The Effect of Religious References on Identity Salience and Social Behaviors

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THE EFFECT OF RELIGIOUS REFERENCES ON IDENTITY SALIENCE AND SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

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Jessica Marie Shenberger-Trujillo

2014
Dedication

For my parents, Tom and Kate Shenberger. With your unconditional support and love, all things are possible.
THE EFFECTS OF RELIGIOUS REFERENCES ON IDENTITY SALIENCE AND SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

by

JESSICA MARIE SHENBERGER-TRUJILLO, M.A.

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

In the aftermath of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks on U.S. soil (e.g., the Boston bombings) researchers began to empirically investigate the conditions under which religion can lead to supporting or committing violence. The contradictory findings for the effects of religious references on both positive and negative behavior call for a closer examination of individual or contextual factors that influence the effect of religion on social behaviors. To address these contradictory findings and to identify the underlying mechanism involved, Study 1 examined the extent to which god-related or church-related religious references impact the salience of individual or group identities. Study 2 served two goals: (1) to test the extent exposure to religious references increases self-ratings of attitude certainty and ratings of the extent to which one’s stance is the correct stance (2) to test under what conditions the influence of religious references will lead to increased support for collective action or over-claiming of religious knowledge. Results suggest that religious references, in general, produce greater group identity salience. The current research develops our understanding of how religion influences individuals’ engagement in social behaviors. Specifically, we have now identified group identity salience as one mechanism through which religion may influence social behaviors.
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**Introduction**

In recent decades the world has witnessed instances of religious-based violence. Events such as 9/11 are extreme examples of religious based terrorism. In the aftermath of 9/11 and other tragic terrorist attacks on U.S. soil (e.g., the Boston bombings) researchers began investigating the conditions under which religion leads to supporting or committing violence (Bushman, Ridge, Das, Key, & Busath, 2007; Saroglou, Corneille, & Van Cappellen, 2009). In the past decade, the field of Social Psychology has placed an increased attention on the investigation of how religion leads to either prosocial behaviors or conflict.

To date, the literature on religious references and social behaviors points to two discrepant findings. On the one hand, research has demonstrated that under certain conditions, religious references can lead to increased positive social behavior. For example, Pichon, Boccato, and Saroglou (2007) found that individuals primed with religious references displayed more charitable intentions than those primed with non-religious references. Similarly, Shariff and Norenzayan (2007) found that individuals who primed with religious references behaved more generously than did those individuals who were primed with neutral references. These findings in the literature support the hypothesis that under certain circumstances religious references have positive influences on social behaviors (e.g., Saroglou, Delpierre, & Dernelle, 2004; Sosis & Ruffle, 2004). Intuitively, many individuals would expect exposure to religious references would lead to increased positive behaviors.

On the other hand, research also demonstrates that under certain conditions religious references can lead to negative social behaviors. Bushman et al. (2007) found that individuals who read a passage said to be from a religious text that called for punishment behaved more consistently with the passage by increasing punishment towards others, as compared to
individuals who read an argument from a non-religious text. Similarly, Van Beest and Williams (2011) found that participants who read an exclusion-framed Bible passage were less charitable than who read the non-exclusion framed Bible passage. These findings show that under certain circumstances, religious references are related to negative social behaviors.

These seemingly contradictory findings for the effects of religious references on both positive and negative behaviors call for a closer examination of individual or contextual factors that may influence this relationship. For example, researchers have explored the individual differences that may lead one to endorse suicide bombings. Ginges, Hansen, and Norenzayan (2009) found that individuals who frequented religious services more reported higher support for suicide bombings. Notably, Ginges et al. (2009) also reported no relationship between independent prayer and support for suicide bombings. This suggests that there is a social component that impacts the relationship between religion and support for violence. These correlational findings provided a foundation for empirical research that further examines the interactive effect of religion and social influences on negative social behaviors. While these findings are interesting, we note that these findings are correlational and do not imply a causal relationship.

In an experimental setting, researchers tested the link between religious references and submissiveness through the use of a lexical decision task (Saroglou et al., 2009). Results indicated that individuals who were primed with religious references more readily accessed submissive related references than individuals who were primed with non-religious references. Van Cappellen, Cornelle, Colis, and Saroglou (2011) tested the effects of religious references on the extent to which individuals follow suggestions of others. Results demonstrated that individuals higher in the individual trait of submissiveness and primed with religious references
behaved more consistently with suggestions of others. These findings demonstrate that various factors (e.g., submissiveness) influence the extent to which religious references impact social behaviors.

**Program of Research**

Through our program of research, we seek to determine the effect religious references on individual social behaviors. We conducted a series of studies examining the effect of religious references as primed by either a subtle sentence completion task or an explicit imagery-based writing task on the effect of decision-making, risk-taking, and legislation endorsement.

**The Effect of Religious References on Decision Making**

In our first test of the effect of religious references on social behaviors we primed individuals with religious references using a subtle sentence scramble task. Participants were randomly assigned to complete a religious or non-religious sentence scramble task in which they received a total of 10 sets of five words. Participants were instructed to remove one unneeded word from each of the sets and then arrange the remaining four words to create a complete sentence (adapted from Srull & Wyer, 1979). The religious prime consisted of one religious word (e.g., blessing or communion) in five of 10 word sets. Participants who were exposed to the non-religious prime saw 10 non-religious word sets. After participants completed the priming task they met as a group to discuss two potential research centers for the university. Participants were told that two research centers had been proposed (i.e., a renewable energy research center and a child development research center) but due to a budget cut they would be asked for their recommendations for funding redistribution. One individual in the group discussion, our trained research confederate, acted as a participant and provided a specific recommendation for funding (i.e., always in favor of giving 70% of funding to one center).
Results demonstrated that individuals first primed with religious references made funding suggestions more consistent with the confederate’s suggestions ($M = 61.92, SD = 14.90$) than individuals primed with non-religious references ($M = 53.91, SD = 20.97$), $F(1, 71) = 4.77, p = .032$. This finding shows that individuals primed with religious references are more susceptible to the influence of others. In particular, this research demonstrates that those exposed to religious references make decisions more consistent with the suggestions of others.

**The Effect of Religious References on Risk-Taking**

Our first test of the interactive effect of religious references and social influence on behaviors demonstrated that exposure to religious references and social influences impact social behaviors. The broader goal of this program of research is to better understand how religious ideation may lead to violence. To approximate this general phenomenon in a local context we tested for the effect of religious imagery and social influence on risky behaviors (Shenberger, Smith, & Zárate, 2013). Participants were exposed to regionally culturally relevant religious imagery (i.e., la Virgen de Guadalupe or Santa Muerte) or to non-religious imagery (i.e., Frida Kahlo or la Malinche) and were asked to write three to four paragraphs on how they felt the individual represented in the image has impacted modern behaviors. The aim of this task was to generate reflection related to religious or non-religious themes.

After participants completed the writing task they were instructed to complete a Balloon Analogue Risk Task with another participant (our trained research confederate). The pair (participant and confederate) was told that the goal of the balloon task (adapted from Lejuez, Read, Kahler, Richards, Ramsey, & Stuart, 2002) was to maximize the points earned through each of the balloon trials. For each click they made the balloon increased in size by one inflation and they earned money in their balloon bank. The participant chose a stopping point for inflation
for each balloon and all earned money for that trial was added to their total bank. The goal of the task was to earn as much as possible for each balloon trial without over inflating the balloon.

The participants were instructed to work together. Depending on random assignment to condition, participants were exposed to a confederate bias (i.e., a confederate who urged “keep going”) or no confederate bias (i.e., a confederate who would respond “it’s up to you”). To test the hypothesis that individuals primed with religious images would follow the suggestions to engage in risk-taking behavior more than individuals primed with non-religious references as a function of prime valence, we conducted a 2 (Prime Type: religious prime vs. non-religious prime) X 2 (Confederate Bias: risk-taking suggestions vs. no suggestions) analysis of variance with the number of over-inflations on the balloon task as our dependent variable.

Results demonstrated that individuals exposed to religious reference made more over-inflations on the balloon task ($M = 16.84, SD = 7.02$) than individuals primed with non-religious references ($M = 13.96, SD = 6.69$), $F (1, 94) = 8.29, p = .005$. Additionally, individuals exposed to a confederate who suggested increased risk taking made more over-inflations on the balloon task ($M = 20.53, SD = 5.70$) than individuals exposed to a confederate who made no suggestions for increased risk ($M = 10.80, SD = 4.27$), $F (2, 93) = 86.73, p < .001$. Results support a two-way interaction for prime type and confederate bias, $F (2, 93) = 8.07, p = .006$.

We followed up the two-way interaction for prime type by confederate bias to determine the conditions under which prime type and confederate bias influences over-inflations on the balloon task. Individuals exposed to non-religious imagery and confederate bias ($M = 18.31, SD = 7.72$) made more over-inflations on the BART than those exposed to non-religious imagery and no confederate bias ($M = 11.79, SD = 4.80$), $t (93) = 4.28, p < .001$. Also, individuals exposed to religious imagery and confederate bias made more over-inflations ($M = 21.91, SD =$
3.75) than those exposed to religious imagery and no confederate bias ($M = 9.44$, $SD = 2.96$), $t(93) = 8.69$, $p < .001$. Most notably, we found that the effect of confederate suggestion for increased risk taking was greater when individuals were exposed to religious imagery than to non-religious imagery, $t(93) = 2.36$, $p < .021$. This study demonstrated that confederate suggestions influenced the extent to which individuals engaged in risk-taking on the balloon task and, as predicted, confederate suggestions increased risk-taking resulted in *more* risky stopping points for inflations on the balloon task for individuals exposed to religious imagery as compared to individuals exposed to non-religious imagery.

**The Effect of Religious References on Endorsement of Legislation**

Our research to date has investigated the effects of religious references and social influences on decision-making. Across two studies, we have found that individuals primed with subtle or explicit religious references will make decisions more consistent with the suggestions of others. This finding has been consistent in an abstract funding allocation task as well as a risk task. To further develop our understanding of under what conditions religious references lead individuals to engage in violent behaviors, we tested for the effect of religious imagery and social influences on endorsement of violence based legislation (Shenberger & Zárate, 2013). Specifically, participants were primed with religious or non-religious imagery (la Virgin de Guadalupe or Frida Kahlo, respectively) and asked to write three to four paragraphs on how the individual presented in the images has impacted modern behaviors (adapted from Shenberger, Smith, & Zárate, 2013). Participants then were asked to consider three social issues of the day: the use of drones in the Middle East, the use of torture in interrogation, and the enforcement of sanctions on North Korea. Participants first read a general description about the social issues at hand and then met as a group to discuss their opinions on legislation related to the social issue.
In the group discussion task, a trained research confederate posed as a participant and made explicit recommendations for the endorsement of each social issue (i.e., strong support of legislation that would allow for increased use of drones in the Middle East, increased use of torture in interrogation, and increased sanctions on North Korea). After each social issue discussion participants were asked to individually rate their level of support for legislation on the three social issues. Additionally, we evaluated the participant’s attitude strength (e.g., self ratings of attitude certainty, correctness, importance) and the individual’s ratings of moral convictions regarding three social issues (e.g., the extent to which the individual identified that the social issue at hand was related to their core moral beliefs).

We predicted that individuals primed with religious imagery would make legislation recommendations more consistent with the confederate than those individuals primed with non-religious imagery. The goal of this study was to test the extent to which religious references and social influence could lead individuals to take an extreme and potentially violent stance on three current issues of debate. While completing this study, however, we encountered an unexpected issue. A notable number of individuals (approximately 15) identified themselves as active or retired military during the social issues group discussion. These individuals changed the intended manipulation of our confederate social influence. Specifically, military-experienced participants shared personal stories of manning drones, exposure to torture, and other concerns about going back to war. As such, individuals who were in an experimental session with an individual who self identified as military were excluded from analyses.

We conducted a one-way analysis of variance to test for the effect of prime (i.e., religious or non-religious imagery) on endorsement of social issue legislation. Results indicated that participants did not vary in their support of legislation as a function of prime, $F(1, 55) = .32, p =$
As suggested by previous research findings we tested for the effect of exposure to religion on endorsement of social issues legislation (Ginges et al., 2009). We found that religious service attendance was related to endorsement of legislation such that more frequent religious service attendance (during childhood and current) was related to higher levels of endorsement of legislation (i.e., increase use of drones in the Middle East, increase use of torture in interrogation, and increase of sanctions on North Korea), $r = .248, p = .05$. Individuals’ exposure to independent prayer was unrelated to social issue legislation endorsement, $r = .06, p = .66$.

Research shows that the extent to which individuals feel certain about their stance on a social issue is related to greater levels of endorsement of violence (e.g., Shaw, Quezada, and Zárate, 2011). For this reason, we tested for the effect of attitude certainty on social issues legislation endorsement. We found that increased ratings of the extent to which the individual believed they were correct in their stance on the social issue was related to higher levels endorsement of social issue legislation, $r = .28, p = .041$.

In sum, these findings allowed us to identify variables that may be related endorsement of violence-based legislation. The correlations discussed provide a starting point for empirical research as we acknowledge that these correlations are informative but the causal relationship must be tested. Moving forward, we know that exposure to frequent religious service attendance and the extent to which individuals feel they are certain and correct about their stance, may be related to the extent to which individuals endorse controversial legislation.

**Contribution of Current Research**

Our findings to date call for further investigation of the effect of religious references on social behaviors. Our research has narrowed in on the effect that exposure to religious references have on the extent to which individuals are susceptible to the influences of others when engaged
in decision making. The current two studies examined (1) the extent to which specific types of religious references make salient group or individual identities and (2) the extent to which religious references influences one’s attitude ratings, support for collective action, and claims to religious knowledge.

Our previous research findings demonstrate that individual prayer and religious community activity exposure differentially impact behavior. Whereas individual prayer was not related to support for controversial social issues, individuals with increased exposure to religious community activities also expressed increased support for legislation related to drones, torture, and sanctions. Individuals can participate in religion in two ways. Individuals may engage in individual based activities such as individual prayer. Conversely, individuals may engage in group based activities such as religious service attendance. We hypothesized that individual exposure to religion or group exposure to religion may differentially impact individual or group salience.

According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), individuals define themselves through various social categories (e.g., gender, age, or occupation). The individual’s use of social categories is influenced by social context, which make salient one’s individual (i.e., individualized; see Pulham 1993) or group (i.e., interpersonal; see Turner et al., 1987) identity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). In previous research, (Brewer & Gardner, 1996) group identity has been primed by tasks that require participants to circle all pronouns within a provided text (i.e., the circling of “we” to prime a collective identity). The current research used a similar task as a dependent measure. To this end, we provided 20 sentences, each with one space for a missing pronoun. The participants were asked to select a pronoun from a word bank that included collective (e.g., “our”) and individual (e.g., “my”) pronouns to examine the extent to which
exposure to religious references influences the salience of individual or group identity. Additionally, participants completed a Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), which allows individuals to freely describe themselves in twenty statements. Both the pronoun sentence completion task and the Twenty Statements Test were used as measures of the salience of the participant’s individual or group identity.

Study 2 examined the impact of religious references on attitudes and social behaviors. Attitudes are generally defined as positive or negative evaluations of particular objects (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). Researchers identify several indices of the strength of one’s attitudes. Attitude extremity (i.e., the extent to which an individual supports or opposes an issue), attitude importance (i.e., the extent to which one rates an issue important), attitude centrality (i.e., the extent to which one’s attitude is related to how one views oneself), attitude certainty (i.e., the extent to which one is certain about their attitude) all are key components of one’s attitude (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005). Toner, Leary, Asher, and Jongman-Sereno (2013) argue that another index of attitude strength is attitude superiority (i.e., the extent to which one views their attitude as more correct that those who hold opposing attitudes). Toner et al. (2013) found that individual’s attitude extremity is related to ratings of attitude superiority. These findings are consistent with our findings that increased attitude extremity is related to increased ratings of attitude certainty and correctness.

The current research included two social issues (i.e., the use of drones and the use of torture in interrogation) to test for the effect of exposure to religious references (i.e., our religious prime) on attitude extremity, certainty, correctness, and superiority. As supported by previous findings individuals have expressed interest in these social issues (e.g., Shenberger & Zárate, 2013). For this reason, these two social issues were incorporated into the current study.
Another key contribution of Study 2 is that it provides an examination of the effect of exposure to god-related or church-related religious references on social behaviors. The research to date does not differentiate between church-related and god-related religious primes. Studies that incorporate word-based priming methods use words that may be perceived as church-related (e.g., “priest” from Pichon et al., 2007) or god-related (e.g., “god” from Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). The literature generally groups these two distinct religion based concepts under one category for use in religious priming tasks. Researchers argue that an over-generalized approach to religious priming may produce the inconsistencies in behavioral outcomes as reported earlier in this paper (e.g., Preston, Ritter, & Hernandez, 2010). We, too, hypothesize that the generalized approach to religious priming may lead to what appear to be discrepant findings. At this point in our program of research, it is critical that we test more specific definitions of religious stimuli. To this end, the current research sought to tease apart themes within currently used religious primes. All previous research only coded for the affective valence of religious stimuli (e.g., neutral, positive, or negative). We are moving towards coding for specific religious themes embedded within the primes (i.e., church or god).

To test for the differential behavioral outcomes related to exposure to church-related and god-related religious references, we tested the extent to which exposure to religious references impact the extent to which individuals support collective action and one’s claim (or over-claim) of Bible knowledge. We predicted that church-related primes increase group identity salience and impact the extent to which one will support collective action. Conversely, we predicted that god-related primes increase individual identity salience (as tested in Study 1) and impact individuals’ estimation of knowledge related to religion. To test for the differential effect of church-related or god-related religious references, these two dependent variables were measured.
Because the use of drones and the use of torture in interrogation may be considered moral issues, we also tested for a mediated relationship for the impact of religion on support for collective action. Collective action is defined as a collaborative effort towards a group goal (Zaal, Van Laar, Stahl, Ellemers, & Derks, 2011). If group identity is made salient, Social Identity Theory would suggest that individuals will act to serve goals consistent with the salient group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Therefore, we predicted that exposure to church-related religious references lead to greater salience of group identity and a greater support of collective action.

Individuals have various levels of familiarity with concepts related to current events, the arts, philosophy, and religion. Researchers (Paulhus, Harms, Bruce, & Lysy, 2003) find differences between individuals’ true familiarity with a concept and claimed familiarity with a concept. The Bible Over-Claiming Questionnaire is one method to measure the difference between an individual’s actual and claimed knowledge related to Bible knowledge (i.e., an over-claiming effect) and is an index of social desirability (Jones & Neria, 2013). Researchers have found (e.g., Trimble, 1997) a positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity (an internally motivated faith) and social desirability. We predict that exposure to god-related religious references will lead to greater salience of individual identity and social desirability, and an over-estimation of one’s Bible knowledge.

**Focus of Current Experiments**

In sum, what is not clear from previous findings is the route by which religious references impact attitude strength and support for collective action. To examine the driving mechanism involved, we first investigated the effect of religious references on group or individual identity salience (Study 1) and then tested the extent to which religious references impact (1) attitude
strength, (2) support for collective action, and (3) over-claiming of Bible knowledge (Study 2). The results of the current research give further insight into the factors that underlie religion’s impact on social identity, as well as support for action and claims to religious knowledge. These findings are particularly relevant for research on how religion may lead to negative social outcomes.

Pretesting of Priming Materials

To test the extent to which individuals perceived the words used within the sentence scramble task (our prime) as church-related or god-related, we surveyed 15 students and asked them to rate 14 words related to church (e.g., church, priest, sermon) and 14 words related to god (e.g., holy, messiah, trinity). For each set of words, participants were asked to rate the extent to which the word was related to church or god on a scale from 0 “not at all related” to 10 “very related.” Participants were then asked to categorize the words into two columns (one for church and one for god) in which each word could only be selected once. For the selection of words to be included in our sentence scramble task, we chose those words rated most related to church or god and which were consistently placed in the respective grouping columns. As such, five words were selected for the church-related sentence scramble task (i.e., church, pew, chapel, priest, and sacrament) and five words were selected for the god-related sentence scramble task (i.e., soul, faith, heaven, miracle, and salvation).

Study 1

Methods

Participants. Participants were 110 introductory psychology students at the University of Texas at El Paso. Students were on average 20 years in age ($SD = 3.46$). The majority of participants were female (70.8%) and approximately 82.7% of all participants were Catholic or
other Christian faiths. Students were recruited via participant recruitment software, Sona-Systems. To determine the needed sample size, a power analysis was conducted using GPower (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). That analysis revealed that approximately 115 participants are needed to test for mean differences ($\alpha = .05$, $\beta = .80$, $f^2 = .104^1$).

**Design.** The design of our study was a 2 (Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) X 2(Identity type: group vs. individual) between subjects design with use of “I” or “we” pronouns in a sentence completion worksheet and responses to the Twenty Statements Test as our dependent variables of interest.

**Materials and Procedure.** Participants were randomly assigned to one of four priming tasks: god-related religious (group), church-related religious (individual), non-religious (group) and non-religious (individual) sentence scramble task (see Appendix B). For this priming task, participants unscrambled 10 sentences by removing one unneeded word and rearranging the remaining words to create a complete sentence. Depending on condition, the sentences contained god-related (e.g., heaven and salvation), church-related (e.g., church and pew), non-religious (e.g., fort and hammer), or non-religious group (e.g., group or us) words. After participants completed the sentence scramble task, participants completed a fill in the blank worksheet using a word bank that includes individual or group pronouns. (i.e., I, me, my, us, we, our). The 20 sentences were content neutral and allowed the participant to freely choose a pronoun for use (see Appendix C). For example, the participant had the option of completing the sentence “______ will go home” with either “I” or “we.” Once participants completed the sentence completion task, participants completed the Twenty Statements Test (Kuhn &

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1 The effect size used for power analysis was obtained Shenberger et al. (2010) which used a similar sentence scramble task.
McPartland, 1954) (Appendix D), and then completed a demographic survey (e.g., gender, age, exposure to religion, and political affiliation) (Appendix A).

The current study addressed the prediction that exposure to religious references lead to increased individual or group identity salience. Specifically, we predicted that exposure to church-related religious references increase salience of group identity (i.e., an increase in use of “we” pronouns selected in the paragraph completion task or greater proportion of group statements in the Twenty Statement Test) and exposure to god-related religious references increase the salience of individual identity (i.e., an increase in use of “I” pronouns selected in the statement completion task or greater proportion of individual statements in the Twenty Statement Test).

Results

Sentence Completion Task. To prepare for data analyses, we first coded the responses on the sentence completion task. For the sentence completion task, participants were able to respond with one of 6 pronoun options. Group related pronouns were coded with a value of 1 (i.e., we, us, our) and individual related pronouns were coded with a value of 0 (i.e., I, me, my). We then summed across the total of 20 sentence completion items and divided this sum by 20. The resulting proportion provides an indication of the number of group pronouns used to the total number of sentences in the task. It was the case that all participants selected at least one group pronoun in the Sentence Completion Task. As such, no participant received a score of less than 1 out of the 20 total items. The created proportion is labeled “groupness” for the interpretation of results. For example, if in 6 of the twenty statements an individual selected a group-pronoun, they would receive a total of 6/20, which would result in a groupness ratio of
.30. In this example, this individual’s response would be considered low on groupness in comparison to an individual who made 15/20 group statements (a groupness ratio of .75).

We also ran a principal components analysis on the twenty sentence completion items to verify that the items all load on to one factor. We found five of the items loaded on poorly onto the rest of the items (i.e., items 6, 8, 10, 2, and 15). As such, we removed those five items and created a new Sentence Completion Task composite score by summing across the remaining 15 items and dividing by 15. The following analyses were run with both the 20 item scale and the 15 item scale. Because the results did not vary as a function of scale version (15 or 20 items) the 20 item scale analyses are reported below.

To test the prediction that participants primed with church-related religious references would exhibit greater group identity than participants primed with god-related religious reference, we then conducted a 2(Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) X 2(Identity type: group vs. individual) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the proportion of group pronouns (“groupness”) selected in the sentence completion task. Prime type (church-related or god-related) impacted identity salience, $F(1, 108) = 3.37, p = .058$, $\eta^2 = .04$, such that individuals primed with religious references responded with greater groupness on the sentence completion task ($M = 0.59$, $SD = 0.13$) than individuals primed with non-religious references ($M = 0.55$, $SD = 0.12$). Results indicate participants did not vary in their groupness as a function of prime type by identity type, $F(3,106) = 1.43$, n.s.

Because the predicted effect of exposure to Christian based religious references is for those who self-identify as Christian, we ran the 2(Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) X 2(Identity type: group vs. individual) ANOVA a second time, only including Christian participants. Results demonstrate a main effect for prime type (religious vs. non-religious), such
that participants exposed to religious references (church or god-related) responded higher in
groupness ($M = .61, SD = .12$) than individuals exposed to non-religious references ($M = .55, SD$
$= .12$), $F (1, 91) = 5.56, p = .021, \eta^2 = .05)$. Additionally, results do not support an interaction of
prime type (religious vs. non-religious) by identity type (group vs. individual), $F (2, 90) = 0.16,
$p = .69$. Although we did not find a difference in results when including or excluding non-
Christian participants, this may be due to the high percentage of Christian participants in our
sample (82.73%).

We also examined the effect of individual differences variables on the proportion of
group pronouns used. We found a main effect for gender on groupness such that women
responded with fewer group related pronouns ($M = 0.56, SD = 0.12$) than men ($M = 0.62, SD =
0.12$), $F (1, 108) = 5.14, p = .025, \eta^2 = .055$. Although this gender effect was not predicted, we
also found an interactive effect for prime type and gender on groupness, $F (2, 106) = 5.19, p =$
$.025, \eta^2 = .02$. Specifically, we found that males who were primed with religious references ($M$
$= 0.67, SD = 0.10$) were higher in groupness than males primed with non-religious concepts ($M =
0.52, SD = 0.13$), $F (2, 30) = 5.50, p = .01$. Women did not vary as a function of prime type on
groupness, $F (2, 76) = 0.37, p = .691$. The effect of gender was not an a priori prediction but was
also tested in Study 2 to check for trend in gender effects.

We also tested for the effect of prime type (religious vs. non-religious) on groupness,
when controlling for various individual differences. Religious attendance ($\alpha = .71$), religious
affiliation, prayer frequency ($\alpha = .39$), family religious exposure ($\alpha = .89$) and political affiliation
($\alpha = .85$) did not explain a significant proportion of variance and will not be further discussed for
these analyses.
Twenty Statements Test. The sentence completion task using group and individual pronouns was created for the purposes of this study. We also used another measure of group identity (the Twenty Statements Test) to test for the effect of prime type on the proportion of group or individual statements made. To complete these analyses, we first coded the statements provided in participants’ responses. Specifically, participants completed 20 statements answering the question “Who am I?” Using the coding scheme frequently used by researchers (i.e., Rhee, 1995), responses were coded as 1 for collective (e.g., responses related to gender, ethnicity, and social roles) or 0 for individual (e.g., responses related to self traits such as intellect, age, or current state). Two coders (J.M.S. and R.A.) rated these statements and the ratings were compared (Cohen’s Kappa = .67). We then reviewed the coding of the two scorers to identify discrepancies. The two coders made different assessments on responses related to several specific individual traits (e.g., kind or funny). Because these traits require a social interaction (e.g., one is typically kind to another person), agreement was made that these social attributes would be coded as collective. Both coders then independently made corrections to coding and a new Cohen’s Kappa was calculated (.84). With sufficient agreement, the data set of one coder was selected and used for the remaining analyses.

An issue arose while coding the open-ended responses for the Twenty Statements Task. Specifically, we noted several poor quality responses (i.e., “I am a frog”, “I am Iron Man”, “Who are you?”). We found that these poor quality responses were among other expected responses (e.g., “I am a student” or “I am a mother”) and there were several of these poor quality responses across multiple individuals. As such, we did not drop these individuals as non-responders but instead coded the responses according to the coding scheme (Rhee, 1995). We summed across
the 20 statements and divided by 20 to obtain a proportion of group statements provided in the Twenty Statements Test.

A 2(Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) X 2(Identity type: group vs. individual) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the proportion of group statements make in the Twenty Statements Test revealed that participants did not vary as a function of prime type and identity type, $F(2, 108) = .015, n.s.$ Additionally, results do not support a main effect for prime type (religious vs. non-religious) on proportion of group statements made, $F(1,109) = .02, n.s.$ Results indicate a main effect for gender on number of group statements made such that females made more group statements ($M = 0.58, SD = 0.16$) than males ($M = 0.47, SD = 0.15$), $F(1, 109) = 7.76, p = .007, \eta^2 = .08$. Finally, we compared participant responses on the Sentence Completion Task to the responses on the Twenty Statements Test and found that the two variables did not correlate, $p = .72$. As noted above, the lack of relationship between responses on the two scales may be due to factors such as the poor and inconsistent quality of responses to the open ended question on the Twenty Statements Task. It could also be the case that the effect of our subtle prime diminished by the time participants completed the Twenty Statements Task. During the experimental sessions, we noted that participants had approximately 5 minutes between the end of the prime and the start of the Twenty Statements Task.

**Discussion**

Study 1 makes multiple contributions to the literature. Primarily, Study 1 results suggest that when controlling for variance due to gender and age of participant, individuals primed with religious concepts (church-related or god-related) responded with more groupness than participants primed with non-religious concepts on the Sentence Completion Task. In other words, the results of Study 1 suggest that religious concepts, regardless of church-related or god-
related references, lead to greater “groupness” on the sentence completion task. We note that this finding did not replicate in the second dependent measure of identity salience (i.e., the Twenty Statements Test) and recommend that future research continue to develop the Sentence Completion Task. Although these findings were contrary to our prediction that church-related and god-related religious concepts would differentially impact levels of groupness, this finding is key for future research that primes religious concepts. One may expect that regardless of church or god related concepts, religious references make group identities more salience. This is a significant contribution to the literature in that this provides insight into why religious references may impact social behaviors. We ran these analyses twice, once with only Christian participants (n = 90) and with all participants; the findings were consistent.

The second main contribution of Study 1 is related to the use of the newly developed Sentence Completion Task. With substantial concerns related to the quality of responses on the Twenty Statements Test, a new measure of identity salience is important. As recorded in our current research, responses to the Twenty Statements Test were difficult to code and time consuming. Some of the shortcomings of the Twenty Statements Test are resolved by the format used in the Sentence Completion Task in that it only produces interpretable (e.g., “I” or “we”) responses. Individual and group identity salience is an important construct for social psychological research. Developed scales to measure identity salience, however, have not changed substantially over the past 60 years (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). Future research should develop and standardize measures such as the Sentence Completion Task tested here.

Although we did not find a differential impact of church-related and god-related religious references on identity salience, Study 2 extended the findings of Study 1 to test for the effect of exposure to religious themes on support for collective action and over-claiming of Bible
knowledge. Given the general effect of religious references (church-related or god-related) we may predict that religion will generally impact support for collective action or over-claiming of Bible knowledge. Additionally, we will continue to include gender in analyses as this impacted the effect of religious references on identity salience. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature that demonstrates the impact of religious references on social behaviors.

Study 2

Methods

Participants and Design. Participants were 251 adults polled from Mechanical Turk (MTurk; www.mturk.com). On average, participants were about 38 years old (SD = 13.44), 60.17% identified as female, and 44.26% identified as any Christian denomination. The survey announcement on MTurk stated that the study would include a sentence scramble task (the priming task), a few short surveys related to opinions on social issues of the day, and a short survey for general demographic information. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would be compensated with $.50 for the approximately 20-minute study. Using the effect size of from the results of Study 1, a power analysis was conducted. Using GPower (Faul et al., 2009) analyses indicated that a total of approximately 240 participants were needed to test our predictions with for our 2(Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) by 2(Identity Type: group vs. individual) by 2(Social Issue Topic: use of drones vs. use of torture in interrogation) within subjects design (α = .05, β = .80, f² = .25). As such, we collected data from 251 individuals. Using the screening tool provided by MTurk, we selected for U.S. participants only. To verify participant location, the IP addresses for participant responses were verified using an IP batch lookup system online, and those with non-U.S. IP
addresses (N = 8) were excluded from analyses. A total of 243 participants were included in analyses.

**Materials and Procedure.** Depending on random assignment to condition, participants saw one of four priming tasks: a church-related religious prime, a god-related religious prime, non-religious group prime, or non-religious prime (see Appendix B). Participants completed the priming task as described in Study 1 (see page 16). Participants were then asked for their attitudes on two social issues of the day (i.e., the use of drones and the use of torture in interrogation, see Appendix E). Specifically, we assessed participant’s attitude extremity, importance, centrality, certainty, superiority, and moral conviction for each of the four social issues (Toner et al., 2013). Participants’ then rated the extent to which they are willing to support collective action related to their attitudes on the two social issues (see Appendix F). This scale was adapted from Zaal and others (Zaal, Van Laar, Stahl, Ellemers, & Derks, 2011). Participants then completed an over-estimation task of Bible knowledge (see Appendix G). Finally, we asked for participants’ gender, age, exposure to religion, and political affiliation (see the demographics questionnaire in Appendix A).

Study 2 tested three predictions: (1) individuals primed with religious references (church-related or god-related) will endorse greater attitude certainty related to social issues of the day, (2) individuals primed with church-religious references will endorse greater support for collective action, and (3) individuals primed with god-related religious references will produce greater levels of over-claiming of Bible. Because the topics of the social issues at hand (i.e., use of drones and use of torture in interrogation) may produce different opinions or social reactions, we included topic as a factor in analyses. Additionally, we included the factor of moral conviction (e.g., the extent to which an individual’s attitude is related to one’s perceptions of
right and wrong) in analyses as some may identify one social issue as more or less moral as the other.

**Results**

**Attitude Strength Questionnaire.** Depending on random assignment, participants were asked to answer questions related to the use of drones or the use of torture in interrogation. The nine item scale ($\alpha = .74$) was a measure of attitude strength with individual items addressing specific attitude indices such as the individual’s general attitude strength (i.e., extremity and importance), as well as attitude “correctness” and moral conviction. Three items ($\alpha = .76$) were related to the extent to which the individual perceived they were sure that their attitude was correct, that their attitude was the correct attitude, and the extent to which their attitude was more correct than others’ attitudes on the social issue. The final three items were a measure of moral conviction ($\alpha = .67$ with the three items, $\alpha = .72$ with moral conviction items 1 and 3). To this end, we asked to what extent the social issue of the day was a reflection of their moral values and beliefs, a reflection of their beliefs of right and wrong, or based on strong more principles.

We conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the effect of prime type (religious vs. non-religious) on general attitude strength, attitude correctness, and moral conviction. Results indicated that participants did not vary in their levels of attitude strength, correctness, and moral conviction as a function of prime type, *p*-values all greater than .05. Results did not support a prime type (religious vs. non-religious) by identity type (group vs. individual) effect on the attitude items. Results demonstrated a main effect of topic (drones vs. torture in interrogation) on general attitude strength [$F (1, 241) = 23.20, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$], attitude correctness [$F (1, 241) = 9.94, p < .01, \eta^2 = .04$], and moral conviction [$F (1, 241) = 42.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .15$].
Research suggests that moral convictions are distinct from other attitude indices. In particular, researchers find that moral convictions are less subject to movement or change due to influence from others (Skitka, 2010). To test the extent to which exposure to religious references impacts moral convictions, we ran a 2(Prime Type: religious vs. non-religious) x 2(Topic: drones vs. torture in interrogation) analysis of variance. Results demonstrate an effect of exposure to religious references on moral convictions when controlling for variance due to topic and the prime type by topic interaction, $F(3, 239) = 4.30$, $p = .031$. Specifically, participants asked about the topic of torture in interrogation (a topic rated as being generally more moral on the moral conviction items; $M = 6.66$, $SD = 1.53$) did not vary in their ratings of moral conviction as a function of prime type such that participants who were exposed to religious primes ($M = 6.88$, $SD = 1.85$) responded similarly to individuals exposed to non-religious primes ($M = 6.88$, $SD = 1.74$), $F(1, 118) = .08$, $p = .774$. Conversely, participants asked about the topic of drones (a topic rated as being generally less moral on the moral conviction items, $M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.63$) varied in their ratings of moral conviction as a function of prime type such that those primed with religious concepts rated the topic of drones as more moral ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 1.67$) than individuals primed with non-religious concepts ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.60$), $F(1, 122) = 7.14$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = .06$. The reported effect of prime type on moral convictions was not predicted, but is a significant contribution to the moral conviction literature in that this finding demonstrates that moral

Table 1: Mean ratings of attitude strength, attitude correctness, and moral conviction as a function of topic and prime type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Prime</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Attitude Strength</th>
<th>Attitude Correctness</th>
<th>Moral Conviction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drone</td>
<td>Non-religious</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drone</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torture</td>
<td>Non-religious</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torture</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
convictions were only subject to the social influence of exposure to religious themes when the topic was considered less moral.

**Support for Collective Action.** To test the prediction that individuals primed with church-related religious primes will endorse greater support for collective action than individuals primed with god-related religious primes, we first created an aggregate of the nine collective action items. The original developers of the Collective Action Questionnaire (Zaal, 2011) identified two distinct components of collective action (i.e., benevolent and hostile). We conducted a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of the nine items. A varimax rotation was conducted, with factors one and two explaining .68% and .20% of the variance, respectively.

The first four items loaded positively on to factor 1 (correlations of .90 and higher). Items five through nine correlated poorly and/or negatively onto factor one (.15 and lower) and loaded well onto the second factor (.82 and higher). As such, the first four items of the scale were included in analyses as benevolent collective action and items five through nine were included in analyses as hostile collective action. For the following analyses, we will report benevolent (α = .97), hostile (α = .95), and general collective action (α = .94). Response options varied from 1 (completely disagree) to 9 (completely agree). See Appendix F.

Participants’ support of collective action on social issues of the day may be influenced by the nature of the topic at hand. Therefore, we first conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for social issue topic type (drones vs. torture in interrogation) on general endorsement of collective action. Results indicate that participants who were asked about the topic of torture in interrogation did not differ in their support of collective action (M = 2.59, SD = 1.78) from participants asked about the topic of drones (M = 2.85, SD = 1.72), n.s. Additionally, results do
not indicate a significant prime type (religious vs. non-religious) by identity type (group vs. individual) interaction on support for collective action; all $p$-values were greater than .05.

Because our predicted effects of prime type and identity type (group vs. individual) on collective action were predicted in particular for individuals of any Christian background, for the following analyses we included only those who self-identified as Catholic, Protestant, Baptist, or other Christian denomination. Results reveal that participants did not vary in their support of collective action as a function of prime type [$F (1, 118) = 2.09, p = .151$] or by identity type, $F (1, 118) = 0.10, p = .749$. Additionally, the two way interaction for prime type by identity type was not significant, $F (2, 117) = 1.14, p = .237$.

We then tested for the effects of religious prime (religious vs. non-religious) and moral conviction on support for collective action. Results did not reveal a main effect of prime type on support for collective action such that participants primed with religious references ($M = 2.69, SD = 1.64$) responded similarly to participants primed with non-religious references ($M = 3.12, SD = 1.90$), $F (1, 118) = 3.34, p = .062$. For exploratory purposes, we tested for the effect of moral convictions and prime type on support for collective action. One may predict that the extent to which an individual identifies a social issue as central to their moral beliefs may impact the relation between exposure to religious references and collective action. Results did indicated that moral convictions significantly predict support for collective action, $F (1, 118) = 10.87, p < .01, \eta^2 = .10$. Results also demonstrate a prime type by moral conviction interaction [$F (3, 116) = 5.38, p = .022, \eta^2 = .05$]. Opposite to predictions, those exposed to religious primes indicated low support for collective action across the various levels of moral conviction ratings (see figure 1 below). Conversely, individuals primed with non-religious concepts endorsed higher support of collective action at higher levels of moral conviction ratings.
We also tested to what extent individuals supported benevolent collective action as a function of prime type, moral conviction, and the prime type by moral conviction interaction. Results indicate that individuals did not vary in support of benevolent collective action as a function of prime type, \( F (1, 110) = 1.78, p = .078 \). Individuals did vary in support of benevolent collective action as a function of moral conviction \([F (1,118) = 2.41, p = .018, \eta^2 = .20]\) and as a function of the prime type by moral conviction interaction, \( F (1,118) = 2.41, p = .01, \eta^2 = .04 \). Individuals did not vary in support of hostile collective action as a function of prime type, moral conviction, and the prime type by moral conviction interaction, \( p \) values all greater than .05. To follow up the gender effects found in Study 1, we tested for the effect of gender on the support for general collective action. Results indicate that when controlling for variance due to prime type and social issue topic, males were higher in support for collective action \((M = 2.95, SD = 1.92)\) than females \((SD = 2.52, SD = 1.62)\), \( F (3, 237) = 3.64, p = .048, \eta^2 = .02 \).

Figure 1: Effect prime type by moral conviction on collective action

**Over-Claiming of Bible Knowledge.** To test the prediction that individuals primed with god-related religious references would demonstrate greater over-claiming of Bible knowledge, we first created an aggregate of the Bible Over-Claiming Questionnaire (BOCQ). The BOCQ
consists of 73 items, 13 of which are foils (concepts that do not exist in the Bible; e.g., “the Roman injunction of Paulhus”) and 60 items are true concepts (e.g., Cain and Abel). Participants response options ranged from 0 “never heard of it” to 6 “extremely familiar.” We utilized the coding scheme described by Jones and Neria (2013) which was adapted from Paulhus et al. (2003). To this end, we coded responses of familiarity (i.e., response options of somewhat familiar to extremely familiar) as a value of 1 and “never heard of it” as a value of 0. We then created a sum of all responses to the foil items. We also created a sum of all responses to true items. To create an index of Bible over-claiming, we added the sum of the foils to the sum of the true items. The maximum allowed score for over-claiming is 73 (as there are 13 foils and 60 true items). For all analyses presented here, the variable of interest is participant scores on the Bible over-claiming index.

Results do not support a main effect for prime type (religious vs. non-religious) or identity type (group vs. individual) on the extent to which individuals over-claimed knowledge of the Bible, all $p$-values larger than .05. Because the focus of our research question is the extent to which individuals over-claim, we also ran analyses on the sum of all responses of familiarity to foil items (the 13 concepts that do not exist). Results indicate that participants do not vary in their over-claim of Bible knowledge on the foil items as a function of prime type, $F(1, 225) = 0.28, p = .594$.

Because we were most interested in the effect of religious exposure on the false Bible items, we also tested for the effect of prime type, identity type, and topic on the sum of foil items (the 13 concepts that do not exist in the Bible). For these analyses, we treated familiarity as continuous (responses ranging from 0 to 6) such that individuals who responded that they never heard of the concept would receive a value of 0 and those who rated being extremely familiar
with the concept would receive a value of 6 on each item. We then summed across the 13 foil items to create a measure of perceived familiarity with foil concepts. Results indicate that prime type, identity type, and the prime type by identity type interaction do not impact individuals’ responses on the foil items, $p$ values all greater than .05.

**Discussion**

Study 2 provides several significant contributions to the literature. The results of Study 2 demonstrate that individuals’ attitudes on topics that are considered less moral are subject to movement from social influences such as exposure to religious concepts. In particular, Study 2 shows that when primed with religious concepts, individuals rated the issue of drones as more of a reflection of their fundamental beliefs of right and wrong, than individuals primed with non-religious concepts. This finding provides insight into the effect of religion on social behaviors. One may predict that when social issues are discussed, the introduction of religious references may lead individuals to hold the issue at hand as a moral conviction. Research on moral convictions (e.g., Skitka, 2010) suggests that debate on moral convictions can lead to increased conflict and barriers to conflict resolution. As such, the findings of Study 2 have important implications for intergroup conflict.

The second key contribution of Study 2 is the consistent finding of no differential impact of church or god-related religious primes. While we did find that religious primes produced greater groupness, we did not find this effect for our non-religious (control) primes. This suggests that religion, in itself, has an impact on social behaviors. In contrast to our predictions the current findings demonstrate that religious references, in general, impact social behaviors. Future research should focus on the general impact of religious references on group identity salience and social behaviors.
Although the current research did not find an impact of religious references on the extent to which individuals engaged in over-claiming of Bible knowledge, the findings presented in Study 2 demonstrate that individual differences impact over-claiming. The results indicate that religious affiliation, exposure to religious schooling, and exposure to prayer increase the extent to which individuals over-claim. This finding is of potential interest for those who continue to develop and use the Bible Over-Claiming Questionnaire.

**General Discussion**

The results of Study 1 and Study 2 add to our understanding of the effect of religious references on social behaviors. Study 1 demonstrated that religious reference produced greater levels of “groupness” as indexed by the extent to which individuals used group related pronouns. This finding demonstrates that religious references significantly impact identity salience. The implications of increased “groupness” are important for the understanding of religious references’ impact on social behaviors. Other investigators have found (Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007; Bushman et al., 2007) that religious primes lead to various positive (e.g., increased generosity) and negative (e.g., increased punishment of others) social behaviors. Our current finding that religious references lead to greater levels of group identity salience provides further insight into one mechanism through which religion impacts various social behaviors. The finding that exposure to religious references produces greater group identity salience provides one explanation for our own findings that religious references increase individuals’ susceptibility to social influence even when the decision at hand may be costly to the individual, as seen in the risk-taking study described earlier (Shenberger et al., 2014).

A second key finding of the current research is that church-related and god-related religious primes lead to similar identity salience outcomes. Study 1 and Study 2 presented in this
paper were the first tests of the effect of group-related (church) versus individual-related (god) religious primes. Although we predicted differential effects for the two specific types of religious primes on identity salience, the consistent findings for the two prime types suggests that religion, in general, influences the extent to which we are aware of our group identity. Study 2 of the current research provided a second test of this. While the individual findings in Study 1 and Study 2 are separately interesting, it is important to identify consistencies across the two studies. Specifically, Study 1 demonstrates that exposure to religious themes leads to increased group identity. This finding is also present in the results of Study 2 in that individuals primed with religious concepts responded differently than individual primed with non-religious concepts on the Collective Action Questionnaire, which was our group identity dependent measure. The effect of exposure to religious concepts did not replicate on our independent dependent measure, Bible Over-Claiming Questionnaire.

Analyses revealed an unpredicted effect of gender on identity salience. While this was not an a priori prediction, it is important to note that males and females may report different levels of groupness in general, and the effect of religion may present itself differently for the two genders. In sum, the results of Study 1 provide insight to the effect of religious references on identity salience.

Study 2 provided a first test of the impact of religious primes on support for collective action. We found an interesting interactive effect for ratings of moral conviction and prime type on the extent to which individuals are in support of engaging in collective action. As with the previously described findings, we did not find differential effects for the two religious prime types (church or god-related). This first test of the effect of exposure to religious references on
collective action suggests that future research must take into account the extent to which the individual rates the issue at hand as related to their core moral values.

Overall, Study 1 and Study 2 provide a substantial contribution to the growing body of research that investigates the effect of religious references on social behaviors. Under certain conditions religious references may lead to generous and charitable behaviors (Pichon et al., 2007; Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). Under other conditions, exposure to religious reference may lead to negative social outcomes such as punishment of others (Bushman et al., 2007). To date, our developing program of research has demonstrated that religious references and social influence can lead individuals to (1) make decisions about resource allocation consistent with the suggestions of others and (2) influence the extent to which individuals will engage in risky behaviors on a balloon analogue risk task. These two findings, coupled with the findings of others (e.g., Ginges et al., 2009; Saroglou et al., 2009; Van Cappellen et al., 2011) demonstrate that a social component underlies the effect of religious references on behaviors.

What was not previously clear is the driving mechanism that produces the effect of religion on social behaviors. The current findings develop our understanding of how religion influences individuals’ engagement in social behaviors. Specifically, we now understand that mechanism through which religion influences social behaviors is identity salience as religion strengthens the salience of group identity. Future research must take into account the impact of exposure to religious references on identity salience when understanding social behavioral outcomes. Moving forward, researchers must focus on identifying under what conditions group identity salience caused by exposure to religious themes may lead to conflict or cooperation.
References


Appendix A

Demographics Questionnaire

Sex: Male Female
Age: ______ years
Are you a U.S. Citizen: Yes No

Ethnicity:

- African-American ______
- Caucasian, Non-Hispanic ______
- Latino ______
- Native American Indian ______
- Asian-American ______
- Other ______

Frequency of religious service attendance:

How often do you currently attend religious services?
Never _____
Holidays _____
Some Sundays _____
Weekly _____
Weekly and holidays _____
More than once a week _____

Frequency of religious service attendance as a child:

How often did you attend religious services during your childhood?
Never _____
Holidays _____
Some Sundays _____
Weekly _____
Weekly and holidays _____
More than once a week _____

Frequency of religious community activities:

How often do you currently participate in religious organization sponsored activities outside of religious services?
Never _____
Maybe once a year _____
A couple of times a year _____
Numerous (6+) times a year _____
Weekly _____
I assist with the organization of these activities _____

Frequency of prayer:

How often do you pray independently?
Never _____
Rarely _____
Once a week and on religious holidays _____
More than once a week _____
Several times a day _____
Frequency of prayer in a group setting:

How often do you pray as a group in the home (e.g., family prayer before a meal or blessing)?
Never _____
Very little _____
Once a week and on religious holidays _____
More than once a week _____
Several times a day _____

Private religious schooling:

Did you attend private religious schooling before attending college?
Preschool or kindergarten
Some of grades 1-8
Grades 1-8
High school
Religious formation education

Religious upbringing and family customs:

*Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements*

I was raised in a family that stressed the importance of religious service attendance:
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Disagree or Agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

My family created a presence of religious symbolic symbols in the home:
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Disagree or Agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

I was raised in a family that stressed the importance of prayer:
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Disagree or Agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

Religious affiliation:
Catholic
Baptist
Other Christian Denomination (please specify)
Jewish
Baha’i
Other
prefer not to answer
Political Ideology:

How would you describe your political party preference?

_____ Strong Democrat
_____ Weak Democrat
_____ Independent Democrat
_____ Independent Republican
_____ Weak Republican
_____ Strong Republican
_____ Other

In terms of economic issues, how would you describe your political attitudes and beliefs?:

_____ Very liberal
_____ Liberal
_____ Slightly liberal
_____ Middle-of-the-road
_____ Slightly conservative
_____ Conservative
_____ Very Conservative
_____ Other

In terms of social issues, how would you describe your political attitudes and beliefs?:

_____ Very liberal
_____ Liberal
_____ Slightly liberal
_____ Middle-of-the-road
_____ Slightly conservative
_____ Conservative
_____ Very Conservative
_____ Other
Appendix B

Sentence Scramble Task (god-related) *Adapted from Srull and Wyer (1979)

The following exercise is a word comprehension task that is in the process of being developed. This exercise will test how you perceive word relationships based on first immediate impressions. You will see a list of 10 five-word sentences from which your task will be to drop an extraneous word to write a four grammatical-word sentence. Please look at the examples below, and if you have any questions raise your hand and ask the experimenter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scrambled sentence</th>
<th>Grammatical Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: tire flat was soap the</td>
<td>the tire was flat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

there is be great news

with audio cook butter the

**soul** ²have a it you

tested should **faith** was his

pant ladder the up climb

she color is **heaven** in

spill the diary write in

a saw **miracle** feel he

the to ignite office go

sell the received he **salvation**

² Prime words are in bold face for illustration purposes only. These words should be deemphasized for experimental use.
Sentence Scramble Task (church-related)

The following exercise is a word comprehension task that is in the process of being developed. This exercise will test how you perceive word relationships based on first immediate impressions. You will see a list of 10 five-word sentences from which your task will be to drop an extraneous word to write a four grammatical-word sentence. Please look at the examples below, and if you have any questions raise your hand and ask the experimenter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scrambled sentence</th>
<th>Grammatical Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: tire flat was soap the</td>
<td>the tire was flat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

there is be great news

with audio cook butter the

**church** went tall to he

occupied the **pew** was run

pant ladder the up climb

she color is **chapel** in

spill the diary write in

a saw **priest** feel he

the to ignite office go

sell she received the **sacrament**
The following exercise is a word comprehension task that is in the process of being developed. This exercise will test how you perceive word relationships based on first immediate impressions. You will see a list of 10 five-word sentences from which your task will be to drop an extraneous word to write a four grammatical-word sentence. Please look at the examples below, and if you have any questions raise your hand and ask the experimenter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scrambled sentence</th>
<th>Grammatical Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tire flat was</td>
<td>the tire was flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soap the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chance give razors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use hammer steel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afar the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flower plant seed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stairs run water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shirt birds off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the take</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full bag swims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disc to the crusts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glue together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fort it all</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>press the green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meeting with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhyme use plant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sentence Scramble Task (group, non-religious)

The following exercise is a word comprehension task that is in the process of being developed. This exercise will test how you perceive word relationships based on first immediate impressions. You will see a list of 10 five-word sentences from which your task will be to **drop** an extraneous word to write a four grammatical-word sentence. Please look at the examples below, and if you have any questions raise your hand and ask the experimenter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Scrambled sentence</th>
<th>Grammatical Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tire flat was soap the</td>
<td></td>
<td>the tire was flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chance give us it a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use hammer we afar the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plant seed the afar we</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stairs run water the up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shirt birds off the take</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full bag swims our is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>group</strong> to the crusts listen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glue together fort it all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the to ignite office go</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhyme use plant that words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Sentence Completion Task

Please complete the following sentences using words provided in the word bank. You may use a word more than once, and do not have to use every word in the bank.

1. Where should ____ go from here?
2. Did he see ____?
3. Can ____ talk for a minute?
4. Is that book ____?
5. ____ will go home.
6. ____ went for a walk to the park.
7. The professor helped ____ understand the assignment.
8. The boss gave ____ too much work.
9. The librarian scolded ____ for being too loud.
10. ____ should start working on the homework.
11. The presentation earned ____ an A in the class.
12. Welcome to ____ home.
13. ____ got caught in the rain storm.
14. He accepted ____ offer.
15. Who will join ____ club?
16. All ____ efforts were in vain.
17. Come with ____.
18. ____ lost the game.
19. ____ have a lot to do.
20. They made ____ work all day.

Word bank:
I
me
mine
us
we
Our/s
Appendix D

Twenty Statements Test *Adapted from Kuhn & McPartland (1954)

In the spaces below, please give twenty different answers to the question, "Who Am I?" Give these as if you were giving them to yourself, not to some-body else. Write fairly rapidly, for the time is limited.

1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________
6. ____________________________________________
7. ____________________________________________
8. ____________________________________________
9. ____________________________________________
10. ____________________________________________
11. ____________________________________________
12. ____________________________________________
13. ____________________________________________
14. ____________________________________________
15. ____________________________________________
16. ____________________________________________
17. ____________________________________________
18. ____________________________________________
19. ____________________________________________
20. ____________________________________________
Appendix E

Attitude Strength Questionnaire

*Adapted from Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis (2005); Toner et al. (2013)*

**Attitude Extremity Item:**
To what extent do you support or oppose (use of drones)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitude Certainty Item:**
How certain or uncertain are you about your position on (use of drones)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uncertain</th>
<th>Very Certain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitude Importance Item:**
To what extent is the (use of drones) personally important to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Unimportant</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitude Correct Item:**
Something you are sure you are correct about (use of drones)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Unsure</th>
<th>Very Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitude Correct Item2:**
My attitude is the one correct attitude on (use of drones) to how you view yourself as a person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitude Superiority:**
To what extent are you certain that your attitude on (use of drones) is more correct than the attitudes held by others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uncertain</th>
<th>Very Certain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moral Conviction Item:**
My attitude about (use of drones) reflects my core moral values and beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moral Conviction Item2:**
My attitude about (use of drones) is a reflection of my fundamental beliefs of right and wrong.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moral Conviction Item3:**
My attitude about (use of drones) is based on strong moral principles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Collective Action Questionnaire *Adapted from Zaal et al. (2011)*

I would be willing to support . . .

1. becoming a member of a collective action group that takes a stance for/against _____(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

2. becoming a volunteer for a collective action group that takes a stance for/against __________(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

3. taking part in a demonstration for/against __________(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

4. serving as a fundraiser for a collective action group that takes a stance for/against ______(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

**Support for hostile forms of collective action**

I would be willing to support . . .

5. the organization of illegal and wild strikes towards organizations that support/oppose _____(use of drones or torture in interrogation)

6. the occupation of the buildings of organizations that support/oppose _____ (use of drones or torture in interrogation).

7. throwing up barricades at organizations that support/oppose _____(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

8. defacing the buildings of organizations that support/oppose _____(use of drones or torture in interrogation).

9. committing sabotage of organizations that support/oppose _____(use of drones or torture in interrogation).
Appendix G

Bible Over-Claiming Questionnaire * Jones & Neria (2013); Adapted from Paulhus et al. (2003)

Below is a list of stories, concepts or people who appear in the Bible...Please indicate how familiar you are with each on a scale of 0 (never heard of it) to 6 (extremely familiar).
For example, if the item said “Jesus,” you would probably select “6” because Jesus is very familiar. However, if the item said “Fred Gruneberg” (my next door neighbor) you would write a “0” to indicate you never heard of him.
e.g., 6 = Jesus; 0 = Fred Gruneberg

In other words, the difficulty of the items ranges from easy to impossible.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Boaz Marries Ruth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Judas Betrays Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The Prophet Of Haggai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The Siege Of Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Cain And Abel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tobit’s Song Of Praise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The Last Seven Plagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Cast Of Nissius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Jesus Calms The Seas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>John The Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Stephen’s Martyrdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Victory Over Lysias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Noah And The Ark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>The Decree Of Darius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>The Journey Of Aruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>The Second Book Of Samuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>The Prodigal Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>The Book Of Judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Soren’s Temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Memelaus Of Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>The Destruction Of Sodom And Gomorrha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>The Crime Of Amnon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>The Ten Commandments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>The Servants Of Anointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Manna From The Heavens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>To Touch His Cloak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>King Herod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>The Roman Injunction Of Paulhus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>The Exodus Of Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>The Book Of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Daniel In The Lion’s Den</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>The Second Plague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Moses Parts The Red Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Parable Of The Tenants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>The Book Of Baruch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Peter, James, And John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>From Egypt To Sinai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Cardinal Law Of The Prophecies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>The Maccabean Revolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>The Sins Of Solomon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>The Reply To Cospar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Abraham, Isaac, And Jacob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Flight To Horeb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>The Book Of Zechariah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>The Four Horsemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Peter Denies Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Barabbas The Murderer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>The Cave Of Durban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>David And Goliath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>Jesus In The Garden Of Gethsemane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Leadership Of Judas Maccabeus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>The Curse Of Levenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>Visit Of Queen Sheba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>The Worshipers Of Baal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>The Army Of Seventeen</td>
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<td>57.</td>
<td>Laws Concerning Nazirites</td>
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<td>58.</td>
<td>Death Of Abijah</td>
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<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>Hour Horns And Four Blacksmiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.</td>
<td>The Last Supper</td>
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<td>61.</td>
<td>The Altar Of Khartoum</td>
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<td>62.</td>
<td>The Second Royal Decree</td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>Count Of The Twelve Tribes</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>The Book Of Amos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>Thomas Doubts Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>Invasion Of Sennacherib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>The Bottle Of Eli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td>The Story Of Amorelus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>The Day Of Atonement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>Achior In Bethulia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>Jesus Curses A Fig Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>The Book Of Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>The Book Of Nehemiah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vita

Jessica Marie Shenberger-Trujillo completed her Bachelor of Arts with honors in Psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in 2007. During her undergraduate education, she was a Ronald E. McNair Program Scholar and participated in the Summer Research Opportunities Program. Additionally, she received the Honors Council Award from the UIC Honors College. In 2010, she joined the doctoral program in the Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

Dr. Shenberger-Trujillo was a graduate member of the Social Cognition Laboratory and developed a program of research related to religion and intergroup conflict. In 2013, she received her Master of Arts degree in Experimental Psychology and was awarded Outstanding Graduate Student in Psychology. During her graduate studies, she was a research associate for the PUENTES Program (funded by a Title V PPOHA Grant with the Department of Education) and as a research assistant for the Center for Institutional Evaluation, Research and Planning at UTEP.

While pursuing her degree, Dr. Shenberger-Trujillo completed a program evaluation internship with the United States Army Public Health Command. She has presented her research at national conferences and has published in outlets such as a book chapter in the APA Handbook of Multicultural Psychology and an article in Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology. Dr. Shenberger-Trujillo’s dissertation, The Effects of Religious References on Identity Salience and Social Behaviors, was supervised by Dr. Michael Zárate. After graduation, she will begin a Research Psychologist position with the United States Army Research Institute.

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Downers Grove, IL 60515

This dissertation was typed by Jessica Marie Shenberger-Trujillo.