religious affiliation was. I told her that I would tell her at the end of the interview, adding, “After all, if I ask you about your religious views, you have a right to ask me about mine, right?” She laughed. When I asked why it was important for her to know about my religious views, she explained that whenever she met someone, she was curious about their religious views. “It’s the first thing I wonder about. I just want to know, so that I know where they’re coming from, so I understand them and won’t offend them or something.” I asked her if not knowing my religious views would impact how she answered my questions. She said, “Maybe — I would probably answer differently if I knew that you either were or were not Mormon. Not knowing might affect what I say.”

Pam may have been the most conservative Mormon student I interviewed. On the survey, she indicated that she attends church more than once a week and practices private religious activities more than once a day. She shares the religious affiliation of her best friend at the college, but she does not know her favorite professor’s affiliation. For her, it is “very important” to be married to a person who shares her religious affiliation. She indicated that five statements about religious attitudes were all “definitely true of me” — first, that “In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine”; second, that “My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole
approach to life”; third, that “I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life”; fourth, that “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to”; and fifth, that “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.” When I asked her, “On a scale of one to ten, with one being not very religious and ten being very religious, rate yourself,” Pam responded without hesitation – ten – and added, “I do all the things that the Church asks you to.”

With these attitudes, Pam feels at home on campus. On the survey, she indicated that it is “definitely true” that other students respect her religious views and that she enjoys the religious climate on campus. After she told me that the great majority of her friends on campus were Mormon, I asked her how having friends who belonged to her religion impacted her experience as a student. Again with no hesitation, she responded, “Well, obviously it impacts my experience in a good way. It makes it easier to live by my standards. Everyone else lives by the standards of the church, so I do it too.” I asked her to list what standards she was talking about, and she replied:

Keeping the Word of Wisdom – which is basically you don’t drink or smoke or do drugs or that kind of thing. In lots of colleges, most students go a little bit crazy and live the college life, but here, none of my good friends really do that, so it’s not a temptation to go crazy and live the wild college life. And being morally clean is another standard. None of my friends are immoral, so there’s not really a temptation to be promiscuous, or that kind of thing.
I asked her, “Do you know any students who – um, you said that people get crazy in college, right? – do you know any students who do get crazy at this college?” and she replied quickly, “Not personally.”

Pam then expressed an interesting paradox: On one hand, she said, it’s good to be in an environment dominated by one’s religion because that environment reinforces one’s religious values; on the other hand, she said, it’s also good to be in an environment where some students violate religious norms because witnessing this waywardness in open display tests one’s religious values. I asked her, “Do you think having a lot of students of one religion makes the students less likely to get crazy and live the wild college life?” and she replied:

No, not necessarily, because even if everyone is Mormon, that doesn’t mean that they all live the standards. There are plenty of Mormon people here who get drunk and do drugs and things like that. It’s just a personal decision they make. Any college that has a dominant religion, whether it’s LDS or something else, will probably have people that get crazy in college. But then again, going to a college where students are a little bit crazy may be good too, because you should figure out things for yourself and decide about what you believe in. And having a bunch of friends who all have the same religious ideas makes it hard to make up your mind on your own. So being around crazy college students may be good in some ways. Some people say that they like to go other places where no one’s their religion, because they can find out if their testimony is really strong. But I like both aspects – I like having LDS friends in college, and I like being where not everybody lives the standards
because I can see some people who don't live the standards and decide on what I believe. But still, I definitely think that having a lot of people who come to school with the same religion helps the students to stay committed to that religion.

Pam described a similar paradox related to her professors. While she enjoyed her Mormon professors, in many ways she was attracted to the broadening influence of non-Mormon professors who discussed what Pam called “political views”:

A lot of the non-LDS professors are awesome teachers. There was one history professor – he was one of my favorite professors, and he was not LDS, and he was an awesome teacher. There was one human development teacher – um, he wasn’t LDS either. But they’re probably my two favorite teachers, because sometimes they’d bring up, like, their views on politics or they’d say something about – well, I don’t know how to explain it – because they wouldn’t slam the LDS people – they wouldn’t do that at all. But they said stuff that no LDS person would say. For example, they’d say that there’s more to people than religion, and we need to be more open minded – that kind of thing. Sometimes when they shared their political views, I wasn’t always a fan of it [laughs], but I learned a lot from them. They were really awesome teachers.

Among students I interviewed, Pam expressed the highest level of integration in the enclave religion. Perhaps because she was so steeped in her religious culture though, she took pleasure in her growing awareness of other students’ rebellious and defiant behavior and her expanding consciousness of the faculty’s non-Mormon
“political views.” While she enjoyed the safety she sensed in her religion’s
dominance at the college, she also enjoyed a stirring awareness of nonconformity and
disobedience among some of her peers, and an exciting new consciousness of
unorthodox or even heretical ideas among some of her teachers. Witnessing the
pageantry and spectacle of college students who “go a bit crazy” and hearing ideas
that had a trace of anarchy from unorthodox college faculty awakened in her a more
broad-based and sophisticated awareness of behavioral and ethical norms, an
expansive new consciousness about which she was simultaneously attracted and
repelled – a fact demonstrated by the steps she took to fortify her faith against the
possible erosion of her growing new awareness.

Clearly, she felt that her awareness of worldly aspects of the campus culture
were dangerous and to be contemplated with a certain amount of self-defense. She
said that, because of this challenging environment, she had decided to take two
Institute courses instead of just one so that she could, as she expressed it, “recharge
her spiritual batteries every day.” What were those classes? I asked. “Right now I’m
taking ‘Life and Teachings of Jesus, the Four Gospels’ on Mondays, Wednesdays,
and Fridays, and I’m taking ‘Dating and Courtship’ on Tuesdays and Thursdays.”
Using a common Mormon expression, “the world,” to describe secular culture, Pam
spoke of how much she appreciated the protection her religion classes provided
against the erosion of her faith:

I love taking Institute. Like, a lot of time, I don’t see how people go without
Institute, because it gives you that boost. You know, throughout the whole
day, you’re in the middle of, well, the world, and classes, and school things,
and worldly teachers, and other students who may not have a testimony and don’t live the standards. But then you can go and be spiritually uplifted for an hour or so. And, it’s just kind of refreshing throughout the day. And, it makes me happier when I go. There is a spirit at the Institute Building, and it’s just nice to go to a place that is peaceful and calm, where people have your same standards, and you get taught the gospel, and you get taught things about Christ and, you know, things about dating and courtship – fun things that help you learn. It’s good to learn about religion.

I asked her if her Institute classes carried over into other classes, and she said, “Not the material, really, but the spirit that it gives you throughout the day – it carries throughout the day into your other classes.”

I asked Pam if being Mormon helps a student to be academically successful, and she repeated the logic I had heard from other students – the Almighty rewards students’ faith and obedience by providing divine help on academic tasks:

In the LDS culture, we believe that when we do certain things we’re blessed. The Lord is going to bless us, we believe, when we live the standards. I think definitely, when we’re obedient – or when I’m obedient, and I go to church, and I do the things that I need to do, that I feel I’m additionally blessed throughout the week. Those blessings help me to be a better student. Sometimes it’s hard to fit in your Institute classes. It’s hard to read your scriptures and pray and go to Family Home Evening and all that kind of stuff. But I find that when I go to my Institute classes and I read my scriptures and that other stuff, that it’s a lot easier for me to be a successful student.
Everything just kind of fits into place. I can do all my other assignments. What’s more, um, with our beliefs, I think I have a lot of things figured out that other people who aren’t Mormon don’t have figured out. I know who I am. I know where I’m going. I know where I came from. I know all these things, and that way I don’t have to be confused about it. School is a lot easier when you have things figured out. I can just start with a clear slate, and just go from there. I know the important stuff, and the new stuff I learn at school is easier to understand. School’s a lot less confusing when you know that stuff.

In the cultural negotiations that Pam conducts with the college environment, she feels both safe and threatened. Her religion dominates the environment, so she feels secure as a participant in good standing. However, the college environment brings her a consciousness of non-religious dimensions of student behavior and of secular and decidedly non-religious ideas. Pam finds this growing consciousness both appealing and menacing. Rather than eschewing or openly disdaining these unorthodox influences, the strategy of Pam’s cultural negotiation is to brace against their influence through a purposeful development of religious zeal.

Shawna: “You Weren’t Raised Like Us”

Raised in Salt Lake City as a Catholic until she was twelve years old, Shawna moved with her family to Texas, where as a teenager she converted and became a committed Baptist. Now she is 34 years old. Two years ago, she finished a three-year stint in the Navy and returned to her husband and two young children. A year and a half ago, she almost simultaneously learned that she was pregnant and filed for
divorce. Thus, at the present, she is a recently divorced mother of three children. During the interview, her infant was babysat by a neighbor who, according to Shawna, is “my best friend – a Mormon – but I love her to death!”

With a 3.3 cumulative college GPA, she is a good student. About a year ago, she applied for and was accepted into one of the college’s cohort-based baccalaureate programs. She is optimistic about her prospects – this degree, she says, will bring her a wage that will support her young family. Her baccalaureate program places students into cohorts, groups of 30, and students remain within these student cohorts throughout their junior- and senior-year courses. Because she has taken a full year’s courses with these students, she has now become intimately familiar with the other students in her cohort, and she knows without any doubt that among the thirty cohort students she is one of only three who are not Mormon.

Her responses to the survey showed that she attends church weekly and prays daily. She does not share the religious affiliation of her best friend at the college, and she does not know the religious affiliation of her favorite professor. She indicated that it is “definitely true” that “in [her] life, [she experiences] the presence of the Divine” and that “[she tries] hard to carry [her] religion over into all other dealings in life.” However, it is “definitely not true” that “[she feels] most of the students at this college respect [her] religious beliefs” and that “[she enjoys] the religious climate at this college.”

Her clothing (a sweatshirt, old blue jeans, worn sneakers), while neat and clean, suggested that Shawna is struggling financially as she tries to support herself, her children, and attend school. She spoke of her financial reliance on her current

285
religious congregation, a local interdenominational Protestant church: "I'm a single mom with three kids, and the members of the church I belong to now have been my source of support." She indicated that they pay her tuition, and added, "Actually, they also helped me get a car so I could come to school in the first place. And they have offered – I haven’t used it, but they offered – for me to drop off the kids when I need to study."

When I asked how many other students at the college attended her church, she responded, “one other person, that I know about.” Several of the anecdotes she told highlight the fact that, while she shares many things with students in her cohort, in the religious dimension of her life she sees herself as virtually alone at the college. She sees the religious dimension of the student culture as the most salient dimension, and she sees herself as one of the very few people who are excluded from this functionally important and intricately complicated way of life.

The college database identifies Shawna’s ethnicity as Hispanic, and perhaps because her background makes her sensitive to group boundaries, she asserted that Mormonism is “a culture in itself.” For Shawna, Mormons are a group that has distinct boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Like Ogbu (1978), who asserts that Mormons are an example of one of three types of ethnic groups, the “autonomous minority” that does not define itself in reference to the majority group or desire to be assimilated, but is nevertheless functional and distinctly identifiable (p. 23), Shawna asserts that:

A culture by definition, in my mind, is where people are sharing the same ways of life and living. The same rules. That’s a culture. I’m not talking
about ethnic background, but it's a culture, like whenever you have a group of
people who think and behave in the same way and are different from the
majority, they form a culture. And you can tell who is, and who is not, a
member of that culture.

Like several non-Mormon students interviewed, Shawna was very attentive to
forms of symbolic Mormon behavior, vocabulary, and dress that identify students and
faculty as adherents or practitioners in good standing – what folklorists refer to as
“shibboleths.” This term is based on a historic linguistic peculiarity: In the ancient
Middle East, only certain ethnic groups were able to pronounce correctly the
phonemes in the Hebrew word “Shibboleth,” and through pronunciation, members of
the Hebrew religious group could identify others who were also insiders. In modern
usage, shibboleths are “words and phrases that can be used in a similar way – to
distinguish members of a group from outsiders.” Shibboleths may include more than
pronunciation or vocabulary. Also encompassing “cultural touchstones and shared
experience,” shibboleths can be practices that involve unique cultural
understanding.47

At first, Shawna noted how Mormon vocabulary is used to distinguish insiders
from outsiders. When I asked her, “How would you say not having friends or co-
students with the same religious affiliation makes your experience different than that
of people who do have lots of friends of the same religion?” she responded:


287
I would say that there’s not a day that goes by that I don’t hear key words that are affiliated with the religion. For instance, um, relief society or primary or mission or ward or . . . you know what I mean? So there’s, um, it’s just there’s a little . . . you could say . . . I’m really open so I don’t mind it so much, but it’s a little alienating to some people who are not . . . or it could be alienating . . . It does feel alienating, I’ll tell you that. However, I have experienced it my whole life, you know. I lived in Salt Lake until I was twelve, then I moved to Texas, and I’ve lived in several places in different states, so I’ve had different experiences. But coming back to this college reminded me very much of my childhood. It’s kind of birds of a feather flock together, so to speak. And although I am friends and do associate with many different people, it does alienate you just in those moments when it’s being talked about.

I prodded her: “It alienates you?” and she continued:

Yeah, it alienates. Um, I don’t take it personal. . . . I don’t think about it beyond that moment, but for that little moment when someone’s sitting around talking about – I don’t even know how to say it – even a professor will bring it up, like: “Well, when I was on my mission,” or whatever, you know – it’s as if everyone in that room is expected to know exactly what is being said and talked about without any regard to the possibility that there might be people in there that do not have the same experiences. It’s assumed that you know what’s being said.
In addition to vocabulary shibboleths, Shawna was attentive to other types of symbolic customs that are used to identify insiders – clothing and jewelry. In particular, she spoke of the difficulty of wearing her own cross necklace. Because Mormons decry the cross as a religious symbol, a crucifix necklace seemed, for Shawna, to take on a message of cultural defiance, especially in a setting where many other students were wearing an alternate symbol, the “CTR ring.” May people in Utah wear a ring that bears the image of a shield inscribed with the letters C. T. R., which stands for Choose the Right. In a cultural context where the majority wear a particular piece of religious jewelry, an alternate piece of religious jewelry, Shawna asserted, was a subtle expression of sedition:

... If I was to bring in a picture, I'm not so sure people would be receptive if it was a picture of Jesus on the cross – do you know what I mean? Their reaction would be like [and she makes a surprised inhalation sound]. It would be like, “Oh my goodness!” You know, the cross is very common among Catholics, very symbolic, just like the CTR ring that I see all the time. But I'm almost afraid to wear my cross. I mean, I see the CTR rings, and what I wonder about is, I'm not sure it would be appropriate for a teacher to wear a CTR ring. I mean, I see CTR rings on teachers here at the college all the time, and I wonder how appropriate it is. Like in some Christian religions there’s the symbol of the fish, or the symbol of the cross. I don’t wear my cross to school because I’m nervous about it. I think people prejudge right away.
Later in our conversation, Shawna joked that CTR really stands for “Catholics Totally Rule!” She laughed tentatively, as though this were a joke she was not used to sharing in Utah. In later exchanges, I nudged her:

Joe: Do you think that people who wear CTR rings are comfortable wearing them, but people who want to wear a cross, it’s not comfortable for them?

Shawna: Absolutely. It is very uncomfortable for them. You know it’s like you set yourself apart. I am very proud about my religion. It’s just, CTR rings, and stuff, they’re pretty cool. CTR rings are just such a norm, such a common thing, but it’s a rarity that I ever see anyone with a cross, you know, hanging down [and she makes a gesture drawing a necklace around her neck].

Joe: Have you ever worn a cross here?

Shawna: I did last year before I lost one. But yeah, I did.

Joe: Did anyone ever make a comment about it?

Shawna: Um, no – no one ever made a comment about it. Maybe it’s paranoia for me. There I am wearing a symbol, right there, that says, “I am not LDS,” because I do not know of one LDS person who has ever worn a cross. And so I am must automatically setting myself apart as an outsider. And I have got a – it’s a feeling – like I had once in the Financial Aid Office when I had my cross on last year. And the Financial Aid lady, like, glanced down, and it was like wheels were turning in her head. Right away, she was saying to herself, “Okay, she’s not LDS. Obviously.”
 Later, Shawna spoke of religious clothing as a form of shibboleth. I asked her if she knew which of her professors were Mormon, and she responded that in most cases she knew even though the professors hadn’t used religious vocabulary. Instead, she said she could see religious clothing that Mormons call “garments” – a kind of religious underwear – that even though worn out of sight, nevertheless is sometimes visible and used to identify cultural insiders:

Shawna: I tell you what – the garments are a giveaway. I know they’re hidden, or whatever, but often you see the lines and you can tell. You really can. Or if someone raises their hand, you see the garments right away. Well, that’s a dead giveaway. [Laughs.]

Joe: How many people do you think know about that and can see that as a sign?

Shawna: Um, I would say a very high percentage of people can see the garments and know what they mean. I think the garments – I’m not sure – I think they’re are unique to the LDS religion. I’m pretty sure. Now, not everyone who’s LDS wears garments, you know. So that’s not a perfect indication. But I don’t think anybody who’s not a Mormon will wear garments. I might be mistaken.

Shawna revealed how attentive she is to religion when she went on to discuss how she had looked for one professor’s garments and could not see them. Lacking that sign, she sought evidence in his vocabulary and behavior, but found none. In short, this professor’s religious affiliation was tantalizingly ambiguous for Shawna, and she found herself thinking about whether or not he was Mormon over the course
of several weeks. She continued in uncertainty until a friend provided a bit of
evidence:

Shawna: Usually, the garments are good sign when you wonder about
a professor. For instance, my history teacher last year, I wondered through the
whole semester whether he was a Mormon. Not that I was thinking it all the
time, but he did such a good job of not bringing his personal religion into the
classroom, and I was wondering throughout the whole term if he was
Mormon. And I just found out from someone who knows him personally, that
“Well, he goes to my ward.” Not that I asked, but it was just brought up in
conversation. And it surprised me that he’s Mormon. Honestly, I was
shocked. I didn’t think he was Mormon.

Joe: What was different between him and an obviously Mormon
teacher?

Shawna: Well, unlike most Mormon teachers, he didn’t bring
personal religious experiences into the lectures. He didn’t say one religious
word, Mormon or otherwise. And he was really great at trying to get all
aspects of opinions through his lectures. So he was very, very, very careful
about not bringing his own personal opinion into things. As far as students’
learning and how religion affects that, I think when it’s not a very evident
thing, you know, the lack of the religious stuff creates a more open
environment for those who are not of the dominant religion to learn more.
Not knowing whether my history teacher was Mormon, I think, made the class
better. I mean, I didn’t have to deal with the Mormon thing before I could
move on to deal with history.

In her conversation with me, Shawn demonstrated that her relationship to the
enclave culture is at the same time fearful and defiant. On one hand, she recognizes
the cultural power of Mormonism and is afraid of the consequences of offending its
norms. On the other hand, she feels that its power is oppressive, and she wants to
draw attention to cultural elements that she considers particularly unjust. In two or
three separate sections of the interview, she told how she purposefully provoked
Mormon students and faculty about Mormon vocabulary and practices. And in two or
three separate sections of the interview, she told how she avoided behavior that would
incite disapproval and annoy those who practice prevailing cultural norms – what she
referred to as “tip-toeing around a certain religion all of the time.” In one incident,
she told how she questioned a particularly Mormon behavior – that of using “mock
profanity,” words that sound similar to obscene counterparts, but which do not bring
upon Mormons any disapproval for violating a taboo on vulgarity or blasphemy.

I like to on purpose sometimes play devil’s advocate and go against
the general population’s ideas about things – even if I don’t really believe in
what I’m saying. For example, my professor was talking about the concept
that meanings are in people, not in words. So I said, “So when I hear people
saying ‘flip!’ – you know, like ‘flip this, flip that, get in the flipping car and
shut your flipping mouth, whatever–‘” and I said “Well, if meaning is in
people not in words, then what’s the difference between ‘flip’ and the normal
F-cussword that you would use in place of that?” And the classroom was kind
of starting to get upset. Because I was trying to bring up that there really is no
difference in my mind . . . I don’t think it’s any better, you know, that you go
around saying “flip.” If you’re saying it because you’re angry, you know,
“What the flip!” or “Flippin’ get in here!” or whatever, you know, I don’t
think there’s any difference.

And, some of the people in the classroom were getting upset, and one
person in the class brought up, “Well, if you were raised like us, you would
know about that word.” She said, “If you were raised like us, in the
environment where we were raised, then you would know that it’s not even an
issue. You would know that we don’t think of it that way.” And in the
classroom, it was like there was an automatic separation, you know. She was
saying, “We don’t think of using those words like you think of using those
words.”

And my professor, whom I respect greatly, basically backed up that
idea: He said, “When you grow up in an area” – he was very careful not to
say, “When you grow up LDS” – however, maybe twenty years ago he may
have said it, because people are a little more sensitive about religion these
days, you know. But he did back up the idea behind what the girl said – that it
depends on how you grow up. Here, meaning in Utah, it was very evident.
People here in Utah grow up very differently. They don’t ever hear that F-
cussword, so they don’t know that that’s what they’re saying, when they’re
saying “flip.”

294
The classroom environment was getting really kind of heated because I was bringing up that there really wasn't any difference between “flip” and the “F-word.” And then it became, well, you were raised this way, and we were raised that way. And I thought, wait a minute, I was raised up in Salt Lake City, in an all-LDS neighborhood. We were the only non-LDS household in the entire neighborhood, you know, in the seventies and the early eighties. And I was very much involved with my friends. I went to the Mormon church with them, you know – that kind of stuff. And I had basically the same kind of upbringing, with the only difference being that I was – I’m not now, but I was then – Catholic. You know what I mean?

And so people made the assumption automatically that because I’m not LDS that, my views are definitely not in line with theirs. They made it very clear that I was different. I wasn’t one of them. I couldn’t understand about “flip.” And it just got heated.

Before entering the Navy, Shawna attended a community college in Illinois, and she contrasted Dixie State’s environment to the Illinois college’s. She said that the Illinois college was in general more diverse culturally and ethnically, and repeatedly she drew upon her experience in Illinois to explain how Dixie State is unique. Like certain identity theorists (Mael & Ashforth, 2001; Brewer, 1999), Shawna suggested that in religious enclaves, homogeneity pushes the religious dimension of identity to the fore, where it dominates other dimensions of identity. In an environment with great homogeneity related to one dimension of identity, that dimension dominates other dimensions of identity. In Utah, one’s identity as either
Mormon or non-Mormon is more important, Shawna said, than one’s identity as either single or married, Republican or Democrat, Hispanic or White, or Male or Female. When I asked her to “compare how much religion is brought into the classroom here to how much it was brought into classrooms at the Illinois community college,” she responded:

It’s a hundred percent different. I went there for two years and got my associate degree, and not one time do I recall ever even having a clue about anybody’s religious upbringing. I was just there to learn. [Pause.] It was a really open environment.

I asked her, “Do you think anything like the incident regarding the word ‘flip’ could have occurred at the Illinois college?” and she said:

Shawna: Um, the conversation could have occurred, but I don’t think it would have been an “us against you” kind of thing in Illinois, because there was a great diversity. Matter of fact, I don’t think it could have happened there, because it was such an open environment and there wasn’t this tip-toeing around a certain religion all of the time.

Joe: Um, compare the religious climate at the college in Illinois to the religious climate here. If you could choose one or the other, which one would you choose?

Shawna: I’d choose the one in Illinois, for sure. It’s more open and accepting, I believe. It felt that way. Um, there was a lot more critical thinking in the discussions going on in the classrooms . . . without being worried that you’re going to offend someone.
Joe: Are people here really worried about offending each other?

Shawna: I certainly am. I worry if I’m saying anything that anyone might consider to be rude.

Joe: Like that “flip” thing.

Shawna: Yeah. When the student said, “You weren’t raised like us,” I just felt like saying, “Oh, you have no idea how I was raised! You’re assuming.” You know, I wanted her to think more critically, like “Look, that’s not even a fair statement to say that.” But I didn’t say anything, because I knew I would have twenty-seven other people in the cohort who would be upset by this thing. It would start to get heated and go back and forth. You know, I’ve had the opportunity to be in many places and experience many things and many religions. Um, there are quite a few people that I know who have not been outside of Utah. Okay, it’s a different kind of environment. It’s an environment where one religion doesn’t dominate, and so religion’s not such a big deal like it is here. When you get people out in Illinois – or this part of Chicago where I went to school – you get people from a lot of different walks of life, many religions, and it’s a different climate altogether. Religion isn’t such a big deal when there are people from every possible religious tradition all going to school together. Nobody would jump your case in Illinois like they’ll jump your case here. Religion doesn’t dominate the college, like it does here. It’s a different kind of learning environment. I would say that the quality of my education was better there than here.
How did Shawna negotiate with the enclave culture? She seemed torn between defiance and fear, alternatively feeling a desire to strike out in rebellion against what she saw as its hypocrisy and blindness, deferential to its power, and wary about its potential harm for her. Her lived experience was that, even though Mormons seemed careful to observe restraints that ensure that their privileging of Mormon culture did not amount to a technically illegal breach of the separation of church and state, nevertheless, the dominance of the overpowering Mormon majority produced a kind of cultural entitlement— as though, within certain bounds, no one would call into question distinctively Mormon forms of symbolic language, religious customs, and quasi-liturgical behaviors. As one of the three non-Mormon members of a baccalaureate cohort, she was academically included but culturally excluded: Because of the intensive academic interaction of the thirty students in the cohort, in academic ways, Shawna felt that she was intimately integrated in a tight-knit academic group of students. She enjoyed and appreciated this intense academic interaction. However, she also sensed that this academic group identity was subverted by a more nuanced and culturally influential religious identity which, because she was not Mormon, excluded her.

Shawna also demonstrated a pattern I saw among several of the students interviewed, who asked me outright, “Are you a Mormon, or what?” or told how they debated for weeks about the religious affiliation of one of their professors. In Utah’s religious enclave, when either Mormon nor non-Mormon college students encounter someone new, they (if I may be permitted a metaphor) look first through the religious “lens,” and only later through other lenses— the gender lens, the politics lens, the
socio-economic status lens, the racial or ethnic group lens, etc. For Utah college students, it probably matters more that a professor or friend is or is not Mormon than that the professor is male or female, republican or democrat, bourgeois or proletariat, or Hispanic, black, white, or Asian. These other issues pale beside the issue of whether the person is Mormon.

Students are much attuned to the implicit clues, and many people are adept at communicating their status as Mormons or non-Mormons through unspoken means. If a faculty member leaves the Mormon/ non-Mormon question unanswered (as I have done until the end of several interviews), Shawna and other students simply cannot leave the question alone. Most often, a student who meets a person whose religious status is ambiguous will probe openly in ways that might be considered rude in some settings. Often they ask outright, “Are you a Mormon, or what?” Because the Mormon/ non-Mormon divide may be constitutive for a host of other socio-cultural questions, if students don’t know their professors’ or friends’ affiliation, they lack an important contextual tool for interpreting their professors’ views on most of the politically or culturally controversial material that may come up in class. Thus, Shawna, like several other Mormon and non-Mormon students, was very, very preoccupied about other persons’ religious affiliation.

Jaron: “But that’s Local Culture, and I Just Deal With It”

For decades, sociologists have described a pattern of rising secularism and declining religious participation in Europe, where as few as two or three percent of the population attends any religious meetings at all (see for example, Chaves & Gorski, 2001; Stark & Finke, 2000, p. 72; and Finke & Stark, 1992, p. 116). Born
and raised in a small town in Holland, Jaron is typical of the a-religious culture of the region surrounding Amsterdam. He reports that he never attends church or spends time in private religious behaviors such as prayer, reading, or meditation. He explained, “Holland is generally not religious, so it is a different view of religion there than here in America. . . . Other than Christmas and Easter, there wasn’t much religion.”

In his interview, Jaron described himself as an unwavering atheist, repeatedly stating that no religious or spiritual impulse whatsoever stirs within him. At 36 years of age, he is thoroughly secular. Single and living with his widowed grandmother in St. George, Utah, Jaron explained that his grandmother was the source of the only religious influence in his childhood. As a committed Catholic, Jaron’s grandmother at one time nearly entered the convent to become a nun. Even though she has not sustained a high level of activity in the Catholic Church, Jaron reports that she continues to be a “person of great faith,” and thus, even though Jaron is thoroughly secular, he has had a life-long and deeply committed relationship with at least one person of faith, and therefore he has developed an understanding of the dynamics of interacting as an atheist with religious persons.

As one of the 24 international students in Dixie State’s International Student Club, Jaron reported that he does not share the religious affiliation of his best friend at the college and does not know the religious affiliation of his favorite professor. Currently dating a woman in St. George who, according to Jaron, is atheist, Jaron also avows that it is not important for him “to be married to a person who shares [his] religious affiliation.” As might be expected from these survey responses, Jaron
reports little or no intrinsic religiosity. It is “definitely not true,” he indicated, that “[he experiences] the presence of the divine,” and it “definitely not true” that “[his] religious beliefs are what really lies behind [his] whole approach to life.”

I asked Jaron, “Some people have religious upbringings, and some people don’t. On a scale of one to ten, with ten being high, rate how religious your upbringing was.” Using this scale, Jaron initially estimated his upbringing as a zero, but then reconsidered: “My parents had pretty much no religion,” he said, “but my grandmother was very religious. She almost became a nun, actually. And my grandfather was kind of religious too, so there was a lot of religious influence from my grandparents.” Taking into account the influence of his grandparents, he raised his estimate to two. Under the influence of his grandmother, Jaron had some limited exposure to Dutch Catholicism, and because of her influence, Jaron attended a Catholic private elementary school. Although an atheist, Jaron stresses that “in me, the respect for religion is still there. It’s just part of my upbringing.”

Even though the elementary school he attended was under the sponsorship of the Catholic Church, Jaron asserts that its environment was generally secular, despite the fact that his teachers were nuns and priests. Paradoxically, Jaron explained, the environment of Holland’s sectarian schools was far more secular than the environment of America’s public schools. While many schools in Holland are under the sponsorship of either Catholic or Protestant religious groups, the influence of those religions on the schools’ curriculum and culture was, he said, minimal. Contrariwise, in Jaron’s opinion, the influence of religion is far more pervasive and noticeable in America’s public schools. Jaron explained:
In the city where I lived, I think there were two true Catholic schools. It was a pretty big Catholic city, and I guess in my neighborhood a lot of kids went to Catholic schools. In Holland people are divided between Protestant and Catholic, with Protestants in the north and Catholics in the south. A little further north from my home town there were a lot more Protestant schools, and in the south there were more Catholic schools. I knew a lot of students who went to Protestant schools and even more who went to Catholic schools. But it’s hard to define a Dutch school as straight Protestant or Catholic because you don’t see the religion in the school very much. A lot of times you don’t even notice the religion. They don’t talk about the religion so much in the school, and you hardly know that there is a religious influence there. But yeah, a lot of people went to Protestant or Catholic schools in Holland, but those schools weren’t as religious as the public schools in America.

After attending the Catholic elementary school, Jaron attended a secular Dutch high school, followed by four years at a secular Dutch college, where he studied computer science but did not earn a degree. Later, he wandered around Europe for a few years, during which time he lived in two small Norwegian communities and attended one year at a small college in Finland. Jaron reports that in these small farming communities he encountered idiosyncratic and peculiar regional cultures that were very different from his Dutch home. “Those were weird places,” he said, each with a culture that was, as he expressed it, “as weird as the culture in Southern Utah.” Thus, Jaron is well-traveled and accustomed to quirky regional cultures.
Having experienced these off-beat regional cultures, Jaron was not surprised when he discovered that the Mormon cultural enclave’s milieu was unlike the mainstream milieu in the United States. Perhaps because of Jaron’s experience with unusual or out-of-the-ordinary regional cultures in Europe, Jaron’s attitude toward the Mormon enclave was a kind of nonjudgmental bemusement. Even though Jaron indicated on the survey that he feels that other students do not respect his beliefs, he nevertheless expressed a laissez-faire attitude about the religious culture at Dixie State College. He commented that “there are lots of weird places in the world,” adding that “this is their place, and they should be allowed to think and act like they want to.” He further explained:

When I came here I knew there was a majority of Mormons or LDS people, so I knew what to expect, and with that also came the acceptance that I would have to change my life in certain ways to deal with that majority. I wasn’t going to come here and live my life like I did in Holland. I knew that, so I don’t have the preconceived notion that I can do whatever I want here. I have to limit certain things. It’s their place. This is their town, and I’m an outsider. One should not infer, however, that Jaron’s bemused and tolerant stance indicates a complete lack of cultural conflict with the enclave. In the interview, I asked him to bring to mind five or six friends at the college. Jaron commented that he didn’t think any of his close friends at the college were Mormon. I asked him if any person he considered to be a good friend, whether at the college or anywhere else, was Mormon. After a short hesitation, he answered, “Um, no.” While Jaron asserted that because “this is their place,” Mormons should be able to practice their cultural
peculiarities, he also seemed keenly aware that the currency of such practices makes him an “outsider.”

One event in particular brought to Jaron’s attention that, in a large and cohesive group where “maybe one or two” are not integrated in the group, the peculiar bonding behaviors of the group may draw uncomfortable attention to the non-participant’s status as outsider. Jaron told that while he was on a college activity, a religious observance abruptly presented itself, and the event involved behavior that was, for Jaron, completely unfamiliar, unusual, and perhaps alien. In his description of this event, Jaron portrayed the bewilderment he felt as perhaps the lone outsider of a large group, where apparently all others are integrated, comfortably familiar, and willingly participating. He described the discomfort of trying to avoid appearing as an interloper, an intruder on a sacred event, a ritual that might be considered private, delicate, and perhaps secretive.

Jaron: One negative experience that didn’t exactly happen in a classroom, but maybe more of a social setting, happened at the International Club at the college. Last semester, they took a trip to one of the college’s lodges up north. The college owns a lodge or cabin in the mountains, I guess. And there was a running club that went with us. And everything was going fine. We would sit and talk, and we were having lots of fun. The first thing that happened was, we sat down to have dinner, and everyone started to pray – which was fine, but everyone was praying, and maybe the one or two who were not praying kind of feel out of place. They feel like they shouldn’t be there, like it’s a private thing. You know, like watching something you’re not
supposed to watch. Like being an outsider. So that’s kind of a negative experience I had.

Joe: Feeling like an outsider. How did that happen?

Jaron: Well, we were . . . everybody had grabbed their food, and we were sitting down and talking, and I’m about to eat. I’ve actually got the food almost in my mouth – it’s probably just coincidence – but I’m just about to bite something, and all of a sudden, somebody mentions that “we want to pray before we eat.” Or somebody’s supposed to pray. And everybody started to . . . I don’t think they used the word pray. They used another expression. But all of a sudden, everyone started to . . .

Joe: Was the expression “bless the food”?

Jaron: That’s it, yeah. And somebody did it – somebody blessed the food. I didn’t catch the meaning right away, but then they started and I realized that I should kind of sit there and back away and wait for them to finish. So I took my food out of my mouth and put my food down. And it kind of felt, you know, embarrassing or awkward, not being part of it. Because every other person in the room is doing this thing, and you tend to get the feeling that maybe you should be doing this thing too, but you’re not really part of it, and you’re not familiar with it, so you don’t.

Joe: You felt that you should close your eyes and bow your head – that kind of thing?
Jaron: Well, I’m not saying there was pressure to do that, but if you’re with a group of people who all feel the same thing, and you don’t feel it, it’s awkward. That’s a normal reaction, isn’t it?

After Jaron told about the prayer at the college’s cabin, he continued to elaborate about the dynamics of insider and outsider status in the college and in the enclave culture. Outsider status, Jaron suggests, is not something that the majority group actively inflicts on persons like Jaron. Instead, as Jaron sees it, outsider status is a natural outgrowth of not participating in social structures and social events that are common to the great majority of persons in the cultural setting. When virtually every other person in a setting behaves in regular and predictable ways, a person who does not behave similarly will automatically assume the status of outsider:

Jaron: Later on after dinner we started playing – what were we playing? – I can’t remember the name of the game any more, but the thing that came up, they started talking about missions and religion. Everybody had something to say about missions and wards and stuff like that. It came on rather strongly, almost like, “Why aren’t you part of this?” That kind of attitude, and everybody was just having fun talking about missions and wards, but as an outsider, I was not enjoying the whole experience, so that trip to the lodge was a negative experience. At this college there’s a feeling of insiders and outsiders that is based on religion. Do you want me to elaborate?

Joe: Sure, I would love you to elaborate!

Jaron: Um, well, the one thing – I guess it could be any religion you have to deal with – but here you’re part of a ward. There’s a certain
connectedness that students have to each other – stuff like that – and if you’re not part of that, they’re on one side of the line and you’re on the other side the line. So the fact that almost everyone is connected to a ward makes some of us outsiders.

Joe: How can you tell when students are connected like that – connected to a ward?

Jaron: In the way they talk about it – in the way they get along together. It’s more of a feeling. It’s hard to explain.

Joe: But being connected to a ward like that creates a feeling of insiders and outsiders?

Jaron: Yeah. There are different wards, obviously, but yeah. If you’re connected to the LDS church here, or if you’re not, there’s a definite division there. You look at each other in different ways. That’s pretty much a given, I think.

Joe: If a student felt himself to be an outsider, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to drop out of school, or to persist at the school?

Jaron: Hum [sighs] – I’d have to put myself in somebody else’s shoes. I don’t care about stuff like that to the point where I’d leave. But I would say for other students – I can see where it might happen. If virtually everyone else has the connectedness or – how do I say it? – the belonging, then it draws attention to the fact that you don’t belong. There’s – this town itself has a very strong – how would I say that? – um, well, if you’re not LDS, you can
feel it and you know it. There's a distinction and you feel like an outsider at certain points. In my neighborhood, for instance, where most of the people are LDS, I feel like an outsider. In school, I feel that way. It doesn't make me drop out of school, but yeah, I can see where for some students that would come up. Students would drop out along the way, or put it off – that kind of thing.

Another point of conflict for Jaron arises from his opinion that many of the town’s legal codes and many of the college’s policies are based on religious customs rather than legal or educational principles. While he acknowledges that “it’s their town,” he also feels constrained, especially in the social activities to which he was accustomed in Holland – activities that involved alcohol and sexual openness. “The rules here,” he said, “seem geared toward LDS people”:

In Holland drinking is more normal than it is here, and I drank. I used to go out on weekends with friends that I had met, and we would – not necessarily get drunk – but we'd go out and drink. You know, social drinking, right? But you can't do that here, and that's one adjustment to my social life. In the first place, there aren't any bars [laughs.] Well, as far as I know – I'm not one hundred percent sure about this – but as far as I know there's a rule at this college that if you are caught drinking – you know, even if you're pulled over by the police drinking, drunk driving, or anything having to do with alcohol – even off campus where it's not related to the college – you can be kicked out of school for that.

308
Another adjustment to Jaron's social life arises from his fear that the sexual behavior common in Holland would bring informal, if not formal, censure in Utah. "I tend to come from a more open culture," he explained, "so there is a big influence of that openness on me, and that openness kind of clashes with the local ideas." Indeed, Jaron believes that the Utah public college has official "rules" that ban sex. He commented, "There are similar rules for sex. I think it's even against the rules for me to be in a girl's room after eleven o'clock. There are rules like that somewhere." He then reconsidered whether or not the ban on sex is a formal prohibition or just an informal proscription:

If it's not a rule, there's a very strong disapproval of sex. I know they've got dorms on campus here, and I cannot -- I didn't know this until recently -- I cannot be in a girl's dorm after eleven o'clock. She'll be kicked out of college, and I would too. And considering my age, it seems to be a little bit -- how shall I say it? I guess if you choose to live in that kind of atmosphere, it's your decision, but when you're used to an open society, and you're at a certain age, you're old enough to decide if you can go into a girl's room, wouldn't you say?

Jaron's objections to Utah's sexual strictures introduced a discussion of local customs related to dating, interaction between the sexes, and marriage. For Jaron, these customs in Utah are infused by an odd kind of seriousness. Mormons, in Jaron's opinion, are very utilitarian in their sexual behaviors. He claims that when Utah students seek for sexual partners, they do so with a seriousness that Jaron ascribes to their having concrete goals. He suggests that Utah sexual customs lack a
good deal of the spontaneity, openness, and joy which he witnessed in Dutch sexual customs. In the following conversation, Jaron discusses his awareness of the doctrinal underpinnings of Mormon concepts of marriage and how those religious values impact his experience in this cultural milieu. As other students pointed out, Mormon culture uses a unique cultural lexicon. In what follows, it’s interesting to notice how Jaron struggles with vocabulary as he describes Mormon ways of life:

Joe: Um, are you familiar with the term “temple marriage”?

Jaron: Yes.

Joe: What does it mean?

Jaron: I’m not too familiar with the idea, but as far as I understand, it’s two people who are part of the Mormon church – they’ve gone through – I’m not sure what the terms are – certain – ceremonies wouldn’t be the right term I guess. They’re kind of accepted into the temple. That’s maybe a good way to put it. And they have to follow certain morals and rules, and once you – rules isn’t the right word either – but once you’ve done that, you can become married in the temple – or by the temple. Is that an accurate description?

Joe: Yeah, that’s accurate. One of the elements of it is that LDS people are encouraged, very strongly encouraged, to marry other LDS people. Did you know that? They’re encouraged not to marry outside of the faith.

Jaron: Encouraged is an understatement.

Joe: Yeah, it’s an understatement. [Laughs.] Yeah.
Jaron: But they’re also encouraged to marry by a certain age. They’re encouraged not just to marry other LDS people, but also marriage by a certain age. Um, by a certain age or period of their life, they’re kind of encouraged to get married. I’m not sure of the steps, so . . . .

Joe: Okay. I wondered if it seems difficult in a place where the great majority of young women are looking for other LDS young men – I wondered how that complicates one’s social life? Do you understand what I’m asking?

Jaron: Yeah, um, I’m trying to figure out the way to explain it. I hope I can. [Laughs.] Well, one thing, in Holland, socially interacting with the opposite sex – it sounds sort of clinical, doesn’t it? – interacting with the opposite sex is looked upon in an entirely different way. Um, here there’s a goal in mind. When a Mormon guy goes out to meet a girl, he has a goal in mind. You want to get married – to have a stable relationship and to have children – that kind of thing. Whereas in Holland it’s more of a – I’m trying to think of the right word – more of a social. . . . I wanted to say something, but it’s not going to sound right.

Joe: Go ahead.

Jaron: Ah, no, not that – in English it comes out wrong. Um, I’m thinking. You go out to meet a girl in Holland, and you don’t necessarily have a goal in mind. You go out just to have fun and, you know. You go out to meet people, and whatever happens, you know, that’s what happens. You’re not going out with some goal, some objective that you want to
accomplish. In Holland it can, you know, turn into a relationship, and that’s fine. If not, I guess you just keep having fun. It’s not a big deal, because you don’t have that goal. That doesn’t necessarily mean that you go out to meet a girl for no reason at all, but it’s just generally different in Holland than it is here. When you go out to meet a girl here, there’s a really specific goal in mind for people who go out. Marriage is always in the back of people’s minds here. There’s always pressure to get married by a certain age, and if you don’t follow those norms, I notice that people tend to look down on you.

So there’s...

Joe: So being single at a certain age – people look down on that here?

Jaron: Oh yeah. Definitely, they look down. If I told you that I’m thirty-six – they look down on that. So, yeah, when I first got here the biggest question I had was, “Are you single?” The next question was, “How old are you?” When they found out how old I am, they then asked, “Are you divorced?” And next they asked, “Do you have any children?” You know, they asked those questions, and those are not the kinds of questions you can ask people in Holland, because you don’t deal with those kinds of things in polite conversation in Holland. People don’t get married until their late twenties or early thirties, and even then they don’t have children until even later, so it’s kind of a different view of life.

Jaron presented an interesting case. An atheist, he has nevertheless had a lifelong and deeply committed relationship to his grandmother, a woman of faith.

Therefore, he understands the place that religion can have in a believer’s life, he
respects religion, and he knows how to behave toward religious persons. Born and raised in Holland, he has nevertheless traveled widely and had several prolonged experiences in quirky regional cultures. Therefore, he understands that regional cultures often vary widely from mainstream or dominant cultures. As an atheist with a deep relationship to a believing grandmother, and as a connoisseur of regional cultures, he has developed a laissez-faire attitude about the religious culture at Dixie State College: “It’s their town,” he says, and “they should be able to do what they want here.”

However, even with this background, it is difficult for Jaron to negotiate with the local culture. When the great majority of students around him exhibit behavioral and attitudinal patterns, Jaron feels an outsider status that is the natural outgrowth of nonparticipation. Also, while he is somewhat accepting of local cultural peculiarities, he also feels constrained by the culture. He believes that he must accommodate his behavior to avoid either cultural or legal offenses. In short, Jaron demonstrates that one can successfully negotiate with the enclave culture, but that this negotiation may not be easy.

Bill: “You Lose Your Identity”

Raised as a Mormon, Bill has a guarded, conservative personality, and describes himself as “devout” and as “a nine out of ten in terms of being religious.” At twenty-three years of age, he is single, white, and has curly, auburn-colored hair and freckles. Unlike most students who spoke openly and easily – almost eagerly – in interviews, Bill’s answers seemed reluctant, circumspect, and cautious, as though he was accustomed to being thought of as a religious curiosity – as though he was used
to being the object of bemused interrogation about his Mormonism. After I had finished several of my questions, he paused for periods of up to fifteen or twenty seconds, considering his answers carefully and replying only, it seemed, when he was completely satisfied that his response was both accurate and safe. I sensed throughout the interview that he was suspicious of me and that he was accustomed to having others think of his religiosity as peculiar and perhaps strange.

With a 3.5 cumulative college GPA, Bill has been successful at Dixie State. He says that he intends to be a high school history teacher, and he received an A-minus grade in HIST 1700. His measures of religiosity are very high: He attends church weekly, spends time daily in private religious practices (prayer, meditation, reading, etc.), and reports that it is “definitely true of me” that “My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life” and “I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.” Further, he also reports high measures of other religious dimensions, particularly those related to friendship and religious support. It “tends be true” for Bill that “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.”

The son of a man who was repeatedly “down-sized” in corporate reorganizations, Bill had moved around the United States throughout his childhood and adolescence, spending a few years in Alaska, Michigan, Georgia, and Ohio. In the past two years, he has lived in three Utah locations - in northern Utah, central Utah, and now Southern Utah. Even though Dixie State’s student database lists Bill as a sophomore, he tells of having attended two other colleges, and he reports that his experiences as a devout Mormon have been different at each institution.
Like many students interviewed, Bill notes striking contrasts between his experiences at Dixie State and his experiences at other institutions. As an eighteen-year-old high school graduate, he attended one semester at Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio, a college that is "an independent, coeducational institution related to the United Church of Christ." After serving a two-year LDS mission in South Carolina, Bill moved to Utah and attended Weber State University, in Ogden, Utah. A year ago, he moved to St. George, Utah and enrolled at Dixie State. His experiences at these three institutions were quite different. Most noteworthy was his assertion that when a student attends a college where most other students share that student's religious affiliation, "You lose your identity."

Whenever you're a part of a big group, it almost feels like you become lost in the group. You're not different. You're just another one of a thousand people who are just like you are. When I went to school in Ohio, I was a minority. I had a set way that I believed, you know, that was different from the majority, and so when I'd meet with other people, I was an individual. I was not one of a thousand. I was, quote, the Mormon guy.

That's why people in Ohio felt more comfortable talking about religion, I guess - because they weren't all part of the same group. It's just like, in Ohio, people seem to be more open to different ideas, and they were willing to let me be different. Here, it's like I don't have my identity. It's the

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difference of being on the outside – you know, a minority – versus being on the inside – one of the majority.

To me, here, it seems like, even though I’m part of the religion, it’s almost like there’s even less of a religious atmosphere, but that might just be because in Ohio, I was part of a small minority, and here, I don’t feel the religious atmosphere as much. Does that make sense? In Ohio, I could feel the religious atmosphere, because I was an individual in that environment, but here, I’m just one of thousands of other Mormons. In Ohio, I was the Mormon guy, but here I’m certainly not the Mormon guy. Heck, everybody’s the Mormon guy here.

In Ohio, it was interesting, because people kept thinking I was Amish too, because they have some of the Amish back there too, you know. They were like, “Where’s your buggy?” [Laughs.] When I was a minority, I felt more of the religious atmosphere. If that makes any sense. I didn’t explain myself very well, did I?

Bill illustrates Barber’s (1995) contention that non-Utah American Mormons who migrate into Utah “experience some pain on becoming a high-profile majority person, identified and numbered with a mass for the first time in their lives, and in the process, struck by the feeling that they are losing individuality” (p. 397). Nevertheless, when asked to rate the religious influence on Dixie State’s campus as being “too much, not enough, or about right,” Bill chooses “about right.” He shares the religious affiliation of his best friend at the college and that of almost all of his friends, but does not know the religious affiliation of his favorite professor. When
queried about whether he knows the religious affiliation of most faculty at the college, Bill responds, “Yeah,” and explains how that is possible:

Bill: Um, the faculty just... just say something... they just... it’s usually, they’ll just say something that I recognize as Mormon. Like, I have a public speaking class, and the teacher will just give us examples of how to give our speech, and he’ll use personal examples that I can tell are Mormon. Yeah, he just talked about certain ecclesiastical positions that he’d had in the church, and through the words he used for those positions, you could tell what denomination he belonged to.

Joe: Like bishop, or . . .

Bill: Yeah, bishop. Um, he wasn’t the bishop, but he talked about being in a bishopric – one of the counselors.

Perhaps because of his experience of having moved from state to state while growing up, compared to other Mormon students interviewed, Bill seemed more aware of the exclusionary effects of religious jargon on non-affiliated persons. He continued his discussion of the public speaking course he took, where many students used Mormon shibboleths:

Being part of the majority, or whatever, there’s just sometimes little references made to things. Like, in my public speaking class, for example, other students are giving speeches – right? – and they just say things as if you know. As if you’re part of the culture. As if you know the terminology. As if you know about the experiences they’re describing. And so, for me, it’s
different here at this college than at the Ohio college because I know exactly what they’re saying.

But I also notice that there are a few people in my class who kind of look confused. They don’t know what’s being talked about. Someone talks about the MTC, and some people are like, “Whoa, what’s that?” It’s just kind of like, if you’re a Mormon, you just understand the language and the experiences that everybody is talking about – not just in classes, but everywhere. I mean, students talk about Mormon stuff everywhere on campus. And some people know what’s going on, and other people don’t have a clue. I’d say that’s probably the biggest thing I’ve noticed. It’s just that people are saying things that other people don’t know what they’re talking about.

One of Dixie State’s student services officers claimed that Mormon students “have a habit of thought that perceives all other students as Mormons.” Perhaps because of Bill’s experiences living in many locations throughout the United States, Bill also notices this phenomenon:

I’ve had a few conversations with some non-Mormon students, and sometimes the Mormon vocabulary doesn’t bother them. Sometimes, though . . . the biggest thing I’ve heard from them is that it’s always just assumed by other people that they are Mormons. And it’s not necessarily a bad thing, but it’s just when they’re in a conversation, it makes it a little awkward when somebody just comes up and talks to them out of the blue about Mormon stuff as if they’ll understand. Or if someone they’re sitting next to in class, they
start talking about Mormon stuff and using Mormon vocabulary, it's kind of like, everyone around here just assumes that everyone else is a member of the church. Sometimes it's not so bad for the non-members, but I'll bet more often it's kind of bad.

Bill's view is that being fully aware of the shades of meaning of everyday Mormon dialog makes one a member of the "in-crowd." He asserts that this inclusion and exclusion "is really similar to what happens in most high schools, where students either make the cut or not, depending on their knowledge of some kind of lingo." But, he explains, in high schools being in the in-crowd "doesn't have anything to do with religion..., but here it's based on religion."

In addition to facility with jargon, being a member of the "in-crowd" involves behavioral elements as well, many of which are associated with observing Mormon "commandments." Among these are avoiding tobacco, coffee and alcohol, and, for students, attending religious instruction while going to college. As a devout and active Mormon, Bill has been admonished repeatedly to enroll in Institute classes (religious instruction), and his guarded, reluctant, and somewhat embarrassed admission that he was not enrolled in an Institute class revealed the extent to which, for some students, taking such a class constitutes a religious duty or obligation. In fact, in his discussion Bill repeatedly used the word "confess" as he explained that he was not taking Institute classes, and there was noticeable embarrassment in his responses to the following line of questions:

Joe: Um, do you take Institute classes?
Bill: [Pauses and smiles, as though embarrassed.] No, actually I confess that I do not. [laughs.]

Joe: Have you ever?

Bill: [Again pauses and laughs.] I have. I have. Not this semester though.

Joe: Tell me about the pause in your answer [Bill laughs again] and tell me about the laughter too.

Bill: [Still laughing.] It's just because . . .

Joe: Remember, I'm not going to use any real names and nobody will know.

Bill: I know . . . I know [laughs]. I just was thinking, 'cause I have taken individual classes in the past. Like, I've dropped in. I should confess that, while I've dropped in for a class here and there, as far as being officially enrolled in Institute classes, no – I confess that I'm not. Yeah. That's bad. That's why there's a pause, because I know I should be enrolled, and I'm not doing what I should do. It's like, well, I'm not doing what I'm supposed to, and so that's why I paused. [again laughs.]

Joe: Have you ever been officially enrolled in Institute classes?

Bill: Yeah, I have in the past, and I sometimes will just go to a class, but as far as being committed to Institute, I guess I should confess that I'm not.

Joe: Um, do you like to go to the Institute?

Bill: Yes!
Joe: Do you participate in the Institute in non-class things.

Bill: No, not really.

Joe: You don’t go to the dances or play ping-pong, or do those kinds of things at the Institute?

Bill: Occasionally I’ll have breakfast there, but I also work full-time, so I don’t have a lot of time. My work schedule won’t let me – it prohibits me from doing Institute activities. That’s a conflict. In the past, I have, though.

Joe: They serve breakfast there?

Bill: Sometimes. It’s just like an activity – they’ll just have, like, in the week of finals, they’ll have breakfasts. Which is nice.

Joe: Yeah, you go get pancakes or something?

Bill: Pancakes, eggs, sausage, hash browns, the whole spread. It’s kind of like your standard breakfast. It’s free food! You can’t complain about that!

Because Bill is single, I discussed the impact of Mormon endogamy on single Mormons who believe that, as is doctrinal, only Mormons married to other Mormons will achieve the highest tier of heaven. He began by telling of a non-Mormon acquaintance, a young woman who became engaged to a Mormon man. The engagement, he explained, broke up, and “the deal-breaker was that he wanted a [Mormon] temple wedding.” I asked him, “If you were not LDS and trying to date here at this institution, would the whole temple wedding thing be a problem?” He replied, “I would say yes, and I would say probably as much as eighty percent of the girls would not want to get serious with a non-Mormon guy.”
I pressed Bill several times to comment on how religiosity impacts academic success. At first, he interpreted my questions metaphysically, even though I hadn’t meant the questions in that way. While I hadn’t meant to ask about divine intervention in the student’s behalf, initially he took my questions to be whether or not God intercedes in behalf of faithful students. Bill’s comments about this issue led him to express formally an ethic of religious self-reliance that had been present in all of his discussion:

Joe: Well, let me talk about academics for a while. Do you think that a student who’s LDS is either more or less likely to get good grades here, or just about the same?

Bill: I would say they have just about the same chances of getting good grades here.

Joe: So, um, it makes no difference . . . religion doesn’t influence a students’ ability to get good grades?

Bill: No, in fact, I know some people that try and blame religion for their grades or use religion to get good grades. They think that religion will influence their ability to get good grades. I mean, they think if they live their religion, they’ll be blessed – for lack of a better term – for living the religion. They think God will help them get good grades. But, if you don’t study, you know, you don’t study! [laughs.] There’s no other way around it. If you don’t study, God can’t do anything about it, you know. I would say, in my opinion, religion doesn’t have anything to do with getting good grades here, but some people think it does.

322
Joe: I want to go back to . . . most of the people who think that religion influences grades, are they LDS people?

Bill: Well, yeah. It’s not necessarily that I think LDS people get better grades, it’s just more of a personal thing where a person says, you know, “I’m trying to be religious, so God will make sure I’ll get good grades.” The only people I know who think like that are LDS. They sometimes say, “I’m trying to be religious, so I should get better grades.”

Joe: Because I’m being religious I should get good grades?

Bill: Yeah, that’s what they think.

Joe: And do they express frustration because they don’t get good grades?

Bill: Well, yeah. It’s just an excuse. Yeah, there’s a bunch of frustration because they’re not getting good grades. Like, it’s not that they’re getting really bad grades. It’s just that they think that, because they’re being religious, they should get better grades.

Joe: Are they . . . I’m probing into their thinking . . . are they . . . is their logic that “I’m being an obedient person to God’s will, and God should bless me by allowing me to have success in classes” – is that the logic?

Bill: That is the logic.

Bill condemns this sort of religious sentiment, expressing his conviction that academic success results from hard work and commitment, not from divine assistance:
I'm a big one for self-accountability, and I take it into all aspects of my life. Currently, I'm going to school and working full-time. And so, just as far as paying for my own college, I like to be self-dependent. I think this self-reliance also goes into the religious aspect of my life. I mean, all Christians are trying to be self-sufficient. But I think as far as a lot of things, school and stuff, it's like you have to work for what you get. It's the same with religion. You can't just leave everything up to God. You have to work. I'd say that's true in my general life as well. You can't just expect God to make a pathway for you with work – with any aspect of your life. I think some people of my religion and just any religion in general, they feel that when they do something to please God, really, that He in turn will bless them monetarily or professionally or academically – like I said, with good grades, or with a high salary, or with a good apartment, or whatever. For me, I don't think God works that way.

What was Bill's lived experience as a Mormon student at Dixie State College? And how did Bill culturally negotiate with the religious culture and with other students? Overall, it struck me that Bill is deeply divided about the costs and benefits of membership in a culture as powerful as Utah Mormonism. On one hand, Bill has a strong streak of individuality, and being incorporated into a group as culturally operational as Mormonism for Bill entails concessions of that individuality. He enjoys being the only Mormon on the campus of a Protestant college in Ohio, and he feels that he has lost his identity in Utah. Despite the religious admonition to attend religious classes at the Institute, he “confesses” that the Institute doesn't appeal to
him, and he goes his own way. He expresses an ethic of religious self-reliance. "I view religion," he said, "as a personal thing... even if you meet with the group because they think sort of like you do, finally you have to be yourself and rely on yourself." On the other hand, he has a deep-seated need for religious belonging. He expresses his faithfulness clearly. He recently served a two-year mission for his church, he attends religious meetings and prays frequently, and, even though he seems cautious and guarded in his discussion of religion, he makes no apologies for his faith.

He describes being a member of a group as culturally powerful as Mormonism in somewhat negative terms, as "going with the flow." Membership in such a culturally dominant group, Bill suggests, requires a basic concession of individual will. It is conceding one's self to the group. When you take a stand, according to Bill, you should do so because of personal commitment, not because of perceived requirements of group membership; however, in a setting where the vast majority of persons are taking a similar stand, the cultural context of that stand is subverted, and it's difficult to avoid "going with the flow":

Well, in a place like Ohio you had an identity. It was like, well suppose you're going to a party, and everyone is drinking, and you're not drinking, because it's your religious standard. People in Ohio understand that -- they accept that. It's like, "Oh, okay -- that's who you are. You're the Mormon guy." And it's not like I ever felt shunned or anything. Actually, lots of people respected me for it because it was, like, what I believed. But here, it's like, you know, first of all, there's not a bad atmosphere here, so taking a
stand loses its meaning. I mean, in the first place, it’s hard to find a party where people are drinking. And that’s a positive thing. There aren’t many drinking parties around this campus. I guess if there is a party, people are like, “Well, we’re all Mormon’s here, so let’s not drink up!” And I would say, like, “Well, you’re kind of missing the point.” People are more “go-with-the-flow” here because they’re not used to standing out as different. They just want to fit in, because they’ve fit into the group their entire life. So taking a stand loses its meaning. I guess it’s that way anywhere everybody’s alike.

Tom: “I’M Ready to Get Out”

Initially, I chose to interview twenty-eight-year-old Tom because on his survey, he indicated that his religious affiliation was “none,” and he annotated his answer: “I am spiritual, but not religious.” Thus, originally I sought Tom out because I thought he would provide me a non-Mormon perspective; however, I learned that he had been raised Mormon, and that he had disaffiliated or dropped out, and now was a kind of religious refugee, belonging to no organized religious group at all. In the interview, I asked Tom, “On a scale of one to ten, how religious would you say you are?” and he responded:

Religious? Well, I kind of draw a separation between religion and spirituality. Religious? None. Virtually nil. I would say that as far as organized religion is concerned, maybe a one, but that’s just by association, because my family is Mormon, so, obviously they take part in certain aspects of the church, and I’m around them. But spirituality-wise, I would say I’m probably an eight. Um,
you know, I have my own spiritual beliefs, but I really don’t subscribe to the
organized religion of some sort of denomination or what have you.

As one of the seven children of a religiously conservative Brigham Young
University professor, Tom had a very traditional Mormon upbringing. I asked him,
“On a scale of one to ten, how religious would you say your upbringing was?” and he responded:

Very! My whole family is very devout LDS, um, save for my little brother
and myself. There are seven kids in my family. My dad taught at BYU. Ah,
he taught religion at BYU. Um, he went on a mission. All my brothers and
even my sister have gone on missions. They have since married in the temple.
Um, they’ve walked the line, you know – absolutely! And so, I would say
that my upbringing was very religious. I went to church every week.
Growing up in the culture – it’s the bubble! It’s the LDS bubble! It’s, you
know, your world, your culture – you don’t know anything else. You know,
you go to church. You go to scouts. . . . Um, you go to Mutual night and other
ward activities. You go to ward dinners. Um, you know, you go baptize for
the dead, or, you know . . . any number of things, you know, that are directly
related to the church or indirectly. But church is central in your life, and
everything is just kind of a satellite that revolves around the church. So, yeah,
I was immersed in it. Absolutely.

At our interview, Tom wore blue jeans, a T-shirt, and a knitted cap pulled
down over blond hair that fell to his shoulders. Tom’s dialog included both insider
and outsider elements. He showed great facility with Mormon vocabulary and
culture, and yet there was an edge of condemnation in what he said. Sometimes he referred to LDS people as “them” and on rare occasions as “we.” After he had slipped into the first person, he quickly apologized and explained that he still feels inside, even though he considers himself a member of “the minority” or “an outsider.”

Tom’s measures of academic success are very high, and his measures of religiosity are mixed. His communication style was that of a person who considers himself to be an intellectual, and indeed, with nearly a straight-A cumulative grade point average, his academic data suggest that he is gifted. His measures of religious participation are among the lowest in the sample: He attends church meetings “once a year or less”; and he participates in private religious observances such as prayer, meditation, or scripture study “rarely or never.” As might be expected of a student who is spiritual but not religious, Tom’s measures of intrinsic religiosity are somewhat high: It “tends to be true” that “[he experiences] the presence of the Divine” and that “[he tries] to carry [his] religion over into all other dealings in life.” He reports that he never turns to members of his religious group for help with problems or when he feels lonely. Also, he says that he does not share the religious affiliation of his best friends at the college. He also reports that he knows the religious affiliation of his favorite professor, and he does not share that affiliation.

Six years ago, Tom found that living in Utah was too confining, too narrowly restrictive. He commented, “There are a great many in the LDS community who are very, you know, fire and brimstone and very reactionary and judgmental.” Therefore, Tom moved to Oregon to be with a brother, who had previously rebelled.
and dropped out of the Mormon Church. Interestingly, while his parents gave him a traditional Mormon upbringing and continued to be religiously conservative, they also are what Tom calls “liberal Mormons”:

That’s kind of an oxymoron. But they’re very understanding. They’re very accepting of my self and my beliefs. . . . Even though they are devout and they, you know, strongly believe all of the doctrine, they give me a lot of latitude. They’re very understanding. Um, like for instance, they know my lifestyle. I’m pretty open. I don’t have to hide things from them. Alcohol for example is completely out of the question for them, but I bring beer to my mom’s house, you know, and she’s fine with that. I mean, she doesn’t necessarily condone it. And she doesn’t like it. But she is like, “Yeah, you know what – you’re a grown person. You can do whatever you wish. You’re making your own decisions. It’s your ball game. And unless you start stepping on toes, and infringing on, you know, the atmosphere of this house, or disrespecting this or that, you know, then you’re . . . you’re . . . on your own.” So it’s mutual respect. I respect her for what she believes, and she respects me for what I believe.

In Oregon, Tom met, fell in love with, and began living with a woman who would later bring him back to Utah. After moving in together, Tom and this woman began attending Lane Community College in Oregon, but after a year, she told Tom that even though she had been raised in Oregon, she was increasingly uncomfortable about Oregon’s pattern of urban social problems – crime, drugs, overcrowding, and a hurried lifestyle with its attendant alienation. She decided, Tom told me, that she
wanted to move to a region that was both warmer and safer than Eugene, Oregon. Because he would be able to pay resident tuition in Utah, Tom and his partner took up residence in a very small town in the eastern part of Washington County, forty miles from where Dixie State is located.

Tom said that he thought it ironic that, having returned to Utah with a non-Mormon partner, he still finds Utah's social environment to be restrictive and intellectually confining; however, his partner finds Utah to be particularly pleasant, a safe environment with a life style that allows for reflection and even serenity. He also finds it ironic that his very attempt to flee Mormonism is what has brought him back into contact with Mormonism. As the partner of a woman who really enjoys the social climate of southern Utah, Tom is able to assess candidly the positive elements of local culture:

She likes it here because it's safe and there's not a lot of crime. And you don't have to lock your doors. And the people are really, you know, really caring. Um, and there is a real sense of community here. And it's a place with decidedly, you know, high moral standards. Um, and people conduct themselves much, much better just generally speaking in their lives than they do, you know, I think, anywhere else – back East or the West Coast, or whatever. But, in places like Eugene, although it's liberal, a lot of bad things come along with that. Some of them are really seedy. This person I met in Oregon, she comes here and she loves it, you know, and she thrives here . . . and I thrive there in Oregon. So I guess I have to sacrifice.
As a 28-year-old who has lived in an Oregon community that he described as “a very liberal, very gay community, but also environmentally conscious,” Tom is able to look back at a time when he was an 18-year-old college freshman at Dixie State. He compares how socially integrated (or “plugged in”) he was when he was 18 to how disconnected he feels now. Basically, he feels that he shares little or nothing with the great majority of students at the college:

I'm not really in the social scene here. I'm not. I'm twenty-eight. I'm not eighteen any more, you know. I have a different agenda. I have a whole different mentality. So I'm not really engaging these people, you know? I'm not really communicating and interacting with these people. I have my friends. Um, personally, I feel that people on campus are close-minded. I think they’re very sheltered. Um, in addition to being exceptionally young and inexperienced, I really don’t think they have much of a clue at all — in any respect. I mean, I grew up here, and I was eighteen here, and you know, I hung out. Even though I wasn’t going to school, I hung out with all these students here. And I cruised the Boulevard and did all that good stuff, and went to basketball games — even though I wasn’t a student here. So I know what it is — I know what the mentality is here. And I . . . I chose to get out of that long ago. And I’m still kind of on the outs with the local student mentality.

Like other persons interviewed, Tom contrasts his experience at Dixie State to his experience at another institution, Lane Community College. In his opinion, the academic environment at LCC was superior to that at Dixie State: “Lane offers you
an excellent academic climate [with] these very intelligent, dynamic professors who have come from the U of O, and they're teaching fifteen students, not a stadium-sized classroom. Good teachers make the difference.” I asked him to “talk about the teachers at Dixie,” and Tom told about finding the most visibly non-Mormon faculty member on campus and forming a meaningful intellectual relationship with him. Tom told about being able to have conversations with this professor of a type that he could have with no other person on campus, conversations in which they explored their dissatisfaction with the student culture at Dixie State:

He freely talks down about the culture here and about the students – because they’re sheltered – because they don’t have a wide range of experience. And he kind of belittles them, which I think it’s funny because I think the same way. And I don’t particularly want to be here, and I don’t think he does either. He certainly doesn’t like the culture or the community, so I don’t know exactly why he is here. We never explored those details. But, you know, we connected on that level. We were like, “This sucks!” [Laughs.] You know? This is really the only way I can say it: This sucks! And, you know, I enjoyed this professor’s free use of language – you know, we’d just cuss and be very free with, you know, our conversation. Completely unlike any conversation I would be able to have with any other professor here.

After learning that Tom seeks out non-Mormon professors, I also discovered that he seeks out non-Mormon friends. When I asked Tom to estimate how many students at Dixie State are Mormon, he responded, “about 85 percent,” and then he volunteered that “about ten” non-Mormon students were his closest personal friends.
I expressed surprise that he would be personally acquainted with so many, and he responded, “Yeah, that’s because those are the people I choose to associate with”:

We have things in common, you know. We share a lot of the same beliefs. And it’s the same life style. And, um, I think they’re just more diversified, well-rounded people. They just offer me more options than having ten friends who are strictly LDS. I mean, if I had ten Mormon friends, they’d all be the same person, basically. They’d all do the same things. They’d all follow the same paths. . . . Mormons are just kind of uniform. There’s a sense of uniformity to them.

With my friends, they’re diverse. They’re each one different. They all bring something different to the table – in all aspects of life, you know. So I’m getting more from them. I’m getting more from diverse people, you know. I’m more enriched because they all have something different to say. They all interact with me completely differently than they would if they were LDS persons. I don’t know if that’s clear. . . .

In his cultural negotiation with the institutional climate and with other students, Tom is aware that he needs to guard against disrespect. At the same time that he enjoys openly criticizing Mormon students in a conversation with a favorite non-Mormon professor, and at the same time that he feels that, as a 28-year-old, he as a “different agenda” than the traditionally aged students, he also senses that in most cultural contexts he must exercise extreme care to avoid “stepping on their toes.” Noting that he enjoys Eugene, Oregon because “I don’t have to watch myself so
closely” or “rein myself in so much,” Tom notes that he must take extreme care in his cultural negotiation:

I have to watch myself. I mean, that’s the whole respect thing. Because I do respect these folks who are LDS, but it limits the interaction, you know? I don’t want to offend. I mean, I am a certain person, and I know what their beliefs are, and I don’t want to step on their toes. And so I rein myself in, and I really have to watch myself. Because that situation could turn really sour, really fast, you know. I mean, just depending on how strict they are, you know, how ardent of followers they are. If I have some coffee or maybe if I drink a beer, that may offend them. Because there are a lot of folks who are extremely judgmental and really take a hard line when it comes to the church. You know, and for them there’s no exception.

It’s just to avoid the awkwardness – avoid the contention, you know. Especially when you’re the minority. Even though they may not respect your views – even though they may not really be treating you fairly – you have to take steps to make sure that you treat them fairly, because you’re the minority, you know?

I’m not one to, you know, just lay down when I’m challenged. Of course, if I feel that I’ve been treated poorly, then I’m obviously going to say something. But I would be more hesitant if it was that kind of scenario – a religious scenario – like they were offended because of my speech or I was drinking coffee or talking smack about Mormons or something. When it’s a religious scenario, I would be less apt to say, “Well, screw you, man!”
After Tom expressed several other things that he dislikes about the college’s culture – prayer at graduation, the constant use of Mormon vocabulary, his sense that other students resent his drinking coffee on campus – I asked Tom, “Do you think Mormon culture drives non-LDS students away from Dixie State College?”

Tom: Well, the culture is sure a deterrent for me!

Joe: It’s driving you away from here?

Tom: Yeah, it is a deterrent for me. It’s driving me away. But then again, it’s all perspective. It might be an attraction to some kinds of non-LDS students. For example, it could, like in the case of my lady friend from Eugene, it could compel her to come here. It could compel her into the college, not away from the college. Because it’s a safe environment. Because you don’t really have to worry about dangerous things. And because there’s an inherent LDS influence, that’s a positive for a person like my lady friend. You know, and I can see how that would be a positive for some people. For me, however, that’s a negative. So it just depends on how you look at it. I mean, I grew up here. I know what it is. I’m ready to get out!

Tom’s experiences also illustrate the lived experience of college students attending a public institution that is situated in a religious enclave. He discusses his cultural negotiations explicitly – how he personally condemns the close-mindedness of traditional Mormon students, and yet feels that negative sanctions would follow open criticism in most settings. He seeks out and enjoys the company of students and one professor who share his views of the culture, and he enjoys condemning its
restrictiveness and narrowness in settings where he is not likely to offend. However, in most public settings, he is careful not to offend – not to “step on any toes.”

While it is only one anecdote, Tom provides an example of a possible association between being religiously integrated and being socially or culturally integrated. If one’s religious views are directly contradictory of the prevailing culture’s views, then one feels “on the outs” religiously, and this sense of exclusion may lead to social and cultural alienation.

**Tammy: “Everyone Has the Same Beliefs and Standards”**

At 19 years of age, Tammy is among the most socially, culturally, and religiously integrated of Dixie State’s students – a member of the college’s 12-person student government, responsible for planning and implementing select student social activities, especially dances. Other than her repeated concerns about selecting music that appeals to religious and non-religious students alike, she is clearly pleased about nearly every aspect of the college’s student and institutional culture. As a white, single, freshman woman, she is majoring in nursing, and she lives at her home, within two miles of the college campus. Her cumulative college GPA is 3.956.

Her answers to each of the items on the survey indicate, almost without exception, that she is highly religious. She reports that she attends church weekly, observes religion privately more than once a day, feels the presence of the divine, shares the affiliation of her best friend at the college, knows people in her church to whom she can turn with problems, and enjoys the religious climate of the college. Among Tammy’s survey responses, only one item contradicted this general pattern – she did not know the religious affiliation of her favorite professor.
One might be convinced that Tammy is the archetypal Mormon college student, and in many respects, her religiosity is very typical of young Mormon emerging adults. She has very traditional and conservative religious convictions and conduct. However, there is a small incongruity between what Tammy’s culture teaches and what Tammy’s family of origin does. The LDS church teaches that, to achieve the highest level of a hierarchically organized heaven, Mormons must marry other Mormons within the temple. At one point in the interview, Tammy discussed a matter that causes her personal grief, explaining that her parents were not married in the temple.

To understand Tammy’s grief, one must understand the cultural significance of marriage in the Mormon temple. For Mormons, the family structure persists into the eternities, but only when the marriage is performed in the temple between two faithful Mormons. Thus, temple marriage is a marker of faithfulness, and Mormons often point to a person’s temple marriage as an indication of religious status. Children born to such unions are said to have been “born under the covenant,” and such children are believed to share the religious status of their parents. These children, in Mormon vocabulary, are “sealed” to their parents for eternity. When Mormon marriages are not performed in a temple, the expression “till death do you part” is taken quite literally. Such “temporal marriages,” according to Mormon doctrine, do not extend into the hereafter, and children born to such unions are not “born under the covenant” or “sealed” to their parents.
As a very faithful Mormon, Tammy showed some regret as she explained that, while her father has been to the temple, her mother has not, and by implication, Tammy is not sealed to them:

But, my mom, she’s religious, but she hasn’t been through the temple. Like, LDS people when they get married they usually get married in the temple and get sealed together and wear their garments. However, my mom and dad weren’t married in the temple. My dad has been through the temple without my mom, but my mom hasn’t been to the temple. And... I mean, she’s like the best person I know, but she sees so many people who do go through the temple, who take upon themselves all these covenants, and they promise they’re going to do all this religious stuff and live worthily – but they don’t. Some people see somebody who wasn’t married in the temple, and they’re like, “Oh – well, you’re not doing what you’re supposed to do.” So, my mom helps me be nonjudgmental. Some people are only going through the motions. Like, they don’t really know for themselves that it’s true, or that the temple is what they want to do.

My mom wants to be ready when she goes through the temple, and not be like these people who go through just to say they’ve been through the temple.

Because her parents are not married in the temple, and because Tammy is a student who seems to accept most, if not all aspects of Mormon orthodoxy, Tammy may feel some religious or cultural inadequacy, a sense that her religious standing is not as honorable or upright as others who were “born under the covenant.”
Regardless of this particular grief, Tammy is very satisfied with the college’s religious culture, with the exception of a persistent “party-school” reputation that Tammy decries as completely unjustified. And Tammy associates the college’s culture with the community’s culture. She knows that most students are Mormon, she said, because “they’re from around here,” with the implicit logic being that this is a Mormon community, and therefore most persons from this community will be Mormon:

I think the majority of students here are religious, but that’s mainly because a lot of the students are from St. George, and St. George is predominantly LDS. Um, I think people who come here from out of state think that we might be too religious, but I’m from St. George, and I don’t think that we’re too religious. It’s just what I grew up around, and I like it. It’s a good environment.

Many students from other places in Utah, she says, may have a mistaken belief that Dixie State is a party school:

Dixie has had a past reputation of being a party school, and some students come down here and find out that it’s not really true. You know you can go to a lot of parties where there isn’t any alcohol whatsoever. So I think their perspective changes a little bit when they get here.

Tammy may be an example of a mind-set that one of the college’s student services officers attributed to Mormon students at the college. They have, he said, “a habit of thought that perceives all other students as Mormons.” Estimating that more than 90 percent of the students on campus are Mormon, Tammy avows that when you
walk around campus, “more than nine out of ten people you see are Mormons.” She adds, “I have hundreds of friends here, and every single one of them is Mormon.” I asked her if she can identify non-Mormon students, and she pointed to a particular student group – athletes, particularly football players. She estimated that “fewer than fifty percent of the football team are Mormons,” and added, “you know, a lot of them aren’t from around here.”

Being “from around here,” according to Tammy, has a big influence on students’ religiosity. When I asked Tammy to estimate what percent of the student government was Mormon, she quipped, “I don’t have to estimate! They’re all Mormon!” In the conversation that followed, I pressed for details:

Joe: Every one of them is Mormon?

Tammy: U-huh. I think, let’s see, let me think of all of them. [Pause] I know all of us have grown up Mormon, but I think that two don’t go to church now. So, of the twelve, all of them are LDS, and two do not go to church. Anyway, I think they don’t go to church. They’re not very active. But I know that ten of them do go to church every week.

Joe: See, this is interesting to me. The football team you guessed to be half and half, and the student government, the group of twelve members of the student government – this is like the cabinet of the student government, right? They’re all LDS, right?

Tammy: Yeah, u-huh, but a majority of them, well, a lot of them are from St. George, so I think that makes a little bit of a difference.

Joe: It’s where you’re from?
Tammy: Yeah.

Joe: How do you get on the student government?

Tammy: Um, you're appointed. Well, the president and vice-president are elected. We have elections in February. And then from there you're appointed to be the other vice presidents and the chairs. You put together a resume, and a cover letter, and you submit your transcripts and you apply for it, yeah. And then they go through and interview you.

Joe: Are there more applications than people that get on, so it's a selective process?

Tammy: U-huh, yeah.

Joe: Well, congratulations. That's great!

Tammy: [Laughing] Thanks!

In Tammy's mind, two distinct student cultures are negotiating within the college's cultural climate — the culture of students "from around here" that is heavily dominated by local Mormon students, and the culture of students who are "not from around here" that is dominated by athletes, among whom half are not Mormons. This negotiation comes to a head as the two cultures contend for different kinds of music at the dances that Tammy administers as an officer in the student government. On one hand, some students want rap music that other students consider "not the best." On the other hand, some students object to dances that are "too churchy":

Joe: Okay, one of the things that I'm interested in is how does having a lot friends of your same religion impact your experience here? Um, think of the football team and the student government. As you said, the football team
is fifty-fifty, and the student government is a hundred percent Mormon. What
do you think would be the most important differences between the
experiences of a football player and a person on the student government?

Tammy: Um, well, I think that because on the student government, we
are all Mormon, we have all grown closer together. We have better
relationships, which makes us get along well and work as a team. And if we
get along well, then we can plan our activities better, and we can agree on
things, and we can make them work so that the student body can come to
them. Because if we’re just fighting over stuff – I mean, a lot of the fighting
does have to do with religion because, I am the vice president of student life,
and so I plan a lot of the activities, and sometimes it’s controversial, because
like a dance – the music that is played there. We get a lot of comments on the
music. With the music, you can’t please everyone, and that’s the hard part,
because some of the students will get mad at us for playing music that wasn’t
really the best, but then . . . .

Joe: What do you mean, “The best”?

Tammy: Rap music! [Laughs.]

Joe: Rap?

Tammy: But see, you know, the football players go to the stomp and
they want the rap music, you know.

Joe: What does this music have that other people object to?

Tammy: It just has bad lyrics, that just like . . . .

Joe: Profanity?
Tammy: Yeah, profanity, swearing, sexual innuendos, I guess you’d say. Just things that you don’t want to hear, really, you know.

Joe: And you said you get comments? Are they from people telling you things or people writing things?

Tammy: Telling us.

Joe: Now, without identifying any person, what for example would they say?

Tammy: Um, they just . . . they just said it wasn’t a good environment for them to be in, which is understandable. But then it’s two-sided, ‘cause I’ve met people who are like, “Well, we don’t want a dance that’s too churchy, because you can go to the Institute dances for that!” You know, and so it’s hard to please both of them, and so we just try to do a variety, you know – we have your rap, we have your country, we have your alternative – whatever – you know, we do a variety. And if they complain about it, you just say, you know, “Take a break on that song!” Like that’s all we could do because it’s not the whole school that’s Mormon, so you have to make the activities good for everyone. So you can’t please everyone, of course. Tammy goes on to say that being Mormon makes students feel “as one” on campus, using religious activities to create social cohesion:

When students are just graduated from high school, they will come down here, and they might not know anyone, but the LDS church has a network type thing. Students can go to church on Sundays and see their bishop. And they can meet a ton of kids all their same age, who are doing the
same things as them. All of them are going to school, you know, they’ve left their family too to come down here, so it’s like we’re all in the same boat, and church helps us get through. It’s just kind of a place where they can meet – a place that they’re used to. And everyone has the same beliefs and standards, and so they, you know, just get along and have fun. Because you’re comfortable, because you know that those persons believe the same things that you do.

Tammy estimates that seven or eight out of ten students attend Mormon services on Sundays in student wards – units of two to three hundred individuals that meet together, duplicating the activities and services of students’ home congregations. Tammy extols the “college wards” for their “up-liftment”:

Coming down to college, you leave your family. You leave your friends that you’ve known forever. And so you come down here and you know no one. And so if you go to your college ward, you can meet people of, like, the same faith. Because, I mean, you’re leaving your security, basically, and you have to build that up again. And going to a college ward can help that a lot, because of its up-liftment. I mean, you learn about the Savior.

Having introduced the topic of religious faith, Tammy goes on to praise the ability of religious faith to improve academic performance. In the conversation that follows, Tammy shows the extent to which she brings the religious side of her life into the academic side of her life:

Tammy: Because we believe in God and Jesus Christ, and because, well, as Mormons, we pray to them every morning and every night, and we

344
read our scriptures every day, it just draws you closer to the Savior, so you’re more in tune with the spirit.

Joe: Okay, let me take you in a different direction. Do those things help you be a better student?

Tammy: I think so, yeah.

Joe: So, how?

Tammy: Well, I’m really, really busy. I don’t know. I have a tendency to make myself so busy, and I don’t even know why I do it. But for some reason I always do well in school. Let’s see, my first semester, well all through high school I did cheerleading and a bunch of other extracurricular activities, and I still only got two A-minuses. So I got a 3.99-something all through high school, and I was really busy. And then when I got through high school, first semester I took sixteen credits, and I got all A’s and an A-minus. Which I was really busy and working too and being on student government – I was just on a committee then. Just like my religion and what I believe helped me a lot. And also going to Institute, because, with two credits of institute, I took eighteen credits. And I was so busy working and doing that, that I don’t know how I got things done. But somehow they just all came together, and I got one A-minus. And I was like, holy cow! I didn’t think that I could do that, you know. But for some reason, I find enough time. I look at my day planner, and I think, there is no time to do any of this. How am I going to study? And it all just comes together, and it just works out.
Joe: And religion helps you – the religious values, the prayer, the scripture study, the Institute classes – these things help with time management? Is that what I’m hearing you say?

Tammy: Maybe. Maybe it’s just me. Of course, it’s like Our Heavenly Father just, because, I think that He... well... this is what I believe... because He knows that we’re doing what He wants us to do, and we’re trying our hardest, and if we still stay faithful to Him, then He helps us out. So if we put in our effort, then He’ll put in His help. Like our half and His half together will get the thing done.

Joe: It’s like divine intervention or... blessings... from on high?

Tammy: Yeah.

After this recitation of religious activities, I asked Tammy to tally the amount of time she spends each week in religious activities. For quite some time she enumerated activities: “Let’s see, there’s scripture reading, and Institute class, and Family Home Evening, and Church on Sunday, and personal prayer, and...”. And after this enumeration, she calculated hours spent in the various activities and came up with sixteen hours per week. I asked her if she thought she was average in the amount of time she spent on religious activities, and she said, “No, I’m pretty much just average!”

I asked if Tammy had ever seen a prayer at a college event, and she quipped, “Yes, all of the time.” She told me that members of the student government pray at meetings, at meals, and before road trips:
Tammy: Um, I know at Student Council, before we do anything, like, before we travel, or if we’re all together up at the college cabin, we will say a prayer before we eat.

Joe: So, a lot of prayers?

Tammy: Yeah, we say a lot of prayers.

Joe: Do you say a prayer every time you eat together?

Tammy: Yep! If it’s in private, yeah. If we’re out to eat in a restaurant, we don’t. But if it’s in private at someone’s house or in the Student Council room, yes, we pray.

Joe: How does . . . like up at the college cabin . . . how does that work? Describe how that was . . . you all sat down to a meal . . .

Tammy: Or, you know, when the meal’s ready, we just call everyone in and say, “Hey, we’re going to say a prayer,” you know, real fast, and . . .

Joe: Who says that – “Hey, we’re going to say a prayer”?

Tammy: Um, our advisor.

Joe: Okay, and the advisor is a college employee?

Tammy: Yeah, she works here.

Joe: And how is the person chosen who will say that prayer?

Tammy: Our advisor just asks if someone will offer the prayer, and, I mean . . .

Joe: So, is it a volunteer then? Is that how it happens?
Tammy: Yeah, sometimes, and if there’s not a volunteer, our advisor will say, “Will you offer to say the prayer, so-and-so?” So it’s a volunteer, or she’ll say, “Hey, John, will you say the prayer for us?”

Some of the most interesting dialog occurred after the interview was over and I had shut off the tape, but which I recorded in field notes. As I was putting things back into my attaché case, Tammy asked, “I just gotta know something – are you LDS?” I told her that I would answer the question – that she had a right to know – but before I told her, I asked her to explain why it was so important for her to know my religious affiliation. With the tape off, she explained that in St. George, people just have to know. I asked her, “Is it more important to know if I’m LDS than if I’m, let’s say, a Republican or a Democrat?” She said that it was. “I mean, I don’t care what party you belong to.”

I asked her why she thought it was so important to know if I was LDS. She thought for a moment and said, “I just want to know where you’re coming from.”

I pressed her: “Will knowing if I’m LDS help you to know what my values are?” and she said, that it would be an indicator: “I mean, not all LDS people think the same things, but mostly they agree about certain basic issues.”

I pressed her further: “So it’s important for you to know if we share the same outlook on life?” and she said yes. I asked her why. Because, she explained, she feels comfortable in a setting where the people share the same outlook on life. “Is it less comfortable for you to be where people don’t share the same values?” I asked, and she said yes. I further pressed: “Why?”
She laughed and acknowledged, “I guess we’re all kind of narrow here.”
With that, I told her that I was LDS, and she said, “I kind of thought so, but I couldn’t really tell.” I asked her if Dixie State College was an uncomfortable setting because there are many people there who are not LDS and who do not share her values, and she said that mostly it was a comfortable setting because most of the people share the same values, but that there was more disagreement in values at Dixie State than anywhere else in St. George. “Something about a college makes people have different values,” she said. I thanked her again and said goodbye.

Tammy exemplifies what I believe is a very common pattern at the college under study – a student who is utterly comfortable and at home in the enclave culture and the college culture that is embedded in the enclave culture. While she is aware of cultural diversity in these settings, that awareness is mostly non-analytical. The sub-strata of much of her thinking may be largely composed of unexamined assumption.

When I asked her to choose if the influence of religion on campus was “too much, too little, or about right,” she chose “about right.” Her answer was quick, confident, and there was very little evidence of reflection. For her, the college environment is what it should be, and there is little need for cultural accommodation of any variety. True, she is aware of cultural conflict related to religious identity, especially as it relates to the music played at college-sponsored dances; however, in other ways she seems unaware that other religious activities such as prayers at student government meals and meetings might be a source of tension or displeasure for some students. Finally, her very strong desire to know of my own religious affiliation suggests that my questioning had raised the possibility of disapproval, and before the
The interview ended, she needed to know whether I was one of "us" or one of "them."

Honestly, I think she wanted to assess whether or not I would disapprove of what she had said.

Tammy's lived experience as a student at a publicly supported college in a religious enclave is very comfortable, and she finds great satisfaction in being deeply integrated with this culture. She is very successful socially and academically. While she negotiates with elements in the cultural climate, her negotiation is from a position that is so powerful that she is hardly aware that it is, in fact, negotiation.

**Jake: "I Struggle, You Know"**

In quite a few respects, Jake's case is an outlier: He is older, more academically challenged, and less religiously conventional than any other student I interviewed. Also, particulars of his personal history are unlike those of almost any student I have ever known well. A 48-year-old, unemployed, single, white man living in a motor home and attending one or two classes each term at Dixie State College, Jake gives the impression that he has been, and is now, in considerable pain. In his interview, for reasons that I'll describe below, I suspected that he was heavily medicated. He told me about having been abused as a child, about having been hopelessly addicted to LSD as a teenager, about working as a male prostitute in his twenties, about spending eleven years in prison in his thirties and forties, about having broken his neck four years ago, about having been shot at some point in his life -- and, perhaps most painful of all, he described a general hopelessness and religious disillusionment, with particular bitterness toward Mormon culture.
Originally, I chose to interview Jake because he had indicated on the survey that his religious affiliation was “none.” Like Tom, Jake had been raised in a Mormon setting; however, unlike Tom, Jake’s upbringing was characterized by abuse and neglect. When I contacted him, I asked if he could meet me in the library for an interview, and he said that he had recently lost his drivers license for driving under the influence. He said that, if we met at the library, he would have to walk a mile to come to campus. He then asked if I would come to his place.

When I got there, he was working on the electrical connections underneath the dashboard of a 1974 Chevy Nova “muscle car.” Standing in Jake’s driveway beside the car, he and I reviewed the informed consent material, and placing the form on the hood of the car, he signed it to indicate consent. Then he continued working on the car’s radio. About half of the interview occurred with the tape recorder on the floor of the car, with Jake lying up-side-down working on the wiring, and about half occurred in the cluttered motor home where he lives.

The interview had what can only be characterized as an odd beginning. As I was setting up my tape recorder, Jake stopped working on the radio underneath the dashboard of his car, and while still lying on the floor of the car, he suddenly interrupted a comment to me, and, looking at the roof of his car, he seemed to speak to somebody he saw there. After a few seconds of very animated speech, he suddenly stopped and turned to me, explaining that he was having a conversation with Jesus. Again, he addressed the roof of the car. This conversation with Jesus lasted for about a minute. Eventually it devolved into a bitter debate about whether or not I would be able to understand.
Apparently, Jake decided to dismiss Jesus’s misgivings, because in later conversation with me, Jake became extremely loquacious. In fact, I’m almost sure Jake was under the influence of some medication, partly because of his behavior, partly because of his often incoherent but always garrulous speaking style, and partly because of the glaze on his eyes. Before I left, Jake had told me about having been shot three times, about working as a male prostitute, about the angry racism that he developed while he served eleven years in prison, about a vivid dream that repeats itself often, and about his general disgust for Mormons in the community and at the college.

His answers to religious survey items were mixed at two extremes, both high and low. Indicating that he attends church “never,” but that he spends time in private religious activities “more than once a day,” Jake also expressed the highest measures of intrinsic religiosity. He also indicated that it was “definitely not true” that “[he enjoys] the religious climate at this college.” When I asked him, “On a scale of one to ten, how religious would you say you are?” the following conversation ensued:

   Jake: I am not religious at all.
   Joe: So – one out of ten?
   Jake: Minus five!
   Joe: Minus five, okay.
   Jake: Religion is just a way for human beings to earn money. You know, there’s spirituality that should come first. And if it doesn’t come first, then you’re not a man of God. You’re a man of money. That’s my view on that.
Joe: All right. Some people are brought up in real religious settings, you know.

Jake: I know I was!

Joe: And other people aren’t brought up in religious settings. How religious was your upbringing?

Jake: It was religious. Every Sunday. I got baptized on my eighth birthday. Maybe not on my birthday – whatever – it was close to that day. They dumped me in the water, and I thought it was just cooler than heck. But the church decided to excommunicate me. I don’t know. They got something against male hair dressers. I’m not sure. I’m not sure how that worked.

[Struggles with the wiring in the car.] Okay, if I can keep that over there [referring to the wires]. I just have to . . .

Joe: But you did have a religious upbringing.

Jake: Absolutely. Absolutely. I’m very spiritual. My spirituality grew probably in my first five or six years of life. I was sexually abused several times. And it was just me and Jesus in them bushes, you know. That’s why I put that in here [pointing to his chest]. You know, Jesus never let me down. You know, he never got rid of me. He’s just always kept himself around me. Every once in a while he’d say, “No, no – we’re not going to do that!” [Laughs.] Yeah, he’d say, “No, we’re not going to do that.” I am crazy, but not actually certifiable. So I put Jesus in there [pointing to his chest, then working on a difficult mechanical process, struggling and grunting.] I think this bolt is stuck.
Jake openly criticized many aspects of Mormon life, including the very doctrinal core of Mormonism, the *Book of Mormon*, which he referred to as "Bible Part Two."

I just don’t believe that there’s a "Bible Part Two." I’m sorry, man. That’s just beyond my realm of comprehension that there’s a "Bible Part Two." I’m like, give me a break! Jeez! At least they waited two thousand years to make the sequel, like *Rocky* [the movie]. But, you know . . . and Mormons have bastardized the original Bible so badly . . . so badly with the [struggles with the bolt he’s trying to remove] with the annotations and the paraphrasing and . . . just, just, they have done awful, awful, awful things to the Bible to the point of me not even wanting to be involved with it. Because, you know, they may be able to take some young impressionable mind that is fifteen or twenty or something like that and ruin their life by giving them false priesthood oil on their heads and stuff . . .

For some time, Jake continued to criticize aspects of the Mormon cultural enclave, especially the concentration of Mormons, the number of Mormon chapels in the community, and the apparent wealth of the church that results from the members’ tithing:

It’s that they don’t understand religion, you know? God didn’t mean people to gather in big buildings and give thousands of millions of dollars. Not at all! He expected them to stop on the street and help a man, you know? Regardless of the man. That’s what He meant. He didn’t mean to build seventy church houses in a single town. That’s a little overkill in my book, you know?
Jake’s case illustrates the dynamics of being quite unconventional in cultural and religious ways. Perhaps in a diverse social setting there are certain sanctions against eccentric behavior and untraditional opinions. However, for a person living in a traditional religious enclave that cherishes predictable behavior and conformist views, these unconventional opinions and peculiar behavior probably elicit more pronounced sanctions, more vehement disapproval. Within such a highly traditional and conservative religious culture, any culturally or religiously unconventional student faces difficult challenges. Further, a student whose unconventionality is extreme, whose behavior is irregular, or whose speech is out of the ordinary may face gigantic cultural challenges within the enclave culture’s region. Such a student faces nearly continuous censure, as Jake’s comments here illustrate:

You know more than half or three-quarters of this trailer park is Mormon. They don’t like guys like me, and they wouldn’t let me live here normally. But I’m good friends with the Smiths who live over there [pointing out the window]. I don’t know if you know them or not. The Smiths over there, and my grandmother are LDS Mormons. Mostly, the whole she-bang are Mormons in this trailer park. You know, the old, “Only LDS people are going to heaven” – you know, you’ve heard the old joke: “Shhhh! Those are the Mormons, and they think they’re the only ones up here in heaven!”

49 This is a reference to a common Utah joke that tells about a man who dies and goes to heaven. Upon arrival in heaven, the man meets with Saint Peter, who gives the man a tour of heaven. Peter takes the man to several beautiful locations, but in each location, the man sees a tall wall. Wondering what is enclosed, the man gets a chair, tips it against the wall, and climbs up to peer over the wall. On the other side of the wall, the man sees several very serious-looking people. The man turns and
know, I just have to laugh at that, because that’s the doctrine that they’re teaching. This is the only religion – the only way to be – and you will go to hell if you don’t be us! You know, dress like us. Walk like us. Talk like us. Act like us, you know? Spout lies from books that aren’t tested with the gospel! Are not tested! Are bastardized parts of the gospel. Awful, awful. It’s terrible.

And I really feel sorry for people who get sucked into that. I would much rather be a criminal than a person who would lay hands on a child! They do it in the name of Satan. Because if it’s not tested by the gospel, and tested true, and not by violence like Brigham Young did, you know. And nineteen wives! Give me a break. The only religion that you got to have nineteen wives. And the only reason they have revelations is because they’re going to get saved [spoken with sarcastic tone]. And then they come up with these cute little revelations like that black man. I thought that was rather cold.

This year . . . I used to be a racist and everything. . . . Last quarter I got the pleasure of writing an essay on Martin Luther King. Man – that man wasn’t about black people. That man was about, you know, all human beings! That’s right. That’s right, I’m a human person. I’m allowed to be that way. I don’t have to act like a god, on the streets, to be, you know . . . Matter of fact, it’s better I don’t. Because if I see a guy stealing a child – I live for something like that. Someone stealing a little boy. I ain’t going to wait! I will beat that

asks Peter who these people are. “Shhhh!” says Peter, “Those are the Mormons and they think they’re the only ones up here in heaven!”

356

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guy up. I will do everything I can to make sure that women and children aren’t mistreated, you know. I think I’m ‘posed to do that. And a lot of it’s pay-back that I owe. [Whispers.] I struggle, you know. I was mistreated.

[Exhales heavily.]

The sanctions that Jake describes in his neighborhood are also present at the college. I asked Jake, “Down at the college, is it easier to be academically successful for a Mormon student than for a non-Mormon student?” and Jake replied:

It’s guaranteed that the Mormon will be academically successful, because you have your Mormon president of the college. You have your Mormon dean. You have your Mormon teachers. You have your Mormon students everywhere. You have your Mormon notebook. You have your Mormon pen [laughs]. I mean . . . you have your Mormon shoes and your Mormon Jesus-jammies [a reference to Mormon underwear] and all that stuff. You bet you’re going to be more successful there. . . . They just do succeed more . . . because they’re in the clique. I mean, it’s just like, I can’t work at the D. I. because I have a violent record – even though I haven’t struck anyone in anger in seven years. Because, there was a time, you know – it’s so hypocritical, non-forgiving, non-communicative, dual standard, that it is just, just, just . . . . It’s a cult that needs to keep to themselves!

And perhaps one should accept some elements of Jake’s assessment at face value. Jake indeed struggles academically. As a college sophomore, his cumulative GPA is less than 2.0, which, he informed me, has put him on “academic probation,” and he received a C grade in HIST 1700. When I asked him if he had ever been to
colleges other than Dixie State, he said, "Yeah, but most were schools of hard
knocks." Then, retrieving a certificate and a photograph from a jumbled pile of
documents on his table, he showed me his diploma for adult high school completion
(GED) along with a photograph of himself wearing graduation robes. Pointing to the
photograph, he commented, "Notice the jewelry!" I then detected that, in the
photograph, Jake was wearing handcuffs.

Much of Jake’s conversation with me was incoherent and disjointed. There
was, as I said, an underlying sense of pain and a religious disillusionment or
hopelessness that included elements of bitterness for Mormon culture. As a very
unconventional person, Jake’s relationship with the campus culture is nearly
impossible to negotiate. While he speaks with great appreciation of the influence of
several teachers, he nevertheless has faced repeated disappointments at the college
including conflicts related to low grades and financial aid.

Jake ended his interview by telling me of a recurring dream that haunts him. I
include it here as another exhibit of Jake’s unforgettable and unconventional
coloracter:

I have a recurring dream. There’s two children drowning. I’m quite old, and I
swim out here in the middle of this water. Well, you know, I get a spiritual
enlightenment that one of these kids will save the world, and one will destroy
it. But I don’t know which one is which. I know I could save them both and
die, and then let God take care of it. Or I could save one kid and live, but then
I have to decide which one, and I might be wrong. And in my dream I never
missed saving both kids, and I wake up when I’m dying.
Janet: “It Broke My Mother’s Heart”

With dark hair, a dark complexion, and dark brown eyes, nineteen-year-old Janet looks very Hispanic, and the college’s database identifies her as such; however, her language is thoroughly North American and even Mormon in both accent and idiom. Her cumulative GPA shows that she is approximately a C-plus student. One of the reasons for which I had chosen to interview Janet was that she had indicated on the survey that she was LDS; however, as was the case with other students interviewed, Janet’s religious affiliation was more complicated than her answer to the survey could indicate.

In the survey, Janet’s answers showed consistently high levels of religiosity. She attends church weekly, observes private religious practices daily, and reports that it’s “definitely true of me” that “in my life, I experience the presence in of the Divine.” It is “very important” for Janet “to be married to a person who shares [her] religious affiliation.” She reports that it is “definitely true of me” that “I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs.” However, interestingly, she indicates that she is “unsure” whether “I enjoy the religious climate at this college.”

The uncertainty of Janet’s satisfaction with the religious climate at the college may be associated with Janet’s personal background. Raised by a very Catholic mother who divorce Janet’s father when Janet was seven, Janet moved to southern Utah when she was twelve. By the time she was fifteen, virtually all of her friends were Mormon. In particular, she told how she had fallen in love with a Mormon boy. To be with this boy and with other Mormon friends, she attended Mormon activities.
Before long, she was attending regular church services every Sunday, reading scriptures with friends, and attending weekly Mormon social gatherings.

During her high school years, Janet was "on the receiving end" of what has been described as Utah students' "habit of thought that perceives all other students as Mormons." When I asked if she could tell who was and who was not Mormon, she commented, "I try not to assume," and she went on to explain that "you can insult people if you just assume":

"When I first moved to Utah, I was Catholic. And I had people kind of come up to me, "Oh, you know, what ward are you in? And who's your bishop," and stuff like that. I'd say, "I don't have a bishop, and I'm not Mormon - okay!" It kind of made me mad. So I was one of the few who got offended. It's just people who live here - it's kind of what they're used to. It's one of the conversation openers: "Are you Mormon?" Just because, usually everybody is Mormon, so people just assume, you know.

It bothered me that they would just assume right from the very beginning. I was like, "Well, no - sorry! I'm different." At first I was really afraid that people were judging me, and that they would think less of me because I wasn't, you know, part of their religion and their belief and everything. But I quickly got over that because most people here are really cool. They just asked questions, like, "Oh - you're not LDS! Well, what's it like to be Catholic? How do you do this? How do you do that?"

Because she had attended Mormon activities for several years, slowly Janet became persuaded that Mormonism was true. When she was sixteen, she announced 360
to her mother that she intended to convert to Mormonism. "It broke my mother’s
heart," she said. For two years, Janet’s mother refused to allow her to be baptized. "I
told my mom, ‘Fine, I’ll just wait till I’m eighteen, and then I’ll convert.’" Janet’s
mother continued in her refusal, vowing that if Janet became a Mormon, she would
have to leave home. However, by the time Janet had turned eighteen, Janet’s mother
sorrowfully accepted the inevitability of her daughter’s conversion. Thus, Janet’s
mother finally assented, and Janet was baptized. Now, nearly two years after Janet’s
baptism, her mother still mourns:

At first it was something my mother and I always fought about – but
now, I don’t know – now, my mother and I just kind of avoid the topic. We
don’t talk about it in the family either. It’s kind of quiet. It causes problems
to talk about it, because they’re still really sad about it. I’m kind of the let-
down of the family. They’re really disappointed in me. I guess I went over to
the – the other side, the dark side, kind of like Star Wars, according to my
family.

At first when I told them I wanted to be a Mormon, my Mom was like,
"I don’t know who you are any more. This isn’t how I raised my daughter.”
And my sister was just really quiet about it – kind of sad. My father, who’s in
California, and so he’s not a very big part of my life, was like, “Okay,
whatever makes you happy!” And now, my Mom gets really quiet when I
talk about it. Or she rolls her eyes. Or she leaves the room. It’s like – she
just doesn’t say anything. She tries to ignore it.
Janet’s case illustrates how some who come into a religious enclave can be torn between non-Mormon family and Mormon peers. When a non-Mormon family moves into a neighborhood where the great majority of neighbors are Mormon, the family’s children may face a dilemma: Either they form close friendships with Mormon peers, or they have very few close friendships. Janet is clearly a loving daughter with deep family commitments; however, she entered a social milieu in which nearly all of her peers were Mormon, and the costs of maintaining a non-Mormon religious identity may have been too high. At one point, I observed, “So, obviously, your family doesn’t support your religious choice,” and I asked, “Where does that support come from?” Janet replied:

Mainly my friends and my friends’ families. All of my best friends were Mormon. They were kind of the ones who introduced me to the religion. At first, they’d invite me to just the fun stuff. “Oh hey, we’ve got a ward activity – we’re going to go have a water-balloon fight, or we’re going on a picnic, or something like that. I’d go, mainly, for free food and just the fun. And then, like, towards the end, they usually have, um, a spiritual lesson. And so that kind of eased me into it.

Later, they were like, “Oh hey, do you want to come to church with me?” I was like, “Oh sure, yeah,” and I kind of just went so I could hang out with my friends. And for a while I had a boyfriend – I was really too young to call him my boyfriend – but I always wanted to hang out with this boy, like, every day. And so I kind of went to church just so I could be with this boy. I might have been in love, or maybe I was too young. I don’t know. I really,
really, really liked this boy, and he was Mormon, and he wanted me to be Mormon too. At the time, I would have done anything for this boy. I know that's stupid.

Then I started hearing their beliefs and their values, and I was like, "Hey, that makes a lot of sense to me! I agree with that!" And so, once I started hearing it, I started going to church for myself, not for my boyfriend. For my own reasons, not just to tag along. And so, all my friends were big cheerleaders. And you know, their parents were really supportive too. And just everybody in the ward I went to was like, "I know you're having a really hard time, but just keep at it! You can do it! You're really going to thank yourself, and your children will thank you for this hardship you're going through."

Thus, Janet went from being a non-Mormon, an outsider, to being a Mormon. She reports that as she came to college, she was attentive to the non-Mormons on campus. I asked her how she could tell which college students were, and were not Mormon. Interestingly, in her response she moves from the third person "they" to the first person "we," and back again:

Usually you can tell by the way that they dress, because in the LDS church we have a standard of modesty. You know, we can't show shoulders. No stomach. No shorts and skirts that aren't to the knee. Um, you can tell by the way we speak. No . . . we're not supposed to swear. They use no profane language, and they don't talk about any crude things. Um, you can tell by
what they do for fun, like what type of movies they go to, whether they like to
go to parties, or if they'd rather just, like, go bowling.

Following this, I asked Janet what difference it makes for students if they're
Mormon or not, and her response suggests either that being non-Mormon has a less
significant impact on college students than high school students, or it suggests that
after one or two years as a Mormon, Janet has become habituated to her status as
insider:

Being non-Mormon is more of an issue for students in high schools than it has
ever been for students in college. Like in high school, people would whisper,
"Oh my gosh - she's not LDS. Oh my gosh! How weird! She's, like, an
alien!" But here at college, it's just like, "Oh, you're not LDS - okay, I've got
homework to think about, so it's not a big deal." Here at college, it doesn't
even matter.

To illustrate that two students with different religious views can be good
friends in college, Janet distinguished between two kinds of college friendships: in-
class friends, and out-of-class friends. In-class friends are students she meets within a
class, sits next to, studies with, talks and jokes with, but then never sees out of the
class. Janet told how she became in-class friends with a young man who had
identified himself as an atheist:

We were talking about movies, and he told us about this movie he'd seen over
the weekend. It was called *The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. He
was telling us how wonderful the movie was, but it was rated R. And so, I
was like, "Oh I can't . . . it sounds like a really cool movie, but I can't see it
because it’s rated R.” And he was like, “Oh, you’re Mormon, huh?” And I was like, “Yeah.” And he was like, “That sucks for you. You’ve got all these rules. I’m an atheist. I can do whatever I want.”

Janet went on to say that her in-class friendship with this young man was particularly sustained and interactive. In addition to sitting together during lectures and other class activities, they sometimes met to share notes, or even went to the computer lab and completed class-related homework together. She noted, however, that he was much older than she; furthermore, he was married. Neither the fact that he was atheist, nor the fact that he was married stopped Janet from enjoying her “in-class friendship” with him. Once the class was over, Janet never saw him again.

When I asked if she thought this student’s atheism would impede friendships with other college students, Janet went on to characterize Mormon students as being of two types: “Hang-loose Mormons and Nazi Mormons.” She asserted that his atheism would impede friendships only with Nazi Mormons. In the following comments, Janet clearly endorsed the “hang-loose” stance:

Some Mormons just sort of “hang loose.” For them, I think college is a lot more low-key than out in the rest of the community. In college, hang-loose Mormons are like, “Oh, whatever! You’re cool!” Everybody’s trying out their own things. Everybody’s just trying to get to know themselves, and they know that other people are exploring themselves too, so they don’t really care.

But I think some Mormons are . . . I call them Nazi-Mormons. They’re pretty much so hard core about their religion and their belief that if
you stray form that in any way, shape, or form, you’re automatically a bad person. They don’t want to hang out with you. They don’t want anything to do with you, but I can only think of two or three people who are Nazi-Mormon, out of all the people I know. The others are hang-loose types, like, “Oh, you’re atheist? Cool! Whatever! I’ve got some homework to do, so do you want to work together?” It’s not just really an issue any more.

I asked her to comment further on Nazi-Mormons. How many of them, really, are there at the college? She estimated, “Oh, very few. Like three out of seventy-five.” And how does one recognize know a Nazi-Mormon? I asked. She replied: They have a very strong opinion, and anything else is wrong. Without even thinking about it, it’s just wrong! That’s all! The discussion is over! That’s all they’re concerned about – your opinion is wrong! They’re very judgmental. They’re very quick to say, “Oh, you’re a bad person” or “You’re a good person.”

They are very self-righteous – very pious – very, um . . . they’re like, “Oh, look at me! I pay, like, fifteen percent tithing instead of ten percent! I am so good! You should all be like me!” Um, they’re not, not very accepting.

What I’ve noticed is that people who have been born in Utah, raised in Utah, by parents who were born in Utah, raised in Utah, and Utah’s all they have ever known – they tend to be Nazi-Mormons.

Setting aside Janet’s assessment of Mormonism’s truth claims for a moment, one can see that because of her personal background – a non-Mormon adolescent trying to function in a social setting with a very high concentration of Mormons –
Janet may have calculated the costs and benefits of culturally negotiating from outside the culture. The costs of doing so, for a fifteen- or sixteen-year-old, were undoubtedly very high. With a group of Mormon high school “best friends,” and either infatuated or in love with a Mormon boy, as Janet calculated costs and benefits, the cultural reinforcement that she received for conceding the outsider’s negotiation must have been overwhelming. True, becoming an insider involved other huge costs – the disappointment to her family – but as difficult as it was for Janet to “break her mother’s heart,” the alternative also must have been overwhelmingly painful.

Karen: “People Get Freaked Out about the Stupidest Stuff”

A forty-six-year-old returning student, Karen was born and raised a Catholic. A year and a half ago, she moved to southern Utah from another Utah county that is known for having much more religious and ethnic diversity than is common throughout Utah. Carbon County is named for its coal mining – an industry that at the beginning of the twentieth century brought immigrants from Greece, Italy, and Eastern Europe who settled there and whose cultural influence persists.

Karen’s survey responses suggest that her religious observances are middling – neither high nor low. She attends church “a few times a month” and observes private forms of religion “two or more times a week.” However, she reports high levels of intrinsic religiosity, asserting that it is “definitely true of me” that “my religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life.” She does not share the religious affiliation of her best friend at the college, and she does not know the religious affiliation of her favorite professor. She reported that it is “definitely not true” that she feels students at the college respect her religious beliefs, and it is
likewise "definitely not true" that she enjoys the religious climate at the college.

According to her survey responses, she does not turn to persons within her religious
group for emotional support or for help resolving problems.

Karen has background that makes her particularly attentive to the
demographics of both the student and the general populations. As a long-time real
estate executive, she was a very influential community leader in Carbon County, even
serving as a member of the institutional board of trustees of the publicly funded
community college located there, the College of Eastern Utah (CEU), a "sister
institution" to Dixie State. With this background, she is able to discuss
knowledgeably the demographics of Utah's college students and Utah's population at
large. Karen explained that in terms of politics Carbon County stands out as a
democratic county among Utah's prevailing republican political atmosphere. It has
"a mining mentality," and thus can therefore be "a rough little community." CEU's
enrollment was shrinking, she said, "down to about seventeen hundred," but CEU
differed from Dixie State in that "there are a lot of students my age at CEU," whereas
"Dixie's students are mostly of traditional college-going age." She further
commented:

I loved Carbon County, actually, although I had a lot of tragedy in Carbon
County.... After a lot of troubles, my twelve-year-old and I picked up and
moved to the furthest part of the state, to St. George. And so here we are. It
has taken quite a while to find this to be our new home, because this is very,
very conservative compared to where I was from.
Carbon County, located in eastern Utah, has long been known as a harbor of cultural and ethnic diversity within Utah's monolithically white and predominantly Mormon culture. In a July 2005 story, the Salt Lake Tribune estimated that the percentage of LDS population in Utah overall was about 63 percent. Carbon County, the Tribune reported, was among a small handful of Utah counties where Mormons do not enjoy a numeric majority, with less than 50 percent of the populace being Mormon (downloaded from http://extras.sltrib.com/specials/LDSpopulation/ on February 28, 2006).

A common Utah joke highlights Carbon County's ethnic and cultural diversity. The joke tells of an Italian coal miner from Carbon County who, when the mining industry slowed down, decided to take a job building a highway on Soldier Summit, about a hundred miles from Carbon County. After a week, the Italian man informed his highway foreman that he wanted to quit his construction job. When the foreman asked why, the man replied, “I don’t like the United States, so I’m going back to Carbon County.”

When Karen moved from this comparative religious diversity to Washington County, (which, according to the Tribune, is about the state’s average percent Mormon), she was immediately aware of several cultural differences between the two counties. In particular, she commented about the difference between the two different Mormon cultures that she experienced in Carbon County and in Washington County. She commented:

The two counties are very different, and religion is a huge part of the difference. Um, to give you an example, Carbon County is sort of the melting
pot of Utah, which means that people from all over eastern and western European countries came to Carbon County for the coal mines. We have a lot of Greek Orthodox. We have a lot of Italian Catholic. We have a lot of Slovacs – we called them Bohunks, I guess. So we have a lot of different religions there. And sure, we had a lot of Mormons, but LDS was not the predominant religion. However, when an event would take place, regardless of what or where it would be, everyone participated. So there would be the Catholic carnival, for example, and you would see Mormon bishops there serving pizzas. So everyone worked well together, which is very different from St. George.

In general, Karen asserts, the diversity of Carbon County meant that religion did not function as a barrier to friendship and interaction. She theorizes that when several religions coexist in a region, no religion is able to assert itself and dominate the cultural arena. However, she asserts that whenever a religious entity reaches a certain “critical mass,” it dominates the cultural interactions of a region. When living in Carbon County, Karen enjoyed frequent interaction with a broad spectrum of acquaintances, both Mormon and non-Mormon; however, since moving to St. George, those kinds of interactions have ceased, and she attributes the difference to the dominance of Mormonism in Washington County:
I do sense exclusion here. When I moved into my neighborhood in St. George, I didn’t hear from anybody for a very long time, and I thought that was odd, because it wasn’t like that in Carbon County. No matter who moved in, they were welcomed. You know, we had a welcoming committee, and so forth. And I did make friends with a person next door whose husband was a Mormon bishop.

Karen spoke of cultural shibboleths – markers of Mormon membership within a neighborhood – and how they function to distinguish insiders from outsiders:

I grew up in Santa Barbara, California, and I can honestly tell you I don’t even know what religion each of my neighbors was. But here in St. George, I know that almost everybody’s Mormon. For example, at Halloween a week or two ago, the LDS church gave cardboard ghosts to all of their members to hang on their doors, and then those were the only places that Mormon children were allowed to go trick-or-treat, so all the Mormon kids by-passed my house because we did not have a cardboard ghost on my door. Now, to me that’s ludicrous. It was like marking the door, is what it was. I wondered, where do we get this ghost? And they said, “Oh, they passed it out in Relief Society. It marks a safe house. It’s just a safe house, you know. And I’m like, “I’m safe! I don’t have a police record,” you know. I’m safe. But the kids literally walked passed our house because we didn’t have a ghost. I’ve never seen anything like that in Carbon County.

Karen points out that these cultural markers that divide Mormons from non-Mormons are in evidence on campus as well. Other students interviewed specifically
mentioned that in the college's public speaking courses, Mormon students prepare and give speeches that include Mormon shibboleths. Like other students, Karen asserts that the speakers have a "habit a thought that views all other students as Mormon," assuming that all students listening will understand the religious and cultural references:

Our public speaking professor irritates me to death. He gets up and tells us that we should give speeches about, you know, various topics. But when he's making the assignment, he won't refer to it as a mission. He refers to it as "a two-year extended vacation." So, he says, "John you went on a two-year extended vacation to Mexico, so you want to get up and talk about Mexican food, and that is what your topic would be." This goes on day in and day out, and I am so sick of hearing about it. I guess it's because I never did go on "an extended, two-year vacation." I'm sick of hearing constant talk about the religion and its customs. Everybody asks, "Where are you going on your mission?" I'm like, you know, I'm all for missions. I wish my nineteen-year-old son would go on a mission, but he's Catholic. To tell you the truth, the kid needs to go somewhere for two years. Every time the phone rings, my heart kind of skips a beat, you know. So it's not that I'm opposed to missions. But this college isn't the place for discussing it day in and day out. That's my position.

Karen is attentive to markers of insider status, and she is also aware that Mormon students are attentive to markers of outsider status, particularly coffee and jewelry with religious symbols:
People get freaked out about the stupidest stuff. Like if I come into an eight o’clock class with a cup of coffee, you know, which I do, because I’m rushing as usual – I drop my daughter off at seven-thirty, and I come rushing in – it absolutely blows people’s mind. I can see them watching me, and sniffing the air, and I’m like, “Do you want some coffee?” You know, just to see what they say. And it’s just, um, little stuff like that that should be totally insignificant – but it blows people’s minds. Do you know what I mean?

... Normally, I wear this beautiful cross that was given to me by my great-grandma. I would never, ever wear that in St. George in public. And I never took it off in Carbon County. Because if you walk around campus, you’ll never, ever see anybody wearing a cross, ever. And if they do, most people are just like staring at it. And so, I would never wear that cross because I don’t want to draw attention to myself. You know, I can’t afford to have my grades docked or for me to be set apart from the rest, or anything like that. So I purposefully am careful about what I wear, and that kind of stuff.

If I wanted to, I could get by as the Mormon lady next door. I really could if I dressed appropriately, and did my hair right and everything. I could slide in very easily as an LDS mom, just trying to get her degree. And sometimes I feel like that would be the best role for me to take. If I did take that role, no, I wouldn’t drink coffee. I would be very cautious about what I said. Um, you know some other things that seem to be a big issue, course, I don’t smoke or anything like that. But, you know, I could be the Mormon lady next door, because in Carbon County people never knew, and they don’t
know now, when they worked with me as a broker, if I was LDS or not. So, you know, they wouldn’t dare ask, and it wasn’t a big deal. So I could slip in very easily as a Mormon mom and get by with that.

Karen contrasts the prevalence of insider and outsider markers in St. George, and the barriers to interaction among affiliates to different religions, to the lack of markers and the interaction that occurred in Carbon County’s more diverse cultural setting:

In Carbon County, we shared our sense of community. Mormon friends might say, “What mass are you going to?” and “Are you going to go to supper after,” and blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah. And we might say, “What happened in your ward?” A lot of the friends and neighbors that lived close to me were members of the Catholic Church, but I remember there was one gal that was LDS and had been married in the temple, whatever, but she liked Catholicism, so she’d go with us too. I don’t know whether she just liked to be part of the group, or what it was. It just wasn’t a big deal there.

But here, for example, Mormons don’t mix. College kids, for example, only will date other LDS kids. This cute little boy who sits next to me in communications, I said, “Oh, I would love to introduce you to my daughter in Salt Lake.” I said, “She just graduated with her B.A. in business. She is so cute!” He goes, “What religion is she?” And I go, “Well, she’s Catholic, but you can be Catholic too” – you know, just teasing him – and he goes, like, “I’m going on a mission.” I go, “Well, she’ll probably be married by the time you get back.” You know, we just tease, but that’s the first
question he wanted to ask: "What religion is she?" I go, "Catholic, duh!"

You know, I was teasing with him, but he was serious. So, yeah, it makes a big difference, and Mormons here don’t want to mix.

The old joke about the Italian coal miner from Carbon County who decided to take a job building a highway outside of Carbon County might be changed a bit to describe Karen’s attitudes. Even though Carbon County and Washington County are both parts of the State of Utah, Karen may some day decide to leave Washington County and return to Carbon County. If and when she does, she might comment that “I don’t like the State of Utah, so I’m going back to Carbon County.”

Each of the nine students profiled above is a complicated and unique individual. In some ways, their individuality and complexity defy generalization. However, it seemed that Mormon students tended to think of themselves as an entitled majority, expressing a kind of cultural ownership: The enclave community is their community; the college is their college; if non-Mormons don’t like it, they can leave. To these students, the enclave community and the college within it represent a supportive and nurturing “home” environment that is relaxed, familiar, easily negotiated, and comfortable. Within the enclave culture, Mormon students express a sense of belonging – that within the enclave community and the college there was an identifiable “we” that includes all Mormon students. The college contributes to this sense of entitlement, openly celebrating the enclave culture in college rituals, narratives and symbols. Steeped in this culture, many Mormon students have “a habit of mind,” as one college officer expressed it, “that perceives all other students as

375

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Mormon. "With this "habit of mind," they have no inhibitions related to peculiar enclave-related behaviors and attitudes. Who could possibly object?

Mormon students and faculty negotiate through "shibboleths" — symbolic language or behavioral customs unique to the enclave culture. Mormons are unaware that they communicate through a culture-specific language. Through this language and through customary behavior related to clothing, jewelry and other behavioral cues, Mormons identify one another and establish communion. In everyday conversation, they use terms that are unfamiliar and baffling to outsiders, such as: stake house, general authority, the brethren, the burning of the bosom, celestial marriage, consecration, deacon, Deseret Industries (more commonly, "The D.I.") , the Ensign, extraction, family home evening, the first presidency, free agency, garments, geneology, gentiles, golden plates, home teacher, institute, Jack Mormons, the JST, the line of authority, the Melchizedek Priesthood, the missionary discussions, Moroni, the MTC, outer darkness, stake patriarch, probation, recommend holder, Relief Society president, an R.M., the saints, a seer, spirit prison, the Stick of Ephraim, to be sustained, the Telestial Kingdom, tithing settlement, the triple combination, the visiting teachers, and Zion (excerpted from Care, 2005).

Contrariwise, it seemed that non-Mormon students tended to think of themselves as part of a beleaguered minority. The enclave community and the college within it seemed unfamiliar, foreign, and not just a little strange. Non-Mormon students were aware that, lacking facility with symbolic expression and behavioral customs, they could not fully participants in the culture. While some non-Mormon students reacted with either a neutral acknowledgment or a regretful
resignation that “After all, it’s their community, and after all, they should be able to
do what they want here,” other non-Mormon students reacted to this with deep
bitterness. Facing the high social costs of outsider status, some denigrate the culture
and others convert.

Keenly aware of the currency of Mormon shibboleths, non-Mormon students
negotiate by either hiding their distinct religious beliefs, symbols, and behaviors, or
by consciously pointing out perceived inconsistencies in the enclave culture. They
may take off their religious jewelry and avoid discussions of religion with their peers
at the college, or they may purposefully bring coffee to class or debate the propriety
of a peculiarly Mormon faux cussword, “flip.” Some of them are biding their time
until their circumstances change and they can move out of the enclave community.

Such students feel alienated, as though they must hide a very important
dimension of their personalities – their spirituality. Their feeling of being alone
among a group of students who share common values and behaviors ranges from
those whose sense of aloneness is absolute, with absolutely no other person with
whom to identify or unite, to those whose sense of aloneness is less complete, with a
very small number of religious confidants to whom they turn for support.

Between the two extremes of Mormon and non-Mormon students are former
or lapsed Mormon students who have disaffiliated or fallen away from the church.
These students often have deeply ambivalent feelings about the enclave culture, and
when they discuss Mormonism, they often alternate between first and third person –
between “we” and “they.” Because members of their families are committed
Mormons, they can never fully sever their connection to the enclave culture. And yet,
their continuing relationship with the enclave culture is either tense or downright painful. These students know and understand the culture, and perhaps more than anyone they fully appreciate the costs associated with outsider status – the loss of family relationships, the loss of trust and reciprocity with fellow students, and the general censure from the enclave culture. And yet, despite these costs, they either actively remove themselves from the culture or they operate at its margin. Theirs is a difficult negotiation because they have neither the power and status of the insider, nor the sympathy that is accorded to the outsider. Because they are not perceived as insiders or as true outsiders, they belong to neither the majority culture nor to any identifiable minority culture other than a poorly organized group of former Mormons or, to use a Utah term, “Jack-Mormons.” Perhaps of all students, former Mormons express the greatest sense of being beleaguered.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, INTERPRETATION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary
As a religious enclave, Utah is a region dominated by a particular religious culture that lies within the boundaries of a larger and more diverse mainstream culture. As has occurred throughout the history of American higher education, members of the enclave culture established colleges and universities to serve the particular needs of the enclave’s religion. However, over time, many of these religious institutions have come under public control. In Utah, several formerly Mormon colleges, including Dixie State College, were converted to public colleges in the 1930s. Despite the fact that it is publicly funded, Dixie State College retains cultural aspects that originate from its former status as a religious college and from the current dominance of Mormonism in the college’s service region.

In Utah, students at public colleges and universities experience a cultural environment where the Mormon religion has a pronounced demographic dominance. This study has employed three methodological components to describe the influence of the religious enclave on students’ academic performance and lived experience at a publicly funded college.
Through a survey administered to 285 students, this study has demonstrated that:

1. A great majority of students in the sample are affiliated with the Mormon Church, and the proportion of Mormon students at the publicly funded college is probably larger than the proportion of Mormon persons in the state of Utah as a whole.

2. Mormon students in the sample have higher levels of several measures of religiosity than non-Mormon students, including organizational, non-organizational, and intrinsic religiosity.

3. Compared to non-Mormons students in the sample, Mormon students express higher satisfaction with the religious climate at the college and indicate that their religious views are respected more.

4. Mormon students in the sample have higher cumulative GPA's than non-Mormon students. Also, Mormon students in the sample received higher grades in an American history course, HIST 1700, than did non-Mormon students. Nevertheless, the rate of return for the subsequent academic year was not significantly different for Mormon and non-Mormon students.

5. Students' cumulative college GPA's, regression analysis suggested, are somewhat associated with their religious affiliation, with Mormon students receiving higher grades. Also, regression analysis suggested that grades are associated with a variable that I interpret as religious independence or self-reliance, with more independent students receiving higher grades.
Through analysis of institutional culture and interviews with key college employees, this study has demonstrated that:

6. The institutional saga nests the narrative of the founding of the college within a larger religious narrative backdrop. The founding of the college is characterized as a natural outgrowth of the early migration of Mormon pioneers into the frontier wilderness and the subsequent settlement of the Great Basin region. Through this connection, the institution attributes to itself the religious motives and virtues of the Mormon pioneers.

7. Through institutional symbols, artwork, and architecture, the institution communicates that education, industry, and community building are religious duties, and the institution advocates continued zeal for these activities.

8. In institutional ceremonies, Mormon religious observances such as prayer are practiced and Mormon individuals are held up as institutional heroes, and their religious virtues are extolled.

9. Traditional family values are promoted in institutional culture and artwork, with traditional gender roles for men and women. Men are to plan and build. Women are to bear and nurture children.

10. Through the LDS Institute of Religion, Mormon students receive religious instruction that reinforces religious behavior and guards against the erosion of their religious values, and by virtue of its location within the informal boundaries of the campus and its place in campus maps and other
college publications, the Institute has informal status as a quasi-official function of the college.

11. The intensely interpersonal relationships that occur in Mormon congregational units called “wards” is duplicated for students at the college, providing individual Mormon students a variety of social resources. Through the “college wards,” Mormon students have an effective means to establish friendships, trust, and reciprocity with other Mormon students, enhancing the college’s ability to socialize and incorporate new students, and reinforcing the dominant role of the church in students’ interpersonal relationships on campus.

Through in-depth interviews with twelve students, this dissertation demonstrated that:

12. Mormon students feel a greater sense of welcome and belonging at the college.

13. Because many aspects of Mormon culture underlie the college’s culture, most Mormon students find the college to be a familiar, supportive, and safe environment.

14. Many non-Mormon students feel alienated from the campus culture, as though they are an embattled minority who has to, in the words of two informants, “tip-toe around” the dominant culture.

15. Perhaps because their religious views dominate the campus culture, some Mormon students show a sense of entitlement – as though the campus
environment should accommodate the majority’s practices, attitudes, and mores.

16. Within the campus environment, most Mormon students culturally negotiate from a powerful position. They usually feel little or no hesitation about introducing religious topics, or about using uniquely Mormon vocabulary to discuss uniquely Mormon themes, or about wearing symbolic jewelry and clothing.

17. Many Mormon students have access to a web of social resources that is less available to students who are not integrated in the enclave culture.

18. Within the campus environment, many non-Mormon students culturally negotiate from a weak position. They usually feel a great deal of reluctance about introducing religious topics, or about using religious vocabulary, or about wearing symbolic jewelry and clothing.

19. Several students who have lived outside of the religious enclave or who have attended colleges or universities located elsewhere have a greater awareness that Dixie State College’s campus culture is unique, unlike the cultures found in most other campuses. Most Mormon students express preference for Dixie State’s cultural and academic climate, and most non-Mormon students express preference for the cultural and academic climates they experienced elsewhere.

20. Non-Mormon students’ attitudes toward the religious aspects of campus culture vary. Some express a resigned acceptance of the culture: “It’s their town — they should be able to do what they want.” Some express fear
and trepidation: "I don’t dare do or say anything about it." And some express defiance and criticism: "I like to poke holes in their arguments."

21. Some formerly Mormon students have lapsed from the faith and find the campus to be threatening or inhospitable.

22. Because of its endogamy, Mormon culture exerts a powerful influence on students’ ability to find sexual or marriage partners. Many non-Mormon or lapsed Mormon students find that the environment provides them access to very, very few potential partners of the opposite sex.

23. All students are quite preoccupied about other persons’ religious affiliation. Within Dixie State’s culture, both Mormon and non-Mormon students express curiosity about the religious affiliation of others and expend considerable effort to determine the affiliation. Many students use that information as a key to understanding their friends and professors. They report that they are curious enough about the affiliation of their professors to think about the issue over the course of several weeks, asking friends and looking for various types of evidence. Also, several of them asked about the interviewer’s religious affiliation.

24. For students at the college, the campus culture imposes significant social costs for disaffiliation (dropping out) and provides significant social benefits for conversion to the Mormon Church. These are the primary influences of religion on students attending a college that, while publicly funded, is located in a community with a numerically dominant religion that has outspoken religious views.
Interpretation

My thinking is heavily influenced by the first premise of rational choice theory, that human beings are rationally self-interested. As Stark and Finke (2000) write, "Within the limits of their information and understanding, restricted by available options, guided by their preferences and tastes, humans attempt to make rational choices" (85). This theory applies the interpretive insights of microeconomic theory to religious behavior. Some object to the concept that behavior that is purportedly motivated by religious belief also has this-worldly motives – motives that have to do with business contacts, availability of sexual partners, access to valuable information, political power, economic wellbeing, or even improved academic performance.

What many object to in rational choice theory is the idea that when individuals make decisions regarding religious belief and practice, they conduct a utilitarian calculation of costs and benefits, and they chose the option that provides the greatest good at the least cost. However, rational choice theory may be particularly relevant to a religious enclave setting such as Utah, where, as Phillips (1998, n.d.) points out, aspects of religious and public life are conflated such that high status in the enclave religion may be tantamount to high status in various public spheres as well. In such an environment, the externalities of religious decisions are manifold, and several this-worldly benefits might accrue to the adherent.

If college students in Utah's religious enclave are rationally self-interested, then when they calculate the costs and benefits of religious behaviors, in addition to ethereal religious rewards that are limited in supply (and may not, in students'
opinions, be available until after this life ends), their calculations will include social and academic success at college, friendships, trust, supportive academic advising, and access to sexual and marriage partners.

What all of these benefits have in common is that they derive from or rely on interpersonal attachments that are created and maintained through religious affiliation and participation. In fact, for most Mormon students, their religious participation facilitates supportive interpersonal attachments that have important positive externalities – social benefits that promote the students’ academic success. For example, in the case of Janet, a student who converted to Mormonism, we see a person who initially had counterbalancing interpersonal attachments inside and outside of Mormon culture, and when the attachments inside Mormon culture came to outweigh attachments outside Mormon culture (including attachments to her Catholic mother), she converted to Mormonism.

Utah’s religious enclave promotes these interpersonal attachments, first, by conflating the educational and religious spheres of operation, and second, by endorsing shared values and trust as the basis of the attachments. To demonstrate how significant religious and educational aspects of interpersonal attachments can be conflated, I again draw the reader’s attention to the following figure.
A student’s college experience is embedded in some contexts that may be primarily educational and secular, and others that may be both educational and religious. As Arum (2000) explained, early sociologists studied the “community effects” on schools, or the way that regional cultures influenced schools, and later sociologists focused more on the national context, “arguing that schools are embedded not simply in local ecological communities, but more importantly in larger organizational communities” (395), including national educational entities, regulatory and accreditation entities, and market forces. When a college is embedded in a cohesive and highly functional religious enclave, the enclave’s “community effects” may be more pervasive and powerful than what might be called the “national effects.”

For one thing, the national cultural environment celebrates and promotes diversity, which may diminish the importance of shared values; however, the
enclave’s cultural environment celebrates and promotes a homogeneous group’s particular ideals, emphasizing the enclave’s shared values.

I posit the theory that where there is demographic concentration of coreligionists, conformity to norms of religious behavior and acceptance of religious beliefs lead to greater community effects on public educational institutions. These community effects lead to greater unity, shared values, and trust among the coreligionists than can be found in more diverse settings. In such an environment, the religious sphere and the educational sphere are conflated and not easily separated. In such an environment, students with shared religious affiliation develop a “habit of mind that perceives all other students as [affiliates],” and therefore, affiliates are able to import the affective benefits from the religious realm (feelings of security, familiarity, welcome and belonging) into the educational realm, and in the educational realm, these affective benefits promote academic success.

Coleman and Hoffer (1987) and later Coleman (1988) conducted comparative studies of schools that were embedded in local religious communities (private Catholic schools) and schools that were embedded in national educational contexts (public schools). Coleman and Hoffer noted higher dropout rates in public schools and theorized that, in the public school setting, students lack “social integration” (215). Contrariwise, schools that are “grounded in a functional community” provide social integration that protects students from negative influences and their educational consequences (216). Coleman (1988) described how “social capital” is used “in the creation of human capital” (S95). In effect, religious social resources can be used for educational benefits. The social resources Coleman identified were “obligations,
expectations, and trustworthiness of structures,” “information channels,” and “norms and effective sanctions.”

In Coleman’s famous essay (1988), he first defined an attribute of social networks that is particularly relevant to Utah’s cultural enclave – network closure. He used figures similar to the following (which I have adapted to my purposes) to illustrate his concept:

![Network without Closure](image)

Figure 32  Network without Closure

One of the students I interviewed, Janet, talked about “in-class friends” – persons with whom she associated only in the educational context. Janet has two kinds of interpersonal associations, those from the religious sphere and those from the educational sphere. In the illustration above, John is an in-class friend, a person Janet knows only from the educational context. Janet, a Mormon student, pointed out that John is atheist and therefore, her relationship to John lacks many of the mechanisms
that are operative in relationships she has with coreligionists such as Susan, a person
who Janet knows from a religious context and not from an educational context.
Presumably, Janet’s relationship to John lacks the confidence, empathy, and trust that
may characterize her relationship to Susan. Likewise, many of the mechanisms that
are operative in the educational context will not be available in Janet’s relationship to
Susan. If all of Janet’s interpersonal associations were separate, with no persons from
the religious network participating in the educational network, then Janet’s network
structure is said to be “open” (Coleman, 1988, p. S106). Several of the non-Mormon
students I interviewed described just such a situation. None of their friends from
church attended the college, and none of their friends from college attended their
church.

Compare the open network above to the network structure depicted in the
following figure. In this illustration, the two networks are closed, since Janet’s
acquaintances know one another in both contexts. When networks are closed,
Coleman asserts, they are more cohesive because they offer a greater variety of links
for exchange among the individuals involved. When the religious sphere and the
educational sphere have closure, several of the social mechanisms that operate in the
religious sphere become operative in the educational sphere. Several of the Mormon
students I interviewed described just such a situation. On Sundays, they attended the
college ward, where they interacted with many religious peers, and those same peers
were enrolled with them in college courses. In the morning they took English, history
and math with several of the same students who joined them in the afternoon at the

390
Institute for religious classes. In their religious activities, they build a web of social connections that they exploit to succeed in the Utah public college.

Because their religious and educational networks have closure, Mormon college students have shared values that promote academic achievement. Comparing academic achievement of students in two school settings (a religious high school and a public high school), Fritch (2001) notes that “... Religion offered a common bond for building community and a time and place for sustained regular social interaction, resulting in social networks that the schools could use for their own purposes” (abstract). Fritch offers a logic model or chain of causality to describe religion’s influence on educational attainment: a) Shared values and common links form community; b) community activities create face-to-face social interaction; c) the
interaction provides the opportunity for social networks; d) networks form social
capital which includes trust, information sharing, and norms and sanctions.

In my analysis of survey responses and institutional culture, I’ve described the
religiously-based sense of community that has coalesced around shared religious
values, and while individual students and college employees sometimes find this
system of values to be oppressive or even tyrannical, this dissatisfaction is not
sufficient to displace the value system. Sherkat and Ellison (1999) reviewed
literature that highlights the importance of shared values in creating social capital.

This literature:

Suggests that religious communities . . . may provide members with ‘social
capital’ that can be mobilized toward instrumental ends. . . . Social capital can
contribute to positive outcomes by (a) providing values and norms that
channel behavior in certain directions and away from others, (b) promoting
the circulation of information, and (c) encouraging both long-term
investments of time and energy and exchange relations, within contexts
governed by norms of reciprocity, trust, and mutual obligation. . . .

While in some ways, Christian values downplay the importance of secular
achievement, suggesting that students seek otherworldly rewards (“Blessed are the
poor for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” Christ declared), at the college shared
religious values seemed to promote secular achievement. In addition to
Mormonism’s emphasis on the importance of work, Mormon doctrine promotes
educational attainment as a religious duty. A common aphorism from Mormon
scripture is that “The Glory of God is intelligence” (D&C 93:36), and several other Mormon scriptures specifically direct believers to seek education⁵⁰.

Several students interviewed commented on Mormonism’s values and norms that channel behavior toward educational endeavors. For example, one student, Janet, expressed the belief that Mormon students generally have greater academic achievement than non-Mormon students. She theorized that, because Mormon Church officials advocate educational achievement, Mormon students will be more motivated and committed to their education. She explained:

Gordon B. Hinckley, who is, like, the prophet of the church – when he gives, like, a speech or something addressed specifically to students, he tells Mormon students to try really, really hard – to get all of the knowledge that you can. That way, you can create a livelihood for your family, which is most important out of everything. So, there’s a scripture that says, “Any knowledge you retain in this world, you can take with you . . . that knowledge will come to the next world.” So knowledge is one thing that you take over to

⁵⁰ D&C 130:19, And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come.

D & C 88:78, Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

D & C 88:79, Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—

D&C 88:118, “As all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.”

393
the next life. And so, pretty much, knowledge is power. What you know will really help you out in the next life. So there is a definite encouragement to get really good grades, and I think a lot of Mormon students take that to heart. They really try hard.

I asked Janet if she had heard persons other than the prophet make this appeal, and she replied, “Oh sure. You hear it in your ward. You hear it from your neighbors. I mean, like, you hear it everywhere. Get all the education you can – it’ll help you out when you pass on.” And a cursory search of the sermons published Mormon Church’s magazines shows several examples such as the following:

Today I would like to pose a question asked long ago by Job: “Where shall wisdom be found?” (Job 28:12.)

Leaders of this Church have repeatedly emphasized the importance of education. It is a vital component of wisdom. Not long after the pioneers began construction of their temple in Illinois, they established the University of the City of Nauvoo. The First Presidency proclaimed that this university “will enable us to teach our children wisdom, to instruct them in all the knowledge and learning, in the arts, sciences, and learned professions.”

A similar scene followed after the persecuted pioneers entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Less than three years later, on 28 February 1850, they instituted the University of the State of Deseret. Later several academies of learning were established.

Now as Church membership worldwide exceeds eight million, it is evident that a direct role of the Church in secular education is no longer

In a sermon delivered to young Mormons in 2001, the current Mormon prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley, gave the following advice:

You are moving into the most competitive age the world has ever known. All around you is competition. You need all the education you can get. Sacrifice a car; sacrifice anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world. That world will in large measure pay you what it thinks you are worth, and your worth will increase as you gain education and proficiency in your chosen field.

You belong to a church that teaches the importance of education. You have a mandate from the Lord to educate your minds and your hearts and your hands. The Lord has said, “Teach ye diligently ... of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—that ye may be prepared in all things” (D&C 88:78–80).

Mind you, these are not my words. These are the words of the Lord who loves you. He wants you to train your minds and hands to become an influence for good as you go forward with your lives. And as you do so and as you perform honorably and with excellence, you will bring honor to the Church, for you will be regarded as a man or woman of integrity and ability.

The concept that education is a religious duty is a shared value that contributes to educational achievement among Mormons and a common theme in Mormon oration. Apart from shared values, Mormons may have access to network resources that are helpful to them in other ways. Fritch (2001) explains:

Although the public school benefited from a general strong feeling of community, religion provided the religious schools with a strong bond in the forms of a common set of values from which the community coalesced. In each private school [Catholic and non-Catholic religious], these common religious values united the community of various age levels into a functional community capable of forming social capital in its various forms. (22-23)

Foley and Edwards (1999) assert that two conditions must be met for individuals to use social capital: First, the individual must be aware that the social resources exist, and second, the individual must have access to the resources. This distinction between awareness of social resources and access to the social resources is important. To explore the extent to which students draw upon social capital, one must first determine if students are aware of, and have access to religiously-based network associations, and then one must determine the extent to which students turn to these resources for help with problems or for emotional support. Do students turn to persons they know through some religious context for friendship, academic

396

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support, or romance? In what follows, I analyze the questions of awareness and access to religiously-based network associations. Later, I analyze the extent to which they turn to those resources for help with problems or for emotional support.

In my survey, I included two items to explore the extent to which students have access to religiously-based network associations, and one item to measure how important those associations are for students. First, I asked students to “Think of your best friend at this college. Do you and that friend share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same church?” Students had three response options: (a) Yes, we share the same religious affiliation; (b) No, we do not share the same religious affiliation, and (c) I don’t know that friend’s religious affiliation. As noted above, only four percent of students responded that they do not know their best friend’s affiliation – a fact that may not be so surprising, given the fact that friendship involves knowledge of personal matters like religious affiliation. However, more than 80 percent of the students reported that they share their best friends’ religious affiliation. This pattern also may not be surprising, given the dominance of one religious affiliation at the college.

Next, my survey asked students to “Think of your favorite professor at this college. Do you and that professor share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same church?” As noted above, 25 percent of students reported that they share the religious affiliation of their favorite professor, 21.4 percent reported that they do not share that affiliation, and 53 percent reported that they do not know that affiliation. The fact that nearly half of the students know the religious affiliation of their favorite professors seems unusually high, but one would have to compare that
data to data gathered at other institutions to assess the fact’s abnormality. However, our question here is whether or not students have access to religiously-based network resources that involve their professors. Students’ awareness of their professors’ affiliation suggests that they have satisfied a prerequisite to access to religiously-based social resources involving their professors. Whether or not awareness of their professors’ religious affiliation is evidence that students exploit these religiously-based resources, or whether there is any truly operational religious dimension in students’ relationship to their professors, is a matter this data cannot address, but nevertheless an interesting topic for further research.

The following shows that the correlation between Mormon affiliation and access to religiously based network associations is positive and significant:

Table 36  Correlation, Whether LDS and Religiously-Based Network Associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>3: Rel-Network, College Friend: Reversed</th>
<th>4: Rel-Network, Professor: Reversed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.588**</td>
<td>.149*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Rel-Network, College Friend: Reversed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.588**</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Rel-Network, Professor: Reversed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.149*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

398
Interestingly, the two “religious network” variables are each significantly correlated to the “Whether LDS” variable; however, they are not significantly correlated to each other. This fact presents interesting questions. One might have assumed that the two variables were expressions of a single underlying construct – the extent to which students have access to religiously-based network associations. Why is it that students who share the religious affiliation of their favorite professors and students who share the religious affiliation of best friends are not significantly related? The fact that the correlation between these two variables is not significant suggests that their relationship may be a fruitful topic for research.

Despite these questions, the correlations of these variables to the “whether LDS” variable show a fact that seems obvious and intuitive – that within the religious enclave, religiously-based network associations are more available to Mormon students than to non-Mormon students.

Having established that Mormon students have greater access to religiously-based network resources, the next problem is to determine the extent to which students may turn to those religiously-based network associations for emotional support or for problem solving. I noted in the analysis of institutional culture above that among college employees, the opinion that the college culture is more supportive for Mormon students than non-Mormon students is nearly universal. Employees theorize that Mormon students find supportive associational resources more readily than non-Mormon students, leading Mormon students to feel more welcome and at home at the institution. Employees interviewed suggested that because Mormon students feel more welcome, more of them remain at the institution, which creates a
more concentrated Mormon culture at the institution, providing even more associational resources for Mormons, and further reinforcing their sense of welcome and belonging. At the same time, the more concentrated Mormon culture, they theorize, also deprives non-Mormon students of access to similar resources, thus driving away non-Mormon students. Is there any evidence that Mormon students find the environment more emotionally supportive and that Mormon students turn to religiously-based associations for help in problem solving?

In my survey, I included two items to measure the extent to which students turn to persons they know through some religious context for emotional support or for help. Question 10 asked students to what extent it was true that “When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.” Question 9 asked students to what extent it was true that “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.” A Pearson’s correlation analysis shows that the association between being LDS and these two survey questions is strongly positive:

As would be expected from the correlations in Table 37, an independent samples T-test comparing means for Mormon and non-Mormon survey takers showed a significant difference at p<.05, with Mormon students higher on both questions.
Table 37 Correlation, Whether LDS and Problem Solving and Social Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: Reversed</th>
<th>10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: Reversed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>.513**</td>
<td>.565**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) .000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: Reversed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .513**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.782**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) .000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: Reversed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .565**</td>
<td>.782**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) .000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 38 Religious Coping, Comparison of Means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>Whether LDS (1=LDS)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: Reversed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.618</td>
<td>.259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: Reversed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.069</td>
<td>.068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results suggest that Mormon students in the sample may rely to a greater extent than non-Mormon students on persons they know from a religious context, for emotional support and for help in problem solving. To a very high degree, they report that it is “definitely true of me” or it “tends to be true” that “When
Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9: Rel-Coping, Problem Support: Reversed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>-10.060</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
<td>.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-7.176</td>
<td>42.729</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: Rel-Coping, Social Support: Reversed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>-11.530</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-2.19</td>
<td>.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-10.018</td>
<td>46.533</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-2.19</td>
<td>.219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support” and “When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.” These results lend support to the idea that, at a publicly supported college located in a religious enclave, students who are integrated in the enclave culture (a) have access to religiously-based network resources, and (b) turn to those resources for emotional support and for problem solving.

One common method for assessing whether social resources are available is what Lin (1999) calls the “name generator” method, in which an interviewer asks the informant to list contacts in relationships and evaluate the nature and strength of those ties. Using the list that informants generate, scholars then assess the diversity, range, and strength of the social resources. Adapting Lin’s suggested method to determine whether religiously-based network resources are available, in all student interviews that I conducted, I asked students, “Think of five or six people who have helped you the most in your life, and get their names in mind,” and I followed up with questions about whether or not the students knew those persons from a religious context.

I fully expected that some college students would spontaneously include persons they knew from a religious context. I thought that, through this method, I
would be able to assess the extent to which students had benefited from religiously-based network resources; however, this method and its results did not suggest that religiously-based associations were important in students’ lives. No student, either Mormon or non-Mormon, included a person they knew from a religious context among the five or six persons in the “name generator” experiment. Instead, the great majority of persons that students listed were members of their immediate nuclear families or peer-group friends. Occasionally, there was an employer. No student, either Mormon or non-Mormon, listed a Sunday school teacher, a bishop or pastor, or any other person they knew from a religious context. Only after I had specifically prompted students about religiously-based associations did they consider the influence of religious leaders, religious peers, or other persons they knew from a religious context.

However, after I had prompted them, several informants discussed how religiously-based associations had helped them in their academic pursuits. The help that they described was of two varieties – direct academic help and indirect or facilitative help. Direct academic help was help applied directly to some academic endeavor, and facilitative help had indirect impact on academics, addressing some foundational need in order to allow students to focus on academics. In one interview, a twenty-three-year old Mormon, Bill, gave examples of direct academic help. I asked Bill, “Have members of your church or persons you know in your religious organization helped you be successful academically?” As a young Mormon, Bill’s responses showed how the intensely interpersonal relationships of a Mormon ward
can have positive externalities that are instrumentally useful in academic endeavors in a direct way:

Bill: Oh, usually it’s – I’ll have a class, or I’ve had classes in the past – and, for example, one of the persons in my ward will be a teacher of the subject. Like, there was a math teacher in my ward a few years back. And so I could just see him and talk to him about my math class, you know, at ward activities. He could do a little review. I mean, that’s how I knew the math teacher, from church, and maybe I’d run into him at church, just in the hallway or something, and . . .

Joe: You had a math teacher in your ward?

Bill: Yeah, maybe I’d see him in the hallway at church. I wasn’t in his particular class, but it’s a math teacher in my ward. He’s somebody that knows the subject, and he knows that I’m in a math class at college, and he asks me how it’s going, you know. And maybe he’ll be able help me with something, you know, the quadratic equation or something. And that’s typically what happens. There’s somebody in my ward who knows the subject. Not just math – sometimes it’s other classes too, like accounting.

Joe: You talked with a math teacher about the quadratic formula in your ward?

Bill: Um, yeah. And, and even earlier when I was growing up, this math teacher in my ward, yeah, he would help me.

Joe: Now, tell me about the accountant.
Bill: Right now, there's an accountant in my ward, and he knows accounting pretty well, so I can just bounce questions off him. You know...

Joe: And he helps you with your college accounting class?

Bill: [Laughs.] Yeah. Um, yeah, I get a little help from him on the side. [Again laughs.] You don’t think that’s bad, do you?

The academic assistance can have direct impact on academic endeavors, as was the case for Bill, or it can take the form of facilitative support, as was the case for Shawna. As the 34-year-old single mother of three children, Shawna told me that a local inter-denominational Protestant group was helping to pay her tuition, buying her a car, and providing babysitting services while she went to school. This type of help is a form of charity, addressing needs that are hierarchically foundational for Shawna’s schooling so that she can focus her attention on academics. In Bill’s case, the help was directly related to his academic courses; in Shawna’s, the help was indirect, addressing foundational needs. These two examples highlight the fact that help can be directly related to academic endeavors, or it can be indirectly related, addressing foundational needs. Religious social capital may be categorized as either direct or facilitative, and further research may explore the respective roles of these two types of social capital.

Overall, in my interviews very few students mentioned that their religious associations provided help that allowed them to be academically successful. I’m not sure how to interpret this fact. It may suggest that students receive very little direct help with academic endeavors from their religious associates. It may suggest that religious associations provide facilitative help that addresses other foundational needs.
that must be met before the student can focus attention on academics, and students
don’t recognize facilitative help because it is not direct help. Or it may suggest that
religious associations provide very little direct or facilitative help. This is a good
topic for further research.

In interviews with college employees, I found that college employees believe
that the cultural environment on campus is more supportive for Mormon students,
leading them to feel more welcome and comfortable. The employees surveyed
suggested a looped sequence of causality: First, they theorized that Mormon
students’ increased sense of welcome and comfort in the college’s culture is
associated with a higher rate of retention among Mormon students. Second, they
theorized that the higher rate of retention in turn increases Mormon students’
demographic concentration on campus. And third, they theorized that increased
demographic concentration of Mormons on campus, leads to an even more enhanced
sense of welcome and comfort for Mormons on campus. Successive cycles of this
loop, employees suggest, has lead to an overwhelmingly Mormon cultural influence
on campus. In theory, a student who is integrated in this culture has greater access to
useful information, greater understanding of, and reciprocity with other students and
with Mormon faculty members. These last theories, even though nearly universal
among the college’s employees, are nevertheless conjectural and unconfirmed. They
also are a good subject for future research.

I summarize the above discussion of social capital by saying that Mormon
students participated in religious and educational networks that had closure. In other
words, Mormon students had social resources that operating in both the educational
and religious spheres simultaneously. Mormon students reported that they shared the religious affiliation of friends and favorite professors at greater rates than non-Mormons, and there was evidence that suggests that Mormons turn to persons they know in a religious context for problem solving and emotional support. I posit that these social resources have a positive influence on Mormon students’ academic performance.

A concrete example of network associations within Utah will perhaps illustrate some of the “social resources” available to participants in Utah’s dominant religious culture. Twenty years ago, when my family and I first moved to the Utah community studied here, we began attending a Mormon ward where we met another family that I’ll call the Jones family. Mr. Jones was a car salesman, and Mrs. Jones was an elementary school teacher. The Jones family had two sons, the oldest of whom was the same age as my oldest daughter. Within a few weeks, my wife and Mrs. Jones became well acquainted as volunteer workers in the Mormon Primary, an organization for young Mormon children. In this organization, my wife and Mrs. Jones collaborated on the religious instruction of one another’s children, along with the children within our small neighborhood of perhaps one hundred households. My wife and Mrs. Jones, along with the children of both families, attended weekly activities as well as Sunday religious services. All members of the two families became good friends.

Through her association with Mrs. Jones in the Mormon ward, my wife gained access to important information. Learning that my wife had a degree in special education, Mrs. Jones shared limited and valuable information with my wife, telling
her about a job opening in the local school district. Before long, my wife applied and was hired. Thus, Mrs. Jones and my wife became work colleagues, as well as friends, neighbors, and coreligionists. My family interacted with the Jones family at least weekly at religious events, and sometimes even more often at other religiously-based neighborhood events.

As an elementary school teacher, Mrs. Jones was able to ensure that each of my children were enrolled in her first grade classroom and enjoyed a year of her instruction. As her first grade students, each of my children received educational attention that was of a quality unavailable for all students. Of course, Mrs. Jones was a fine teacher for any student; however, she gave my children particular attention, often giving them rides to and from school, sharing her lunch with them, and collaborating frequently with my wife and me on their educational progress. Through Mrs. Jones, we learned of my children’s occasional malfeasance at school. They knew and loved Mrs. Jones, and they said they didn’t mind when she “tattled” and collaborated with my wife and me in the corrective steps we took.

What’s more, Mrs. Jones knew the entire staff at the elementary school, and each year she coached my wife and me about which teachers were best suited to our children’s needs. She told us how to ensure that our children, if not enrolled in the “right class” could be moved to gain access to teachers that she considered most effective. She extended continuous “insider information,” immediately alerting us to threats and opportunities in the school system. All the while she helped my children, giving them rides, and watching out for them generally. Further, whenever my family
bought a car, we went to Mr. Jones' dealership, knowing that he would ensure that we got the very best financial arrangements possible.

When Mrs. Jones' older son came to college, I invited him to my office and returned Mrs. Jones' favor. As an academic administrator, I was familiar with all faculty members on campus, and I made sure that the son registered early and got into classes that I thought would be most helpful to him. I very seldom channel students toward or away from specific faculty members, because such recommendations have a tendency to come back to the faculty member. However, for the Jones's son, each semester I actually logged onto the campus computer system and registered him in courses from faculty I thought most interesting and effective. Also, I kept him from waiting in line at the Registrar's Office.

Later, as the son began writing papers for his college classes, I told him I would help him with them, ensuring that they were effective and error free. I knew his professors well—their writing requirements and teaching styles—and I frequently helped him improve his writing. I saw him on campus often, inviting him to my office, where we sometimes drank a soda together.

Largely because of their integration in a religious community, my children and the Jones' children enjoyed several benefits: insider information about educational resources and how best to access them, personal attention that was unusually caring and attentive and that contributed to socialization about norms and sanctions, as well as a kind of non-parental adult supervision that might not have been available except through our association in the religious community. I might add, Mrs. Jones was instrumental in my wife's employment, and over the years I've gotten
some excellent bargains on automobiles from Mr. Jones. These are the kinds of “this-worldly” externalities that may be associated with religiously-based network resources.

Bourdieu’s and Coleman’s concepts of social capital have several relevant implications for Utah’s cultural context. If students attending a public college in Utah are members of the Mormon Church, with a general upbringing within the culture, they may have access to social resources that are not available to students not integrated in the dominant religious culture.

With a background of active participation in a Mormon ward, those students have enjoyed what Coleman (1988) calls “intergenerational closure” – network associations with non-family adults, including scout masters, religious advisers, lay ministers, Sunday school teachers, and a host of other adults. Their involvement in the church extended beyond religious activities, offering them summer camps, dances, and holiday events, charitable service experiences, and instruction about varied topics such as world history, world cultures, and home economics.

Their parents have been intimately acquainted with the parents of their peers, able to collaborate intensively in their upbringing and socialization. They have interacted intensively with other youth in a non-academic context. They bring a wealth of friendships and acquaintances that, because of their own and their parents’ investments of time and effort, involve reciprocal obligations and trust. Some of them have served as Mormon missionaries in foreign countries, where they have become fluent in another language and learned something about a different culture. And, because of these experiences, they understand the semiotics of the dominant
culture – the subtle coding of effective cultural interaction. These resources, even though developed in a religious setting, are to some degree fungible or interchangeable in the satisfaction of obligation, applicable for use in other non-religious settings. Or to use Bourdieu’s (1986) term, students are able to “convert” their social capital into other forms of benefit, even economic and academic benefit.

If students attending a public college in Utah are not members of the Mormon Church, or if they are Mormons who for some reason are not fully integrated with the local religious community, they may lack access to social resources that could contribute to their educational success. Rather than having an extensive network of local associations, they know few of the students in their cohort, and almost no adult members of the ecological community. Perhaps they lack “assets” of mutual obligation, created through their own or their family’s investment in a local community, that they can take advantage of for a variety of benefits. They may not have access to high-demand or controlled information about advantages, opportunities, educational processes, or other benefits. And importantly, they may lack facility with the subtle language, the esoteric symbols and vocabulary that lead to certain kinds of inclusion and trust.

I now turn to another theme in my interpretation of data – a concept from identity theory which helps to describe the function of a highly concentrated religious enclave such as Utah. According to identity theory, each person identifies with groups of various types. For example, I identify myself as a member of a particular family, as an employee of a college, as a member of a political party, as a practitioner of a particular hobby, as a member of a specific ethnic group, and as a member of a
church group. "Individuals," Mael and Ashforth (2001) note, "classify themselves and others into groups as a means of ordering the social environment and locating their place within it." By identifying with a group, individuals establish "belongingness"—the perception that they are "intertwined with the group's fate, sharing its common destiny, and experiencing its successes and failures" (p. 198). An Individual thus sometimes merges his personal fate with a group's fate:

... He tends to feel at one with each such group. Its fortunes are his fortunes; its goals become his goals, its successes and failures, his successes and failures; and its prestige becomes his prestige. ... The continued life and immortality of such a group comes to be felt to be the equivalent of and a substitute for his own personal life and immortality. (Tolman as quoted by Mael and Ashforth, p. 199).

This kind of "belongingness" often forms the basis of community and social solidarity. While different kinds of group identity can provide this solidarity—including identities related to work, sports, and even war—"nothing in life matches the power of religion to evoke commitment and inspire loyalty" (Shea, quoted by Mael and Ashforth, p. 208). Shared values, as noted above, can constitute a group's identity, serving both to unite the community and to exclude those who do not fully share the values (Strike, 1999).

Because group identities can be both inclusive and exclusive, a fundamental group process is what sociologists call "boundary maintenance"—the means of identifying which individuals are, and are not, members of the group. Among other forms of boundary maintenance, Phillips notes that Mormons use their prohibition on
tobacco, coffee, and alcohol to distinguish between ingroup and outgroup individuals (n.d.).

Brewer (1999) argues that the human species evolved a propensity to form group identities as a survival mechanism: "For long-term survival, we must be willing to rely on others for information, aid, and shared resources, and we must be willing to give information and aid and to share resources with others" (p. 433). Thus, group identities are associated with social benefits such as trust, reciprocity, and access to limited information. Groups, Brewer argues, often create richly symbolic means of "boundary maintenance": "Symbols and behaviors that differentiate the ingroup from local outgroups become particularly important here, to reduce the risk that ingroup benefits will inadvertently extend to outgroup members, and to ensure that ingroup members will recognize one's own entitlement to receive benefits" (pp. 433-434). These resources (i.e., trust, reciprocity, "networking," shared information, etc.) are important incentives for group identity and group loyalty.

Usually, multiple kinds of group identities exist in any given social setting, including ethnic, class, professional, and religious identities. Sometimes, however, one group identity or one type of group identity comes to dominate a social setting, eclipsing all other types of group identity. When one group identity dominates, that identity comes to function as a dichotomous discriminator: Persons are perceived first and foremost either as members of this locally important group (insiders), or as non-members (outsiders). Members of the dominant identity often perceive other groups as competing against, or mutually exclusive with, the dominant group.
Brewer (1999) explains that diversity, pluralism, or heterogeneity create a “cross-cutting” pattern of social identities and reduces the likelihood that one social identity will dominate in a particular setting. In other words, in a setting such as New Jersey, where there are many different kinds of group identity and many different religious identities, pluralism keeps any single religious identity from becoming dominant, and thus religion in New Jersey is not a dichotomous social identity. In New Jersey, persons are not perceived as, first and foremost, insiders or outsiders of one particular religion. Certainly, persons have religious identity in New Jersey, but other types of religious identity are “cross-cutting,” keeping any single religious identity from dominating the social setting.

However, in a setting such as Utah, religious homogeneity makes religion the dominant type of social identity. Therefore, unlike New Jersey’s multiplex system of religious identity, in Utah’s cultural setting, all religious identities tend to be simplified into a binary system: In Utah, one is either Mormon or non-Mormon. Within Utah, Mormons refer to outgroup members as “gentiles.” Further, in Utah, rather than being perceived as a complex amalgam of multiple identities, one is categorized along the Mormon/ non-Mormon divide first and foremost.

Brewer argues that in social settings that are “differentiated along a single primary categorization,” there is more “social comparison” and more “perceptions of conflict of interest that give rise to negative attitudes toward outgroups and high potential for conflict” (p. 439). Thus, in Utah, one’s status as “non-Mormon” is probably more important than one’s status as Roman Catholic, Anglican, Hindu,
Methodist, or Jew, etc. Members of Utah’s Jewish community, for example, have been known to joke that “Utah is the only place where a Jew is a gentile.”

In settings with greater heterogeneity than Utah, where religious identity tends to be more “a complex, cross-cutting pattern of social differentiation” (Brewer, 1999, p. 439), negative attitudes toward outgroup members are less strident and people tend to be more tolerant. In social settings where no single social identity predominates, persons are not categorized as either members or non-members of some primary group type. Brewer explains,

In a complex social structure characterized by cross-cutting category distinctions a single person may be attached to one ingroup by virtue of ethnic heritage, to another by religion, to yet another based on occupation, or region of residence, and so forth. With this profusion of social identities, other individuals will be fellow ingroup members on one category distinction but outgroupers on another. Such cross-cutting ingroup-outgroup distinctions reduce the intensity of the individual’s dependence on any particular ingroup for meeting psychological needs for inclusion, thereby reducing the potential for polarizing loyalties along any single cleavage or group distinction and perhaps increasing tolerance for outgroups in general. (p. 439).

Utahans are very preoccupied with the dichotomous religious distinction, Mormon or non-Mormon. As early as 1937, sociologist Nels Anderson (1937), a principle founder of the Chicago School of Social Research, commented about a social chasm that divided Mormons and “Gentiles”:
Gentiles [non-Mormons] were boycotted in business and excluded from all social associations. Mormon children were taught to avoid strangers, to answer no questions, and to know nothing, if asked about their families or neighbors. An atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion prevailed between Mormons and Gentiles in Utah.

Mormons in Utah heard the same solemn warnings respecting Gentile strangers, "Receive them not. Be wise as serpents but gentle as doves. Let them make honey in their own hives. They want to lead our children from us. They take our words and bandy them about." (p. 602)

Some scholars assert that this social division still persists in Utah. Barber (1995) cites a non-Mormon Utahan who says, "All non-Mormons in Utah share one thing in common . . . that supersedes race, creed or religion: the fact that they are not Mormon" (p. 397). She further notes that in Utah:

Incomers of all faiths and creeds experience much the same perplexity in their search for "feeling at home" in Utah – scratching out a place among strongly-bonded lifetime friendships, a subtle pioneer/spiritual aristocracy, and generations-old social patterns and attitudes. But bonds often get sifted out, forgotten, lost in a locked polarity which neither side intends to create, all because of one of the most commonly asked questions in the state – "Are you a Mormon?"

The question is an effective device for establishing lines of demarcation, analyzing social expectations and cutting to the bone. . . . If one tunes in to the flow of conversation on buses, in corners, at parties and over
the fences of this community, one is likely to hear a discussion of churchly
topics. "I've never been in a place," says [one woman], "where people discuss
religion so much."

Some people talk about it because they are curious, some because they
feel a need to establish their identity, often in self-defense, and others because
the topic fuels the great armchair sport of testing who can outdo whom with
horror stories. But regardless of reasons, the bottom line reality is that many
people feel isolated. The following quotes are variations on the single most
repeated theme from thirty-five interviews and multiple informal
conversations with Utah incomers, old and new:

"People are often involved only with their families and the same
friends through elementary, high school and college," observes a retired
businessman from California.

"We couldn't ask for nicer neighbors," says [a non-Utah woman who
moved into the state]. "They are friendly, generous and offer us vegetables
from their gardens. But there is no social mixing, just a respectful tolerance of
each other."

"That I am a guest on Mormon turf is a pervasive feeling," says . . . a
former Unitarian minister in Salt Lake City, now a practicing psychologist.
"The ward structure is an intense community, and with all of the various ward
activities, there is a natural feeling of exclusion."

"It hit me after six to eight months," says [another non-Utah woman
who moved into the state]. "Suddenly you realize that you're happy in your
work, but you don't have a social core unless you are LDS. People are friendly and say 'We've got to have you over,' but they never do." (pp. 397-398)

A recent event illustrates Mormonism’s continuing difficulty in accommodating diversity. Because tens of thousands of athletes and spectators came to the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, Chen notes (2003), the event immersed Utah in pluralism. On 9 December 2001—barely two months before the beginning of the Olympics—the *Salt Lake Tribune*’s Catholic editor, James Shelledy, published a special six-page Sunday section that focused on Utah’s dichotomous religious social identity. Entitled “The Unspoken Divide,” the special section took “a hard look at how Mormons and non-Mormons get along in Utah.” Because of Utah’s unique demographic characteristics—what sociologists have called a “*de facto* religious monopoly” (Phillips, 1998; Iannaccone, 1991; Iannaccone, 1992a)—the state has what the Tribune called “a tolerance problem that runs along both sides of the religious/cultural divide.” The editor wrote:

> The social divide between Mormons and non-Mormons is the elephant in Utah's living room. Everyone can see it, but most people are reluctant to talk about it openly with the people on the other side. So the communication between camps often takes indirect forms: fractious letters to the editor, political battles over liquor regulation or income-tax exemptions for dependent children, academic clashes over LDS Church history (“The Great Divide,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 December 2001, AA1).

During the weeks before the Olympics, the Tribune’s editors had employed a professional polling company (Valley Research) to devise and implement a “lengthy
survey” (n=600) to measure aspects of the “divide.” Following are key findings as reported in the Tribune’s feature article:

- “The perception [that Utah is divided along religious lines] is held by 86 percent of the non-Mormons and 63 percent of Mormons.”
- Survey respondents were “equally divided on whether the situation is improving.”
- “The optimism was strongest among respondents who identified themselves as Mormons: 62 percent say the division is healing. . . .”
- “The majority of those who listed another religious affiliation or no religion do not see improvement. Seventy percent felt relations between the two groups is [sic] deteriorating or, at the least, unchanged.”
- “Mormons and non-Mormons tend to socialize with their own.”
- “A majority of both groupings accept responsibility for bridging the gap.”
- “The influence of the LDS Church is felt, from neighborhoods to state government, by both groups.”
- “A third of the Mormons and 60 percent of non-Mormons say they have experienced discrimination or uneasiness in Utah based on their religious views.”
- “More than half of the non-Mormons and 22 percent of the Mormons say LDS followers are too aggressive in attempting to convert others. . . .”
- “. . . A third of both groups say non-Mormons are too antagonistic toward LDS.” (“3-in-5 Utahns See Divide Between LDS, Others,” Salt Lake Tribune, 9 December 2001, p. SR4)
With feature articles by prominent Utah Mormons and non-Mormons, the six-page special section elicited vigorous state-wide discussion and commentary. Within a week, the *Tribune* had received so many letters to the editor that the editor published a feature story on the breadth and intensity of response ("Unspoken Divide Real, Tribune Readers Agree," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 December 2001, p. AA2). Also, *Tribune* articles about the special section appeared for months afterward.

The flurry of press attention to Mormon/non-Mormon relations that occurred at the time of the Olympics serves to illustrate the positive and negative outcomes of strongly shared constitutive values. On one hand, such values serve to unite those who share the values, providing common goals and forming bonds of common identity, solidarity, and communal relations—social resources that may be useful in both religious and educational settings. On the other hand, Mormons' constitutive values may serve as the basis for exclusion, making Mormons parochial and insular, or what sociologists have termed "overembedded" (Adler, 2000) and "divisive" (Dudley, 2004; Portes, 1998; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000; Burt, 2000).

Perhaps the enclave's cultural influence at the publicly funded college can be conceptualized as a vortex, with both centripetal and centrifugal forces. For some students at Dixie State College, the enclave culture is magnetic, drawing them into the cultural center and creating a strong sense of belonging at the institution. Other students, however, are repelled by it, pushed away from the cultural core. As is the

51 The following *Salt Lake Tribune* stories, for example, continued to explore the "Unspoken Divide" weeks after the special section's initial publication: "Utah is Not What America Stands For," 5 January 2002, p. C3; "LDS Convert Dislikes Politics But Attends Church Anyway," 2 February 2002, p. C3.

420
case for vortices in astrophysics, as the core of the vortex becomes more and more dense, the gravitational pull becomes stronger and stronger, and the centripetal force pulls more and more toward the center. Likewise, as the vortex spins faster, it spins with more and more energy, and the centrifugal force propels individuals away from the center more and more vigorously. Under the cultural influence of these contrary forces, the campus's cultural core has probably become more and more densely Mormon, and the religiously diverse students who remain have probably become more and more marginalized, or even alienated altogether.

Figure 34 Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces in the Enclave Culture

Recommendations

At a publicly funded college located within a religious enclave, clearly, all persons, whether affiliated with the enclave religion or not, have an obligation to treat
one another with respect. Wolin (2005) writes that one prominent philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, asserts that “Toleration . . . is always a two-way street.” Whenever religion functions within the public sphere, according to Habermas, affiliates and non-affiliates are ethically obligated not only to tolerate one another, but to “assume the standpoint of the other”:

Not only must believers tolerate others' beliefs, including the credos and convictions of nonbelievers; it falls due to disbelieving secularists, similarly, to appreciate the convictions of religiously motivated fellow citizens. From the standpoint of Habermas's "theory of communicative action," this stipulation suggests that we assume the standpoint of the other. . .

The criterion for religious belief systems that wish to have their moral recommendations felt and acknowledged is the capacity to take the standpoint of the other. Only those religions that retain the capacity to bracket or suspend the temptations of theological narcissism – the conviction that my religion alone provides the path to salvation – are suitable players in our rapidly changing, post-secular moral and political universe. (p. B16)

For a highly religious people like Mormons – who claim that among all truth claims, in the most important metaphysical sense, only their own are fully legitimate – it may be particularly difficult to “assume the standpoint of the other.” Within a campus that is located in a religious enclave, the fundamental stance of what sociologists call a sect – that only the sect’s truth claims are fully legitimate – may create several positive externalities for participants in that culture, including a strong
bond of unity and access to social resources that are otherwise unavailable; however, non-affiliated students may find this atmosphere to be particularly unwelcoming, precisely because the sect’s stance will discourage its affiliates to “assume the standpoint of the other” in a completely sympathetic and respectful way.

As a nominally secular institution, Dixie State College claims the intention to promote tolerance. The college’s mission statement avows that the college “enhances its campus climate by promoting cultural and demographic diversity.” This is an appropriate goal for such a publicly funded college, and the following recommendations are intended to help the institution, and any other publicly funded institution that may be located within a religious enclave, more fully to realize these stated intentions.

First, a publicly funded college located within a religious enclave must find balance between two competing claims. On one hand, it must understand its ecological community’s culture and, within appropriate limits, be sensitive, deferential, respectful, and accommodating toward the enclave’s values. On the other hand, it must be committed to academic freedom in the context of national standards of educational best practice and scholarship. The college must be attentive to both community-based values and national standards.

Because of its role as a provider of higher education, the college stands as a broker between national standards and community-based values. It should be deliberate and careful in facilitating the give-and-take between these two claims, helping Mormon students to understand and respect the pluralism of American culture, and helping non-Mormon students to understand and respect Mormon
students. As a broker between community values and national standards, the institution should avoid functioning as agent for the enclave culture, unless at the same time it has adopted a role as agent for national educational standards. This balance requires perspective and sensitivity.

Within a religious enclave, facilitating give-and-take between these two claims can be one of the most fundamentally effective forms of education, having profound impact on adherents and non-adherents alike. Whenever possible, the college should make room for both kinds of claims; however, if and when these two claims come into irreconcilable conflict, the institution must, because of its public funding, support national standards. In its role as broker between two claims, the college must seek balance and avoid functioning as agent for the enclave’s values.

Second, the college should manage institutional culture to include celebrations of non-enclave religious traditions. While the influence of the enclave culture will probably lead to campus celebrations of the enclave’s values and history (in artwork, ceremonies, institutional heroes, etc.), a publicly funded college located within a religious enclave must ensure that the enclave’s culture and values are not celebrated to the exclusion of all other religious traditions. Such exclusive celebration of the enclave’s culture and values communicates that persons of other religious backgrounds are not welcome at the institution. In 2003, Dixie State College’s commencement speaker was Reverend Franz Davis, Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Salt Lake City, Utah. Reverend Davis is a prominent religious leader in Utah, and his selection as commencement speaker helps students to value the social
contributions of persons of varied religious affiliations. Dixie State College should seek other ways to celebrate non-Mormon religious traditions.

Third, while the college’s student services unit probably can’t and shouldn’t eschew the Mormon congregational system (the college wards) that bonds Mormon students and provides social activities and advisement that enhances their persistence at the college, it should strenuously resist the temptation to allow this religious system to fulfill basic student services functions of providing activities and social support that bond students to one another and to the institution. If the student services unit takes the position that the Mormon Church provides those services, non-Mormon students will likely go without those services, which will diminish non-Mormons’ persistence at the college and increase the demographic dominance of Mormons at the institution. The Mormon congregational system should not be the sole means of socializing new students into the campus culture. The student services unit should provide carefully tailored programs for all students.

Fourth, the college should encourage non-Mormon faith-based organizations on campus, at the same time that it actively eliminates all formal or implied communication that suggests that the Mormon Institute of Religion has privileged institutional status of any kind, including references to the Institute Building in campus tours, on campus maps, and in other campus publications. While the college should be congenial to its neighbors and collaborate in appropriate ways, the college must be sure that congeniality does not cross a line and become religious sponsorship.

Fifth, the college should quietly cease religious observances in college meetings, ceremonies, and other college events. Likewise, the college should
undertake sensitivity training with campus personnel that provides a clear definition of what behavior is, and is not, appropriate at college sponsored events. In particular, the college should avoid prayer in official campus events and train employee about the subtle impact of repeated in-class use of Mormon terminology and discussion of Mormon customs and culture.

Finally, the college should actively manage its personnel to provide diverse role models on campus. Since its founding in 1911, the college has had no president who was not Mormon. Likewise, demonstrably Mormon persons on campus occupy most prominent positions of leadership. Perhaps these facts can be attributed to the continued paucity of non-Mormon persons in the college’s community. Regardless, the college should actively avoid even the hint that one’s religious standing within the Mormon Church has any influence whatsoever on personnel decisions.

Throughout this dissertation, I have made repeated references to topics that warrant future research. For example, the influence of religious independence on students’ cumulative GPA’s warrants more research, as does the influence of religious identity on students’ cumulative GPA’s. Also, testing whether Mormon students have greater persistence at the college invites much more research. The specific nature of religiously-based social capital and the influences it has on academic performance and student experiences is a good topic for future research. Also, to explore some aspects of research questions more fully, research instruments should be administered in a non-enclave institution that would function as a control setting, supporting the claim that phenomena are attributable to the enclave environment. This too is a good project for future research.
INTRODUCTION: This survey's purpose is to explore the relationship between religious attitudes and practices and academic success. In order to compare these things, the researcher wants to learn about your religious attitudes and practices and your academic success. The researcher asks you to complete this survey, and the researcher asks your permission to access your academic information in this college's database.

Your privacy will be strictly guarded. All information will be used only for purposes of this study. You will remain anonymous, and other than the researcher, no person will learn of your answers. When research results have been calculated, the researcher will destroy all personal information and all survey forms.

First, indicate if you give the researcher permission to use information as described above:

☐ Yes
☐ No

Second, indicate if your age is eighteen (18) or older:

☐ Yes
☐ No

If you answered "No" to either of these questions, you should not answer the survey questions that follow. If you answered "Yes" to both questions, you should complete the survey now.
INSTRUCTIONS: Circle your answer to the following.

1. How often do you attend church or other religious meetings?
   1. More than once a week
   2. Once a week
   3. A few times a month
   4. A few times a year
   5. Once a year or less
   6. Never

2. How often do you spend time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or scripture study?
   1. More than once a day
   2. Daily
   3. Two or more times/week
   4. Once a week
   5. A few times a month
   6. Rarely or never.

INSTRUCTIONS: The following section contains questions about religious affiliation. Please circle your answers.

3. Think of your best friend at this college. Do you and that friend share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same church?
   1. Yes, we share the same religious affiliation
   2. No, we do not share the same religious affiliation
   3. I don't know that friend's religious affiliation

4. Think of your favorite professor at this college. Do you and that professor share the same religious affiliation or belong to the same church?
   1. Yes, we share the same religious affiliation
   2. No, we do not share the same religious affiliation
   3. I don't know the professor's religious affiliation

5. For you, how important is it to be married to a person who shares your religious affiliation or belongs to the same church?
   1. Very important
   2. Somewhat important
   3. Not important
INSTRUCTIONS: The following section contains statements about religious belief or experience. Please circle the extent to which each statement is true or not true for you.

6. In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine (i.e., God).
   1. Definitely true of me
   2. Tends to be true
   3. Unsure
   4. Tends not to be true
   5. Definitely not true

7. My religious beliefs are what really lies behind my whole approach to life.
   1. Definitely true of me
   2. Tends to be true
   3. Unsure
   4. Tends not to be true
   5. Definitely not true

8. I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.
   1. Definitely true of me
   2. Tends to be true
   3. Unsure
   4. Tends not to be true
   5. Definitely not true

9. When I need suggestions on how to deal with problems, I know someone in my religious group that I can turn to.
   1. Definitely true of me
   2. Tends to be true
   3. Unsure
   4. Tends not to be true
   5. Definitely not true

10. When I feel lonely, I rely on people who share my religious beliefs for support.
    1. Definitely true of me
    2. Tends to be true
    3. Unsure
    4. Tends not to be true
    5. Definitely not true

11. I feel that most of the students at this college respect my religious beliefs.
    1. Definitely true of me
    2. Tends to be true
    3. Unsure
    4. Tends not to be true
    5. Definitely not true

12. I enjoy the religious climate at this college.
    1. Definitely true of me
    2. Tends to be true
    3. Unsure
    4. Tends not to be true
    5. Definitely not true
APPENDIX B

INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY
Dixie State College of Utah emerged from the desire for learning of the Mormon pioneers who lived in the remote isolation of Utah's Dixie, a plain on the Virgin River in the heat of the Mohave Desert. The people supported modest schools early, but permanent roots for secondary and post secondary education were planted only after the colony had survived 50 years. The early LDS ward schools gave way to a public school in 1901 when the handsome Woodward School was constructed on the town square. It included two years of high school.

In 1908 church leaders from St. George and Salt Lake City undertook plans for an academy like those in other Mormon communities. The Salt Lake authorities agreed to allocate $20,000 if the members of the St. George LDS Stake would raise $35,000 to build a college structure. The sacrifices of the people to build and equip the building have become legendary. That spirit of community contribution still serves as the inspiration to sustain the present institution. This story testifies that the College came about from the community's desire for learning and that drive is still fundamental.

On September 19, 1911, the College opened while the carpenters were still completing the building. Initially it was called the St. George Stake Academy (and later nicknamed Dixie Academy), but in 1916 the name became Dixie Normal College, in 1923, Dixie Junior College, in 1970 Dixie College, and in 2000, Dixie State College of Utah. Its initial 42 students
partook of a curriculum which included Algebra, Domestic Art, Domestic Science, Economics, English, Geometry, Ancient and Modern History, Physiography, Physiology, Physics, Theology and Music.

In 1933 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints discontinued its support of the College as part of a wider policy to favor state-supported education instead of parochial. The austerity of the 1929 Depression also bore on the decision to close most of the 22 Church academies. A crucial moment had arrived for the College. Dixie College President Joseph K. Nicholes, Mathew Bentley, and many community leaders determined that the College should not die and that the State of Utah should become its sponsor. Arthur F. Miles introduced a bill in the Utah Legislature (House Bill 58) to accomplish that. There was considerable opposition. Utah Governor Henry Blood said he would veto any new appropriation because of the severe economic problems in the State. Mathew Bentley undertook a tedious but effective campaign to convince each senator and representative that Dixie College was essential. His quiet and sincere manner won many friends to the cause. Orval Hafen and Othello Bowman, as well as other community leaders, were influential in the uphill battle. The Governor finally withdrew his objections to State ownership if the bill had no appropriation. So, the State of Utah took ownership in 1933 with the understanding that Dixie Junior College would receive no funding for the duration of the depression austerity. The LDS Church, the community, the faculty and the students rallied to gather goods in kind to keep the College open for two years until a State appropriation was finally achieved.

433
During that period, community support was organized through a group known as the Dixie Education Association. They came to the rescue to finance the transition period. The officers included William O. Bentley, Orval Hafen, Mathew Bentley, Wilford W. McArthur and B. Glen Smith. They undertook many projects to promote education, including the building of a girls dormitory (Dixiana) and acquiring various kinds of equipment and property.

From 1935 to 1963 Dixie College grew on the St. George city square, expanding from the original (administration) building into five other structures clustered together around the St. George LDS Tabernacle and Woodward School. The college curriculum and the high school courses were taught by the same faculty, creating a four-year school with two years of high school and two years of college known as the 6-4-4 plan -- six elementary grades, four years of high school (7th, 8th, 9th, 10th grades) and four years of college (11th, 12th grades, freshman and sophomore college years). At the time, it was thought this plan would revolutionize the education system, but it was abandoned in less than 20 years. This was a period (1935-63) fondly remembered by devoted alumni who talk of the superior teaching by such faculty as Linna Snow Paxman, S. Ralph Huntsman, John T. Woodbury, Jr., A. Karl Larson, H. Lorenzo Reid, Arthur K. Hafen, Earl J. Bleak, Juanita L. P. Brooks, B. Glen Smith, Maurice J. Miles, D. Elden Beck, Beth Gardner Schmutz, Joseph W. McAllister, Anna Page Robinson, Dean Peterson, Rodney Ashby, Mariam Ahlstrom Robinson, Myrtle Henderson, Coach Leland Hafen, Arthur A. Paxman, E. Ellis Everett, Nadine Ashby, Elizabeth
APPENDIX C

EXERPTS FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS
Because respecting privacy is an important element in the ethics of human-subjects research, full transcripts of student interviews are not provided here. Instead, following are representative excerpts that will give readers a general sense of the interviewing techniques and results.

Excerpt from Bill's Interview

Joe: Um, let me tell you about one of my research questions. My research question deals with what scholars call the “lived experience” of being a college student. I mean, what's it like to be a college student and, in particular, I'm interested in the lived experience of students who are Mormon and students who are not Mormon. What it's like to be religiously integrated with the predominant religion around here — or not religiously integrated with that religion? Um, I give you that as a background to this question: What's it like to be a person with your religious views at this college? What difference does it make?

Bill: Um, there . . . I'd say probably with it being part of the majority, or whatever, there's just sometimes little references made to things. Like, I'm going to use my public speaking class as an example. Other students are giving speeches, they just say things as if you know. As if you're part of the culture. As if you know the terminology. As if you know about the experiences they're describing. And so, for me, it's different because I know exactly what they're saying, but I notice that there are a few people in my class...
who kind of look confused. They don't know what's being talked about. They
talk about the MTC, and some people are like, "Whoa, what's that?" It's just
kind of like, if you're a Mormon, you just understand the language and the
experiences that everybody is talking about – not just in classes, but
everywhere. I mean, students talk about Mormon stuff everywhere on campus.
And some people know what's going on, and other people don't have a clue.
I'd say that's probably the biggest thing I've noticed. It's just that people are
saying things that other people don't know what they're talking about.

Joe: The vocabulary that people don't recognize.

Bill: Yeah.

Joe: Can you think of other terms – the MTC and . . .

Bill: Um [pauses].

Joe: I'll start you off: R.M.,

Bill: Yeah, R.M.'s. That . . .

Joe: Stake Center?

Bill: Yeah, stake center. I just would say other words like "bishopric,"
elder's quorum president, primary, or distinct things like that. My ward.

Yeah. I know that people, as far as that, most non-Mormons know about a lot
of the vocabulary . . . if they've been here for at least a semester. I mean, they
pick up a lot of the vocabulary right off the bat.

Joe: Yeah. Now, you mentioned that two or three out of ten of your friends
are not LDS. Do they ever talk to you about what it's like for them to be
students here at this college?
Bill: Um, I've had a few conversations with some of them. Um, they . . .
sometimes it doesn't bother them. Sometimes, though . . . the biggest thing
I've heard from them is when it's always just assumed by other people that
they are Mormons. And it's not necessarily a bad thing, but it's just when
they're in a conversation, it makes it a little awkward when somebody just
comes up and talks to them out of the blue about Mormon stuff as if they'll
understand, or if someone they're sitting next to in class, they start talking
about Mormon stuff and using Mormon vocabulary, it's kind of like, everyone
around here just assumes that everyone else is a member of the church.
Sometimes it's not so bad for the non-members, but I'll bet more often it's
kind of bad.

Joe: So do you think that people in this area – people in this location –
assume that everybody's LDS?

Bill: Yeah. Yeah. Well, not . . . Yeah. Well, I've been seeing it a lot more
lately. Yeah.

Joe: Um, can you think of other ways that you could explain to somebody
who doesn't know what it's like be a student with your religious views at this
college? I mean, how would you characterize your experience? What
difference does it make?

Bill: I don't know.

Joe: You understand the vocabulary.

Bill: U-huh.

Joe: You participate in the culture.
Bill: Um, I guess it's just the other thing... it's just... well, you're just...

I don't know how else to really say this... you're just one of the in-crowd.

What I mean by that is, if there are activities at the Institute, you just know all about that environment. If you're not one of the in-crowd, I mean, all of the activities and vocabulary and conversations probably just don't make any sense, and you feel like you're an outsider. You know, if someone says, "Let's go to an activity at the Institute," well, first of all, you know what the building is. You just know the background and you're able to feel comfortable there and with the people there. You're an insider – you just know what's going on. You know what the activities are and what to expect of the people who are there. If you're an outsider, you're just like, "Man, I don't get it."
Excerpt from Janet's Interview

Joe: What religious affiliation do you think most students here have?

Janet: Probably Mormon. It's pretty, it's pretty much the majority.

Joe: And can you tell that most of your classmates are Mormon?

Janet: Um, sometimes you can just by their conduct and their way of dress.

Some of them will be wearing a Choose the Right or CTR ring that kind of . . .

It's like when you wear, like, a cross for other religions. It kind of communicates what religion you have. I try not to assume. You can insult people if you do. So, but, usually you can tell.

Joe: Have you ever seen people be insulted?

Janet: When I first moved to Utah – I actually moved here from Germany – and I was, when I came here, I was Catholic. And I had people kind of come up to me, "Oh, you know, what ward are you in? And who's your bishop?" and stuff like that. I'd say, "I don't have a bishop, and I'm not Mormon – Okay!" It kind of made me mad. So I was one of the few who got offended. It's just people who live here, it's kind of what they're used to. It's one of the conversation openers: "Are you Mormon?" Just because, usually everybody is Mormon, so people just assume, you know.

Joe: Hum – how old were you when you came here?

Janet: I was twelve.

Joe: You were twelve. And was your family Catholic?
Janet: U-huh.

Joe: And so people around here just assumed you were LDS?

Janet: Yeah.

Joe: And that kind of bothered you?

Janet: Yeah, it did. It bothered me that they would just assume right from the very beginning. I was like, “Well, no – sorry! I’m different.”

Joe: Okay. Well, you offer me a perspective I haven’t got yet – someone who has come to Utah and been a member of a religion other than the dominant religion, and now has become a member of the dominant religion. What was it like to not be LDS here?

Janet: Well, at first I was really afraid that people were judging me, and that they would think less of me because I wasn’t, you know, part of their religion and their belief and everything. But I quickly got over that because most people here are really cool. They just asked questions, like, “Oh – you’re not LDS! Well, what’s it like to be Catholic? How do you do this? How do you do that?” They were still really friendly, even when they found out I wasn’t LDS. So, a lot of it was just, like, self-perceived, like, fears and notions and stuff.

Joe: Are you saying that most of it came from you and not from other people?

Janet: Yeah, I was just worried about it to the point where I made it, like, truth. I was so scared about it. I was like, Oh my gosh! What are they going to think? Are they going to throw rocks at me? What’s going to happen?
And those fears just kind of made it true in my mind.

Joe: Hum. How, how long have you been LDS?

Janet: Well, um, in practice since I was sixteen, but my mother did not want me to convert, so I had to wait till I was eighteen to become part of it – to convert and be baptized.

Joe: So, you practiced LDS things for two years before you . . .

Janet: . . . became a convert.

Joe: . . . became a convert. Um, are members of your family LDS?

Janet: No, I’m the only one.

Joe: Is that a problem?

Janet: At first it was a real big problem – but now, I don’t know – now, we just kind of avoid the topic. We don’t talk about it in the family. It’s kind of quiet. It just kind of causes problems because they’re still really sad about it. It’s kind of the let-down of the family. I went over to the, I guess, the other side. They’re really disappointed in me. I don’t know. The dark side, kind of like Star Wars, according to my family.

Joe: So they’re really disappointed.

Janet: U-huh.

Joe: How do they express their disappointment?

Janet: Oh, well, at first when I told them I wanted to be a Mormon, um, and that I wanted to be baptized into the LDS church, my Mom was like, “I don’t know who you are any more. This isn’t how I raised my daughter.” And my sister was just really quiet about it – kind of sad. My father, who’s in
California, and so he’s not a very big part of my life, was just like, “Okay, whatever makes you happy!” And he was like, “Whatever!” And, but, now, I don’t know, my Mom gets really quiet when I talk about it. Or she rolls her eyes. Or she leaves the room. It’s like – she just doesn’t say anything. She kind of ignores it.

Joe: Does she live in Utah?

Janet: Yeah, I live with my mother.

Joe: And does she, um, get along well with LDS people in the community?

Janet: U-huh. Yeah, she doesn’t have a problem.

Joe: She’s just disappointed that you are LDS.

Janet: Yes, we come from a really long, long line of Catholics. I kind of broke the chain.
Excerpt from Shawna’s Interview

Joe: How would you say not having friends or co-students with the same religious affiliation makes your experience different than people who do have lots of friends of the same religion?

Shawna: Well . . . it affects me in a way that there’s . . . I would say that there’s not a day that goes by that I don’t hear the words . . . key words that are affiliated with the religion. For instance, um, relief society or primary or mission or ward or . . . you know what I mean? So there’s, um, it’s just there’s a little . . . you could say . . . I’m really open so I don’t mind it so much, but it’s a little alienating to some people who are not . . . or it could be . . . It does feel that way; however, I have experienced it my whole life, you know. I lived in Salt Lake until I was twelve, then I moved to Texas, and I’ve lived in several places in different states, so I’ve had different experiences. But coming back to this reminded me very much of my childhood, to where, it does ‘cause it’s kind of birds of a feather flock together, so to speak. And although I am friends and do affiliate with many different people, it does alienate you just in those moments when it’s being talked about. So, I don’t know if I answered that right. I don’t know if I got that . . .

Joe: Yeah, you did. [Pause.] It alienates you?

Shawna: Yeah, in a sense, um, I don’t take it personal. I don’t feel necessarily . . . I don’t think about it beyond that moment, but for that
moment when someone’s sitting around talking about... I don’t even
know how to say it... or even a professor will bring it up: “Well, when I
was on my mission” – or whatever, you know. Or some of the terms are
interchangeable, as if everyone in that room is expected to know exactly
what is being said and talked about without any regards to possibly there
might be people in there that do no have the same experiences. It’s
assumed that, you know...

Joe: Okay, um, good, um... Do you think it’s easier to be... is it
easier to make associations with other students if you share their religion?

Shawna: Um, I can see how that would be, sure. You would already have
something major in common – something really major. And it goes the
other way too – when there’s, um, I consider... See, you label yourself,
like “I’m LDS,” “I’m Christian,” or “I’m Catholic” – whatever. I label
myself a Christian, and when you meet someone and I know that they’re a
Christian – I might have saw them here on campus at a – we have a –
Campus Crusade for Christians -- I don’t really go very often, but I have
shown up there before. But you automatically feel like, oh [sound of
recognition], I have some bond with them, because they’re someone who
understands you and where you’re coming from. So I think that it is easier
to associate with... and the religion here in Utah is of such dominance
that it is a culture in itself – it really is, I believe. Just an opinion. I
believe it’s a culture in itself, the religion. And so when you’re coming
from the outside, you’re not of the culture, so you’re having to adjust, you
know.

Joe: Well, tell me – do you think it’s harder for non-LDS students than for LDS students to be academically successful.

Shawna: [Long pause.] That’s a really fine line to try to decide if it’s affecting academics or not.

Joe: That’s one of the things I’m very interested in.

Shawna: I believe that it can kind of get in the way maybe. See, not everybody has an open mind about the dominant religion, you know, if you’re not of that religion. Do know what I’m saying? And even some people who are of the dominant religion tend to question things, but it’s a little harder – for instance, I have a professor who’s a great professor who brings up, not to talk about religion, but brings it up because it’s so much a part of him that he brings it up in his lectures, or whatever. He might say – he uses personal examples. And if I was to have a problem with the dominant religion, it really might get in the way of me listening to what he has to say, you know, after he talks about religion.

Joe: So, to you it’s obvious that he’s Mormon? How is it obvious?

Shawna: Well, he says, “I went on my LDS mission,” or “In my ward” – he uses those key terms, you know, those words. I mean, I’m not . . . I haven’t blatantly come out and asked him, but . . .

Joe: But it’s obvious that he is [Mormon]?

Shawna: Yes.

Joe: How many . . . is it obvious that . . . well, I don’t know how to
phrase this question. Can you tell when a teacher’s a Mormon?

Shawna: Not all the time, usually it’s . . . . I tell you what – the garments are a giveaway. I know they’re hidden, or whatever, but often you see the lines and you can tell. You really can. Or if someone raises their hand and you see the garments, right away, well, that’s a dead giveaway. [Laughs.]

But that’s . . .

Joe: Let me ask you . . . um . . . how many people do you think know that and can see that as a sign.

Shawna: Um, I would say a very high percentage of people.

Joe: So most people would say, “I can see the garments and I know . . .”

Shawna: Right . . . Well, because I think the garments – I’m not sure – I think the garments are unique to the LDS religion. I’m pretty sure. I would say with almost one hundred percent certainty that they’re unique to the LDS religion. Now, not everyone who’s LDS wears garments, you know. So that’s not a perfect indication. But it’s a, you know, sometimes when you wonder . . . . For instance, my history teacher last year [Harris], I wondered through the whole semester, not that I was thinking it, but he did such a good job of not bringing his, um, he didn’t really talk about his personal experiences with religion into the classroom, and I was wondering throughout the whole year, and I just found out form someone who knows him personally, that “well, he goes to my church.” Not that I asked, but it was just brought up in conversation.

Joe: But you didn’t . . . it was not immediately obvious?
Shawna: No, he's one of the few teachers I've had here who it was not obvious right away.

Joe: How did . . . what was different between him and a teacher that it was obvious?

Shawna: He didn't bring personal religious experiences into the lectures. He didn't say a word. And he was really great at trying to get all aspects of opinions through his lectures. So he was very, very, very careful about not bringing his own personal opinion into things. Or, you know, to get you to think and say, okay, as the instructor. As far as learning – your question about learning and how religion affects that – I think it does create a more open environment to those who are not of the dominant religion to learn more when it's not a very evident deal, you know. Because you do feel – you know, St. George is growing and this college is growing, and everything is getting bigger, and with that comes diversity. And so, then, you know, it's that there will eventually be more of a balance. But for now, the dominant religion is very, very evident at this school.

Joe: Um, I want to go back and look at something you said earlier. You said you wondered about your history professor's religion. How long?

Shawna: The entire semester.

Joe: The entire semester? Um, why . . . why did you wonder about his religion?

Shawna: Ya, like what am I doing even thinking about it?

Joe: Ya, like, did you wonder if he was a democrat or a republican?
Shawna: Um, well, because it was history class that was kind of interesting too, ya.

Joe: Was he a republican or a democrat?

Shawna: I have no idea.

Joe: But . . . did you wonder?

Shawna: A little bit, yes.

Joe: Which did you wonder more about – religion or politics?

Shawna: Religion.

Joe: Ya . . . why?

Shawna: [laughs.] Because . . . you know, as hard as it is to admit . . . you know, it shouldn’t even matter. And it doesn’t matter. I’m not looking at it in a judgmental way. It’s kind of refreshing to have someone up there teaching for whom it’s not obvious, or it’s not brought right into the classroom. So, I was like, wow . . . I was kind of taken back by his teaching. You know, I was like, I don’t even know about this guy, because he’s so open.

You know, I’ve been to a different school in Illinois. It was a community college, a public college, where I never even thought about anybody’s religion . . . ever . . . without even . . .
Joe: All right. Well, let me ask you this. Would you say that anybody down there at the college understands you and your religious views?

Jake: Oh, I have several character references down there. I mean, they'd put on paper that I'm a real character! [Laughter.]

Joe: But do they understand you? Can they understand where you're coming from?

Jake: Of course they don't understand me. The only reason I understand me is because the Lord wants it that way, you know? I like to think that I'll get up there in heaven and I'll be standing back there in line, and the Lord's going to go, "Is that you back there, [Jake]? You come on up here and tell all these people how they should have done it. You know, ten percent tithing! I give sometimes fifty or one hundred percent. I give a thousand and ten percent – of myself, on an individual basis. [Mumbles.] Everything's all cool with the Mormon religion, except they cram the Pearl of Great Price . . . they cram the Book of Mormon. If they say God's will, they're the A-number-one church for me. If they say God's gospel. But they don't say those things.

[Placing his hand on his forehead, and with a forceful, angry tone] He didn't put a rock on his head and . . . no! You'd have to be an idiot to believe that crap. Revelations from a rock on his forehead. Give me a break!

You know, to say that darkness fell when Jesus died. And millions of
people died when Jesus died. Bologna! The veil split. He died for our sins.
He did not take people with him! He took two thieves with him, and that’s it.
He did not kill millions of people, you know.

Where are all these great cities down there in South America?
Where’s them golden plates? I mean, you’re telling me that someone actually had sixty-five pounds of gold, and they put it back? I don’t believe it.

[Laughter.] I don’t think so. [More laughter.] If you had sixty-five pounds of gold, I don’t care which angel’s blowing a horn . . . [laughter] I would not be, like, “Okay, I’ll put it back!” [Laughter.] Oh yeah, where’d I get this Rolex?

Joe: Well, let me cut to what I’m most interested about – whether you think a student who is a Mormon – whether it’s easier to be academically successful for a Mormon student than a student who’s not a Mormon.

Jake: It’s guaranteed that the Mormon will be academically successful, because you have your Mormon president of the College. You have your Mormon dean. You have your Mormon teachers. You have your Mormon students everywhere. You have your Mormon notebook. You have your Mormon pen [laughs]. I mean . . . you have your Mormon shoes and your Mormon Jesus-jammies and all that stuff. You bet you’re going to be more successful there.

But it don’t mean that anybody else with a different view can’t be successful there too. You don’t have to be a Mormon to succeed down there.
Joe: You think other people can?

Jake: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely, absolutely. And, you know, I think that's the only way that we're going to be able to turn the poor, forsaken Mormons around. I mean, you know, it is God-awful. It's flagrant blasphemy to build sixty of your own churches in one town. It's . . . you don't do that when there are people still hungry. You don't do that! You don't have a temple in every hamlet, you know. They just went across the line. They crossed the line when they crossed that Mountain and said, "This is the place." This is the place where we rule -- that's what they meant. Our doctrine rules. And if anything goes wrong . . . we just have another little revelation [laughs].

Cool! You know.

Joe: Okay. All right. Do you think that people of different religions get along okay down at the College? Or do they have problems getting along?

Jake: I think ethnic groups have more issues than religious groups. Like I say, I was in prison for eleven years. I know that a white man who has never been raised around black people has automatic resentments when he's on the same sports team, and the black man's stronger and everything. Well, of course he is! All the sick ones died on the way over here. [Laughs.] They're from good breed. [Laughs.]

Joe: So you think there's racial tension down at the College, but not religious tension?

Jake: I think there's religious tension too, because, you know, now it's a big thing to be called Mahatma Ghandi Ma-Conga-Conga-Conga Hagundo.
Boamba.

Joe: African-sounding names?

Jake: Yeah, your basic African names. Bomba-Conga-Magonga! It’s just...

It’s both ways. This whole world is so hypocritical, you know. They say, “Faith without works is dead.” Well, works without faith is dead too. If you’re just earning your place in heaven, do you know what you’re earning? Not shit, man. You got another thing coming when you’re standing in that line. You won’t be standing in my line! You won’t be standing in my line if you’re only trying to earn your way to heaven. Money’s not where it’s at, man.

I’m a good human being, like I’m ‘posed to be. I’m doing the best I can. Best I can. I got a broken neck... twenty-two years. Jesus wants me to be there when I’m needed.

Joe: Twenty-two years ago you broke your neck?

Jake: No, I didn’t. I nearly died twenty-two years ago. Got shot three times. I broke my neck four years ago. And they of course never fixed me.

Joe: Okay... well....

Jake: This is a little different interview than you expected, eh?

Joe: Well, that’s all right. This is exactly what I was after. I don’t want all the same interviews. And this one is different.

Jake: You know, I can’t sit here and tell you that we’re all sent down here for the same reason... to “follow our prophet” [mocking tone], Joseph Smith, or whoever the one they got now is. And “we must wear Jesus-
Jammies.” You got Jesus-Jammies on under there? [Points at Joe’s shirt.]

Joe: Jesus-Jammies?

Jake: Yeah, those fancy underwear.

Joe: Oh, garments. Well, that’s for me to know and you to wonder [laughs].

Jake: [Laughs.] No Jesus-Jammies, I’m guessing. Right? [Joe doesn’t answer.] That makes me feel better. I really didn’t think that that you were . . .

Joe: I’ve never heard them called that.

Jake: That’s what all us rough folk call them. Jesus-Jammies. And they don’t fly well in the gym, unless you’re in a Mormon school. At Alabama State, you show up in the gym with a pair of Jesus-Jammies on, and . . .

[laughs].

Joe: Have you ever been to another college?

Jake: I’ve been to several schools.

Joe: Outside of Utah?

Jake: Most of them were schools of hard knocks. I just . . . let me pull this out [retrieves a diploma case from a pile of documents]. I was pretty proud of that. [Shows a diploma for adult high school graduation, with a photograph of himself with long hair and wearing a pair of handcuffs.] I graduated in 2000 when I was in prison. Notice the jewelry [pointing at the handcuffs]. Notice the hair.

I had to change! I had to adapt . . . not only adapt, but I had to
overcome. I went to the State Hospital in 1989. I was able to not only get through that, but live through it, you know. Learn to live through it. Not to not live, you know.

Excerpt from Tammy’s Interview

Joe: Let’s see, um . . . (turns pages). These interviews have had a free format. Let’s see, what’s your opinion of the way students at Dixie State College are religious? Are they too religious? Not religious enough? Just right?

Tammy: Well, I think the majority of students here are religious, but that’s mainly because this is a community college, and a lot of the students that go to Dixie are from St. George, and St. George is predominantly LDS. Um, I think people who come here from out of state think that we might be too religious, but – I’m from St. George, and I don’t think that we’re too . . . it’s just what I grew up around, and I like it. It’s a good environment.

Joe: So you grew up in St. George?

Tammy: U-huh, I’ve lived her my whole life. I still live at home.

Joe: And I take it from your comments that you’re LDS?

Tammy: Yes.

Joe: Okay, I hadn’t remembered that, so okay . . . all right, um . . . have you ever spoken to a student who thought that the students here were too religious or not religious enough?

Tammy: Um, not that I can recall right off hand, but I think that a lot of . . .
like, Dixie has had a past reputation of being a party school, and some students will come down here and find out that it’s not really true. You know you can go to a lot of parties where there isn’t any . . . well, if you’re LDS you don’t drink alcohol, and stuff, and you can go to a lot of parties here where there’s no alcohol. So I think their perspective has changed a little bit when they get here.

Joe: So there isn’t a lot of alcohol at Dixie State?

Tammy: Well, just like it’s a party school. We’re trying to get away from that. Like, I’m on student government, and it’s like, I mean, one thing that our advisor hates – when people say, “Oh, you’re from Dixie? Well that’s a party school!” And really, you’re like, “Well, have you ever been there?” and they’re like, “Not really.”

Joe: What does being a party school have to do with religion? Or another way of saying it is, would you expect, um, a non-religious environment to have more partying?

Tammy: Um, I guess, like, we’re, like, at first glance you would think so. Because St. George is kind of sheltered, so you don’t see that as much. So maybe I think it’s kind of judgmental, and so when, if you’re not religious, then you party. That’s what people think. But I guess when you go out of St. George, you find out that it’s not always like that, you know, partying because people are not religious.

Joe: Yeah, um, okay.

Tammy: Did I answer your question? (Laughs)
Joe: Yeah, I'm trying to find a direction in these comments.

Tammy: No, you're fine. If I'm not clear, then just tell me. (Laughs)

Joe: Um, think in your mind about your best friends at this college. I mean, actually get in your head the names of five or seven good friends here at Dixie State College. Are you able to do that quickly?

Tammy: Yeah.

Joe: Do you have them in mind?

Tammy: U-huh.

Joe: Um, do you know the religious affiliation of those people? Do you know what religion they belong to?

Tammy: Yes. They're all LDS.

Joe: Every single one?

Tammy: Yeah. They might all practice it the same way. You know, some are more active than others.

Joe: Yeah. Do you know any students here who are not LDS?

Tammy: Yes.

Joe: A lot of them?

Tammy: Um, not a lot.

Joe: What proportion of this student body would you say is LDS?

Maybe give a percentage. Just your guess.

Tammy: I don't know. It's probably pretty high. Seriously, I think like ninety percent. It's really . . . But see I always hang out with . . . not that I'm like, "Oh, they're not LDS so I'm not going to hang out with them,"
it's not like that. But I just do hang out with LDS people a lot, just because there’s so many of them. And so, like, I don’t really know how many are not LDS.

Joe: But your guess is ninety percent.

Tammy: Yes, probably.

Joe: So, walking out here on the campus, nine out of ten people that I see here are LDS?

Tammy: Okay, maybe not that many. Maybe eight.

Joe: Eight out of ten?

Tammy: Or have grown up LDS, but may not be practicing now, but they have had that religious background.

Joe: I see. Um, okay . . . um,

Tammy: Well, I don’t know . . . (says something under her breath, and laughs). I just almost grouped people together! That’s bad.

Joe: No, that’s not bad.

Tammy: I almost just said, like, if you talk to the athletes . . . well, a lot of the athletes aren’t from here, like football players and stuff . . . and I don’t mean to say that they’re not LDS, but a lot of them aren’t from here, you know, and so . . .

Joe: Well, this is just your guess, right?

Tammy: Yeah, I don’t know at all!

Joe: That’s okay, but what I’m after is your guess. Um, if you were to guess about the football team, what percentage of that group of students is
LDS?

Tammy: Um, probably, maybe half.

Joe: Half? Hum, now if you were to guess about members of the student government . . . maybe you know them well enough to know. Do you?

Tammy: Like, just the exec council, or do you want committee members too?

Joe: Are you on the exec council?

Tammy: Yes.

Joe: How many students are on the exec council.

Tammy: There’s only twelve of us.

Joe: There are twelve. And do you know their religious affiliation?

Tammy: U-huh. I think, let’s see, let me think of all of them. [Pause] There’s only . . . I know all of us have grown up LDS, but I think that two don’t go to church. Out of twelve of us.

Joe: So, of the twelve, all of them are LDS, and two do not go to church.

Tammy: I think they don’t go to church. They’re not very active.

Joe: Okay.

Tammy: But I know that ten of them go to church regularly.

Joe: See, this is interesting to me. The football team you guessed to be half and half, and the exec council, the group of twelve members of the student government – this is like the cabinet of the student government, right? They’re all LDS, right?
Tammy: Yeah, u-huh, but a majority of them, well, a lot of them are from St. George, so I think that makes a little bit of a difference.

Joe: It's where you're from?

Tammy: Yeah.
Excerpt from Pam’s Interview

Joe: Some people are very religious and other people aren’t very religious. On a scale of one to ten, with one being not very religious and ten being very religious, rate yourself.

Pam: I’d say a ten. I go to church every Sunday, and I do all the things that the Church asks you to, and things like that. So I’d consider myself a ten.

Joe: You consider yourself highly religious. Um, some people have highly religious upbringings – they’re raised in a very religious home. Other people aren’t. Rate your home. One is not very religious and ten is very religious.

Pam: Ten [laughs].

Joe: Ten – a very religious home?

Pam: Pretty much, yeah.

Joe: Do you have a lot of siblings?

Pam: I have five . . . I mean four. There are five of us, but the closest to me in age, we’re eight years apart. So I was kind of like an only child.

Joe: You’re the last of the eight?

Pam: U-huh.

Joe: Um, here at this college, are your best friends members of your religion?

Pam: Um, most of my friends are, yes. And I have . . . my best friend probably, she was baptized, but she hasn’t been active for most of her life. She doesn’t really consider herself Mormon, I don’t think.
Joe: But of the group of close friends you have . . . you have a best friend who is, shall we say, a lapsed LDS person?

Pam: Yeah [laughs].

Joe: Um, and do you have a group of other close friends at the college?

Pam: Yeah, well most of my friends are LDS. There might be one or two that aren’t, but for the most part, they are.

Joe: Do you know the ones who aren’t? Can you say, this one and that one aren’t LDS?

Pam: U-huh.

Joe: I don’t want you to tell me who they are, but you know who is and who is not a member of the LDS church?

Pam: Mostly. My best friend, she . . . nobody can tell that she’s not LDS, because she’s a good girl and she keeps high standards and everything, but . . .

Joe: Um, no one can tell?

Pam: No. [Laughs.]

Joe: Um, this question may require you to think for a second or two. Um, how does having friends of your same religion at this college impact your experience at the college?

Pam: Um, well obviously it impacts it in a good way. I guess . . . what were you going to say?


Pam: Um, just because when you have friends of the same religion – well, I guess there’s pro’s and con’s – but I guess it makes it easier to live by your
standards. And . . . because everyone does it, so you do it too. That kind of thing. But then again, having friends of the same religion makes it harder too, because you should figure out things for yourself and decide if that’s what you believe in. And having a bunch of friends who are the same religion makes it hard to make up your own mind. That kind of thing. And so, some people say that they like to go other places where no one’s their religion, because they can grow their testimony. But I like it—I like having LDS friends.

Joe: It’s easier to maintain your standards?

Pam: Yes.

Joe: Mention some of those standards. Like what’s easier?

Pam: Keeping the Word of Wisdom—which is basically you don’t drink or some or do drugs or that kind of thing. I think it makes it easier, when most of your friends have the same religion, especially in a college setting. In college, most people go a little bit crazy and live the college life, but here, none of my friends really do that, so it’s not a temptation to go crazy and live the college life. Or being morally clean. None of my friends are immoral, so there’s not really a temptation to be promiscuous, or that kind of thing.

Joe: So it’s easier to live your standards when your friends are doing the same things?

Pam: Yeah.

Joe: Do you know any people who . . . um, you said that people get crazy in college . . . do you know any people who do get crazy at this college?

Pam: Not personally! [Laughs.]
Joe: Are there people at this college who do get crazy?

Pam: Yeah. I’ve heard lots of stories. And I’ve heard that, you know, everyone from up north says, “Dixie’s a party school. Dixie’s a place where, you know . . .” So, I guess so.

Joe: Do you think having a lot of people or students of one religion makes the school, um . . . makes students less likely to get crazy and live the wild college life?

Pam: No, not necessarily, because even if everyone is LDS, that doesn’t mean that they live the standards. There’s plenty of LDS people here that get drunk and do drugs and things like that. So it’s just a personal . . . Any college that has a dominant religion, whether it’s LDS or not, will have people that get crazy in college.

Joe: Um, you said something interesting – that some people prefer to go where there aren’t people who are members of their religion. They try to separate themselves from their religion. Some LDS people do that? Is that what you were talking about?

Pam: Um, like my friend Debbie. She went to Virginia for a year to be a nanny. She came back saying, “Everyone needs to get out of Utah for a while – just get out where LDS is not the main religion, and figure out for yourself exactly what you believe in. You can share it with others then.

Joe: So, it sounds like your friend doesn’t think its easy to figure out your religious values for yourself while you’re among a lot of people who have the same religion you do.
Pam: Maybe it's true.

Joe: What do you think?

Pam: What do you mean?

Joe: Um, your friend suggests that if you leave a place where most of the people have the same religion, that you can figure things out for yourself without the influence of a lot of people of that same religion. Do you agree?

Pam: Not really. I think that it's just as easy to figure out your religious values for yourself, even if you live with a lot of other LDS people, because . . . either way, whether you go a way, or whether you stay here, it's personal anyway. I don't know. I've never been outside of Utah where I've had to decide for myself, kind of thing, so I don't know if it would be easier. It would be something I could try, maybe, just to see how it affects me. I'm not sure.

Joe: Um, one of the questions I'm exploring is whether having a lot of people of the same religion makes it so that students are able to stay committed to that religion.

Pam: Yeah, I think so. It helps them stay committed. Because, just what I was talking about earlier – if everyone's following that religion, then chances are that you'll follow the same kind of thing. And so, yeah, I definitely think that having a lot of people who come to school with the same religion helps the students to stay committed to that religion.

Joe: Well, can you think of things that have happened at this school that supported your religious views or helped you strengthen them?
Pam: Do you mean, things that are not . . . things that are just school-related?

Joe: Yeah, or anything that happened here that has strengthened your religious views.

Pam: Sure, just the fact that the dominant religion, there are a lot of opportunities to have wholesome activities rather than other activities that would tear down your religious views. Um, the Institute program is really big, and they have tons of activities that are really fun. And those are always fun to go to. In particular – what’s the word I’m looking for? It has a different . . . it gives another alternative to stuff that tears down your religion. It’s, you know, it’s . . .

Joe: Um, do you take Institute classes?

Pam: Yeah.

Joe: Do you take them every semester?

Pam: Yeah.

Joe: What do you have right now?

Pam: Right now I’m taking “Life and Teachings of Jesus, the Four Gospels,” and “Dating and Courtship.”

Joe: So you’re taking two Institute classes?

Pam: Yeah.
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469

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470


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487


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