ADOLESCENT RELIGIOUS DISPOSITION IN CANADA:

AN EXPLORATORY SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Undergraduate Degree (B.Education, Lethbridge, 1984)

A Thesis
Submitted to the Council of Graduate Studies
of the University of Lethbridge
in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA
Date (May, 1995)

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Abstract

Taking as a given the general decline of organized religion in Canada, this thesis attempts to document the present lack of commitment towards organized religion among adolescents. Four questions are explored: (1) how committed are Canada's adolescents towards organized religion relative to other social options? (2) to what degree has religious commitment among Canadian adolescents shifted over time? (3) in what ways does adolescent religious commitment vary according to religious group? and (4) do adolescent religiosity patterns follows those of adults?

The major findings of this study, based on national *Project Teen Canada* and *Project Canada* data, is that organized religion is seldom experienced or valued by the vast majority of Canadian youth. Furthermore, adolescent religious commitment decreased from 1984 to 1992. Conservative Protestants reported higher religious commitment than did other youth and adolescent religiosity generally reflected adult levels. Lastly, tentative evidence suggests that Canada may experience future social consequences if adolescent religious disinterest continues.

Despite being tentative and exploratory in nature, it is believed that the thesis gives social scientists their first national, in depth, sociological analysis of Canadian youth and organized religion. As such the findings provide a solid launching pad for further research. The thesis concludes with a plea for innovative study of Canadian adolescent religiosity and offers a list of potential projects.

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Chapter One

"The Problem of Dwindling Adolescent Commitment
to Organized Religion in Canada."

The sharp decline of organized religion in Canada during this last half century is well documented (Bibby, 1987; 1993[a]; Rawlyk, 1990; Baril and Mori,1991; Hewitt, 1993; Stackhouse, 1994). Whether one examines attendance, membership, identification or self reported description of one's commitment, numbers are down. The pool of active participants is shrinking, and when figures for various religious groups are compared over time to the country's total population, religious groups are losing even more ground proportionately than raw numbers suggest.

However, demographics are particularly discouraging for religious practitioners. Churches are top-heavy with older adherents. Commitment levels for the largest organized religious groups in this country take the shape of an "inverted pyramid"[1], greatest among the elderly and smallest among the youth. For example, a recent adult study of a very prominent Protestant denomination found 65% of their weekly attenders were over age 55 and that numbers for core participants could drop from 360,000 to 200,000 by 2015 if present trends continued (Duncan 1994:22). Similar dire predictions face other religious groups (Bibby 1993:106). While many of Canada's most faithful church goers are

aging and dying off, groups are presently in need of a younger generation to carry on their institutions. Apparently, many do not have them.

A strategic way to understand and address the human resource problem facing Canadian churches is to document and attempt to explain the present adolescent disinterest towards organized religion. This line of argument was recently used by American demographer Peter Halverson to address similar realities in his country:

"All of this attention being given Baby Boomers is irrelevant to the question of what to do about the current attendance drop-off. The Boomers are a historical artifact - a horse already out of the barn. The future of the churches depends on the behaviour and choices of Generation X .... If we want to be helpful to the churches we should be focussed on the next - not the previous - generation no matter how unique and fascinating we might find Baby Boomers to be. We need to accept that our time is passing and that the important fertile ground for the future is the generation only now coming of age (Bibby, 1995:73)."

Unless commitment can somehow be generated among the younger generation, it appears the fortunes of organized religion in Canada will continue to dwindle. Religion's present "demographic weakness"[2] is of considerable interest to the social scientist. In sociological terms, cultural institutions endure as one generation pass on symbolic meaning to another. This includes acquiring and internalizing the social norms necessary to continue social practices. For Canadian religious groups, this means their future largely depends on youth who are positively inclined towards religious perspectives and expressions.

This thesis, therefore, proposes to explore the following

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relevant questions: (1) how committed are Canadian adolescents towards organized religion relative to other social options? (2) how has adolescent religious disposition shifted from 1984 to 1992? (3) in what ways do adolescents from a variety of religious groups differ in terms of religious disposition, belief and commitment? and (4) how do adolescent religiosity levels compare to adult levels? In general, a Canadian picture of low and dwindling adolescent religiosity among most religious groups will emerge.

The information that the project yields has the promise of being of considerable immediate interest to religious practitioners, along with social scientists engaged in the study of religion. In addition, however, this thesis has sociological significance as an examination of the disenchantment that contemporary Canadian youth have with what has been one of the country's historically most central institutions. As such, it has the potential to provide insight into the relationship between young people and established Canadian institutions more generally.

Chapter two examines a wide range of theoretical considerations pertinent to the complex study of adolescent religiosity. First, the issue of wide-spread secularization in post-industrial societies is raised. A diversity of theoretical perspectives is shared concerning the future of religion in a secularized world. In addition, three dominant explanations for present adolescent religious disinterest are presented. Next, cultural, social structural and institutional forces impacting Canadian churches and the teenagers which have been identified by

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social scientists are examined. Lastly, life cycle theories that focus on how religion is acquired and modified during adolescence are presented. As will undoubtably become apparent to the reader, chapter two presents a vast array of ideas concerning the sources of religiosity among the general population, and among youth specifically. No thorough synthesis of this material is attempted; such a study would constitute an entire thesis in itself. However, a number of issues that are raised — such as secularization, innovation, institutional strength, socialization, and plausability structure theory — will be addressed throughout the rest of the thesis.

Chapter three is concerned with methodological issues related to data sources as well as the operationalization of concepts utilized throughout the thesis. In addition, the statistical measures of association used in variable correlations are introduced.

Chapter four consists of a presentation of findings on adolescent disposition to organized religion and other social options. Adolescent religiosity patterns are then contrasted across time, across religious groups and intergenerationally. Although beyond the scope of the thesis, a comparison of religious and non-religious adolescents is made. This contrast tentatively explores the notion of potential social consequences of Canada's religious decline.

Chapter five contains a brief summary of patterns found in the thesis and outlines the scope of the project. The thesis ends with

some possible lines of inquiry that will further our understanding of adolescent religious commitment in this country. Furthermore, the sociological significance of this understudied phenomenon is underscored.

Chapter Two

"Theoretical Considerations"

Three issues are of concern in this chapter. First, some theoretical approaches to general decline of religion in advanced industrial societies will be highlighted. These explanations range from positivist and conflict theories of the disappearing sacred to functionalist market approaches emphasizing continuous religious economies. Next, the current research on shifting structural, cultural and institutional forces that impact Canadian adolescents and religion is reviewed. Finally, life-cycle explanations regarding how teens acquire and modify their personal religious disposition are presented. Here the focus is on socio-psychological factors that shape religious expression during adolescence.

2.1 Competing Explanations Regarding Religious Decline in Advanced Industrial Societies

Social analysts of the western industrial world tend to agree that religious thinking, practices, symbols and organizations have lost social significance in recent times (Wilson 1966; Berger 1967; Luckmann 1967; Stark and Glock 1968; Bibby 1993[d]; O'Toole 1994). Religious institutions have been increasingly marginalized from

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public life. This process is called secularization which Peter
Berger assesses as follows: "Through effort, modern man has
unlearned the once accepted notion of a supernatural reality which
transcended and provided a background for everyday life. As an
effort this unlearning has indeed succeeded" (Berger 1969).

While there is almost unanimous agreement regarding the
presence of secularization there is wide debate concerning what
will follow present patterns of decline. Social theorists differ
in their assessments of Canada's present lack of religiosity. The
majority of their contributions however fall into three dominant
categories: rising secularization, oscillating secularization, and
secularization and innovation.[3]

a. Rising Secularization According to this argument advanced
societies with greater scientific understanding and economic
prosperity lose their need for the supernatural.   Religion is
eventually relegated to history books. Comte (1966), the father of
sociology, envisioned religion as part of a primitive theological
phase. Over time this phase was to be displaced by a metaphysical
one and finally an era of positivism and science. Sigmund Freud
(1957) saw reason, a more adequate way of dealing with reality,
replacing what he considered illusionary supernatural explanations.
To Karl Marx (1970), religion was a tranquilizing panacea that
would pass from usefulness with coming social and economic utopia.
Max Weber (1963), meanwhile, predicted that capitalistic societies
would become increasingly efficient, rational and bureaucratic.

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This ordering, metaphorically described as an "iron cage", would affect every aspect of human life including religion which would become emptied of its magic. Declining Canadian teen religiosity to these proponents would be viewed as an anticipated and inevitable component of a global pattern.

b. Oscillating Secularization Theorists such as Pitirim Sorokin (1937-41), believed societies swung between epochs that were sensate and materialistic and those which were "ideational" (Ritzer 1992:61). The focus during the latter included transcendant realities and spiritual issues which gave meaning to everyday existence. For Sorokin an internal logic pushed extremely sensual societies toward religion and overly religious ones towards this-worldly orientations (Ritzer 1992:61). According to the oscillation argument, Canada's present teen decline is part of a cultural downswing. In time, the internal logic of a highly individualistic and material culture will again drive Canadian society back to the gods. Modern day futurists John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene support Sorokin's thesis. Their best seller, *Megatrends 2000*, predicts a massive societal shift towards spirituality[4] as the world counts down to the twenty first millennium (Naisbitt and Aburdene 1990).

c. Secularization and Innovation The classical sociologist Emile Durkheim (1976) believed religion would always plays a speculative function in society. Despite the advance of science,

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religion **would never be** extinguished since scientific explanations **are "fragmentary** and incomplete....and [questions about] life **cannot wait"** (Bibby 1994[d]:71). Since no other social institution is capable of adequately tackling the ultimate meaning issues of human existence religion always has a market niche. Present theorists Stark and Bainbridge update Durkheimian theory and provide compelling arguments for a "religious economy". In their book, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation* (1985), Stark and Bainbridge describe religion as continually useful yet ever shifting. Drawing largely on American data they state that it is "companies" delivering religion rather than entire cultures which become secular. The latent need for nonempirical (spiritual) answers always remains high, waiting to be stimulated by effective religious groups who tap the market through creative, culturally sensitive religion. According to innovation theorists, teens will always search for answers to ultimate realities. Adolescent religious expression simply happens elsewhere when traditional groups do not come through.

2.2 Explanatory Social Factors For Religious Decline in the Canadian Setting

Canadian religious groups operate in a specific social environment which both enable and constrain them (Giddens 1976). Religious constraints have been a focus of North American analysts since the 1960's when Protestant religious groups began losing numbers. Recently some excellent reviews of these factors have

been compiled from both a Canadian (Bibby 1987; Bibby 1993[a]; Hewitt 1993) and an American perspective (Wuthnow 1988; Robbins and Anthony 1991; Finke and Stark 1992; Roof and McKinney 1992; Roof 1993; Roozen and Hadaway 1993; Hoge, Johnson and Luidens 1994).

Perhaps the most helpful compilation conceptually appears in the recent 1994 U.S. study of baby boomer Presbyterians conducted by sociologists Hoge, Johnson and Luidens[5]. Hoge and associates present a model containing three explanatory categories: (1) Cultural explanations referring to attitudinal trends in society and including "changes in meanings, values, beliefs, and sentiments.... shifts in life priorities, views about one's own faith and other religions, and views on morality" (Hoge et al. 1994:11). (2) Social structural factors referring to behavioral trends in the larger population. These rely "on patterns of social interaction and institutional life,... changing trends in gender roles, marriage rates, birth rates, and rates of participation in various forms of community life" (Hoge et al. 1994:11). (3) Institutional explanations focus on resource patterns within religious institutions themselves, particularly trends concerning "denominational programs, decisions and policies....[as well as] changes in congregational characteristics such as satisfaction with leadership" (Hoge et al. 1994:10).

Many cultural, social structural or institutional factors identified by Hoge and associates are applicable to Canada's religious decline. Additional factors surfaced from my own review. Table 2.1 lists explanatory factors crediting Hoge, Johnson and

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Luidens for their contributions.

Table 2.1 Explanatory Social Factors For Canadian Religious Organizational Decline

Cultural Factors
    C-1. Rise in Individualism*
    C-2. Rise in Pluralism*
    C-3. Rise in Relativism
    C-4. Rise in Liberalism
    C-5. Rise in Privatism*
    C-6. Rise in Anti-Institutionalism*
    C-7. Rise in Youth Alienation

Social Structural Factors
    S-1. Increase in Liberal Education*
    S-2. Increased Marginalization of Religious Groups
    S-3. Decline of Community*
    S-4. Changes in Family Life and Role of Women*

Institutional Factors
    I-1. Increased Bureaucratization
    I-2. Failure to be Relevant*
    I-3. Too much Social Activism*
    I-4. Failure of Leadership and Programs*
    I-5. Loss of Internal Strength*

*Identified in Hoge Johnson and Luidens, *Vanishing Boundaries* (1994:12-18)

Cultural Explanatory Factors. Changes in social norms impact social life. Shifts in attitudes, values and meaning systems have influenced both Canadian religious groups and the adolescents they wish to attract. These shifts include the following:

C-1. Rise in Individualism In a former era, church attendance was socially respected behaviour and perceived as good citizenship. Sunday mornings were reserved exclusively for religious groups. However, according to Robert Bellah (1985), a "self centred individualism" has undermined and weakened America's ties to

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community. Now church going and church authority are optional. These traditional community based involvements are no longer peceived as necessary for one to be a good [religionist]. Rather contemporary individualism maintains that everyone has the right to maximum personal religious freedom (Hoge et al. 1994:13). According to individualism, each person decides which religious tenants are convenient and worthy of endorsement. Religion is treated as a consumer good. "Christians shop for a church... and switch as casually as they change brands of dishwasher detergent" (Bellah et al. 1991:183). Reginald W. Bibby (1987) uses the metaphor "religion a la carte" to describe this highly selective approach to religion. Canadians "pick and choose beliefs, practices, programs, and professional services from increasingly diversified religious smorgasbords." (Bibby 1990:84). Individualism has made Canadians, including adolescents, highly critical of the demands traditionally expected by religious groups. Unless a cost/benefit analysis weighs in favour of participation, religious groups are for the most part avoided. The tendency is "to evaluate the church in rational utilitarian terms rather than simply accepting it as a good thing that is to be supported" (Hadaway and Roof 1993;35).

C-2. <u>Rise in Pluralism</u>   Hoge and associates state the following concerning pluralism:

"[The] culture has become increasingly pluralistic during the twentieth century. Increased travel and the availability of mass media are making [people] more aware of other cultures today than were their counterparts a half century ago. This awareness has

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inevitably had an impact on the religious community. For example, it has introduced...alternative religious experiences and interpretations. Some analysts have argued that encounters with pluralism weaken the Christian's belief in the teachings of his or her own church.... [and] this factor has played a role in moulding their adult religious commitments" (Hoge et al. 1994:13).

In addition, Canadians have enshrined pluralism in legislations such as the 1971 Multicultural Policy and 1975 Immigration Act. State legitimization of the concept has encouraged cultural diversity and religious tolerance. It can be argued that the new ethic of tolerance for the belief systems of minority groups has undermined the confidence of predominant Christian groups in their own worldview (Berger 1969; Roberts 1995:188; Roof 1978). An accomodationist attitude once inside the minds of religious people, their churches, and their young people, can lead to a debilitating "pluralism without a centre" (Bellah et al. 1991:205) where originally unifying and motivating tenants of faith are lost.

C-3. Rise in Relativism Relativism has been partnered with individualism and pluralism and suggests that there are no absolute standards (like God) by which to evaluate human attitudes and behaviours. Its logic is as follows. Just as all ethnic people groups are to be valued, so also their beliefs are to be considered equally valid and their behaviours equally good (Green 1990). This thinking is also found in positivist treatments of religion where the "sacred" is viewed entirely as a human social construct. For example, the introductory text First Sociology states:

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"If Muhammad was just a man, then so was Jesus. If the book of Mormon was conjured up by a human mind, then so were the books of the Bible.... If the Arabs are not God's people, then neither are the Jews. In sum, there are no sacred texts, no moral doctrines, no sacraments, no liturgies, no rituals except those fabricated by people as ordinary as you and I.... There is no need to claim that any particular kind of acting out, whether economic or religious, is somehow eternally true and infinitely right. I would insult my readers if I allowed them to pretend that we can burst the bubble of other's absolute's without making our own go poof." (Westhues 1982: 286).

Relativism, as stated above, declares "it to be true that there is no such thing as truth; that it is absolutely true that only the relatively true exist" (Smith 1989:217). A more defensible approach concerning religion is for science to recognize that it is "completely helpless in the face of claims made on behalf of a being, world or force beyond the natural world" (Dodd 1961). Meanwhile, relativism "assumes that matters of morality and religion... cannot be judged as true or false, valid or invalid but will vary with persons, cultures and societies" (Bellah et al. 1991:162). As a result, "ethical reflection about the good life and good society" which traditionally drew on, among other things, religious heritages also diminished (Bellah 1991:163). Meanwhile, belief in the relativism of beliefs and behaviour lessens personal accountability to traditional belief systems and social norms, further fuelling individualism (Bibby 1990).

C-4. <u>Rise in Privatism</u> Closely linked to individualism, pluralism and relativism are issues having to do with privatism. Hoge and Associates state the following:

"[Privatism is] predicated on the assumption that individuals want

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privacy and can attain it best by living alongside others like themselves who are seeking the same privacy. Though people live in proximity with each other, they fail to develop interdependence or community. Rather, personal fulfilment and success are the hallmarks of privatism (Bellah et al. 1985;71-75,335). In terms of religious commitments, the rising privatism has encouraged growth of a utilitarian perspective on faith and the church. In a privatise setting *faith is good for you* because it helps you achieve personal life goals.... Personal advancement and success have displaced the collective purposes that have traditionally undergirded the organized church" (Hoge et al. 1994:13-14).

A private faith however runs contrary to biblical religion which in a variety of forms constitutes the vast majority of the Canadian religious tradition. As Bellah and associates state: "Both Christians and Jews recognize a God who created heaven and earth, all that is, seen and unseen, whose dominion clearly transcends not only private life but the nations themselves. There is nothing in the private or public realm that cannot concern such a religious tradition" (Bellah et al. 1991:179). Therefore the religionist who takes faith seriously lives in tension with a culture which states "You can believe whatever you want, just don't tell me its true." In such an environment many lack the stamina needed to let their faith guide all of life.

C-5. <u>Rise in Liberalism</u> Institutional distrust has weakened social norms. Sociologist Emile Durkheim has coined the phrase "anomie" to describe this "breakdown of norms governing social interaction" (Abercrombie et al. 1988:11). This breakdown has led to a wide range of lifestyle options. Many of these options are at odds with church teachings. Some social scientists suggest that youth are opting to avoid the church because of perceived, and oft

times real, lifestyle incompatibly with religious groups in which they were raised. "New values have emerged and diffused at various levels of saturation,. throughout society....[which] militate against church involvement on the part of young adults" (Hadaway and Roof 1993;41). Recent research on family formation diversity such as divorce, cohabitation, and the dissolution of cohabitational relationships adds further support to the notion that present attitudes and behaviours affect religious participation (Stolzenberg, Blair-Loy and Waite 1995).

C-6. <u>Rise in Anti-institutionalism</u> Hoge and associates link the 1960's protest youth culture with a generational alienation that had long lasting implications for social institutions. They write:

"[Social scientists] have pointed to the significant cultural shifts the Baby Boomers experienced during the 1960s as an explanation for their weakened religious involvements. A keynote in the counterculture movement was distrust – distrust of "anyone over 30" as well as of institutions more generally. Public opinion polls from the 1960s through the 1980s show a loss of public confidence in the leadership of most major institutions – including the church. As a result of this drop in confidence in the church, it has been argued, large numbers of believers left it" (Hoge et al. 1994:14).

It can be argued that disaffiliation from religious movements was perceived as one of the powerful cultural symbols of this anti-institutional attitude. Roof argues that once disconnected these disaffiliates have for the most part not returned and remain less likely to religiously socialize their children (Roof 1993:170-171).

C-7. <u>Rise in Youth Alienation</u> Alienation denotes "the

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estrangement of individuals from themselves and others" (Abercrombie et al. 1988:8). Prevalent perceptions of today's young adults as bored (Tinning and Fitzclarence, 1992), ignored, misunderstood and disheartened (Tapia 1994:19; Barna 1994), economically manipulated (Cote and Allahar 1994), and possessors of a dead future (Copeland 1992; Redhead 1994) are perhaps linked to this concept. Correlated to anomie is a breakdown in institutions (including religious ones) traditionally responsible for creating and enforcing social norms. The sense of societal disconnectedness has the potential to drive those affected by it in a variety of directions, some towards and some away from religious institutions.

b. <u>Social Structural Explanatory Factors</u> Changes in the structure of society during the last half century have also accounted for religious decline. These changes include:

S-1. <u>Increase in Liberal Education</u> According to some social analysts cultural shifts, including church decline, have been linked to an increase in liberal education. It is believed that as the level of education increases, intensity of religious commitment decreases and religious relativism, scepticism, and liberalism grow. For example, Robert Wuthnow (1988) has pointed to the "burgeoning ranks of colleges and universities in the years since World War II to account for the declining levels of religious commitment among youth.... [stating that] between 1958 and 1982, the most serious decline in regular church attendance came about

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among young people with at least some college education" (Hoge et al. 1994:12). Studies are inconclusive concerning a higher education/religiosity link. Although Caplovitz and Sherrow in the 1970's labelled the college campus "a breeding ground for apostasy" (Caplovitz and Sherrow 1977:109), Canadian scholars tend to view this as an overstatement (Hunsberger 1980:159; Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993). Still, however, there are higher levels of liberal education among the parents of today's teenagers and this may be having a negative impact on their church attendance.

S-2. Increased Marginalization of Religious Groups The modern era has seen a rise in the scope and influence exerted by the state. Zylberberg and Cote argue that the "decline in the churches has to do with the growth of the state and its interference in what was at one time the domain of the churches ....[taking] over completely their erstwhile functions in such areas as education, social welfare, and the like" (Beyer 1994:22). It can be argued that present Canadian governments are powerful possessors, allocators and legitimizers of cultural resources. Historically the churches enthusiastically assisted the state to amalgamate its power in these areas. In recent times however the state has abandoned its relationship with churches, thus marginalizing religious groups and contributing to their institutional weakness (Zylberberg and Cote 1992).

S-3. Decline of Community In *Vanishing Boundaries*, Hoge,

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Johnson and Luidens speak of today's "new tolerance[6]" across

religious social groups. There has been a

"significant shift away from the intolerance and rigidity that
reinforced denominational and congregational loyalties during [an]
earlier period....This blurring of sharp social boundaries has
tended to undermine the cohesiveness of the local community....each
[member] pursuing his or her own version of truth" (Hoge et al.
1994:14).

Decline in community has surfaced in a variety of explicit

ways. Acceptable Sunday activity is a good example. Whereas

previous eras reserved Sunday for religious groups, there is now an

ever-growing list of retail, business, culture and sporting options

which compete with religious traditions for the commitment of

Canadians.

S-4. Changes in Family Life and the Role of Women   Again,

according to the findings of Hoge and associates structural shifts

in family and gender roles have impacted religious commitment by

disrupting the life cycle rhythm of mainline churches.   Young

people traditionally left these churches during their teens, only

to return in their twenties for rites of passage such as marriage

and baptism of children.   These patterns have now shifted.

"Since the 1950's... changes of historic proportions have taken
place in the structure of the family and the position of women.
These structural changes - such as cohabitation of unmarried
people, rising age of marriage, delay of first childbirth,
decreasing numbers of children, and rising divorce rates - have had
a pronounced impact on church involvement.... people are more
reluctant to return to the ecclesiastical fold after experiencing
longer years of absence; the ambivalence people feel because of
their unconventional marriage patterns have made church
participation awkward for many; and the reduction in number of
children and the delay in bearing them have worked to diminish the
attractiveness of church involvement for many others" (Hoge et al.

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1994:15-16).

Women's roles also changed. With increased numbers joining the work force, fewer are available to maintain church programs. Furthermore, with the rise of the feminist movement in the 1970's, the teachings of the church and its language for worship have been widely criticized for being patriarchal (Hoge et al. 1994:16). All these issues contributed to weakened religious institutions and declining personal commitment by teens and their parents.

c. Institutional Explanatory Factors   Trends inside religious bodies have also contributed to an exodus from the fold. These patterns include:

I-1. Increasing Bureaucratization   In response to a growth of the state, churches have increasingly established parallel organizations as a contact mechanism. The resulting situation is one where "local churches have become intricately connected to denominational bureaucracies and agencies, and more densely surrounded by inter-church and para-church groups that educate and mobilize citizens on specific social issues" (Bellah et al. 1991:185). This has resulted in a situation where the church has difficulty acting on people's behalf, taking strong stands or making big changes when they've needed to. (Bellah et al. 1991:190).

I-2. <u>Failure to Be Relevant</u>   Since the 1960's mainline

churches were encouraged, for the sake of their young people, to

alter their teachings and program priorities to make them more

relevant to the challenges of the modern world. This led to a "new

breed of radical leaders in the church who were involved in civil

rights, the war in Vietnam, the problems of poverty and the Negro

ghetto," and who refused to reinforce "childish ideas about the

church as a safe refuge from the world"[7] (Hoge, et al. 1994:16).

Some believe that a radical culture-confronting church is the only

kind that will appeal to adolescent idealism. Ernest Becker, for

example, wrote:

"Today religionists wonder why youth has abandoned the churches,
not wanting to realize that organized religion... is almost
defunct....denies reality, builds war machines against death, and
banishes sacredness with bureaucratic dedication....the church is
in trouble not because its myths are dead, but because it does not
offer its ideal of heroic sainthood as an immediate personal one to
be lived by all believers" (Becker 1975:164).

I-3. <u>Too Much Social Activism</u> Virtually the opposite of the

failure to be relevant factor is negative reaction to perceived

"excessive denominational emphasis on radical social programs"

(Hoge et al. 1994:17). In *The Good Society*, Robert Bellah and

associates speak of mainline Protestant religion as a "caucus

church" fractured by powerful agendas of special interest groups

(Bellah et al 1991:202-206). This is perhaps what Jeffery Hadden

warned of in 1969 as a "gathering storm in the churches"[8] brought

on by the political activism of a new type of radical clergy in the

face of mounting resistance from a laity that was preponderantly

conservative.   Increased political involvement jeopardizes the

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harmony of religious denominations and therefore threatened their membership bases (Hoge et al. 1994:17).

I-4. <u>Failure of Leadership and Programs</u> Some researchers see church decline being caused by ineffective denominational leadership and programming in the face of modernity's challenges. According to Hoge and associates, "some contend that denominational leaders were unable to generate a sense of denominational identity or to instill denominational loyalty. Others contend that there was a grave failure during the postwar decades in mainline denominational programs, especially those designed for young people. In their opinion, the youth did not receive proper religious training, with the result that they failed to develop any long term commitment to the church and ultimately left" (Hoge et al. 1994:17-18).

I-5. <u>Loss of Internal Strength</u> According to a growing and influential body of theorists, from Dean Kelley (1972) to Finke and Stark (1992), church decline can be attributed to the weak character of religious life at the local church level. The assumption of these theorists is that people desire a religion which gives clear-cut answers to ultimate questions about life. Kelley in *Why Conservative Churches are Growing*, categorizes churches as "strong" and "weak".

"Strong churches grow, he argues and weak churches decline. Strong churches: (1) are characterized by a total, closed belief system that is deemed sufficient for all purposes and need no revision. They (2) have a distinctive code of conduct that sets their members

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apart from nonmembers. They (3) exercise a strict discipline over their members in matters of belief and practice. They (4) demand a high commitment of time and energy from their members. Finally, they (5) maintain a missionary zeal and are eager to tell the good news to all persons. Weak churches, by contrast, are characterized by relativism, permissiveness, and individualism in matters of belief; tolerance of internal diversity and pluralism; lack of enforcement of doctrinal and behavioral standards; tolerance of a limited commitment to the church; little effective sharing of convictions or spiritual insights within the church; and a preference for dialogue with outsiders rather than attempts to convert them" (Hoge et al. 1994:18).

Recent support for Kelley's thesis comes from Roger Finke and Rodney Stark groundbreaking[9] book *The Churching of America, 1776 – 1990* (1992). The authors contend that over two hundred years of American history have uncovered a consistent pattern where a certain type of church "churched" and another type declined. The authors conclusion is that:

"Humans want their religion to be sufficiently potent, vivid, and compelling so that it can offer them rewards of great magnitude. People seek a religion that is capable of miracles and that imparts order and sanity to the human condition....mainline bodies [which no longer deliver] are always headed for the sideline" (Finke and Stark 1992:275).

Social, structural and institutional factors impact the adolescents who attend religious groups as well as the religious groups they attend. In addition, however, adolescent religious behaviour is also influenced by the position that adolescents occupy in the life cycle.

2.3 Life-cycle Explanations For Acquiring And Modifying Adolescent Religious Disposition

During each period of the life cycle, people are specifically located within the time/social space grid. Here unique social

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networks and experiences provide a backdrop for achieving appropriate developmental tasks. This convergence enables and constrains adolescent religious expressions. In their article "Life Events and Religious Change" Stan Albrecht and Marie Cornwall provide the following summary of the life cycle/religiosity linkage.

"There is now ample evidence that both religious activity and belief are related to life cycle factors. The research shows a pattern of declining belief and activity during the teens and early twenties, followed by increasing levels of activity as the person reaches the late 20s and the early 30s" (Albrecht and Cornwall 1989: 24).

Adolescence is a strategic period for the development of religious faith and practice (Starbuck 1895; Allport 1950; Havighurst & Keating 1971; Hastings & Hoge 1976; Ozorak 1989). The teens and twenties are the times in the life cycle with lowest reported church attendance (Hoge and Roozen 1979) and highest religious disengagement (Bromley 1988). Relatively fewer changes occur in religious belief and practice in later adulthood causing many to speak of the foundational nature of youth and young adulthood religiosity (see for example, Ozorak 1989; Willits and Criders 1989).

Five Adolescent Religiosity Theories Numerous studies have focused on how religious commitment is acquired and modified during the adolescent and young adult phase. Five theories are supported in the literature.

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i. Social Learning Theory According to social learning theory, youth are socialized into a religious tradition when significant others teach, model and reinforce religious norms and behaviours. This is by far the most prominent perspective in sociology of religion literature concerning how adolescents acquire religion (Hoge et al. 1994). Theorists have found parents are particularly significant in the religious socialization of youth (Havighurst and Keatings 1971; Parker and Gaier 1980). Part of this significance is due to the role parents have in channeling children into "personal religious communities" and experiences which reinforces what is taught at home (Cornwall 1989). Parental religiosity is most impacting when there is emotional closeness between parents and adolescents (Hoge and Keeter 1976; Hunsberger 1983; Dudley and Dudley 1986); both parents agreed on religious matters (Nelson 1981; Hoge 1982); parents are involved in faiths with strong group identity (Ozorak 1989); parents are religiously committed themselves (Hoge et al. 1993); parents attend religious services and have informal home religious observances (Cornwall 1987). Researchers have documented the impact of parental socialization among a wide variety of religious groups including Catholics (Greeley et al. 1976); conservative Jews (Parker and Gaier 1980); Mormons (Cornwall 1986; and Albrecht et al. 1988) and Seventh Day Adventists (Dudley and Dudley 1976). After the high school years, parental religiosity diminishes as youth move from home and encounter other life experiences (Hoge et al. 1994). Ozorak states that parental religiosity remains the "cognitive

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anchor" from which faith evolves (Ozorak 1989).

A "wrinkle" within social learning theory is that some parents choose to socialize their children to belong to a religion but not commit (Currie 1971). Other parents believe that religion is a matter of choice and ought not to be imposed. Such parents may implicitly believe and therefore send the message that religion is not important. In such cases "apostasy from the religious tradition... is actually an acceptance of parent's most basic assumptions" (Hoge et al. 1993:243).

Besides the parent-child relationship, other relationships are important to social learning theorists. Church leaders are seen as key transmitters of faith (Hoge and Petrillo 1976). Religiously similar peers may also encourage religious beliefs and behaviour (Cornwall 1986).

ii. <u>Cultural Broadening Theory</u> Cultural broadening theory focuses on the cosmopolitan nature and "cognitive broadening" of advanced adolescence and young adulthood (Hoge et al. 1993). As youth grow older they experience increasingly diverse social networks which foster new approaches to life. Potvin and Lee found that "peers begin to construct worldviews etc. amongst themselves which may differ from those previously acquired" (Dudley and Dudley 1986). Peer influence on religious behaviour increases in late adolescence (Madsen and Vernon 1983). For example, different religious demands may be made by a serious boyfriend or girlfriend (Wallace 1975). Eventually the weight of religious role modelling

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shifts from parents to significant others such as spouses and key friends in young adulthood (Willits and Criders 1989).

Advocates of cultural broadening point to the morally relativizing effects of higher education as a cause of decreased religiosity (Caplovitz and Sherrow 1977; Wuthnow 1988). Some, such as Roof, also suggest the social attitudes spawned in the 1960's and 70's counterculture negatively impacted the religious commitment of babyboomers and now continue to impact their children (Roof 1994).

3. Emancipation Theory Some research focuses on the differing goals, tasks and socially relevant persons that come with teen maturation. Ozorak summarizes developmental issues during this period which trigger religious change. These changes include: spurts of cognitive growth that prompt evaluation of previously accepted knowledge during young adolescence, a search for ultimate answers during this period which can lead to renewed commitment or disengagement, proneness to existential experiences, and increased questioning (Ozorak 1989;449). The assertion, however, of teen years as times of emotional volatility, stress and strain (Hall 1904; Freud 1958), and rebellion (Caplovitz and Sherrow 1977) that distances youth from childhood faith have not been supported by the weight of recent research (Dornbusch 1989:236).

4. Post-modernist Theory The post-modern view of adolescence is "an emerging inchoate perspective" (Cote and Allahar 1994). Its premise is that we have moved out of the modern era in which

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science, linear logic, and order prevail to a postmodern era which emphasizes the subjective experiences of youth (Cote and Allahar 1994). Post-modern social analysts argue that today's young people experience frustration, alienation, economic manipulation which leaves them disenfranchised and distrustful of adult institutions (Cote and Allahar 1994; Redhead 1994).

The impact of recent technological change is another aspect of the post-modern view. Neil Postman in *The Disappearance of Childhood* (1982) argues that the late twentieth century has shifted from a print to a visual culture. In such an age, media is an increasingly powerful socializer that mediates between social actors and institutions and erodes traditional cultures. According to Tinning and Fitzsimmons "adolescents' perceptions of, and experiences within, each (social institution) are shaped to a greater or lesser extent by experiences with information technology such as television, telephone, FM radio, video and computer...postmodern adolescent life in Geelong, Australia, is increasingly linked to life in Los Angeles, Tokyo, and Berlin" (Cote and Allahar 1994:22). In becoming a powerful new broker of youth culture, media may be seen to enable and constrain, enhance and undermine, mould and erode the religious disposition of young people. Some social analysts argue that post-modern complexity, coupled with youth despair, has created non-traditional religious starting points (Barna 1994); and deep inner quest for religious options offering meaningful relationship and personal community (Tapia 1994). As such, post-modernism is not entirely a

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secularizing influence on young people.

5. Plausibility Structures Approach: A Synthesizing Theory

Social learning theory, cultural broadening theory, emancipation theory and post-modern theory should not be viewed as opposing perspectives on the transmission of religion during adolescence. They can be viewed as components of a general theory of "plausibility structures" proposed by Peter Berger (1967). Hoge and colleagues write:

"According to Berger, plausibility structures are networks of persons in constant contact who hold to a common worldview and a set of moral commitments; upkeep of the structures is necessary if the beliefs are to be maintained and transmitted. Local churches are good examples. Without communities of persons in constant contact, beliefs and commitment weakens. In a plausibility structure, any events that impair a person's communications with others will tend to weaken his or her faith" (Hoge et al. 1993).

The plausibility thesis has been supported by research on evangelical college students (Hammond and Hunter 1984); Mormons (Albrecht and Cornwall 1987); and Presbyterians (Hoge et al. 1994). In general the findings support the view that religious groups with a high emphasis on group identity, personal community networks, affective bonds and intensive interaction (Cornwall 1987; Roof and McKinney 1987; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Roberts 1995) maintain religious plausibility while those with low emphasis on group ties decline (Jacobs 1987; Roberts 1995). According to plausibility structure theory, the religiously significant issues become "how often"; "with whom"; and in "what settings" are youth interacting (Wuthnow 1992).

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2.4 Summary

In conclusion this chapter was concerned with three issues. First, the ongoing debate concerning religion's role in advanced industrial societies was discussed. Second, the findings of social scientists concerning current forces believed to be impacting Canadian youth and religious institutions was shared. Third, an introduction was given to various approaches to the study of adolescent religiosity. While a synthesis of this theory is well beyond the scope of this thesis, these far reaching theoretical considerations provide us with a backdrop to the complex phenomenon of adolescent religious disposition in Canada. It is with these considerations in mind that attention can now be turned to methodologies, *Project Teen Canada* findings and their implications.

Chapter Three

"Sources of Data and Methodology"

This chapter will be concerned with four issues. The first issue addressed will be primarily descriptive and relates to the sources of data used in the analysis. The second issue deals with some theoretical assumptions which assisted in formulating the research questions. The third issue concerns the operationalization of key adolescent religious disposition variables which are used throughout the thesis. Lastly statistical measures employed in aspects of the analysis are explained.

3.1 The Sources of Data

There were two sources of data used in this analysis. Each has been described separately.

First, *Project Teen Canada* 1984 and 1992 national surveys developed and administered by Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski were utilized. The methodology of the 1984 survey was replicated in 1992 (Bibby and Posterski 1992:321). Bibby and Posterski's focus was "the emerging generation", that segment of Canada's young people on the verge of adulthood. They, therefore limited their target group to 15 to 19 year olds in Grade 10 to 12 across Canada including CEGEPs in Quebec.

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Bibby and Posterski used a multi-stage stratified and cluster sampling procedure to randomly select approximately 200 individual high school classrooms. The procedure utilized ensured the sample was representative according to regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, B.C.); community size (populations greater than 100,000, 99,000 - 10,000, less than 10,000); and school system (public, separate, private). Grades for the specific classroom in each designated school were also randomly chosen. Guidance counsellors or their equivalents were asked to administer the surveys in each school. Student participation was voluntary, anonymous and confidential. In 1984 the usable questionnaires totalled 3530 with 152 schools participating for a cooperation rate of 76 percent. In 1992, 180 out of 193 schools produced 3990 usable questionnaires for a response rate of 93 percent.

The surveys were highly representative according to gender, parental marital status and believed to be an accurate reflection of teenage religious affiliation[10]. Bibby and Posterski conclude that "in sum [the two surveys] are sufficiently large and representative of Canadian teenagers to permit generalizations to the high school population with a very high level of accuracy. On most items in the questionnaire, the national results should come within about three percentage points of the results of other surveys probing the teenage population, 19 times out of 20" (Bibby and Posterski 1992:322-323).

Secondly, the 1975, 1980, 1985 and 1990 *Project Canada* adult data sets conducted by Reginald W. Bibby were occasionally used for

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comparative purposes. These self-administered national surveys were conducted by mail and consist of approximately 1500 responses each. Bibby utilized a multi-stratified procedure whereby participants were randomly chosen from communities reflecting provincial and community size composition using telephone directories. *Project Canada* samples, says Bibby, "are highly representative of the Canadian [adult] population. Samples of this size and composition... should be accurate within about four percentage points on most questionnaire items, 19 times in 20 similar surveys" (Bibby 1993[a]:316).

Of course, some limitations face all researchers utilizing secondary data. Since research strategies were not created with present research questions in mind, certain issues cannot be addressed. In this case, for example, a major issue raised in the literature – the impact of religious socialization – will remain unresolved. The PTC92 survey contains no measure of parental religiosity except affiliation and only a crude measure of clergy/teen interaction[11]. This severely hampers the use of adult socialization as an independent variable when accounting for the religiosity of youth. While the data does allow an alternate macro-level strategy for analyzing social learning theory, a topic addressed elsewhere (see for example Bibby, 1993[a]:95-114; Penner and Bibby, 1994), the impact of adult socialization for the most part remains beyond the scope of this thesis.

However, the benefits of using the wealth of data in the PTC and PC surveys are considerable. In fact the data sets make

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possible the first in depth national sociological analysis of adolescent religiosity in this country.

3.2 Rationale Underlying The Thesis Research Questions

A combination of open systems, network and plausibility structure assumptions guide this analysis of adolescent religious disposition in Canada.

Open systems theory suggests that social institutions are stable in terms of their structure and active in terms of their processes[12]. While being functional, institutions such as religion operate within a dynamic field of conflicting and influential social forces (Roberts 1995:75-81). The first research question, "To what degree are Canadian adolescents negatively disposed to religious groups relative to other social options?", flows from this thinking. It is assumed that religion is but one of many social forces in the life of a Canadian teenager. Religion has the function of "explaining the unexplainable" by providing an "otherworldly" reality which gives meaning to everyday existence (Berger 1969). In other words, religion can potentially give adolescents "meaning to the routine of everyday life" by "celebrat[ing] the goodness of that routine symbolically in ritual", and providing "a sense of purpose and collective well-being" (Westhues 1982). This function however is carried out within a complex world where adolescents encounter a wide variety of competing social options. In some cases these options crowd out religious ideas and expressions, influencing the amount that

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religious groups and behaviours are experienced and valued.

The second question attempts to examine the changing influence of these social forces on the religious expressions of teenagers. By raising the question, "How has religious disposition shifted from 1984 to 1992?", we can address the changes in religious attitudes and behaviour over time. Dimensions of religious disposition, including religious beliefs, religious identification, religious participation, personal religious consciousness and institutional religious consciousness are examined. These aspects of religiosity are operationalized in Chapter three, Section three.

The third research question, "What are the adolescent religious differences among Canada's various religious networks?", flows out of network and plausibility structure theory. Following network theory this thesis assumes that religion is a social phenomenon as opposed to an individualized one. While private meaning systems, often referred to as "invisible religions" (Luckmann 1967), are without doubt present among adolescents, only the impact of traditional organized religious groups will be assessed. The structure of these groups will be viewed as Durkheimian (1965) social facts which are external to and constraining on individuals (Goldenberg 1992:257-266). Thus we will assume that religious networks are in part responsible for creating the religious disposition levels of the adolescents within them.

Plausibility structural theory emphasizes the role that social interaction plays in shaping cultural systems which then

impact the thoughts and attitudes of individuals (Wuthnow 1992:9-35)[13]. Unfortunately, the PTC surveys contain no acceptable variables measuring adolescent interaction with religious parents, clergy and religious peers. We therefore cannot address an essential plausibility issue, namely, the impact on religiosity that occurs from "in-group ties" (Cornwall 1987) and social interaction with like minded people. PTC 1992 data however does have excellent religious belief variables measuring supernaturalism and particularism considered by researchers to be important for religious identity (Stark and Glock 1968) and the content of strong plausibility structures (Roof 1978).

3.3 Measuring Religious Disposition and its Various Domains

Religious disposition, for the purposes of this thesis, is a comprehensive religiosity concept consisting of the following domains: religious beliefs, religious identification, religious participation, institutional religious consciousness, and personal religious consciousness. Each domain will be examined separately.

a. **Religious Beliefs** Two measures of religious beliefs were captured in both PTC 1984 and 1992 surveys. The items were: Do you believe that (1) God exists and (2) How we live will influence what happens after we die. These two variables were complimented by additional 1992 items including: Do you believe that (3) Supernatural forces exist (4) You have spiritual needs (5) Some things are right and other things are wrong (6) Evil forces exist

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and (7) All world religions are equally valid. Religious belief variables were measured on a four point ordinal scale ranging from "Yes, I Definitely Do", "Yes, I Think So", "No, I Don't Think So", to "No, I Definitely Do Not".

Some researchers assert that religious beliefs are crucial variables in contemporary religious identity (Stark and Glock 1968; Roberts 1995:15). Others, however view beliefs as aspects of religious orientation (see for example Davidson and Knudsen 1977), and independent of religious commitment. This thesis will view religious beliefs as independent variables which perhaps are causally linked to religious commitment. This way the degree to which religious beliefs and religious commitment are correlated can be assessed rather than unifying them conceptually. In other words, adolescents with orthodox beliefs will not automatically be considered more religious than other youth by virtue of their beliefs alone.

b. <u>Religious Identification</u>   Adolescents were asked in 1984 and 1992 "What is YOUR general religious preference?" followed by the qualifier "If your preference is Protestant, what specific denomination [do you identify with]?" From this information three religious groupings emerged from the data in large enough numbers[14] to warrant sub-category analyses. These groups were, Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants[15] and conservative Protestants[16], following Nock[17] (1994). A further subcategory, Catholics inside and outside of Quebec, following Bibby (1993) was also created. Since religious nones appeared in sufficient numbers in both

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surveys they are used at times for comparative purposes.

Many religious groups will be absent from sub-category analyses because of their low number of cases in PTC data[18]. Essentially, their absence turns much of the thesis into an exploration of adolescent "Christian disposition" in Canada. While this is a necessity given the limits of our data, it does have the advantage of squarely focusing attention on a sorely misunderstood area of research: variations between mainline and conservative Christian groups (Wuthnow 1989:154).

A further PTC measure of religious identification which will be used is membership. The 1992 survey asked teens "Are you a member of any religious organizations?" While church membership is considered a poor measure of individual religiosity (Demerath 1965) it is an expression of religious affiliation that has in the past been highly correlated to some dimensions of religiosity (Roberts 1995:350).

c.   Religious Participation   Measures of religious participation examine the behaviourial component of religious commitment (Davidson and Knudsen 1977).   Social analysts of religion conceptualize religious practices as falling within two dimensions, ritualistic and devotional (Stark and Glock 1968). The ritualistic aspect involves for example, "frequency of participation in corporate worship" while "devotionalism" refers to such practices as "faithfulness in private devotions [scripture reading] and regularity in private prayer" (Roberts 1995:15).

Unfortunately the PTC 1992 survey contained no measures of devotionalism. However, it did ask teens the ritualistic question, "How often do you attend religious services?" Answers were given on a six point ordinal scale ranging from "weekly or more" to "never". The frequency distribution for 1992 religious service attendance was bimodal with teens tending to cluster around either weekly or no attendance (See Table 3.1). The bimodal reality provided the thesis' rationale for considering monthly attendance as the cutoff between attenders and non-attenders. Using this distinction attenders make up 34% of the population and attend 92% of the religious services. Non-attenders make up 66% of the population and attend 8% of the religious services. This distinction was particularly useful when comparing religious disposition variables by religious groupings.

Table 3.1 Bimodal Histogram Of Adolescent Religious Service Attendance In Canada

Frequency of Attendance	Percentage of Adolescent Population
Weekly or More	***************** 18
2-3 Times Monthly	******** 8
Monthly	****** 6
Several Times A Year	************** 15
Once Yearly or Less	**************************** 29
Never	********************* 23

Source: PTC 1992 data sets

The religious service attendance question was also asked in the earlier survey. However since 1984 answers were give on a four

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point ordinal scale ranging from "very often" to "never"
comparisons across time are at best crude and will be highlighted
when used.

d. <u>Personal Religious Consciousness</u>   Personal religious
consciousness will be conceptualized as the subjective component of
religious commitment and involves the "salience, importance or
meaning of religion in people's lives" (Davidson and Knudsen
1977:154). PTC data contained a number of variables which tapped
this aspect of religion. Teens in both 1984 and 1992 were asked
"Which of the following comes closest to describing the nature of
YOUR religion?". Answers could be ranked ordinally according to
the following categories: "I am not a religious person," "I have
some interest in religion," and either "I regard myself as a
committed Christian" or "I regard myself as committed to a religion
other than Christianity." This variable is a particularly helpful
indicator of religious commitment as it taps those who cognitively
believe they are religious (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:155). Teens
in 1984 and 1992 were also asked: "How much ENJOYMENT do you
receive from your religious group?"   Possible answers were
ordinally ranked and included "a great deal," "quite a bit,"
"some," "little or none," or "doesn't apply." In addition, teens
in 1992 were asked "How important is religious group involvement to
you?"   Answers for this variable ranged from "very important,"
"somewhat important," "not very important," to "not very important
at all."   Salience and enjoyment of religious group tap the

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"affective domain" of "religious consciousness" (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:155) and speaks to a teen's feelings of whether organized religion is a positive or negative force in their lives. These variables also are measures of personal institutional consciousness in that they tap value assessments of a teen's personal experience with organized religion.

e. Institutional Religious Consciousness While it is true that a person's general perception of a social institution can be based on personal experience, it may also be shaped by other social forces. For example, an unchurched teen may have a strong opinion about organized religion shaped by media, education, social conversation with others, etc.. Institutional religious consciousness refers to this generalized perception of organized religion in the minds of teenagers. Two variables found in both 1984 and 1992 tapped this perception. They were "How much confidence do you have in the people in charge of religious organizations?" and "Do you think that by the end of this century, religion will GAIN more influence, LOSE some influence, or remain about the SAME?" These two variables will not be viewed as part of religious commitment although their percentages will be shared.

f. Religious Commitment One issue this thesis attempts to explore is the religious commitment level of adolescents within various religious groupings using the multidimensional measure of religious commitment by Davidson and Knudsen (1977). This measure

parallels Levin, Taylor and Chatters' (1995) concept of religious involvement[19]. Religious commitment, following Davidson and Knudsen, is a general concept refering to the extent of an individual's involvement. Commitment includes a subjective component, "the extent to which that area is important to the person....[and] is a part of the person's self concept" (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:154). It also includes a behavioral component, "the extent to which the individual participates in the area under consideration" (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:154). The limits of PTC data to measure religious commitment must be acknowledged at the outset. Only three variables comfortably fit the Davidson and Knudsen criteria. Religious commitment will therefore be operationalized as the combination of PTC92's one religious behaviour variable "religious service attendance" and two of the PTC92's three personal religious consciousness variables "nature of religious commitment" and "value placed on religious group involvement". Our third personal religious consciousness variable, "enjoyment of religious group" has been excluded since it perhaps speaks more to fulfilment or pleasure gained from religious involvement than to the subjective worth placed on it.

National inter-correlations of the religious commitment variables are captured in Table 3.2. The high levels of correlation between these variables lends further support to the assertion that each item taps aspects of the same religious commitment concept.

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Table 3.2 Gamma Correlates Of PTC Religious Commitment Variables

Religious Commitment Variable	Gamma
Self Reported Religious Commitment by Value of Religious Group Involvement	.75
Self Reported Religious Commitment by Religious Service Attendance	.85
Value of Religious Group Involvement by Religious Service Attendance	.75

These correlations suggest that for Canadian adolescents, following Davidson and Knudsen logic, "a high degree of religious consciousness is likely to foster religious participation, while religious participation is likely to enhance one's religious consciousness" (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:159).

3.4 Exploring Causality And The Use Of Statistical Measures

An underlying question that propels this thesis is "What are the causes and consequences of adolescent religious commitment?" From a methodological point of view, an adequate test of the causes/consequences of commitment includes meeting the criteria of causality. This includes demonstrating a relationship, establishing time-order, testing for spuriousness and possessing a defensible rationale (Goldenberg 1992:118). At an exploratory level, it is worthwhile to at least address the first of these criteria: the existence of a relationship. This thesis therefore will report a number of correlations between religious commitment and other possible determinants such as religious belief and religious groupings. Furthermore, the thesis will also examine the correlation between two religious commitment variables and social

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zones important to Canadians. The statistical measures used to establish the above correlations will be the nominal measure Cramer's V and the ordinal measure Gamma. Both Cramer's V and Gamma are measures of association recorded between zero and one, where zero means no relationship and one means a perfect relationship. Gamma has an added benefit of recording measures up to negative one, thus distinguishing between positive and negative linear correlation. All Cramer's V and Gamma correlates found in this thesis are statistically significant to the .01 level.

3.5 Summary

This chapter was concerned with methodological issues. In part one, the sources of data were discussed. Next, theoretical assumptions that shaped the research questions were disclosed. Third, a discussion of the methodological issues related to the measurement of religious disposition, especially with respect to Davidson and Knudsen's (1977) measure of religious commitment, was presented. Finally, the issue of causality and measures of correlation were introduced.

Chapter 4

"Findings on Adolescent Religious Disposition: 1984-92"

This chapter is concerned with the presentation of the findings on Canadian adolescent religious disposition in 1984 and 1992. It will: (1) explore the degree to which adolescents report positive disposition to organized religion relative to other social options encountered; (2) document adolescent religious disposition shifts from 1984 to 1992; (3) analyze reported adolescent commitment differences within Canada's various religious groupings and (4) contrast adolescent – adult disposition levels. Finally, it will introduce a tentative exploration of potential consequences of religious decline.

4.1 Adolescent Disposition Toward Religious Groups and Other Social Options

The adolescent world includes a wide variety of social alternatives including family, peer group, media, and school. Some youth have jobs. Many belong to sports teams. Still others participate in youth groups, school clubs and hobby-related organizations. One way to measure adolescent disposition towards these many alternatives is to determine the number of hours spent in them. Of note from PTC findings was the minimal amount that

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teens claimed they experienced religious groups relative to other options. According to PTC 1992 data, on average Canadian teens spent approximately 1200 hours in school, 1129 hours watching television, 294 hours at jobs and only 23 hours attending religious services. (See Table 4.1) At the same time, 92% of the religious services were being experienced by only 34% of the Canadian teens and 73% of teens fell below the Canadian average of 15 religious services annually. Approximately half of Canada's teenagers reported attending no more than one religious service per year. These findings support the notion that relative to other social options, religious groups are seldom experienced by adolescents.

Table 4.1 Average Annual Adolescent Hours Spent In Various Social Activities*

At School	1200
Watching Television	1129
On the Job	294
Attending Religious Services	23

* For method of calculation see endnotes[20].
Source: PTC 1992 data set

Another way to measure disposition toward social alternatives is to record the percentage of teens that report membership. Membership, although a poor measure of personal religiosity (Demerath 1965; Roberts 1995:350), implies being a constituent part of a complex whole. Again, relative to other social networks, religious groups fared poorly. According to PTC 1992 data, 47% of teens were members of sports teams, 28% belonged to school clubs,

however only 13%, less than one in seven, reported belonging to a religious group. This figure was also lower than membership tallies for hobby related groups, school clubs or youth groups.

In Table 4.2 another aspect of adolescent social network experience is revealed. When asked to identify which of the following variables "applied", all social networks listed were ranked higher than religious groups.

Table 4.2 Applicability And Enjoyment Of Adolescent Social Options (% reporting variable "applies"; % reporting "a great deal" of enjoyment from variable.)

SOCIAL OPTION and variable	APPLICABILITY		ENJOYMENT*	
	1984	1992	1984	1992
FAMILY				
Your mother	98	98	47	34
Your father	95	93	41	30
Your grandparents	87	88	32	23
Your brother(s) or sister(s)	NA	92	34	24
PEER				
Friendships	99	98	74	68
Your boyfriend or girlfriend	79	77	69	60
MEDIA				
Music	99	99	72	57
Television	99	99	30	23
Stereo	86	93	54	44
VCR	NA	92	NA	30
SCHOOL				
Your school	99	97	16	9
WORK				
Your job	69	64	29	15
YOUTH GROUPS				
Your youth group	65	62	17	15
RELIGION				
Your religious group	80	53	10	11

* % tallied from those stating that variable applies to them
Source: PTC 1984 and PTC 1992 data sets

Also of note is the staggering 27% decrease from 1984 (80%) to 1992 (53%) in reported religious group applicability. This crude measure suggests that religious groups are increasingly irrelevant to Canadian adolescents. Taken at face value this variable implies that one out of every two Canadian teens views religious groups as personally unsuitable.

Religious groups were also reportedly less enjoyable than other social options. Approximately 10% of religiously identifying teens reported a great deal of enjoyment from religious organizations. This percentage was generally doubled and tripled by 1992 family and media figures respectively. Peer indicators scored highest, more than five times higher than church endorsement levels.

One surprising finding for religious groups in an otherwise "dismal" showing was the 1984-92 stability of reported religious group enjoyment while levels for all other social networks declined. Perhaps organized religion enjoyment levels have bottomed out at approximately 10% while other are receding. This may have significant (and perhaps grave) societal implications and be representative of a growing sense of alienation among today's Canadian adolescents towards social life and traditional institutions generally (see for example Cote and Allahar 1994).

While adolescents indicated that religious groups were experienced less, joined less, and enjoyed less than other social networks, they are also reportedly less valued. When youths were asked to rank the personal importance of a range of items only 10%

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of Canadian youth listed religious group involvement as very important. This ranking paled in comparison to the value placed on other items such as friendship (84%), a comfortable life (70%), family life (60%), being a Canadian (45%), or cultural group heritage (22%).

In addition, religious leaders were considered less trustworthy and less approachable. Teens were also asked how much confidence they had in the people in charge of social institutions. The 1992 confidence rating for religious leaders, while higher than our much maligned governmental leaders, ranked behind the confidence levels of those running schools, courts, police and television. (See Table 4.3)

Furthermore clergy confidence experienced a 23% inter-survey decrease perhaps in large part due to highly publicized church scandals in the 1980's (Bibby 1993[a]:73-75).

Table 4.3 Adolescent Confidence In The People In Charge Of Social Institutions 1984/1992
% stating "a great deal" or "quite a bit" of confidence in the people in charge of:

Social Institution	PTC 1984	PTC 1992
The Police	76	69
The Schools	68	67
Television	57	61
The Courts	66	59
Church	62	39
Your Provincial Government	40	32
The Federal Government	39	27

Source: PTC 1992 data set

Furthermore, the PTC 1992 survey asked teens who they would most likely turn to when making a decision about right or wrong. Less than 2% chose a minister or priest. When the decision regarded other categories (spending money, relationships, sex, having fun, school, career, or a major problem) less that 1% considered religious leaders their first choice. Parents, friends, no one, and school counsellors were consistently ranked higher than clergy.

In summary, findings clearly suggest that relative to other social networks, organized religion is seldom encountered by today's Canadian teenagers. Even when Canadian adolescents do come into contact with religious groups or their leaders, the vast majority appear to place less value on the encounter than they do on virtually any other aspects of their social world.

4.2 1984 - 1992 Adolescent Religious Disposition Across Time

The present disinterest in organized religion raises questions about the shifting nature of religious attitudes and behaviours in comparison to previous teen cohorts. Has adolescent religious disposition always been this low? Already some evidence has pointed to the contrary. Most notable in this regard is the reported religious group "applicability" drop of 27% from 1984 to 1992 as well as the reported 23% decrease in the confidence rating for religious leaders. Other disposition shifts, recorded in Table 4.4, also suggest higher levels of religiosity among a previous generation of Canadian youth. A PTC 1984 - 92 comparison

identifies 1992 youth as less positively disposed to organized religion on virtually every dimension tapped. Of note was a drop in the percentage of teens who claimed to be committed to their religion[21], lower salience levels placed on religious group involvement as well as declining identification and service attendance rates. In short, religious disposition declines are reported from 1984 to 1992.

Table 4.4 Adolescent Religious Disposition: 1984-92 Comparisons

Religious Disposition Variables	PTC 1984	PTC 1992
Beliefs: % definitely believing that God exists % definitely believing how one lives influences what happens after death	54 35	46 . 29
Identification: % identifying a relig. preference	88	79
Participation: % attending religious services "weekly or more"	23*	18

Consciousness (personal):
% describing self as religiously
    committed
% reporting applicability and "a great
    deal" of enjoyment from relig. group
	42
	
	10
		24
		
		11

Consciousness (institutional):
% claiming "a great deal" of confidence
    in people in charge of religious
    organizations (includes "quite abit")
% believing religion will gain
    influence in the future
	29
	(62)
	
	19
		14
		(39)
		
		16

* % stating service attendance was "very often".
Source: PTC 1984 and 1992 data sets

These findings suggest that organized religion is having less social significance for Canadian adolescents in 1992 than it did in 1984. Reported religious disposition, as measured by the above variables, has clearly experienced decline in this past decade.

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4.3 Adolescent Religious Group Comparison

A diversity of religious groups operate in this country. It is important to examine the tendency for adolescent religious dispositions to vary according to group affiliation.

Table 4.5 Adolescent Religious Disposition: 1984-92 Comparisons by Religious Group

Religious Disposition Variables	RC not Que.	RC in Que.	Main Prot	Cons Prot	Relig None
Beliefs: % definitely believing God exists % definitely believing how one lives influences what happens after death	62 68* 34 42*	42 60* 18 39*	48 45* 29 30*	81 76* 57 62*	13 15* 14 15*
Identification: % of population identifying with religious grouping**	21 26*	15 21*	10 20*	7 5*	19 11*
Participation: % attending relig. services "weekly+" (84 "very often") 1992 average annual hours attending relig services**	28 38* 33hr NA*	11 17* 16hr NA*	15 17* 24hr NA*	61 43* 70hr NA*	2 3* 3hr NA*
Consciousness (personal): % describing self as religiously committed % receiving "great deal" of enjoyment from relig. group % receiving "great deal" of value from religious group involvement	35 63* 3 10* 5 NA*	22 61* 3 9* 5 NA*	27 28* 6 8* 11 NA*	62 51* 24 31* 43 NA*	1 2* 0 1* 2 NA*
Consciousness (institutional): % claiming "great deal" of confidence in leaders in charge of relig. groups % believing religion will gain influence in future	16 43* 17 25*	10 30* 13 14*	17 23* 15 18*	33 40* 32 35*	3 6* 5 9*

* % from 1984 PTC data set
** For method of calculation see endnotes[22]
Source: PTC 1984 and 1992 data sets

Table 4.5 displays religious variables found in Table 4.4 with this consideration in mind. Both 1984 and 1992 figures are displayed for convenient comparison.

Of note were the following findings:

As expected, religious nones were considerably less disposed to religion than all other groupings and appear to be slightly more "secularized" in 1992 than in 1984. Organized religion's continued lack of salience for this group appears to be clear.

Roman Catholic teens experienced the greatest overall religious disposition decrease from 1984-1992. Significant decline was experienced in every disposition dimension including beliefs, identification, participation, personal consciousness and institutional consciousness. Quebec Catholics appeared more negatively disposed to organized religion than did Catholic youth from other provinces. They also appeared to have experienced the greater disposition shift from 1984 to 1992.

Conservative Protestant teens scored significantly higher than teens from other religious groups on all religious disposition variables probed. A note of interest is that this group had reported increases in belief levels, religious service attendance and reported commitment levels from 1984 to 1992.

Mainline Protestant teens, despite some hemorrhaging on all variables, appeared to vary the least in reported religious disposition since 1984. This may represent mainline stability. One potential major concern, however was a reported 100% drop from 1984's 20% to 1992's 10% of the Canadian youth population who

identified with a mainline Protestant denomination[23]. A partial explanation for this will perhaps be found in the 17% of the 1992 survey whose religious identification was unknown[24]. The mainline Protestant reported affiliation decrease may also have been at the expense of an 8% increase from 1984 in the religious none category.

Institutional consciousness was the single dimension where every religious group including conservative protestants reported lower dispositions in 1992 than in 1984. It appears that the 1992 cohort of youth, both religious and nonreligious, was more pessimistic than was the previous cohort about the possibility of organized religion playing a substantial role in their social world.

Some critics argue that comparing mainline "churches" and conservative "sects" is like comparing apples and oranges[25]. Large numbers of affiliating youth on the fringes of mainline groups are believed to distort disposition levels of active participants. Table 4.6 addresses this concern by limiting the comparison of religious disposition measures to only those teens attending religious services monthly or more[26].

Of note was the continued persisting overall difference in reported religiosity levels between conservative Protestants and those from other religious networks. On every 1992 religious disposition measure except attendance, where conservative Protestants were outnumbered almost three to one in sheer volume by Catholics, conservative Protestant youth consistently scored the highest religiosity levels.

Table 4.6 Adolescent Religious Disposition: 1984-92 Comparisons By Religious Group - Attending Youth Only**

Religious Disposition Variables	RC not Que.	RC in Que.	Main Prot	Cons Prot	Crame r's V
Beliefs: % definitely believing God exists	75 76*	66 72*	72 66*	92 91*	.14
% definitely believing how one lives influences what happens after death	40 49*	30 46*	47 44*	71 74*	.18
Identification: % of national attending population identifying with religious grouping	33 NA*	12 NA*	12 NA*	16 NA*	NA
Participation: % of monthly attenders attending "weekly or more"	56 NA*	42 NA*	40 NA*	81 NA*	NA
Consciousness (personal): % describing self as religiously committed	51 77*	51 77*	53 54*	74 67*	.12
% receiving "great deal" of enjoyment from relig. group	7 13*	8 15*	18 17*	34 38*	.24
% receiving "great deal" of value from religious group involvement	10 NA*	10 NA*	27 NA*	56 NA*	.28
Consciousness (institutional): % claiming "great deal" of confidence in leaders in charge of relig. groups	20 52*	16 40*	31 34*	40 51*	.13
% believing religion will gain influence in future	20 29*	21 18*	24 25*	38 46*	.14

* 1984 PTC figures
Source: PTC 1984 and 1992 data sets

Catholics continued their pattern of being less positively disposed to PTC religiosity variables than both mainline and conservative Protestant teens.

Meanwhile, continuing stability was found in mainline Protestant teen reported dispositions. As in Table 4.5, this group

displayed the least variation between 1984 and 1992 religiosity measures despite low religious identification and participation levels.

Cramer's V measures between adolescent religiosity variables and religious groupings suggested that a weak association exists. According to PTC92 data, religious grouping was one variable which has a direct impact, albeit small, on the religious disposition levels of Canada's teenagers.

Religious commitment as defined by Davidson and Knudsen (1977) is a combination of subjective and behavioral components of religious involvement. The thesis now addresses this concept by presenting findings concerning the percentage of "religiously committed" adolescents found within various religious groupings. Following the Davidson and Knudsen logic, three PTC variables (religious service attendance, self reported religious commitment and value place on religious group involvement) have been used in the analysis. Findings based on PTC92 reported religiosity levels are found in Table 4.7.

First, when all affiliating teens were analyzed, more than one of every two conservative Protestant teens claimed to value and attend their religious group and considered themselves a committed Christian. This claim was reported by less than one fifth of all Catholics and mainline Protestants. At the other end of the spectrum approximately two out of every five mainline Protestants (and on average Catholics) did not report that they considered themselves committed Christians nor valued and attended religious

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services. Meanwhile only one in seven conservative Protestants makes this claim.

Table 4.7 Adolescent Religious Commitment: Comparisons By Religious Group
% of religious group
* % of religious group if only monthly+ attenders are included

Commitment Category	RC not Que.	RC in Que.	Main Prot	Cons Prot
Self reported committed Christian[27], values religious group involvement, attends religious services	19 37*	7 27*	18 46*	56 74*
Self reported committed Christian, doesn't value religious group involvement, attends religious services	8 16*	7 27*	4 10*	2 3*
Not a self reported committed Christian, values religious group involvement, attends religious services	9 17*	4 15*	10 25*	12 16*
Not a self reported committed Christian, doesn't value religious group involvement, attends religious services	15 30*	8 32*	7 19*	6 7*
Self reported committed Christian, values religious group involvement, doesn't attend religious services	3	3	3	3
Self reported committed Christian, doesn't value religious group involvement, doesn't attend religious services	4	5	2	2
Not a self reported committed Christian, values religious group involvement, doesn't attend religious services	8	5	11	7
Not a self reported committed Christian, doesn't value religious group involvement, doesn't attend religious services	34	60	42	13

* For method of calculation see endnotes[28]
Source: PTC 1992 data set

When the focus was placed on only those adolescents who attend religious services monthly or more, there was still an observable reported commitment homogeneity among conservative Protestants that was not indicated among other groupings. While three quarters of conservative Protestants stated that they fit the most committed category, approximately 50% of mainline Protestants and 33% of Roman Catholics made the same claim. At the same time approximately one third of Catholics, one fifth of mainline Protestants and less than one in ten attending conservative Protestants stated that they fit the least committed classification.

An area of considerable sociological interest and controversy[29] is the correlation between religious commitment and religious belief. Three belief measures (and corresponding PTC 92 variables) "supernaturalism", "relativism", and "spiritual receptivity" are analyzed in Table 4.8. In addition, Table 4.9 introduces religious commitment and belief correlations for various groupings.

Table 4.8 Adolescent Religious Beliefs: Comparisons By Religious Group

Religious Disposition Variables	Nation al	RC not Que *	RC in Que *	Main Prot *	Cons Prot *	Reli g None
Supernaturalism: % definitely believing God exists	46	75	66	72	92	13
% definitely believing supernatural forces exist	28	28	23	21	48	24
% definitely believing how we live influences what happens after death	29	40	30	47	71	15
% definitely believing evil forces exist	28	32	27	35	73	17
Religious Relativism: % definitely believing all world religions are equally valid	26	30	21	33	10	26
Moral Relativism (reversed): % definitely believing some things are right and other things are wrong	65	71	85	66	86	53
Spiritual Receptivity % definitely believing they have spiritual needs	25	35	32	41	73	13

* Includes only teens attending monthly or more
Source: PTC 1992 data set

Conservative Protestant youth displayed the greatest deviation from the Canadian norm on every belief indicator measured. The teens of this network also scored highest on supernaturalism and spiritual receptivity items and lowest on measures of relativism. Meanwhile mainline Protestant and Catholic attenders surpassed the Canadian norm regarding reported scepticism concerning supernatural forces. Catholics also approached the Canadian norm in terms of stated scepticism concerning evil forces and life consequences

after death. Also of note among mainline Protestant and Catholic teens was a relatively high tendency to report endorsement for the validity of other religions. Attending mainline Protestants and Catholics scored higher than Canadian youth in general, religious nones (including some non-attending mainline Protestants and Catholics[30]) on the question "Do you believe that all world religions are equally valid?" This may be an indication that some mainline religious groups are among Canada's strongest social supporters of religious relativism. Mainline Protestants also approached the Canadian norm in terms of the percentage who did not indicate that they definitely believed that some things were right and others were wrong.

In summary, there is a pattern of distinctly higher levels of reported religious commitment and "other-worldly" belief among conservative Protestant than among other religious groups. Comparisons of gamma measures of belief and commitment variables also reveal that the strongest correlations are among conservative Protestants. It appears that increased supernaturalism, particularism and spiritual receptivity motivates conservative Protestant religious commitment and that being involved in conservative Protestant groups enhances these religious beliefs.

Table 4.9 includes the correlation levels of Religious Nones. For adolescents of this group there is a weak relationship between many reported beliefs and levels of commitment. As one moves from religious nones to Catholics and mainline Protestants, and on to conservative Protestant adolescents, correlations strengthen and

religious affiliation becomes an increasingly salient predictor of both reported religious commitment and reported religious belief.

Table 4.9 Adolescent Religious Commitment—Belief Gamma Comparisons By Religious Group*

Religious Commitment Cross-tabulated with Belief Variables.	Cana da	RC not Que.	RC in Que.	Main Prot	Cons Prot	Relig None
God Exists	.72	.60	.59	.64	.87	.45
Supernatural Forces Exist	.11	.15	NA	NA	.17	NA
How One Lives Affects Them After Death	.51	.38	.33	.42	.57	.53
Evil Forces Exist	.40	.29	.19	.25	.43	.27
All World Religions Are Equally Valid	.08	.09	.05	.09	.46	NA
I Have Spiritual Needs	.55	.47	.30	.57	.78	.22
Some Things Are Right And Others Are Wrong	.28	.16	.12	.13	.55	.10

* For method of calculation see endnotes[21]
Source: PTC 1992 data set

4.4 Adult—Adolescent Religious Disposition Comparisons

To this point, the thesis has illustrated a significant reported drop off in Canadian teen disposition toward organized religion since 1984. It has also highlighted reported variations between religious groups. What others have documented among Canadian adults (Bibby 1987, 1993; Baril and Mori 1991) is now supported with adolescent data. Comparisons of adolescent and adult survey data on religion suggest that there is intergenerational mirroring (Penner and Bibby, 1995) with youth reporting slightly lower disposition levels than adults. Table

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4.10 bears this out.

Table 4.10 Adult-Adolescent Religious Disposition Comparisons

Religious Disposition Variables	Adult 1975	Adult 1990	Teen 1992
Beliefs: % definitely believing that God exists % definitely believing how one lives influences what happens after death	66 NA	55 40	46 29
Identification: % identifying a relig. preference	92	92	79
Participation: % attending religious services "weekly or more"	31	23	18

Consciousness (personal):
% describing self as religiously
  committed
% receiving "a great deal" of enjoyment
  from religious groups
	46*
	
	NA
		48**
		
		32
			24
			
			11

Consciousness (institutional):
% claiming "a great deal" of confidence
  in people in charge of religious
  organizations
% believing religion will gain
  influence in the future
	NA
	
	29*
		37
		
		19
			14
			
			16

* PTC 1980 figure
** PTC 1985 figure
Source: PC 1990 and PTC 1992 data sets

This is a general picture of declining religiosity across time with the early adult survey revealing significantly higher reported religiosity levels than displayed in both the latest adult and teen data.

4.5 <u>Illustrative Social Differences Between "Religious"</u>

<u>and "Nonreligious" Adolescents</u>

The consequences of low adolescent religious disposition is a complex issue beyond the scope of this thesis. However an exploratory analysis does suggest some significant differences between Canadian youth who are reportedly "religious" and those who are not. By way of illustration, findings on interpersonal values, drug use, and future family expectation are shared in Tables 4.11 through 4.13. These tables examine the extremes of two key independent religious commitment variables from the *Project Teen 92* survey as follows:

* church attendance (weekly and never)

* salience of religious group (highly valued and not valued)

These dichotomous variables are cross-tabulated with interpersonal values (generosity, honesty, forgiveness and concern for others); drug use measures (cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana/hashish, and other drugs); and future family expectations (marriage, children, staying married, and staying home to raise children).

These cross-tabulations give an illustrative sense of how "highly religious" and "nonreligious" youth presently differ in their responses to key social zones that are important to Canadians. These reported differences have research implications[32]. Each religious variable examined has a weak to moderate correlation with every reported civility indicator (See Table 4.11). In keeping with social learning theory, one of the basic functions of religious groups pertains to stressing

interpersonal traits which enhance social life (Bibby[b], 1994).
In Sunday schools and youth programs, children are taught the
importance of traits like forgiveness, honesty and unconditional
acceptance. The "love of one's neighbour" is championed as the
glue which builds community and keeps relationships intact.

Table 4.11 Adolescent Religious Commitment And Interpersonal Values

INTERPERSONAL VALUES % indicating "very important"	Generosity	Honesty	Forgive ness	Concern for Others
CHURCH ATTENDANCE				
Weekly	51	76	75	69
Never	34	61	48	55
Gamma	+.33	+.32	+.51	+.30
REL.GROUP SALIENCE				
Religious group highly valued	73	87	85	80
Religious group not valued	29	61	45	53
Gamma	+.72	+.60	+.73	+.53

Source: PTC 1992 data set

If in fact the observed correlations exist, and if what teens
say they value translates into behaviour, and if there are no
comparable functional alternatives[33] to instill interpersonal
social norms, a decline in religious participation may bring an
increased fragmentation of community life. This is a possible
consequence of declining involvement and commitment which is being
tentatively stated in this thesis. Of course, much more study is
neccesary. Analysis of drug usage and future family expectations

show two more social zones which perhaps could be impacted by declining religious commitment, (See Tables 4.12 and 4.13.). Again an argument can be made that specific beliefs, norms and mores promoted within religious institutions (e.g. one's body is God's temple and therefore to be kept pure; marriage and children represent blessings from God) impact social attitudes and behaviours beyond the church. An alternative to this argument is social control theory which suggests that teens tend to endorse church norms in survey data because it is expected of them. If this is the case, survey responses may not be linked to actual personal behaviours and expectations. Again, much more study is needed.

Table 4.12 Adolescent Religious Commitment And Family Expectations

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS % indicating Yes, I expect to:	Get Married	Have Children	Stay With Same Partner for Life	Eventually Stay Home And Raise Your Children
CHURCH ATTENDANCE				
Weekly	92	90	94	41
Never	76	77	76	28
Gamma	+.55	+.45	+.64	+.28
REL.GROUP SALIENCE				
Religious group highly valued	73	87	85	80
Religious group not valued	29	61	45	53
Gamma	+.53	+.37	+.58	+.43

Source: PTC 1992 data set

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Table 4.13   Adolescent Religious Commitment And Drugs-Alcohol Consumption

SUBSTANCE USED % reporting use is monthly or more	Cigarettes	Alcohol	Marijuana	Other Drugs
CHURCH ATTENDANCE				
Weekly	14	7	4	2
Never	33	25	17	7
Gamma	-.39	-.44	-.54	-.62
REL.GROUP SALIENCE				
Religious group highly valued	14	9	6	2
Religious group not valued	31	26	14	5
Gamma	-.38	-.56	-.46	-.53

Source: PTC 1992 data set

4.5 Summary

The present reported shift toward "secularization" previously documented among adults has now been bolstered by teen data. Today's cohort of Canadian adolescents appear to encounter very little organized religion relative to other social options. Even when religion is experienced it is of little stated value to the vast majority of youth. Very few positive trends for organized religion have been generated from this analysis. Nevertheless it is true that: (1) religion may have bottomed out in terms of the percentage of youth who indicate they enjoy it; and (2) conservative protestant youth reported religiosity increases from 1984 - 1992. On the negative side for religionists, the vast majority of youth attending religious services, regardless of

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religious grouping, did not report enjoying the encounter. Furthermore, there are dwindling numbers that identified themselves as committed to their religion or attending religious services, particularly within mainline Protestant and Catholic circles. Dwindling adolescent religiosity levels appears to be a reflection of an adult phenomenon. These shifts will likely cause cultural shifts in those zones where religion speaks to social life.

If reported religiosity levels are a true indication of present adolescent religious disposition, one thing appears certain. Without a large scale religious revival in Canada's traditional groups, or the emergence of new forms of the "sacred" which capture the imagination of the younger generation, the patterns presently established will continue largely unabated.

Chapter Five

"Discussion and Conclusion"

This thesis has explored the changing relationship between teenagers and organized religion in Canada. Two survey "snapshots", one in 1984 and another in 1992, have been used to assess religious dispositions among this country's young people. This chapter reviews the findings, discusses their scope and presents avenues for further research.

5.1 Adolescent Religiosity Patterns Restated

Five general patterns emerged from *Project Teen Canada* data. First, relative to other social options organized religion was seldom experienced or valued. Second, religious disposition levels decreased from 1984 to 1992. Third, adolescents from certain religious groups, most notably conservative Protestants, consistently reported higher religious commitment levels. Fourth, adolescent levels of religious decline reflected adult levels. Fifth, there was some tentative evidence suggesting potential Canadian social consequences from religious decline. Impact would likely occur in those areas such as civility, family norms and drug use where religion speaks to social life.

5.2 A Cautionary Note

A word of caution, however, is in order. The thesis' findings were based on secondary analysis of survey data, a fixed question methodology that tends to "impose some artificiality on the phenomenon under study" (Cicourel 1964:106,107). In fact, all social science methodologies impose particular types of artificiality and a variety of methods are desired to make confident generalizations. This information then, based on survey methodology only, should be likened to what anthropologist Clifford Geertz calls "thin" rather than "thick" description. In his classic, *The Interpretation of Cultures,* Geertz speaks of the differences between observable or reported behaviour (thin description) and the symbolic meaning (thick description) behind it. He illustrates these differences by using the example of a twitch and a wink. Thin description is the reporting of two boys rapidly contracting the eyelids of the right eye. Thick description is the uncovering of the unphotographable meaning behind the latter, complete with the message being imparted and the socially established codes being accorded (Geertz 1973:3-30).

The five PTC patterns described in this thesis were based on what random samples of Canadian teenagers reported about themselves. In order to validate these patterns, researchers need to continue to investigate adolescent religiosity through survey methodologies at the national level. These surveys will need increasingly detailed and focused questions to complement present queries on standard issues such as religious service attendance.

Other valuable survey approaches include increased Canadian longitudinal projects at denominational and municipal levels which follows adolescent religiosity from the onset of puberty through to the emergence of religious disposition in adulthood. Some American studies among Mormons (see for example, Cornwall 1987) and Seventh Day Adventists (see for example, Dudley 1994) are exemplary in this regard.

In addition, alternative methods are required to further validate established patterns and bring meaning to description. For example, much illumination is needed to make sense of the linkage between a teen's religious orientation, the resulting worldview with its accompanying beliefs and attitudes, the personal and institutional behaviours that follow and the consequences of these behaviours. Detailed interviewing and participant observation research would best tap this type of inquiry. Furthermore, lessons concerning adolescence and institutional religion could be sifted from innovative study in fields such as adolescent popular culture and youth deviance. For example, what, if anything, can the burgeoning entertainment industry teach religious groups about capturing the imagination of youth?; and, what theoretical frameworks developed in deviance, conformity or social control apply to the study of religious adolescents who are part of a "group formed around a body of deviant knowledge" (Berger 1969:7)?

In short, there is an urgent need for social scientists to take up the task of describing, explaining and predicting patterns

of Canadian adolescent religiosity. These researchers will need to employ participant observation, detailed interviews and other such methodologies to compliment what to date has been primarily survey research on the topic. In addition much more detailed Canadian survey data is sorely needed to validate and illuminate adolescent religiosity patterns established to date.

5.3   The Scope of the Findings

The PTC findings, presented in detail in Chapter Four provide social scientists with what to my knowledge is the first national, in depth, cohort data on adolescent religious attitudes, beliefs and behaviours in Canada[34]. As such, the information is extremely valuable.

However it is important to view this thesis' findings as exploratory in nature. While some attempt has been made to sort out the subtleties of meanings behind the data, the patterns established are at best tentative and NOT entirely definitive. A number of queries arise from the data which provide a solid launching pad for further research.

5.4   Future Avenues for Adolescent Religiosity Research

Given the above state of affairs, it is helpful to outline potential next steps in the study of Canadian adolescent religiosity. Listed in this section are research avenues which, in my estimation, deserve immediate investigation. I have attempted to highlight sociological projects having theoretical and practical

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promise so as to benefit both the researcher and religious leader. Some effort has also been made to identify methodology most suited for the venture being proposed. My suggestions are as follows:

a. <u>Adolescent Religious Commitment: Extending the Davidson Knudsen Approach</u>   Davidson and Knudsen's (1977) approach to religious commitment is worthy of a detailed adolescent examination.   Their theoretical grid conceptualizes religious commitment as psychological and behavioral involvement. A national survey of Canadian teenagers needs to be conducted where a wider range of variables attempt to measure these subjective and objective domains.

In addition, religious groups need to inform social scientists concerning what adolescent commitment looks like in their traditions.   For example, youth behavioral items from the conservative Protestant tradition generally include such items as participation in religious youth groups and/or religious based school clubs, Sunday schools, group Bible studies, religious service or mission projects, religious youth camps, faith sharing, private prayer, table grace, scripture reading, baptism and church membership[35]. Of course, the understanding of religious commitment from other traditions differs.   Variables from these traditions also need to be incorporated.

Psychological components assessing affective, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of subjective involvement will in likelihood be more unified across traditions. These, following Davidson and

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Knudsen, include the degree to which adolescents believe they are religious (cognitive); feel religion is a positive rather than a negative force in their lives (affective); and feel their religious convictions should affect their daily lives (behavioral) (Davidson and Knudsen 1977:155). Such a study would do much to further the assessment of religious commitment among Canadian teens.

Such a study would also assist in understanding the causal relationship between various components of commitment and how this causal relationship shifts for different religious traditions. For example, 1984 PTC data reveals a positive correlation between religious service attendance and religious participation variables prayer, bible reading and religious youth group attendance for all religious traditions probed[36]. These correlations were especially strong for conservative protestants and to a lesser degree for mainline protestants and religious none. However the correlations were moderate for Catholics. Why? Perhaps other religious commitment variables are paramount for this group. Perhaps standard measures of religious commitment such as religious service attendance have less utility for Catholics than Protestants. If this is the case, Catholics need to inform researchers of appropriate religiosity measures within their tradition.

Still, the general linkage between attendance and other religious participation variables ought to cause serious reflection for all religionists including Catholics. The evidence suggests that adolescent religious service attendance may be a crucial independent variable which church officials need to manipulate

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inorder to increase adolescent commitment and preclude projected institutional decay. Further study of this suggestion is needed.

b. Adolescent Religious Commitment: A Network Approach

Network theory could provide an excellent foundation for understanding the impact that religious traditions have on determining adolescent religious commitment levels. Perhaps a participant observation, detailed interview and survey study ought to be conducted within a given geographic locale where a broad spectrum of religious traditions and their adolescents are included. This investigation could observe the degree of social homogeneity in each institutional religious setting. Interconnectedness of youth with religiously similar peers, religious clergy, youth from other groups, nonreligious youth, would all be a part of such an analysis. The spectrum of groups should include Catholics, mainline Protestants, conservative Protestants and other religions. Following network theory, religious groups are social structures which enable and limit the attitudinal and behaviourial options of social actors within them. Thus, adolescents who are "churched" Catholic, United, Mennonite, Pentecostal or Buddhist would experience their church as different Durkheimian "social facts" external to and constraining on them (Goldenberg 1992:257-266). The study could investigate adolescent religious commitment and the degree to which various religious groups facilitate and limit a wide range of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours through the amount and strength (multistrandedness) of

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ingroup ties (See Cornwall 1989).

This type of investigation would do much to determine the largely unknown realm of group involvement factors that are linked to Canadian adolescent religious commitment. If such a study compared conservative Protestants with other youth, it would also assist in assessing a wide range of explanations[37] being postulated for the relatively high levels of religious commitment among conservative Protestants. One could examine why conservative Protestant adolescents appear to remain religious throughout their teenage years, while the "norm" in adolescence is to stray away from religion. Perhaps such an investigation would facilitate new understanding between mainline and conservative Christian groups who in the words of Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow, are presently divided by a "profound cultural gap.... high level of mutual suspicion, prejudice and name calling" and could benefit from this type of analysis[38] (Wuthnow 1989:154).

c. Adolescent Religious Commitment: A Plausibility Structure Approach Plausibility structural theory emphasizes the role that social interaction plays in shaping cultural systems which then impact the thoughts and attitudes of individuals (Wuthnow 1992:9–35). Surveys, interviews and participant observation should be used to assess the impact that adolescent social interaction with like minded parents, clergy and peers has on religious commitment and belief. For example, an ethnographic study including both religious and nonreligious teens could focus on the impact that

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amount and homogeneity of interaction with religious individuals has on commitment. In addition, the content of strong plausibility structures should be assessed. For example, a number of researchers link beliefs emphasizing supernaturalism and particularism with religious commitment (Berger 1967; Glock and Stark 1968; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Finke and Stark 1992). A study needs to explore whether "otherworldly" religious belief systems among young people generate religiosity and if in fact "liberal" religious belief systems hinder commitment. Some scholars suggest that liberal Protestantism spawns secularists when they modernize their belief systems because they lose their ability to promise their adherents meaningful rewards in future otherworldly contexts (Stark and Bainbridge 1985). Others suggest that accommodating religious groups have difficulty selling "religious" brands of therapy, community service and social justice when a host of similar products are offered by "nonreligious" groups (Berger 1969). These suggestions require greater scrutiny among Canadian religious groups generally and adolescents specifically.

d. <u>Adolescent Religious Commitment: Social Learning Theory Revisited</u> Much has been stated in the literature about the link between adolescent religiosity and significant adults such as parents and clergy. However, teens are not passive subjects of adult socialization. Little research to date has addressed the dynamic impact of teenage faith on their elders despite classic

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cautionary notes by Wrong (1961) about the "over-socialized conception of man in modern sociology" and Piaget (1932) about the important role which experience plays in cognitive development and the creative assimilation of new material (Tepperman and Rosenberg 1991: 95). Recent research by Dornbush states that "behaviour by the adolescent often influences the behaviour of the parent so we must suspend judgement on the direction of causation" (Dornbusch 1989:243). An ethnographic study involving parents, religious leaders and peers could best capture the way in which "ultimate meaning systems" are negotiated during the teen years. This perhaps would shed light on present distortions within the adolescent pattern of reflecting adult religious dispositions. In addition, such a study potentially could illuminate the degree to which life cycle development tasks impede and facilitate religious consciousness and behaviour during adolescence.

e. Adolescent Religious Commitment: An Open Systems Approach

Systems theory stresses both the stability and the dynamism of social institutions, through a linkage of conflict and functional perspectives (Roberts 1995:74-75). Religion in the functional sense has the role of bringing meaning to the ultimate problems of human life (Roberts 1995:7). However, today's adolescent faces a dynamic interchange of social forces such as individualism, pluralism, relativism, privatism, liberalism and anti-institutionalism. These forces are potentially secularizing and may conflict with the developing of meaningful transcendant

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realities.

An ethnographic study of a variety of adolescents would be ideal for highlighting differential styles for negotiating this dilemma. Why is it that some youth experiencing these forces, opt for communal values and traditional religious responses while other do not? Such a study would assist in understanding how adolescent worldviews are shaped and the impact this has on attitudes and behaviours both religious and otherwise.

A number of other studies are also needed:

A comparative study which examines the disenchantment that contemporary Canadian youth have with a range of historically central institutions, including the government, school, court system or police could potentially provide insight into the relationship between young people and established institutions more generally. The sociological significance of PTC findings which point to decreased enjoyment and confidence levels in traditional institutions needs assessing. This thesis's findings on organized religion provides a starting point to such a project on adolescence and social change.

Another valuable study would be an investigation of adolescent religiosity as a reflection of the child-rearing practices of a generation of babyboomer parents. One could assess the impact that non-traditional ideas regarding family, women and work[39] have had, particularly on mainline adolescents which has caused these teens to place less value on institutional religion than on a variety of other options.

Another study could focus specifically on the determinants of adolescent religious behaviour. The theoretical model developed by Cornwall (1989) would be helpful for such a project. Cornwall's dimensions of religiosity include influential factors such as group involvment, belief-orthodoxy, religious socialization, religious (affective) commitment and socio-demographic factors. Throughout this thesis a wide range of potential independent variables has been suggested which fall within the Cornwall categories. These include orthodox belief systems emphasizing supernatural realities; positive social interaction with significant adults and religious peers; parental religiosity; church attendance; and social homogeneity within religious networks. Once the utility of these variables has been assessed, religious leaders would have greater knowledge of what modifications are necessary to preclude institutional decline.

As most readers are no doubt aware, a critical issue facing Canadian churches is gender (See, for example, Nason-Clark 1993). Much can be done within religious groups to address patriarchal perceptions and realities. A gender analysis of the findings presented in this thesis deserves full attention and will be addressed in future papers by the author.

In sum, a wide variety of research projects are still needed.

5.5 Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to contribute to an understudied

social phenomenon in Canada, namely the relationship between adolescents and organized religion. The study has clarified what is known to date using what is believed to be Canada's first national survey data on the subject.

This has been a study specifically focusing on one Canadian institution - namely religion. Nonetheless, to the extent that this institution impacts a significant number of Canadians generally and adolescents specifically, the thesis has raised the prospect of Canadian social change and resulting consequences. Is there social and personal loss when an institution that has traditionally impacted Canadian life is increasingly marginalized? While some observers who do not value organized religion may view the thesis findings as good news, in the minds of other they are sobering. It is a social fact that social institutions cannot survive without capturing the imagination of a younger generation. Yet recent adolescent patterns appear to point to a situation of ongoing religious disinterest and continuing institutional decay for many religious groups.

Some evidence suggests that Canadian social norms and behaviours will be affected as these patterns continue. This state of affairs has many religionists wondering if independent variables can be manipulated to regenerate adolescent religious interest.

This thesis has offered no quick fixes for church leaders. However it has offered both sociologist and religionist a window into a wide range of Canadian adolescent social perceptions and behaviours. In addition, it has presented a degree of clarity to

the present relationship between adolescents and institutional religion. Furthermore a plea has been made for further innovative study using this thesis' findings as a launching pad to further sociological understanding in such areas as plausibility structure, network and social learning theory.

In sum, both those who have a substantitive interest in ultimate realities and those wishing to further sociological theory have the potential to benefit from ongoing research in Canadian adolescent religiosity. This thesis throws out a challenge for academics to more seriously pursue an understanding of this social phenomenon.

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ENDNOTES

1. The description "inverted pyramid" originally was used to describe the American situation and was borrowed from Pierre Hegy's (1994) unpublished paper *The Transmission of Faith and the Babyboomers*.

2. The term "demographic weakness" is attributed to Benton Johnson in a reference to American mainline Protestants (Roof and McKinney 1992:154).

3. This section is indebted to R.W. Bibby's "Secularization and Change" in W.E. Hewitt ed. *The Sociology of Religion, A Canadian Focus* (Hewitt 1993:65-81).

4. Spirituality, according to Naisbitt and Aburdene's thinking, is a more inclusive concept than organized religion (Bibby 1993[a]:96). However, Naisbitt and Aburdene argue that one of the main expressions of spirituality is, and will continue to be, renewal movements within mainline churches and continued vitality within conservative Protestant groups.

5. See Dean R. Hoge, Benton Johnson and Donald A. Luidens *Vanishing Boundaries* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994).

6. A concept coined in Theodore Caplow et al. *Middletown Families: Fifty Years of Change and Continuity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982:12,99).

7. See William F. Starr "The Changing Campus Scene: From Church to Coffeehouse," in *Never Trust a God Over Thirty,* ed. Albert H. Friedlander (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967:60).

8. See Jeffery Hadden, *The Gathering Storm in the Churches: The Widening Gap Between Clergy and Laity,* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969).

9. For an assessment of the "groundbreaking" impact Finke and Stark's (1992) book is presently having in sociology of religion thinking see the 1995 reviews by Eva M. Hamberg, Ted G. Jelen, and Darren E. Sherkat in *Review of Religious Research* 36:313-319.

10. Bibby and Posterski make the point that religious preference of teenagers has often been given by adults to census takers. It seems that in PTC data, teens with parents who claim "residual" religious affiliation show a tendency to show themselves as religious nones (Bibby and Posterski 1985:204). This tendency appears to be responsible for PTC 1984 and 1992 increasingly

declining national percentages (when compared with census figures) for mainline Protestants and to a lesser degree Catholics.

11. The PTC92 measure of teen clergy interaction is "Who do you find yourself most likely to turn to when you are making a decision in the following areas?" Eight areas are given and the options to turn to include parents, friends, school counsellors ministers/ priests or no one. This measure is vague because it does not measure amount nor closeness of interaction.

12. For discussions of systems theory see Keith A. Roberts, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (3rd ed. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing, 1995:51—81) or Marvin Olsen *The Process of Social Organization: Power in Social Systems* (2nd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1978).

13. To better understand the logic of network theory and plausibility structure theory the author recommends the following resources respectively: John Scott, *Social Network Analysis* (London: Sage Publication, 1991); and Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann *The Social Construction of Reality A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1966).

14. The number of cases from 1992 PTC data for sub-classifications are as follows:
Group (numbers/numbers attending relig. services monthly or more)
Roman Catholics Outside Quebec (740/399)
Roman Catholics — Quebec (512/147)
Mainline Protestants (345/143)
Conservative Protestants (232/176)
Religious Nones (730/na)

Corresponding estimated maximum sampling errors at various sample sizes at the 95% confidence level are as follows:
Sample Size (maximum error)
1000 (4 percentage points)
600 (5 percentage points)
400 (6 percentage points)
250 (7 percentage points)
200 (8 percentage points)
100 (14 percentage points)

15. Mainline Protestants included adolescents who identified themselves as Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian or United.

16. Conservative Protestants included those adolescents who identified themselves as Adventist, Baptist, Brethren, Christian, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Christian Reform, Church of Christ, Evangelical Free, Full Gospel, Mennonite, Nazarene, Non-Denominational, Pentecostal or Salvation Army.

17. David Nock (1994) gives an excellent Canadian assessment of the differences between these religious groupings.

18. Religious groups with fewer than 200 PTC 92 cases were eliminated from sub-category analysis. These groups include: Greek Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, Unitarian, Jew, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Native.

19. Levin, Talyor and Chatters' (1995) measure of religious involvement comprises of organizational, nonorganizational, and subjective religiosity which matches Davidson and Knudsen's (1977) measure of religious commitment comprising of religious participation in worship or other group sponsored events, religious participation in devotional activities and religious consciousness respectively.

20. Average annual adolescent hours spent in various social activities was calculated as follows:

School - calculated at 40wks, 6hrs per day and 5 days a week. (40 x 6 x 5 = 1200 [yearly school hrs].)

TV - calculated from PTC 1992 data as follows: 1.8% of youth reporting 9 hrs. of TV daily; 1.6% reporting 8 hrs. of TV daily; 1.6% reporting 7 hrs. of TV daily; 4.3% reporting 6 hrs. of TV daily; 9.1% reporting 5 hrs. of TV daily; 15.9% reporting 4 hrs. of TV daily; 21.9% reporting 3 hrs. of TV daily; 26.3% reporting 2 hrs. of TV daily; 16% reporting 1 hr of TV daily and 1.5% reporting 0 hrs. of TV daily. This calculates to an average 3.1 hrs of TV per youth per day or 1129 hrs. yearly. (1.8 x 9 = 16.2; 1.6 x 8 = 12.8; 1.6 x 7 = 11.2; 4.3 x 6 = 25.8; 9.1 x 5 = 45.4; 15.9 x 4 = 63.6; 21.9 x 3 = 65.7; 26.3 x 2 = 52.6; 16 x 1 = 16; 1.5 x 0 = 0; for a mean of 3.09 [ave. daily TV hrs.] x 365 [days] = 1129.3 [ave. yearly TV hrs.]).

Job - calculated from PTC 1992 data as follows: .8% reporting approx. 35 hrs. on job weekly; 5.3% reporting approx. 25 hrs. on job weekly; 7.8% reporting approx. 17 hrs. on job weekly; 11.7% reporting approx. 12.5 hrs. on job weekly; 14.6% reporting approx. 7.5 hrs. on job weekly; 6.7% reporting approx. 2.5 hrs. on job weekly; and 52% reporting no job. This calculates to an average 5.7 hrs. on job weekly or 296.4 hrs yearly. (.8 x 35 = 28; 5.3 x 25 = 132.5; 7.8 x 17 = 132.6; 11.7 x 12.5 = 146.25; 14.6 x 7.5 = 109.5; 6.7 x 2.5 = 16.75; 52 x 0 = 0; for a mean of 5.7 [ave. weekly job hrs.] x 52 [weeks] = 296.4 [ave yearly job hrs.]).

Religious Service Attendance - calculated from PTC 1992 interval data as follows: 18.2% reporting "weekly or more" attendance; as interval data "weekly or more" (resembling approximate PC80, PC85, and PC90 [several times weekly/weekly-almost weekly] ratios) is approx. 61 services yearly with religious group totals as follows:

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Conservative Protestants and Other Religions at 69 services, Other Protestants at 62 services; Roman Catholics, Mainline Protestants and Religion Unknowns at 57 services; and Religious Nones at 52 services yearly. 8.4% reported attending "2-3 times a month" or 30 services yearly. 5.5% reported "monthly" attendance or 12 services yearly. 15.1% reported "several times a year" which has been approximated at 6 services yearly. 28.9% reported attending "yearly or less" which has been approximated at 1 service yearly. This calculates to an average adolescent mean of 15.5 religious services yearly. Assuming that on average religious services are 1.5 hrs, each youth on average would attend approx. 23 hrs. at religious services yearly. (18.2 x 61 = 1110; 8.4 x 30 = 252; 5.5 x 12 = 66; 15.1 x 6 = 91; 28.9 x 1 = 29; 23.9 x 0 = 0; for a mean of 15.48 [ave. religious services attended yearly] x 1.5 [hrs. per religious service] = 23.22 hrs [ave. religious service hours attended yearly]).

21. The decrease in self reported religious commitment was experienced entirely within Christianity. From 1984 - 1992 the percentage of teens which reported commitment to a religion other than Christianity rose from 2.2% to 2.5%.

22. To determine percentage of population identifying with religious group entire PTC 1984 and 1992 sample were used. Totals were as follows:

Relig. Grouping:	1984 % of pop.	1992 % of pop.
Groups reported in Table 6	83	72
Other Prot.Catholics	4	3
Other Religions	2	8
Religion Unknown	11	17
Total	100	100

1992 average religious service hours was calculated by converting religious service ordinal data into interval yearly data. For example "monthly" attendance equalled 12. (See endnote #20 for entire list of interval conversion figures.) Religious group means were then multiplied by a 1.5 hour approximate service length to produce the average adolescent religious group hour figures listed in Table Six.

23. Affiliation figures for mainline Protestant groups appear to be a reflection of a marked decrease in affiliation of United Church teens relative to others. 1984 - 1992 comparisons are as follows:

Mainline Denomination	1984 % of pop.	1992 % of pop.
United	9	3
Anglican	7	5
Lutheran	2	1
Presbyterian	2	1

24. Religious disposition variables for religious unknowns appear to be more closely correlated to mainline Protestants than to other religious groups.

25. This critique is based on the church-sect distinction originating with Max Weber (1963) who differentiated between (1) exclusionary "sects" where members must meet certain conditions such as adherence to particular doctrines and practices (e.g. belief in salvation through Christ alone, adult baptism) and (2) inclusive "churches" who de-emphasize conformity and encourage the participation of all members of society regardless of personal commitment level. Ernst Troeltsch and Richard Niebuhr (1957) are also noted for church sect typologies however their distinctions are theological as well as sociological (Roberts 1995:202-214).

26. The attendance level monthly or more was chosen because of the bimodal distribution of church membership (as indicated in Chapter Three). 1992 figures show approximately 30% of teens clustering around weekly attendance (between "weekly+" and "monthly") and 70% of teens clustering around yearly attendance (between "several times a year" and "never".

27. Excluded from measures of Christian commitment are five RC's, two RC's Que., two mainline Prots. and one conservative Prot. who stated "I am committed to a religion other than Christianity." If these were included and "religiously committed" rather than "committed Christian" became the concept being tapped, percentages in Table Eight would vary by no more than 1 percent.

28. Table Eight commitment categories are as follows:

Committed Christian include those who reported "I am a committed Christian" while not a committed Christian includes those who reported "I have some interest in religion but do not consider myself as very religious".

Values religious group involvement includes those who reported religious group involvement as "very important" or "somewhat important while doesn't value religious group involvement includes those who reported religious group involvement as "not very important" or "not important at all".

29. See for example (Roberts 1995:15-16).

30. 41% of attending and 36% of non-attending United Church adolescents reported definitely believing all world religions were equally valid. Attending Catholic youth outpaced non-attending Catholic youth 28% to 24% on the same variable.

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31. The religious commitment variable used for this table was a four point ordinal index created from (0,1) dummy variables for the three PTC 1992 commitment variables.

32. Of course it cannot be assumed that correlations from teen data will remain constant into adult life, but correlations can at minimum provide a starting point for research into the consequences of religious commitment among Canadian adolescents.

33. The jury is still out regarding whether or not there are alternatives to churches as instillers of interpersonal values. For an article suggesting there are none see "Who Will Teach Our Children Shared Values?" (Bibby[b] 1994).

34. See also Bibby and Posterski's (1985) *The Emerging Generation,* and (1992) *Teen Trends* which were written from PTC 1984 and 1992 data respectively. Although both books address the topic of adolescent religion, this thesis provides analysis not previously recorded.

35. These items are listed from the author's own participation in conservative Protestant youth groups and nine years as an interdenominational youth leader working with significant amounts of conservative Protestant youth.

36. PTC84 gamma correlations for religious service attendance and other religious participation variables were as follows:

Variable	Can.	RCNQ	RCQ	MP	CP	None
Private Prayer	.52	.41	.40	.42	.63	.47
Private Bible Reading	.58	.48	.40	.59	.79	.53
Relig. Youth Group Attendance	.66	.56	.50	.78	.86	.79

Groups listed above are Canada, Roman Catholics outside Quebec, Roman Catholics inside Quebec, Mainline Protestants, Conservative Protestants and Religious Nones respectively.

37. Some explanations presently given for the relatively high commitment levels among conservative Protestants include:
a) sects have a "more flexible organization and technique" (Mann 1948:153).
b) the elaborate conservative Protestant subculture limits nonreligious social options (Balmer 1993).
c) mainline groups have weakened plausibility structures (Stark and Bainbridge 1985).
d) conservative Protestants are tapping into the beginnings of the Sorokin style "religious revival of the twenty first millennium" (Naisbitt and Aburdene 1990).
e) present religiosity measures have a low-church conservative Protestant bias. (This critique came from some mainline religious youth workers who were shown the thesis tables).

These and other explanations of apparent conservative Protestant success require further investigation.

38. In his book *The Struggle for America's Soul*, Robert Wuthnow makes a plea for the involvement of academics from conservative and mainline Christian groups to assist in the development of mutual tolerance. His full quote is listed below.

"There is a profound cultural gap between evangelical conservative and liberal Christians. In addition to the fact that the two differ in their views of the Bible, in their beliefs about God, and in the kind of churches they attend, they also are divided as we have seen, by a high level of mutual suspicion, prejudice and name calling.
    If one views the situation from the standpoint of Christian principles, however, one can only decry the ill will, the absence of brotherly and sisterly love and the prevalence of dogmatism and bigotry that characterize present relations between conservative and liberal Christians. Scholars on both sides who care about the Christian virtue of harmony and reconciliation could clearly take a more active role in understanding and helping to mitigate these conflicts" (Wuthnow 1989 :154).

The thesis' author concurs with Wuthnow's analysis and endorses his suggested course of action.

39. See also Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993: 161-165 or Landon Y. Jones, *Great Expectations* (New York: Ballantine, 1980:241-254).

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