



Faculty Publications

2020

Surviving Secular Society: How Religious Families Maintain Faith through Community and Parenting Practices

Quinn Galbraith

Brigham Young University - Provo, quinn_galbraith@byu.edu

Christina Riley

Brigham Young University

Alexandra Carlisle

Brigham Young University

Heather Kelley

Brigham Young University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Galbraith, Quinn; Riley, Christina; Carlisle, Alexandra; and Kelley, Heather, "Surviving Secular Society: How Religious Families Maintain Faith through Community and Parenting Practices" (2020). *Faculty Publications*. 5927.

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/5927>

This Peer-Reviewed Article is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Surviving Secular Society: How Religious Families Maintain Faith through Community and Parenting Practices

Christina Riley, Brigham Young University, USA
Alexandra Carlile, Brigham Young University, USA
Quinn Galbraith,¹ Brigham Young University, USA
Heather Kelley, Brigham Young University, USA

Abstract: In pluralistic society, religious families may struggle with adapting to non-religious culture. This can be concerning for religious parents who attempt to raise their children to be religious in a non-religious environment. This study draws upon qualitative interviews with 130 highly religious individuals in Ireland and the UK to analyze what perceived challenges religious families experience in secular society and what coping mechanisms they employ to counteract secular influences. Researchers identified three common challenges: outside pressure to conform, media misrepresentation, and immoral messages in media. They identified three potential coping mechanisms: controlling access to media, building religious community, and teaching critical thinking. An analysis of these findings provides an insider perspective to the issues of religious families and has implications for how religious families might live in secular society while still maintaining the key tenets of their religious culture.

Keywords: Religion, Family, Society, Secularism, Parenting

Introduction

The contemporary United Kingdom and Ireland, following a global secularization trend, are often characterized by societal trends of decreased church attendance and increasingly secular values (Halman and Draulans 2006). Some scholars argue that religious communities and values are consequently becoming reduced in these societies (Copen and Silverstein 2008; Halman and Draulans 2006; Thornton 1985). As a result of changes in the perceived value of formal religion, the highly religious often face stressors and challenges while trying to reconcile their identity and values with larger societal trends seemingly contradictory to their lifestyle (Engelberg 2016; Verkuyten, Thijs, and Stevens 2012). These perceived stressors and challenges faced by the highly religious in secular societies are, however, often overlooked in sociological research (Hvidtjørn et al. 2014). The current study explores this gap in the literature by examining the self-identified challenges faced by highly religious individuals as they reconcile their religious identities and practices with secular society in the UK and Ireland. Additionally, this study explores the means by which interviewees coped with the challenges they identified. The study is based on qualitative interviews with self-identifying highly religious families and religious leaders from various faith backgrounds.

Since the purpose of this research is to provide depth into the experiences of highly religious individuals, a qualitative method was deemed most suitable. By allowing the religious individuals to speak for themselves, we as interviewers could better understand the issues about which they were most concerned, as well as how they believed the problems could be resolved. The use of semi-structured interviews proved effective in understanding how the religious individuals in the study viewed their own experiences regarding raising families and integrating into society. Although the scope of our study was limited, the stressors and coping mechanisms

¹ Corresponding Author: Quinn Galbraith, 1223 HBLL, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, 84602, USA.
email: quinn_galbraith@byu.edu

discussed in can help inform future research as well as inform counselors and religious leaders who aid highly religious families in the stressors they face.

Literature Review

The extent to which the UK and Ireland have become secularized is still a matter of debate, although many scholars agree that some secularization has occurred (Crockett and Voas 2006; David 2014; Field 2014; Halman and Draulans 2006; Thornton 1985). Commitment in religion, as measured by attendance, membership, affiliation, and participation in rites, has decreased, and declared faith in clergyman and in church organizations has decreased as well (Field 2014). However, Habermas (2008) argues that religious adherents still comprise a notable proportion of secular societies and that religious practices have merely become more individualized and private. Field (2014) reports that the British still take pride in calling themselves a Christian nation. Similarly, Glendinning and Bruce (2011) agree that declines in church membership and attendance are definite signs of secularization, but they argue that the real definition of secularization is the decline of a religion's social significance, as manifested by its ability to influence social and political functions. By that logic, British society is not completely secularized, since British believers remain a notable portion of the population, and significant interest in religion in general still permeates the culture. Thus, the work of Field, Glendinning and Bruce, and others suggests that the secularization process is not clear-cut; while British society appears to be shifting away from religious influence, research indicates that religion still has a role to play in British culture (Cadge et al. 2017; Deller 2012; Robinson et al. 2019).

The nature of secularization itself is, however, also something that can be considered debatable. Brewitt-Taylor (2013) argues that the UK as a secular nation was initially simply an idea invented by Christians in the 1960s, who were concerned about inward decay in the state of their church. He argues that since then, the idea of religion as a minority has spread and had significant implications. Ever since the implementation or invention of the term "secularization," according to Brewitt-Taylor, Christian presence has decreased in the media, and Christians are more frequently mocked in media (2013). Additionally, as Christians and other religious groups have felt themselves to be in the societal minority, they have no longer been in a position to dictate social customs, and being a religious person has become peculiar rather than normal. Regardless of the origins of the secularization concept, it is evident that some change occurred in society a few decades previously that caused religious people to either become a societal minority or begin to be perceived as a societal minority; it has consequently shifted the nature of the relationship between British society and religion.

Despite the difficulties in comprehensively defining and understanding the secularization process, a change has undeniably occurred, and it is this change—and how religious individuals perceive this change as affecting their lives—that our study examines. The British and Irish people and media have become increasingly aware of a sense of secularization (here defined as a shift of society toward non-religious values and practices) and a general privatization of religion (Habermas 2008). Religious people are more conscious that they are in the minority and feel "increasingly out of step with the mainstream of society" (Davie 2015, 178). Davie (2015), in her study of the historical development of the relationship between religion and the British populace, draws this conclusion from recent events: "Part of being British, it seem[s], [is] to accept a low-key approach to religion, with the strong implication that anyone who comes to live in these islands—for whatever reason—should conform, in public at least, to a similar view" (2015, 179). Although these societies may not be entirely secularized, church attendance and affiliation have noticeably decreased, and it has become less acceptable to practice and publicize religious beliefs, a shift that has undoubtedly affected the lives of highly religious individuals.

Secularized values create issues on which religious society and mainstream society differ. Browning and Clairmont (2007) list some of the common resultant issues of debate between religion and secularized society: the changing nature of the family, mainstream culture, sexuality,

feminism, substance abuse, pornography, pop culture, government practice, and science-dominated thinking. According to Edgell (2013), many pastors are concerned not only about secularized values themselves but also about the time that secularized values take away from family and religion. These religious leaders worry that materialistic values mean many church members are spending too much time seeking entertainment or working in order to afford a more extravagant lifestyle. Other research suggests that secular entertainment does, in fact, compete with religious activities for time and attention, generally to religion's detriment (Cragun, Stinespring, and Tillman 2019; Smith 2005). Modern families evidently face more secular value systems, which may include contradictory issues or differing life priorities than in traditional religious values.

Many scholars argue that secularization has occurred as a result of modernization. Kashyap says, "The process of modernization essentially involved a rational structural transformation of not only the social, economic and political order of a society, but also simultaneous changes in its belief system, values and way of life as a whole" (2004, 342). Furthermore, in their study of the Netherlands, Kregting et al. (2018) found a few societal aspects of modernization that they particularly connected to a decrease in religiosity: increased education, a focus on individuality and the individual as an ideal, scientific rationalism, and later and fewer marriages. Scholars Halman and Draulans (2006) agree that modernization has created secularization, and they add that industrialization, rationalization, and globalization have been particularly powerful influencers. Scholars therefore agree that modernization has created a distinct value system, which has influenced the secularization process.

Modernization means that the connections between the family and religion have had to change as well. In their study on the transmission of family values, Akyil et al. postulate that "with increased outside influences, the family needs to negotiate new boundaries both in and out of the family" (2016, 369). A family caught between modernity and traditional religious values is caught in the midst of "contradictory forces" (Ji 2015, 1031), which many studies indicate have a larger influence on children because they will more rapidly acculturate to social changes than will older generations, which can create generational conflict (Akyil et al. 2016; Crockett and Voas 2006; Pew Research Center 2015). Modern society has meant that, for many groups, traditional family values have broken down; it also means that children are more independent from their families, and the bonds between an individual and kin or community are weaker (Kashyap 2004; Kirkland 1984). The diminishing influence of the church and religious community in society could also mean religious families and parents are receiving less religious support (Habermas 2008). Thus, modernization has changed the shape of the family and the way that it exists in society.

Research indicates that parenting in religious families takes place on a wide scale of varying levels of strictness; being exposed to modern values may cause parents to become stricter in enforcing their traditional values, but in many cases, family values and structure evolve to include modern values (Kashyap 2004). In these cases, families must find a new balance and new values in order to remain relevant in a changing societal situation (Akyil et al. 2016). Consequently, the ways that religious families cope to a secular society vary, depending on the tendency of the family to adapt to new values or adapt their old values to new ways.

Browning and Clairmont's book, *American Religions and the Family: How Faith Traditions Cope with Modernization and Democracy* (2007) offers an extensive view of some of the coping mechanisms that families of minority groups employ to combat outside opposition. They categorize the coping mechanisms into five groups, which can be applied to religious families in secular society. First, religious families may employ progressive accommodation, in which they live a mainstream life but implement small, non-confrontational measures to encourage change in their favor. Second, they may become "prophetic progressives" (2007, 107), calling for attacks on legal barriers to religious viewpoints. A third potential coping mechanism is social isolation and a fourth is the firm rejection of modernity to work for the return of simple tradition. Finally,

groups may embrace modernity altogether. These categorizations may appear in real life as applying modern context to traditional values, building community, establishing solidarity, or living outside of the world.

A large-scale study by Bengston, Putney, and Harris (2013) on religious transmission suggests coping mechanisms that families can use to successfully combat modern values and transmit their religions successfully. They found that a child is less likely to leave their childhood religion if their parents were highly religious, the child grows up and gets married or has kids, or the child comes from a tight-knit religious community. Good religious transmission was generally characterized by a warm parent-child relationship, permitted religious latitude, and an early and strong religious foundation. It also often included frequent activities in the religious community, parents acting as strong examples, family activities being synonymous with church activities, and family members living their beliefs. In contrast, religious non-transmission is often associated with marrying outside one's faith, too much or too little parental religious socialization, perceiving parental hypocrisy, or having role models who discourage religious participation. This study therefore suggests some coping mechanisms that parents can adopt in order to successfully transmit their religion to their children while still existing in a modern society, but it also warns against the over-application of some of these methods.

Summing up previous research, connections between religion and society have diminished, and religious people increasingly frame themselves as being part of a minority. Many religious people see the values of society as changing and secularized and note a devaluation of the family compared to previous eras. Although much of the research talks about the secularization process and the idea of changing values, particularly in reference to religious organizations, few sources discussed how this directly affects the lives of religious individuals and how they respond. Our study, in its qualitative approach, attempts to address these gaps in the literature to understand how secularization affects the lives of British religious families and how the families have reacted. While we acknowledge that secularization and modernization have had some positive effects on the lives of all people, including the lives of the religious, this study focuses specifically on the challenges that religious families face because of secularization.

Method of Inquiry

Sample

We employed a purposive sampling approach, seeking religious individuals and religious leaders who reported a high level of involvement in their faith. Our study focused on the geographic area of the UK and Ireland because these geographic areas are religiously diverse but have also been impacted by secularization. Our sample includes 130 interview participants from various faith backgrounds, 71 of which were religious leaders in their faith. Given that this sample was not randomly selected, this study does not attempt to draw broad conclusions about the opinion of an entire population on the topic of societal challenges to religious families. Rather, our study seeks to gain further insight into how these challenges are perceived among religious individuals themselves. For this reason, our sample deliberately includes people with a high self-reported level of religious participation, with 81 percent of the participants who were not religious leaders rating their level of activity in their faith as a 6 or a 7 on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (not active at all) to 7 (very active). Average religious activity was 6.493 on the same 7-point scale. In terms of gender, 59 percent of our participants were male, and 41 percent were female. Eighty percent of the sample was Christian (34% from various Protestant denominations, 28% Catholic, 12% non-denominational Christian, 3% Latter-day Saint (Mormon), and 3% other Christian), 10 percent Muslim, 4 percent Jewish, and 5 percent other religions (Hindu, Buddhist, and Baha'i). In terms of race, 78 percent of participants were white and 22 percent were racial minorities (including African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean, and Latino).

Participants were contacted primarily via the religious institutions' websites. We first reached out to religious leaders via phone or email. We then invited them to be interviewed and to refer strong families within their congregation who would also be interested in being interviewed. To increase our sample size, we also sent fliers to over 1,000 places of worship throughout Ireland and the UK. This approach yielded few respondents, so we continued to contact religious leaders directly and employed some snowballing among our participants, particularly among the less common faiths (i.e., Judaism and non-Abrahamic faiths).

Interview Procedure

Trained team members conducted semi-structured interviews in June and July of 2016. Interviews took place in person, generally in either the participant's home or at their place of worship. Couples were interviewed together, and single participants were interviewed by themselves. Interviews lasted seventy minutes on average and consisted of approximately twenty open-ended questions. The current study focuses on the discussions surrounding the topic, "What are societal challenges that religious families face, and how can they cope?" Participants were asked a variety of related questions about their faith and practice, and interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Coding and Analysis

The transcriptions were coded and analyzed using a team-based methodology (Marks 2015). This methodology is used in qualitative research in order to produce results that are more reliable, valid, and replicable (Levitt et al. 2018; Marks 2015). Strategies for greater reliability included keeping a detailed audit trail of the coding, coding in pairs, and tracking inter-rater reliability. The data was analyzed using NVivo 11 qualitative coding software. Paid undergraduate research assistants read through the interviews and coded accounts under "Societal Challenges" and "Coping Mechanisms." The accounts were then reviewed, and a codebook was created. The codebook was given to two pairs of undergraduate students enrolled in a semester-long research methods course. The accounts relating to societal challenges and coping mechanisms (130 from the 134 total interviews) were divided between the pairs, and each account was coded twice, once by each member of the partnership. Then, coding partners met to review their codes line-by-line in a check-and-balance system, resolving discrepancies as they arose.

While our sample includes people from a variety of different faiths, our analysis does not separate participants by religious affiliation. This was done in an effort to specifically analyze commonalities that exist among religious individuals as a whole rather than potential differences between distinct faith traditions. While there are some who disagree with such an approach due to the diverse nature of different faith traditions (Prothero 2011), grouping individuals of differing religious affiliations by a common sense of "religiousness" (Błażek and Besta 2012) is frequently used to evaluate the general effect of religiosity independent of a person's specific faith tradition (Brown et al. 2011; Dalton, Dollahite, and Marks 2017).

Themes and Findings

This study explores the difficulties that religious families see themselves as currently facing in highly secularized societies in the UK and Ireland. Two main themes were identified from our interviews: 1) challenges faced by highly religious families in secular societies and 2) coping mechanisms employed by highly religious families in secular societies. Each of these themes contain subthemes that were identified from our interviewees' responses, which answered the following two-part research question: What difficulties are highly religious families facing in the UK and Ireland as a result of living in a secular society, and how are religious families dealing with these difficulties?

Table 1: Numerical Content Analysis of Qualitative Coding

	Theme	# References	# Sources	% Interviews
1a.	Societal Challenge: Outside Pressure to Conform	209	80	61.5
1b.	Societal Challenge: Misrepresentation by the Media	52	31	23.8
1c.	Societal Challenge: Immoral Messages in Media	157	64	49.2
2a.	Coping Mechanism: Access to Media	197	72	55.4
2b.	Coping Mechanism: Building Community	154	62	47.7
2c.	Coping Mechanism: Critical Thinking	127	55	42.3
	Total	658	130	100 (97.0)

Note: The percent of interviews is calculated out of the 130 interviews that contain accounts directly related to the research question, not out of the larger sample of 134 interviews conducted. Four interviews were omitted for the purpose of this analysis because the participants did not discuss information related to our chosen themes.

Source: Riley et al. 2016

Challenges Faced by Highly Religious Families in Secular Societies

The first theme covers the difficulties that our interviewees felt they faced as highly religious individuals living in increasingly secularized societies. Within this theme, researchers identified three subthemes: 1) outside pressure to conform, 2) misrepresentation by the media, and 3) immoral messages in the media.

Outside Pressure to Conform

Many of our interviewees expressed that they experienced external pressure to adopt secular lifestyles and adhere to non-religious or atheistic belief systems. The interviewees often identified the source of this pressure as originating from external sources such as media, social interactions, and interpersonal relationships, and they discussed how it created a sense of dissonance or discomfort in the relationship between religious families and secular society.

Many participants expressed a feeling of underlying pressure to keep their religious beliefs private. Fifty-six-year-old social worker Billy (all names are pseudonyms) expressed this common belief: “Structurally, legislatively, media-wise, there is a trend to shut us up, put us back in the box. Faith is okay if it’s a very personal thing, just don’t feel you have the right to come and talk to me about it.” Billy perceived pressure to privatize faith as coming from the media, the government, and society’s structure in general. Another participant, Anne, discussed how she felt that living among people of a secular value system placed upon religious people pressure to adopt a materialistic lifestyle inconsistent with their own values: “There is an expectation that this is how you would live, this is the type of holidays you would go on, and these are the type of cars you would drive. That can be difficult for families if you either can’t afford it or you don’t necessarily have the same values.”

Similarly, Libby, a middle-aged Catholic woman, believed that people are afraid of faith and society has become an “inhibiting” climate for them as practicing Christians. She agreed that showing religious beliefs in public is not socially acceptable: “I’m conscious if I am carrying my prayer book to church on Sunday if I’m walking through the town. I’m not thinking that I need to hide it but...people might give me funny looks...Even wearing a simple cross in this country has almost become a political act.” Libby felt also that raising a religious family in a secular society isolated her. Libby, Anne, Billy, and other interviewees felt an underlying social pressure to keep their religion private and avoid discussing their religious beliefs or displaying religious symbols in society. As Libby expressed, this social pressure created a feeling of isolation from society.

Libby and Mark, both of whom have graduate degrees, provided an account of feeling pressured to conform to a secular worldview in education. They said that, throughout their own experiences in academia, they felt a societal expectation that “[I]n order to have academic rigor you have to discount any airy-fairy nonsense like religion. That’s for the superstitious, unreconstructed simple folk.” Libby added that during her studies of medieval religion, she quickly came to realize “that the people who were teaching me thought it was all a load of rubbish.” The interviewees here discussed how religious adherents in academia feel pressure to conform to a secular worldview and highlighted how secularism pervades academia. According to Libby and Mark, those adhering to a religious worldview are viewed as “superstitious,” “simple,” and not “civilized” compared to their secular counterparts.

The experiences of our interviewees seem to coincide with interviewee Canon Armstrong’s description of trends in secularism as “soft persecution,” wherein the highly religious are not being forcibly or aggressively made to conform to a secular way of life; rather, they experience social pressure to change their worldview and lifestyle. This social pressure manifested often as pressure to view religion as part of the cultural past rather than a realistic present or future. Overall, our interviewees expressed feeling uncomfortable or different because they chose to practice religion in a secular world. This discomfort sometimes created behavioral changes, including keeping religious beliefs quiet when in public.

Misrepresentation by the Media

Many interviewees expressed concerns about media, particularly the news, misrepresenting their respective religious communities. Such misrepresentation included reporting false information about a religious community’s activities and beliefs and presenting religious leaders, adherents, or communities in a negative way. Generally, the religious individuals in our study saw media portrayals of religion as being inaccurate, imbalanced, and negative.

Scott, a Christian from Ireland, argued that typically only conservative Christians, with whom he personally disagrees, are interviewed and presented as representative of Christianity as a whole. He shared that conservative Christians on the radio are often mocked by the other guest or radio talk show host. Scott said “in a sense he’s mocking Christianity, but not recognizing that maybe this guy’s views aren’t necessarily held by a lot of Christians, nor is it biblical, in my opinion.” He also explained that he personally “has a hard time relating” with the people in media who are meant to represent Christianity. According to Scott, not only are media sources misrepresenting religious communities in their reports, but the religious people highlighted in the media can be misrepresentative.

Forty-one-year-old Methodist woman Phoebe discussed a “feeling of imbalance” experienced by religious consumers of news in her country. She explained, “Our news broadcasters have always been seen in the past to be very neutral and open,” but Phoebe felt that media had become “imbalanced.” Phoebe provided two examples. First, she explained that newscasters from her country “are happy to present a group of extremists protesting in London for Sharia law, but they wouldn’t document a group of Muslims who were standing up to support good working relationships and understanding.” Her second example related to TV dramas and the presentation of those of the Catholic faith. She said, “When clergy are depicted in dramas and soap operas and that kind of thing, it’s a dodgery old man. It’s not true representation of the Church.” Phoebe saw a clear bias in the media, both news-based and fictional, toward depicting religion in a negative light.

Muslim father Dr. Hakim corroborated Phoebe’s statements. He said that news sources “tend to just broadcast the bad things and avoid the positive things...They somehow avoid all of this and show you the bad stuff that is happening and give you the wrong image.” He said that consequently, “everybody thinks that Muslims are a killing people, people that kill, and they just want jihad because that’s the way the news shows it.” Both Dr. Hakim and Phoebe saw the media as being imbalanced in favor of negative representations of religion.

Along with the imbalance created by media, many participants in our study specifically discussed the negative view that media has of religion. Christopher said that “Media casts particular religious values as being restrictive and inhibiting,” and other participants discussed how the media cast their religious communities in a negative light.

Young engineer Mohammed expressed related concerns regarding the internet and social media’s misrepresentation of Islam. He explained that some YouTube videos will convince viewers that “killing is allowed in Islam.” He concluded that “...people can portray the wrong image about a certain religion.” While Mohammed’s concerns focused on his own religion, he also recognized that the media could have serious negative effects on the social reputations of all religious groups.

Overall, the participants in our study were concerned about how the media was portraying their religion. Generally, participants believed that the media favored secularism and viewed religion in a negative light. This bias manifested as misrepresentation of religious individuals, an imbalance of available information about religions, and clear negative misrepresentations of religious groups.

Immoral/Contrary Messages in the Media

Many of the parents from our sample cited messages in the media as a concern for their families. They identified these messages as those that contradicted their own religious beliefs and practices and those that they perceived as immoral. These messages from the media were identified as a negative secular influence because the parents from our sample felt that such messages would negatively impact their children and lead their children away from their respective religious community’s beliefs and practices.

Some religious participants worried that the misrepresentation of religion by media, as discussed in the previous section, could be detrimental to the younger generation’s perception of their own beliefs. Muslim religious leader Nabih expressed his concern for young Muslims who do not have “proper” Islamic education and who are educated by social media. His concern stemmed from worries about extremist groups using social media. He explained, “The real extremist groups and terrorist groups, they are very active in social media...Those youth who spend time on social media, they will take guidance from social media rather than from the well-established transparent system...Many people are groomed, and they throw them to Syria.”

Georgia expressed her concerns about secular media affecting her daughter’s “self-worth.” She explained “[t]he visualizations that she sees are impacting the way she thinks and feels about herself.” Despite Georgia’s efforts to help her daughter realize that she did not have to conform to the images she sees in the media, Georgia explained that her daughter has “seen a vision that seems more appealing, [and] that it has to be right.” Georgia concluded that her daughter felt pressured to look and be a certain way due to images presented in the media, and Georgia then expressed that as a mother, she felt a strong need to constantly be counteracting the negative influence of the media.

In fact, mothers of a variety of faiths discussed the difficulties of raising children when the media portrays different values than religion does. Ella, a Catholic mother of three, remarked that it is difficult to get young people to be religious because, in contrast to the fun, instant gratification of social media, religion “challenges people to get in the habit of not being there for themselves” and focus on worship and service instead. Chloe, a Jewish mother of two, agreed that raising children in a media-saturated environment is difficult, “Yes, television is blasting out a load of values with which I do not agree and so I tended to keep my children very busy.” Similarly, Latter-Day Saint mother Jodie expressed that she believes poor use of social media can lead to sin and worries that her children will “get hurt” by poor social media choices in the future. Across faith backgrounds, parents worried about the implications of secularized media for their children’s value systems and choices.

One participant, Chris, made this interesting remark: “If I turn on the TV, I’ll be bombarded by a particular code of morality that I don’t believe in...I can’t enjoy it very much because I feel like I’m being bombarded with someone else’s propaganda.” For Chris, as well as the religious mothers quoted above, media was a source of “propaganda” of other value systems. By supporting secular morality, media directly contradicted religious moral views.

Coping Mechanisms Employed by Highly Religious Families in Secular Societies

Many participants in our study identified coping strategies for dealing with the perceived negative influences of secularism on family relationships and religious life. Coping mechanisms included the following: 1) Access to Media, 2) Building Community, and 3) Critical Thinking. Although these coping methods were not mutually exclusive, the strategies which parents discussed represented their main approach to raising their children to successfully navigate a religious identity in secular society.

Access to Media

Many parents from our sample identified contradictory influences in media as a major societal challenge that they faced in raising their families, and many of them chose to influence their children’s access to media in order to mitigate the potential negative effects of media choices. Some parents focused on limiting or eliminating access to secular media while others focused instead on infusing their children’s life with positive, pro-religious media influences.

Some parents chose to limit the media to which their children were exposed. Natalie, for example, explained she has a “lock” on her son’s internet “because it just could bring up anything like dating sites or porn.” She went on to say that parents “have to be deliberate and watch out” for secular influences in the media. Her reasoning for adopting this coping mechanism was that “otherwise [influences from the media] just [come] in. It numbs you and it seems normal to you.”

The Jones couple took the same approach as Natalie by putting “restrictions” and “blocks” on their daughter’s phone and tablet, but they expressed that this approach was not foolproof since “[children] are being reached in so many different ways,” including friends and peers at school whose devices are “open to all.” This was a concern for these parents as it constituted a possible exposure to websites and media which they did not wish their daughter to encounter. In blocking certain types of media, Natalie and the Joneses attempted to restrict their children’s use of media to include only media consistent with their religious moral code.

Anthony and Jodie described restricting their children’s access to media as a way to “nurture.” They explained, “We try to nurture in here. We’re making sure the children are not watching certain programs, they’re not doing certain things that take away from everything else that we’re doing inside the faith.” They described this coping mechanism as a protection from things that could potentially diminish their children’s faith activities and beliefs. This theme of outside influences or forces as potential deterrents from faith was often cited by the parents interviewed in our study. For religious parents, limiting or eliminating the media exposure of their children was a way to attempt to prevent secular values from entering their homes.

Rather than simply limiting incoming media via filters, some religious communities eliminated media altogether. Amish converts Paul and Gemma chose not to use TV or radio and kept the internet only for “the most basic things.” They felt that Western media was too “pornographic” for them and their family and chose to reject it as much as possible.

As well as limiting or eliminating certain types of media, many parents made an effort to expose their children to positive media that supported religious values. Yash, a divorced Hindu father, said that he read religious bedtime stories to his children “from Vedic culture or philosophy, like Ramayana or Mahabharata or something, or Krishna book stories.” For Yash, these nightly bedtime stories allowed him to nurture the faith of his children. Similarly, many

Christian parents talked about reading Bible stories to their children at night. Roland said this had a “positive effect” on his children because the Bible “teaches us good things” and helped them “become better persons, better parents, and better children.”

Other sources of positive religious media included “singing songs that taught Bible truths” according to Jason, “age-specific Bible story books” according to Nathan, “pop-like songs that are Christian and about God” according to Sofia, catechisms, prayers, and beatitudes. Alice explained, “It’s almost like etching it on your psyche, on your soul, it’s the repetition, the time and time again...they become part of who you are.” For these religious parents, regular introduction of religious-based media was a way to make religion a meaningful part of their children’s lives.

Samuel suggested that these little methods of integrating daily faith, including positive media, are an important part of religious parenting. He advised,

Create a context in your home where God becomes a part of your family in a very real and significant way. Encourage them to read stories about men and women and faith who have done incredible things. Stories of missionaries are incredibly inspiring, incredibly challenging, and incredibly beneficial for our kids to see there is something here worth giving your life for. Sacrificing yourself to these things makes a difference.

For many parents we interviewed, media was a serious concern. They coped by influencing their children’s media choices, whether that was by eliminating secular media, limiting secular media, or introducing positive, religious-based media experiences.

Building Community

Many parents found that surrounding their children with members of a religious community was an important way to counteract secular influences. Many discussed how a community provided an additional positive moral influence beyond just themselves as parents. Alice, mother of two, said, “So much of your child’s growing is not just your influence. It is their friends. It is the other adults who take part in their life.” She expressed that she believed church community to be important and hoped her children will take away the message that “there are other people than my parents that think this and say this and believe this and do this.” Her husband Nathan agreed: “We learn by examples from our parents, but our parents need to be validated by external sources, by other people who are living the same way and saying the same things.” For Alice and Nathan, having a strong church community meant that their children would have more examples of religious belief in their lives.

Charlotte, speaking of her son, said, “We want Charlie to grow up around people who love Jesus and actually will be good role models for him.” Her husband discussed how they want active spiritual godparents for their children: “We’re not choosing godparents that are a distance away. We are having people that are nearby...we want them to have a real connection for him as he grows up.”

Emily saw religious community as encouraging her daughter to make sound moral decisions in the future: “I want her to have Christian friends and Christian influences that aren’t just us. I think that will be important in the choices that she makes as parents become less influential and friends become more and more influential.”

Some of our participants discussed the importance of having a religious community that included youth influence and activities led by young people. Natalie discussed how youth activities helped her sons build personal religious communities. “They keep quite engaged and interested. I don’t have to worry about them doing drugs on Friday night or something.” She added that youth and kid groups allowed her children to learn the “same message but at the level they understand it” in a way that is “beautiful.” Similarly, evangelical faith leader Elliott argued for making more room for young leaders in religious life. He said, “It is young people that are

best to reach young people. When I was younger the people that really saw me and got me passionate about God were young people.” For this father and religious leader, it was important for young people to have the influence of other religious young people.

Catholic faith leader Daniel discussed how religious community is important for parents as well as children. He added that the value of religious community “is to help couples and parents begin to have solidarity with other couples and parents of like mind and like values.” He went on to say that he considered isolationism one of the biggest difficulties of religious life in a secular society and that religious community helped to combat this isolationism. Overall, for those in our sample, religious community appeared to help inspire children and support parents in their efforts to raise their children in the faith.

When asked how she would rate the importance of religious community on a scale of 1 to 7, Abigail said,

I would say 7. It’s really important. You can’t really do it yourself. You support, and you can’t do it yourself. It’s good to have people who are like you and share that same community. Jesus had the apostles, you need that. Friends, family and support. In a secular society it is easy to get bombarded with a secular message. If you don’t have support sometimes you do not have the strength to live the life you want to live

Overall, Abigail’s statement succinctly summarized the feelings of our interviewees. They saw value in the positive influence of a religious community, so they tried to keep their children involved in the activities of the religious community, and they attempted to build communities of like-minded people around their children for spiritual support.

Critical Thinking

In the end, many parents realized that their children would still have to interact regularly with secular values, and they would have to be prepared. These parents coped with their children’s increased access to secular influence by attempting to instill critical thinking skills in their children. This involved allowing them to interact with all different types of media and people but then encouraging them to examine how these interactions compared to their beliefs. Participants described how this method allowed them to discuss media and actions of others that may be contradictory to their own religious beliefs.

Stephan expressed the need for this kind of parenting. He said that he wanted his son to be able to “fight the battle and make his own decisions” because “I won’t be there at the situation to protect him. He has to be even stronger.” Stephan realized that his son could not rely on him forever, and he would have to raise his son to make independent life decisions.

Nathan and Alice discussed how this approach to parenting is “purposeful.” They explained that their approach involved discussing with their children what the children watch, listen to, and read and then asking their children to compare these media sources with the tenets of their faith. They said that “you have to help them [children] process that [media] and pay attention” to what values and media they are absorbing. Alice added, “You have to kind of talk them through and say ‘what does this mean’ and ‘what does this look like in God’s world’ and ‘how do we handle these situations.’” For Alice and Nathan, the inevitable encounters that their children would have with opposing opinions were opportunities to help their children interpret secular events within a religious context.

Mark, father of two, explained that teaching critical thinking was an important part of his parenting because it prepared his children to be independent religious adults. He said, “They’ve got to deal with those challenges, learn how to remain who they are and who they want to be in the face of challenges or pressure of other people and general society and laws that are being passed.” Scott expressed a similar sentiment: “That [secular culture] presents challenges, but they’re good challenges because it’s real life.” For these two fathers, having their children

interact with non-religious influences was important because it allowed the children to develop their own personal identities and critical thinking skills. For our religious interviewees, this parenting method allowed their children to realistically interact with the real world while also involving their religious standards.

Samantha said that, regarding “media and pressure,” her ultimate goal for teaching her children critical thinking was to make them “comfortable in their own skins about everything: about their religion, about their clubs that they go to, about their abilities, that they’ll be able to deal with that okay” and able to “deal with conflict, but in a positive way.” Samantha and others felt that self-assurance was essential for their children to live fulfilling religious lives in a secular society. These interviewees wanted to give their children the tools to succeed out in the world, and they considered critical thinking an important part of life success.

Discussion

Consistent with previous research (Davie 2015; Habermas 2008), our religious interviewees considered themselves to be a minority in a secularized society. Many of them felt that society was against them, or at least that the values of society had become inconsistent with their own moral beliefs. Previous studies have suggested that placing the blame on secularization was a way for religious leaders to explain changes in their community’s spirituality without having to initiate reforms (Edgell 2013; McMullin 2013). Our results, which included interviews from many religious leaders, contradicted this idea. Our interviewees viewed secularization as impetus for them to make changes rather than an excuse. They worried about the effects of secularization and consequently adopted coping strategies in their families. While that previous study called for religious organizations to innovate to meet the needs of a changing world (Edgell 2013), the interviews in our study suggest that religious families have already done so.

Our religious participants tended to view secularization as a bad thing. However, some researchers indicate that secularization may be a positive influence on society. It is, after all, often connected to modernization and industrialization (Browning and Clairmont 2007). People living secular lives are still fully capable of living purposeful, moral lives (Flaskerud 2016; Zuckerman 2009). In fact, one study correlates secularity with higher levels of education, greater gender equality, and less prejudice (Zuckerman 2009). The purpose of our study was not to compare religious and secular lifestyles. However, it was an interesting aspect of our study, consistent with other research (Zuckerman 2009), that religious people hold a negative connotation of secularization. Further studies may be able to determine in what ways religious individuals have or can advantageously embrace aspects of secularization.

Although some studies have indicated that religious families react to secular society by insulating themselves (Habermas 2008; Kim and Wilcox 2013), none of our religious interviewees advocated for insularity. Although, arguably, building a religious community could be taken to the extreme of social isolation, our interviewees tended to realize that they still were participants of a wider, pluralistic society. They believed that they could separate themselves from the ideals of a secularized society while still being society members, fulfilling that old religious adage “in the world but not of the world.” This is consistent with research that suggests that religious individuals may support traditional religious values but adapt those values into a modern lifestyle (Browning and Clairmont 2007).

Our study suggests that media plays an important role in worshippers’ relationship to their religion. Our interviewees generally identified social media and technology as a negative influence on the religious family; this trend of high religiosity and low support for media is backed by previous research (Ratcliff, McCarty, and Ritter 2017). As our interviewees recognized, increased exposure to social media in young religious people is associated with less desire to communicate about religion in interpersonal relationships (Alkazemi 2015). However, although media was identified as a challenge, our interviewees also recognized that access to pro-religious media could help their families remain closer to their religion. This is consistent with

previous findings, which suggest that religious traditionalists may have concerns about media, but modern media may also help younger generations embrace or understand their spirituality (Aguilar et al. 2017; Clark 2002).

Many parents in our study emphasized their desire for their children to have access to a solid religious community. Studies indicate that tight-knit religious communities and strong role models within one's faith community are indeed linked to positive religious transmission (Bengston, Putney, and Harris 2013; Vondras 2013). Similarly, researchers Voas and McAndrew (2012) identified family and social environment, both of which compose community, as two of the three most important influences on long-term religious belief. Participating in a religious community with frequent activities is associated with greater religious dedication (von der Ruhr and Daniels 2012). Establishing religious community may also help counteract the influence of non-religious peers, as peer pressure was one of the top concerns of our religious parents. Research says that non-religious adults cite spending time with friends with secular values as one of the top reasons they become distanced from their childhood religion (Thiessen and Wilkins-Laflamme 2017). Thus, our participants' concern with building religious community and counteracting secular peer pressure is founded in previous research and suggests a legitimate concern for religious families.

The last major coping strategy that our religious families discussed was integration of critical thinking. This is an interesting coping strategy, since critical thinking is often associated with secularism and is cited as a method of overcoming religious extremism (Davies 2014). However, research indicates that religious youths have greatest respect for fellow religious peers who reason with complexity about their religious beliefs (Williams 2013). Similarly, research on religion in the classroom suggests that critical thinking is necessary for students to interact with religion and consider "the concerns, conflicts, and possible solutions to the various misapplications, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings of spirituality and religion across societies" (Vondras 2013, 193). This quote suggests that critical thinking helps students engage with religiosity on a more personal, real-world level, which may help them envision religion acting in their own lives. Generally, it would seem that critical thinking is used by both religious and non-religious individuals as a way to reconcile belief systems with reality and more fully interact with the real world. Our participants and others therefore encouraged youth to seek out critical thinking to help them internalize their religion and live it more fully in situations inconsistent with their own beliefs.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations to this study. First, our study focused primarily on highly religious individuals, meaning that non-religious individuals and those who placed lower emphasis on their faith were not included. Further research could include how non-religious or less religious families are affected by a changing society. Additionally, while our study explored the societal issues that religious individuals see themselves as facing and some of their coping mechanisms, we did not address the effectiveness of these coping mechanisms, nor did we address the potential positive effects of secularization and modernization on religious families. Further research could be conducted in these areas. Our study was also limited in scope; we were only able to talk to a limited sample of individuals in the UK and Ireland, so it is impossible to draw broad conclusions from our results. However, our study does still have value because it describes the personalized perspectives of the people we were able to interview. Although the results of our study can only be directly applied to religious individuals living in the geographical and cultural context examined, our study suggests some key areas of concern for religious families, and it suggests areas in which they may be able to counteract secular influence.

Conclusion

Despite coming from a wide variety of different faith backgrounds, our interviewees shared concerns about societal secularization. For many parents and faith leaders, the media was a major concern in the raising of religious families. They saw this as an issue because the media created pressure to conform, misrepresented religion, and supported secular values. In their concerns, our interviewees generally agreed that something had to be done. While they discussed a variety of coping mechanisms, three were the most common: influencing access to media, encouraging critical thinking, and building religious community.

Due to both the use of a purposive sample of religious individuals and the use of a qualitative approach, this study does not seek to make broad generalizations about the application of these themes. Rather, our study attempts to provide an insider perspective on the issues facing some religious families today. We provide valuable insight into aspects of society that some religious families find most challenging and their coping mechanisms. As society continues shifting away from religious tradition, the perspective of religious individuals and families regarding society will continue to change; we hope that our research provides the beginning of an understanding of what increased secularism means for highly religious groups.

REFERENCES

- Aguilar, Gabrielle K., Heidi A. Campbell, Mariah Stanley, and Ellen Taylor. 2017. "Communicating Mixed Messages about Religion through Internet Memes." *Information, Communication and Society* 20 (10): 1498–1520. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1229004>.
- Akyil, Yudum, Anne Prouty, Amy Blanchard, and Kevin Lyness. 2016. "Experiences of Families Transmitting Values in a Rapidly Changing Society: Implications for Family Therapists." *Family Process* 55 (2): 368–381. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12163>.
- Alkazemi, Mariam F. 2015. "Mediating Silence: The Media's Role in Silencing Religious Dialogue among US Muslims." *Journal of Media and Religion* 14 (1): 29–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348423.2015.1011989>.
- Bengston, Vern L., Norella M. Putney, and Susan Harris. 2013. *Families and Faith: How Religion is Passed Down across Generations*. New York: Oxford.
- Błażek, Magdalena and Tomasz Besta. 2012. "Self-Concept Clarity and Religious Orientations: Prediction of Purpose in Life and Self-Esteem." *Journal of Religion and Health* 51 (3): 947–960. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-010-9407-y>.
- Brewitt-Taylor, Sam. 2013. "The Invention of a 'Secular Society?'" *Twentieth Century British History* 24 (3): 327–350. <https://doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwt012>.
- Brown, Teri, Yaxin Lu, Loren Marks, and David C. Dollahite. 2011. "Meaning Making Across Three Dimensions of Religious Experience: A Qualitative Exploration." *Counseling and Spirituality* 30 (2): 11–36. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2012-00594-001>.
- Browning, Don S., and David A. Clairmont. 2007. *American Religions and the Family: How Faith Traditions Cope with Modernization and Democracy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cadge, Wendy, Mar Griera, Kristen Lucken, and Ines Michalowski. 2017. "Religion in Public Institutions: Comparative Perspectives from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 56 (2): 226–233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12350>.

- Clark, Lynn Schofield. 2002. "US Adolescent Religious Identity, the Media, and the 'Funky' Side of Religion." *Journal of Communication* 52 (4): 794–811. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2002.tb02574.x>.
- Copen, Casey E., and Merrill Silverstein. 2008. "The Transmission of Religious Beliefs across Generations: Do Grandparents Matter?" *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 39 (1): 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jefs.39.1.59>.
- Cragun, Ryan T., John Stinespring, and Andrew Tillman. 2019. "Sunday Football or Church? A Case Study in Substitutes and Complements." *Review of Religious Research* 61 (2): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-019-00367-0>.
- Crockett, Alasdair, and David Voas. 2006. "Generations of Decline: Religious Change in 20th-century Britain." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 45 (4): 567–584. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2006.00328.x>.
- Dalton, Hilary, David C. Dollahite, and Loren D. Marks. 2018. "Transcendence Matters: Do the Ways Family Members Experience God Meaningfully Relate to Family Life?" *Review of Religious Research* 60 (1): 23–47. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-017-0317-2>.
- Davie, Grace. 2015. *Religion in Britain: A Persistent Paradox*. Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishers.
- Davies, Lynn. 2014. "One Size Does Not Fit All: Complexity, Religion, Secularism and Education." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 34 (2): 184–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2013.875647>.
- Deller, Ruth Anna. 2012. "Faith in View: Religion and Spirituality in Factual British Television 2000-2009." PhD diss., Sheffield Hallam University. <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/5654>.
- Edgell, Penny. 2013. *Religion and Family in a Changing Society*, Vol 57. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Engelberg, Ari. 2016. "Religious Zionist Singles: Caught between 'Family Values' and 'Young Adulthood.'" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 55 (2): 349–364. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12259>.
- Field, Clive D. 2014. "Another Window on British Secularization: Public Attitudes to Church and Clergy since the 1960s." *Contemporary British History* 28 (2): 190–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2014.923765>.
- Flaskerud, Jacquelyn H. 2016. "Culture Change? A Secular Shift." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 37 (2): 121–124. <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612840.2015.1074772>.
- Glendinning, Tony, and Steve Bruce. 2011. "Privatization or Deprivatization: British Attitudes about the Public Presence of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50 (3): 503–516. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2011.01582.x>.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 2008. "Notes on Post-secular Society." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25 (4): 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5842.2008.01017.x>.
- Halman, Loek, and Veerle Draulans. 2006. "How Secular is Europe?" *British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2): 263–288. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2006.00109.x>.
- Hvidtjærn, Dorte, Jacob Hjelmberg, Axel Skytthe, Kaare Christensen, and Niels Christian Hvidt. 2014. "Religiousness and Religious Coping in a Secular Society: The Gender Perspective." *Journal of Religion and Health* 53 (5): 1329–1341. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-013-9724-z>.
- Ji, Yingchun. 2015. "Asian Families at the Crossroads: A Meeting of East, West, Tradition, Modernity, and Gender." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77 (5): 1031–1038. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12223>.
- Kashyap, Lina. 2004. "The Impact of Modernization on Indian Families: The Counselling Challenge." *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling* 26 (4): 341–350. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-004-0169-7>.

- Kim, Young-Il, and W. Bradford Wilcox. 2013. "Bonding Alone: Familism, Religion, and Secular Civic Participation." *Social Science Research* 42 (1): 31–45. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2012.08.001>.
- Kirkland, James R. 1984. "Modernization of Family Values and Norms among Armenians in Sydney." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 15 (3): 355–372. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.15.3.355>.
- Kregting, Joris, Peer Scheepers, Paul Vermeer, and Chris Hermans. 2018. "Why God Has Left the Netherlands: Explanations for the Decline of Institutional Christianity in the Netherlands between 1966 and 2015." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 57 (1): 58–79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12499>.
- Levitt, Heidi M., Michael Bamberg, John W. Creswell, David M. Frost, Ruthellen Josselson, and Carola Suárez-Orozco. 2018. "Journal Article Reporting Standards for Qualitative Primary, Qualitative Meta-Analytic, and Mixed Methods Research in Psychology: The APA Publications and Communications Board Task Force Report." *American Psychologist* 73 (1): 26–46. <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2018-00750-003.html>.
- Marks, Loren D. 2015. "A Pragmatic, Step-by-Step Guide for Qualitative Methods: Capturing the Disaster and Long-Term Recovery Stories of Katrina and Rita." *Current Psychology* 34 (3): 494–505. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-015-9342-x>.
- McMullin, Steve. 2013. "The Secularization of Sunday: Real or Perceived Competition for Churches." *Review of Religious Research* 55 (1): 43–59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-012-0089-7>.
- Pew Research Center. 2015. "America's Changing Religious Landscape. Pew Research Center: Religion and Public Life." May 12, 2015. <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape>.
- Prothero, Stephen. 2011. *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World, and Why their Differences Matter*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Ratcliff, Amanda Jo, Josh McCarty, and Matt Ritter. 2017. "Religion and New media: A Uses and Gratifications Approach." *Journal of Media and Religion* 16 (1): 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348423.2017.1274589>.
- Robinson, Oliver C., Karina Hanson, Guy Hayward, and David Lorimer. 2019. "Age and Cultural Gender Equality as Moderators of the Gender Difference in the Importance of Religion and Spirituality: Comparing the United Kingdom, France, and Germany." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 58 (1): 301–308. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12567>.
- Smith, Christian. 2005. *Soul searching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thiessen, Joel, and Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme. 2017. "Becoming a Religious None: Irreligious Socialization and Disaffiliation." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 56 (1): 64–82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12319>.
- Thornton, Arland. 1985. "Reciprocal Influences of Family and Religion in a Changing World." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 47 (2): 381–394. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/352138>.
- Verkuynen, Maykel, Jochem Thijs, and Gonneke Stevens. 2012. "Multiple Identities and Religious Transmission: A Study among Moroccan-Dutch Muslim Adolescents and their Parents." *Child Development* 83 (5): 1577–1590. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01794.x>.
- Voas, David, and Siobhan McAndrew. 2012. "Three Puzzles of Non-religion in Britain." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 27 (1): 29–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537903.2012.642725>.
- Von der Ruhr, Marc, and Joseph P. Daniels. 2012. "Subsidizing Religious Participation through Groups: A Model of the 'Megachurch' Strategy for Growth." *Review of Religious Research* 53 (4): 471–491. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-011-0024-3>.

- Vondras, Dean D. 2013. "Spirituality and Religion: How Contexts, Developmental Processes, and Personal Experiences Influence Behavior." In *Controversy in the Psychology Classroom: Using Hot Topics to Foster Critical Thinking*, edited by Dana S. Dunn, Reagan A.R. Gurung, Karen Z. Naufel, and Janie H. Wilson, 185–207. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Williams, Ryan J. 2013. "Network Hubs and Opportunity for Complex Thinking among Young British Muslims." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52 (3): 573–595. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12050>.
- Zuckerman, Phil. 2009. "Atheism, Secularity, and Well-being: How the Findings of Social Science Counter Negative Stereotypes and Assumptions." *Sociology Compass* 3 (6): 949–971. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2009.00247.x>.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Christina Riley: Doctoral Research Assistant, Psychology Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

Alexandra Carlile: Undergraduate Research Assistant, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

Quinn Galbraith: Family Life and Sociology Librarian, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

Heather Kelley: Doctoral Student, Family Life Department, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

Copyright of International Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Society is the property of Common Ground Research Networks and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.