



**RELIGIOUS STRATIFICATION:
ITS ORIGINS, PERSISTENCE, AND CONSEQUENCES***

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Introduction

As sociologists, our job is to study social structures and processes. One of the things we've studied the most is social stratification. We've done extensive research on the conditions under which stratification develops, why it persists and changes over time, and how it produces social problems that otherwise would not exist. In this research, we've paid special attention to the effects that race, class, and gender have on people's access to important social resources. Without denying the importance of these three variables, I think it is odd that this literature pays almost no attention to religion. Oh, sure, it says that religion often legitimates inequalities based on race, class, and gender. And, yes, it mentions the fact that religion sometimes is on the cutting edge of movements aimed at building a more just and equal world. But,

it almost never explores the possibility that religion also might affect people's access to power, privilege, and prestige. Look at our mainstream journals. They're full of articles on racial stratification, class stratification, and gender stratification, but contain almost no articles on the origin, persistence, and consequences of religious stratification. All of the leading textbooks on stratification have wonderful chapters on race, class, and gender. Not one of them has a chapter on religion.

Why do sociologists pay so little attention to religious stratification? There are several reasons. First, many of our colleagues assume that race, class, and gender are ascribed qualities that don't change over the course of one's life, but assume that people can easily switch from one religion to another, or drop out of religion altogether. Second, they think religion is not as visible—and therefore not as useful—as race, class, and gender in deciding who should or should not have access to social rewards. Third, they believe religion has lost its social significance, especially in the workplace and the political arena. Fourth, they

claim that people don't know or care about religious affiliation as much as they used to. Thus, they argue, religion has little or no effect of its own on people's access to power, privilege, and prestige (whatever correlation there might be between religion and access to these resources is considered spurious). It's no wonder they believe religious stratification is rare and does not deserve much attention.

We sociologists of religion would disagree with at least some, if not all, of these assumptions. First, we'd grant that religion is not as fixed a quality as race and gender, but our research shows that it's more ascribed than class. People are more likely to remain in the same religion all of their lives than they are to remain in the same social class. Some switching does occur, but over 80 percent of people do not change religions, even when it would be in their best interest to do so. Second, we know that religion is highly visible. Many people are very "up front" about their religious affiliation. If they aren't, it's pretty easy to figure it out on the basis of their names, their nationalities, the way they

talk, and where they went to school. Third, all you've got to do is watch the news or read the papers to know that religion is still an important part of our society. Fourth, some of the historical differences between Protestants, Catholics, and Jews are not as salient as they once were, but they certainly haven't disappeared. Also, the differences between these three groups and Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims are more significant than ever. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that religion has at least some effect on who does and who does not have access to scarce resources. It probably does not have as much effect as race, class, and gender, but religious stratification is probably a more significant social condition than many of our colleagues think.

We sociologists of religion have done a little better job of studying religious stratification, but not much. At least we ask whether religion affects people's access to resources. But, when we do, we tend to frame the issue in terms of Weber's book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and Lenski's book *The Religious Factor*. These studies, and the many others they've

spawned, argue that some religious values are more conducive to worldly success than others, that Protestants have these values more than Catholics do, and, therefore, Protestants are higher in socio-economic status than Catholics. As a Catholic, I've never been real thrilled with this argument. As a sociologist, I believe it is seriously flawed. It treats religious groups as separate entities, which they are not (historically, theologically, or sociologically). It focuses on the groups' religious values, but ignores their worldly self-interests. It assumes that groups are able to act without opposition from other groups, which is simply not true. And, it blames the victim, which we are unwilling to do in studies of race, class, and gender. Needless to say, this hasn't been a very productive approach.

I think we ought to try a different one. For the sake of building a general theory of stratification, we could start by approaching religion the same way we approach race, class, and gender. That means beginning with a conflict, or "fair shares," theory of society that appreciates the potency of both material and

non-material qualities. Such a theory assumes that society is in a constant state of turmoil; that the main reason for this turbulence is the co-existence of different races, classes, genders, and religions; that these groups are in close relationship with one another; that they interact on the basis of both their values and their self-interests; that the groups' values and interests tend to conflict; that, as a result of this conflict, there is more tension than teamwork between the groups; and that, in the course of their interaction, groups often develop unequal access to power, privilege, and prestige. Power is a largely political concept having to do with a group's ability to get its way even when opposed by others.

Privilege refers to economic resources, such as inherited wealth and the income people derive from work. Prestige is a cultural variable reflecting the amount of social honor and respect accorded to various amounts of education (more *vs* less), types of education (elite private *vs* public), and types of occupations (white collar *vs* blue collar). The groups that have the greatest access to these resources try to pass laws, develop ideologies, and create customs

aimed at preserving their advantages over others. Of course, they encounter opposition, but to the extent that they succeed, inequality is transformed into a more permanent pattern of stratification that produces benefits for people in the upper stratum, but problems for the rest of the society. As we've seen in various forms of stratification, the power differential between the elites and the non-elites tends to persist more than change over time.

Therefore, the laws, ideologies, and customs supporting the original pattern of stratification, the ranking of groups, and the problems resulting from stratification are more likely to persist than change. But, to the extent that there is a shift in power, all other components and consequences of stratification are subject to change.

Several colleagues and I have explored this approach in recent studies of religious stratification in the United States. I want to summarize what we've learned about the origins of religious stratification in the colonial period, expand our understanding of how religious stratification has persisted and changed since then,

and offer some new observations about religious stratification's destabilizing impact on our society. When I'm finished with this macro-level analysis, I'll say a couple of words about future research, including research at the meso and micro levels. Given the theme of this year's meeting, I'll conclude with a few thoughts about building a more just and equal society.

Origins

Religious stratification develops when the relationship between religious groups includes three conditions: ethnocentrism, competition, and differential power (see Figure 1). Ethnocentrism occurs when some groups view themselves as better than others. Competition refers to groups' efforts to assert their values and interests and limit other groups' ability to assert theirs. Finally, if some groups are larger, have stronger organizational bases, and have more resources, they have more power than others.

As Ralph Pyle and I showed in our 2003 *JSSR* article, all three conditions were present in the American colonies. Anglicans,

Congregationalists, and Presbyterians created laws making themselves the “established” churches in nine of the 13 colonies. They also developed a pro-mainline Protestant ideology, which viewed mainline Protestant beliefs and practices as the cultural norm against which all other groups would be evaluated. The greater the differences between mainline Protestantism and other groups’ values, the more deficient the other groups were thought to be. Thus, evangelical Protestants were seen as inferior, but at least they were Protestant. Catholics, Jews, and people with no religious preference were even more culturally different, so they were viewed as the most inferior of all. These groups were expected to abandon, or at least modify, their own traditions and blend into the dominant culture.

The dominant groups also developed behavior patterns that allowed them to accumulate resources and pass them on to their children and grandchildren. These practices ranged from favoritism to outright discrimination. For example, the dominant groups nominated political candidates who belonged to the same religious

groups, voted for their own kind, and appointed people of the same faith to political office. They established their own businesses, hired people who shared their religious affiliation, promoted their own kind over workers with other religious preferences, and left their businesses to members of their own families. They founded church-sponsored colleges and universities, hired teachers and administrators on the basis of their religious affiliation, and gave preference to applicants who belonged to the same religions. All of these behavior patterns maximized their access to social benefits, while limiting other groups' access to them.

These conditions led to a distinct ranking of religious groups (see Figure 2). Anglicans, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians were the Upper stratum. (In Baltzell's words, they also were a socially cohesive "upper class.") Below them was an Upper-Middle stratum, which included Quakers (whose influence far exceeded their percentage in the total population of Pennsylvania) and Unitarians (a late-eighteenth century offshoot of Anglicans). The Lower-Middle stratum consisted of all other Protestants, such

as Baptists, Reformeds, Lutherans, and Methodists. Catholics, Jews, and people with no religious preference were in the Lower stratum.

Persistence/Change

Once religious stratification emerges, under what conditions does it persist or change? The answer begins with the power differential between the groups in the Upper stratum (the “elites”) and all other groups (the “non-elites”). The differential is measured in terms of group size, organizational capacity, and access to resources (see Figure 3). To the extent that the elites are able to maintain their power advantage over the non-elites, they should be able to preserve the laws, ideologies, and customs that produced the original ranking of religious groups. To the extent that the non-elites are able to increase their power, these elements are likely to change.

As I read the historical data, the power differential has diminished, but still tilts toward the elites. Yes, Catholics, Jews, evangelical Protestants, and new immigrant religions have grown

in size, expanded their organizational bases, and accumulated resources (including alliances with the subset of elites who share their goal of building a more just and equal society). But, the percentage of people with no religious preference has declined sharply since the colonial period, and elites are about the same percentage of the total population as they were in the late 1700s. More importantly, elites' organizational bases have expanded to include many more denominational offices, local congregations, prep schools, private colleges and universities, offices on Capitol Hill, and ecumenical coalitions. Their members also are linked into a wide network of business, political, and fraternal organizations that extend elites' influence well beyond their percentage of the total population. And, because of their lofty rank, they have had access to more resources than lower ranking groups. In addition to money, these resources include alliances with the subset of mainline and evangelical Protestants who would rather align themselves with Protestant elites than with non-elites of other religious traditions, and those Catholics, Jews, members of other

religions, and “Nones” who aspire to be accepted by the nation’s religious insiders.

The net effect is that there have been some important changes in the laws, ideologies, and customs supporting religious stratification and in the ranking of some groups. However, the overall structure of religious stratification is still intact, and the ranking of many groups hasn’t changed much at all in over 250 years. Let’s look at the evidence.

Laws

The history of race, class, and gender suggests that laws are more likely to change than the ideologies, customs, and group rankings. The same pattern appears in the history of religious stratification.

The religious elites of the colonial period have won occasional legislative victories, such as the Immigration Act of 1924, which but stopped the influx of Catholics, Jews, and other non-Protestants. But, they have not been as consistent in supporting laws that would perpetuate their dominance as non-

elites have been in opposing them. Non-elites also have been quite successful in forming alliances with those elites who are willing to put egalitarian values ahead of their self-interests. As a result, most of the laws that favored the elites in the colonial period have been struck down by the courts or replaced by ones guaranteeing religious groups equal protection. For example, the First Amendment made it impossible for the colonial elites to become the established religion of the new nation as a whole. In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment put an end to any idea of having religious establishments or imposing limitations on the free exercise of religion at the state level. The Tax Reform Act of 1954 said that religious groups could no longer endorse or opposed political candidates without losing their tax-exempt status. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal to discriminate against anyone on the basis of religion. Although the elites and their allies succeeded in shutting off the flow of non-elites into this country in the 1920s, the non-elites and their allies were able to reopen the doors of

immigration in 1965, leading to an influx of new immigrant religions, such as Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims.

The enforcement of these laws is a never-ending problem, as indicated by EEOC's 2005 data documenting 2,340 claims of religious discrimination, about one-third of which were found to have merit, resulting in over \$6,000,000 in settlements. But, at least the legal props have been knocked out from under religious stratification. However, this fact does not mean that religious groups are now on a level playing field. The reason is that laws are only one of three factors that affect the persistence of religious stratification.

Ideologies

Ideologies are another. Elites promote ideologies that legitimate social inequality. In the colonial period, they promoted ideologies of racism, classism, sexism, and what might be called "religious ethnocentrism." These ideologies distinguished between in-groups and out-groups. Rich, white, male, Anglicans, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians were the insiders; the poor,

people of color, women, and people belonging to other religious groups were the outsiders. These ideologies also asserted that the cultures of the dominant groups are preferable to the cultures of the subordinate groups. The greater the cultural differences between insiders and outsiders, the more inferior the outsiders were thought to be. The religious ideology of the time took the form of a pro-mainline Protestant bias that viewed other religious traditions as unacceptable or even inferior. The way for outsiders to overcome this stigma was to shed their own traditions and adopt the insiders' way of life.

Most scholars agree that this ideology extended into the early 20th century. However, some writers believe it has lost its potency since then. The loss, they say, is the result of many factors, including the legal changes I just outlined. They argue that the pro-mainline Protestant ideology has been superseded by a more egalitarian one known as "cultural pluralism" or "multi-culturalism." This ideology questions the legitimacy of laws and customs favoring one group over others. It insists that all groups

have a right to their distinctive ways of life and that these differences should not limit their access to power, privilege, and prestige.

I agree that the pro-mainline Protestant ideology is not as hegemonic as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries, or the nativist period of the “roaring twenties.” But, like claims of Mark Twain’s death, claims about its demise and the triumph of multi-culturalism are greatly exaggerated. Here are four indications, all of which are based on recent research. First, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and UCC/Congregationalists still think of themselves as the nation’s religious insiders, and no matter how well off other groups are, they still think they are on the outside looking in. Second, mainline Protestant values such as individualism, voluntarism, and denominationalism are still the cultural standard against which all other religious traditions are judged. Third, this standard puts lots of pressure on other groups to adapt, which some groups have done more than others. Fourth, the more religious traditions adapt to the dominant ideology, the more favorably they are viewed; the more

they differ from the prevailing norm, the more unfavorably they are seen. For example, in a June 2006 poll, 10 percent of Americans said they would not vote for a presidential candidate who was Catholic, 15 percent would not vote for a Jew, 21 percent would not vote for an evangelical Christian, 37 percent would not vote for a Mormon, and 54 percent would not vote for a Muslim. In short, just as the ideologies of racism, classism, and sexism persist in our culture, so does religious ethnocentrism.

Customs

Customs are behavior patterns that groups develop and tend to repeat over extended periods of time. Some have little or nothing to do with groups' access to resources. But, others give preference to insiders and/or exclude outsiders.

As I noted earlier, colonial elites engaged in a variety of such customs. A number of them are now illegal, but many others persist, and a number of new ones have been introduced over the years. The ones that persist are so ingrained in our culture that we take them for granted and do not think much about their

consequences. Thus, it is not important to know why people support these policies and practices, but it is important to document their behavior because these customs are mechanisms by which religious stratification is perpetuated.

With regard to power, the elites of the colonial period do not vote for their own kind quite as automatically as they used to, but they still vote for themselves more often than they do for others. And, as Rachel Kraus, Scott Morrissey, and I documented in our 2005 *JSSR* article, when the elites gain access to the White House, their presidents are still more likely than non-elite presidents are to appoint their own kind to cabinet posts and seats on the Supreme Court.

With regard to privilege, elites are more constrained by laws against religious discrimination in the workplace but, as Ralph Pyle has reported, they are still more likely to recruit at schools where religious elites are over-represented in the graduating classes than at the schools which non-elites attend. From the pool of qualified candidates, they are still more likely to select those

who share their characteristics than those who do not. Avenues for advancement certainly are more open than they used to be, but elites still promote their own kind at a higher rate than they promote others, especially in corporate careers in which social acceptability is an important consideration.

With regard to prestige, elites expanded their network of church-related colleges and universities during the 19th and 20th centuries. In the early 20th century, they also introduced a series of steps—such as legacy admissions—that gave their offspring more access than members of other religious groups had to higher education. They also created an array of church-related prep schools in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Although admission policies at all of these schools are more inclusive than they used to be, Jerome Karabel and other researchers have shown that the elites are still over-represented among students who work their way into the inner social circles at and graduate from these schools.

Because these customs are so highly institutionalized, most non-elites have accepted them as givens and incorporated them into their own behaviors. For example, when non-elites have gained access to the White House, they too have tended to appoint elites to the cabinet and the Supreme Court. By doing so, they have tended to reproduce the original pattern of religious stratification and their group's subordinate place in it.

But, some non-elites have been more willing than others to devise customs that increase their own members' access to resources. Although different in many ways, Catholics and Jews have been particularly adept at creating their own schools and businesses; graduating, hiring, and promoting their own kind in these settings; and catapulting their own kind into positions of power, privilege, and prestige. Evangelical Protestants have moved in this direction recently, developing their own networks of Christian colleges and Christian businesses. To the extent that non-elites take control of their own destinies in these ways, they can

alter the original pattern of stratification and improve their standing within it.

Current Ranking

Now let's look at the current ranking of religious groups. In addition to the groups that existed in the colonial period, America's religious landscape now includes many groups that either have been created in this country (such the LDS church and Assemblies of God) or have come to this country through more recent waves of immigration (such as Hindus and Muslims). No single study can cover all the groups, but the 2001 American Religious Identification Survey lets us consider 19 of the largest ones. In addition to data on people's religious identifications, it also provides data on each group's median household income (which I use as a measure of privilege) and the percentage of each group's members who are college graduates (which is a decent measure of prestige). To measure power, I use data on the religious composition of the 2001-2002 Congress relative to the religious composition of the U. S. population as a whole, then calculate the

extent to which specific groups are over- and under-represented in the halls of power. I'll save all the methodological details for the print version of this talk. If you want the reception to start on time, let me cut to the chase (Figure 4).

Today's Upper stratum includes four groups: Episcopalians, Jews, Unitarian-Universalists, and Presbyterians. (Clearly, the Upper stratum is not the homogeneously mainline Protestant Establishment of the colonial period. But, because of the adaptations that Unitarian-Universalists and Jews have made to mainline Protestant norms, it also is not the "atomized elite" that Baltzell believes it has become.) The Upper-Middle stratum includes six groups: Methodists, Mormons, Catholics, Lutherans, Hindus, and UCC/Congregationalists. The Lower-Middle stratum includes six groups: Nones, Assemblies of God, Adventists, Buddhists, Baptists, and the Churches of Christ. The Lower stratum includes Muslims, the Church of God, and Jehovah's Witnesses (along with many smaller groups that did not exist in the colonial period).

~~This profile is similar to other recent rankings of religious groups.~~ Since over 80 percent of the people who currently identify with one of the 19 groups grew up in that religion, the ranking reflects the effects of life-long religious identification more than the effect of people switching religions. And, with 89 percent of the U.S. population being native-born, it can be attributed to American laws, ideologies, and customs more than to global factors such as the amount of education immigrants have received in their homelands.

Now, let's compare the 10 groups that were part of America's colonial history, are still part of the America's religious landscape, and for which I have comparable data (see Figure 5). Two of the three groups that were in Upper stratum groups during the colonial period are still in the Upper stratum. Five of the seven non-elite groups are still non-elites. Clearly, there have been changes, but— given the fact that we are covering 250 years—the continuities are even more impressive.

Three of the 10 groups are in the exact same stratum. Episcopalians and Presbyterians are still in the Upper stratum, and Baptists are still in the Lower-Middle stratum. Five groups are within one stratum of where they were in the colonial period. UCC/Congregationalists have slipped from the Upper stratum to the Upper-Middle stratum, Unitarian-Universalists have moved up one notch into the Upper stratum, Lutherans and Methodists have moved from the Lower-Middle to the Upper-Middle stratum, and Nones have moved from the Lower to the Lower-Middle stratum. Only two groups have moved up two or more strata: Catholics and Jews.

Consequences

Now, consequences. Stratification based on race, class, and gender destabilizes society by producing social problems that otherwise would not exist. Problems are conditions that come to be recognized as wrong and needing to be solved. They are situations that are seen as unethical or socially undesirable because they have harmful effects on significant numbers of people or the stability of

the society as a whole. Examples include racial segregation, poverty, and violence against women. The people who are harmed most by these problems are most likely to question the legitimacy of the current situation and seek solutions. Thus, African-Americans took the lead in the civil rights movement, workers led the way in the labor union movement, and women have been the backbone of the women's movement.

Stratification based on religion has similar consequences. Although it contributes to the well-being of the religious groups in the Upper stratum, it has negative consequences for the life styles and life chances of the groups in lower strata. Being under-represented in the halls of power, non-elites have only limited control over legislation that might affect their well-being. With fewer economic resources, they are less able to purchase adequate housing and health insurance. With only limited formal education, they have less access to skills, expertise, and knowledge that might improve their lot in life.

Religious stratification also fosters conflicting perceptions of existing social arrangements. Just as whites, the rich, and men tend to believe in the legitimacy of a social order that benefits them, so too mainline Protestants tend to view the current distribution of resources as fair. On the other hand, people of color, the poor, women, and other religious groups are more likely to think it is unfair.

Also, by fostering a distinction between insiders and outsiders, religious stratification breeds a tendency to emphasize “in-group virtues and out-group vices.” It is only a short step from there to the formation of hate groups, the publication of hate literature, and the perpetration of hate crimes on religious out-groups. Religious stratification contributed to the publication of anti-Catholic literature about nuns and priests during the so-called Protestant Crusade of 1800 to 1860; a violent attack on an Ursuline convent in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1834; the formation of groups such as the Know-Nothings, the American Protective Association, and the Ku Klux Klan; violence against Jews in

Georgia and Louisiana in the 1880s; attacks on Catholics in Montana and Kansas City in 1894; the lynching of Leo Frank (a Jew) in Georgia in 1915; and Henry Ford's campaign against Jews in the *Dearborn Independent* in the 1920s.

But, such groups and attacks are not just things of the past; they are still very common. One website provides instant access to 149 hate groups, many of which are aimed at religious outsiders. In addition to its traditional hate-filled tracts and comics, Chick Publications now offers CDs and DVDs in multiple languages (inseeert Figure 6). And, according to FBI reports, hate crimes related to religion account for 16-18 percent of all hate crimes—trailing race, but ahead of sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disability. We cannot always tell who the perpetrators are, but these crimes are most likely to be directed at Jews, Muslims, Catholics, and other non-Protestants (see Figure 7). Between 1995 and 2005, the percentage of religious hate crimes against Jews declined somewhat as the percentage against Muslims jumped from 2 percent to 10 percent. (The anti-Protestant crimes are

probably aimed at evangelicals more often than mainline Protestants.)

It's no wonder that religious outsiders have created organizations to monitor and respond to such attacks. For example, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which was founded in 1913, records about 1,600 incidents of anti-Semitism a year, including vandalism, assaults, threats, and harassments. The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights was formed in 1973. It also tracks incidents of anti-Catholicism, although not as systematically. The so-called Christian Right has relied heavily on the American Center for Law and Justice, which was founded by Pat Robertson in 1990, for data on violations of their religious liberties. The new religious movements and new immigrant groups also have turned to the law for help in identifying cases where their civil rights have been violated. Armed with such data, these organizations issue news releases that describe incidents of religious hostility, identify the perpetrators whenever that is possible, and specify the steps that should be taken to end such

incidents. These steps usually include a mixture of law suits and collective actions, such as economic boycotts. None of these organizations and actions would be necessary if were not for religious stratification.

Conclusion

Now, some conclusions. I believe that sociologists need to pay more serious attention to stratification that is based on religion. I also believe that if this is going to be done, it won't be done by colleagues who don't appreciate religion's role in modern society. We sociologists of religion will have to take the lead. But, we can't do it using the Protestant ethic thesis. We need another approach—one that extends our studies of race, class, and gender to include the study of inequalities based on religion. I've outlined one such approach today.

Research Implications

I'll elaborate the research implications of this approach in the print version of this talk. For now, let me just mention three bullet points. At the macro-level, we need to do national studies of

religious stratification in a variety of first-, second-, and third-world countries. In each country, and in comparative studies, we need to examine the three issues I've emphasized this afternoon: origins, persistence, and consequences. At the meso-level, we need to study religious stratification in different regions, states, cities, and small towns in these countries. The basic questions are these: to what extent do the national patterns appear in local settings, and to what extent do different patterns appear in places with different religious compositions? At the micro-level, we need to explore the extent to which, and the ways in which, religion affects individuals' access to a variety of resources. When the results of such research are added to what we already know, we'll have a much better understanding of how much and in what ways stratification is based not only on race, class, and gender, but also religion.

Policy Implications

The theme of this meeting is "Striving for a Better World:

Religion and Social Change,” so I want to conclude with just a couple of policy implications. Sociologists agree that inequalities based on race, class, and gender are unfair because these are largely ascribed qualities which people can’t do much to change. They also produce social problems that otherwise would not exist. Thus, sociologists agree that these types of stratification should be prevented from occurring in the first place, and, if they do develop, steps should be taken to reduce or eliminate them. These claims also apply to stratification based on religion. It’s unfair, problematic, and should be remedied. My analysis suggests three steps toward preventing it: minimize religious ethnocentrism, curtail interfaith competition, and reduce the power differential between religious groups. But, once it exists, the next step is to reduce the power differential between elites and non-elites. Non-elites can do this on their own, but increasing their memberships, strengthening their organizational capacities, and increasing their access to resources. But, they also can forge coalitions with those elites who want to build a more just and equal world. As I’ve

shown, these strategies have led to some progress over the course of U.S. history. We now have laws that provide equal protection for all religions. The pro-mainline Protestant ideology has been challenged and a multi-cultural alternative has gained some traction. The legitimacy of some elite customs has been called into question, and some non-elites have developed customs that increase their members' access to resources. But, as I've also shown, violations of the law continue, the pro-mainline Protestant ideology still prevails, customs benefiting religious insiders persist, and some other groups have not created customs that would increase their members' access to resources. Addressing these conditions should be part of any attempt to build a better society.

Introduction

Problem:

**Sociologists pay almost no attention to
stratification based on religion**

Why? Faulty assumptions about religion

Sociologists of religion have done not much better

Why not? Theoretical approach not helpful

Solution:

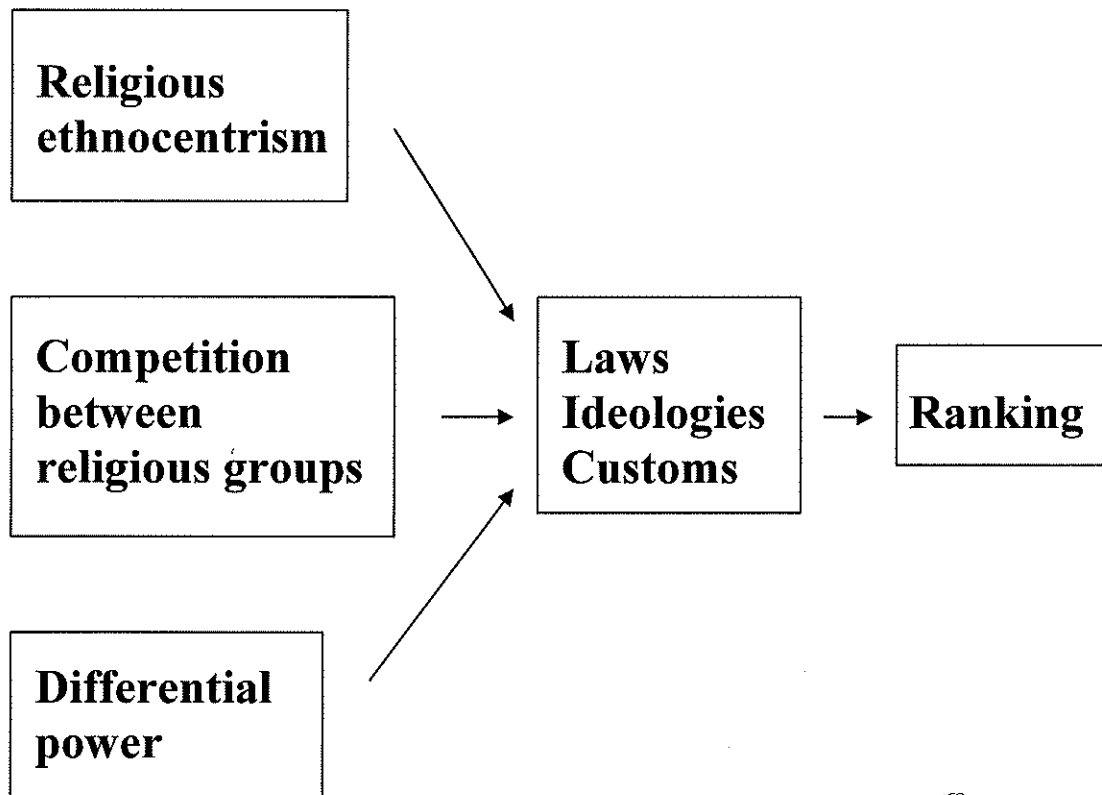
**Use conflict theory and treat religion the same way
we treat race, class, and gender**

Outline:

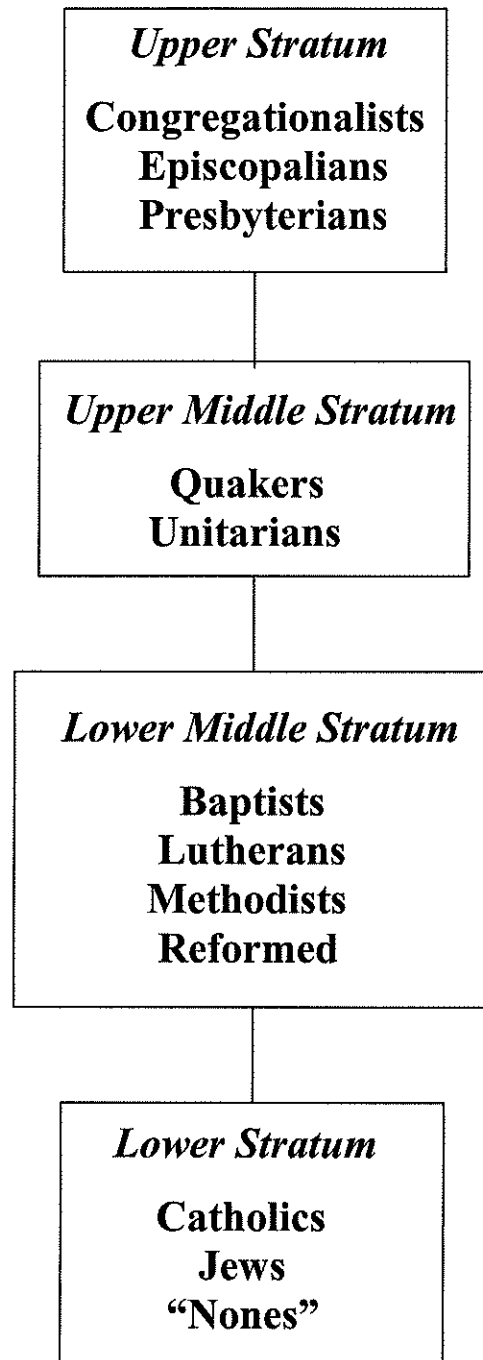
- a) Origins**
- b) Persistence/change**
- c) Consequences**
- d) Implications for research and public policy**

Figure 1

Origins of Religious Stratification



Source: Adapted from Pyle and Davidson (2003)

Figure 2**Religious Stratification in the Colonial Period**

Source: Adapted from Pyle and Davidson (2003).
The ordering of groups is strictly alphabetical.

Figure 3

How Religious Stratification Persists and Changes

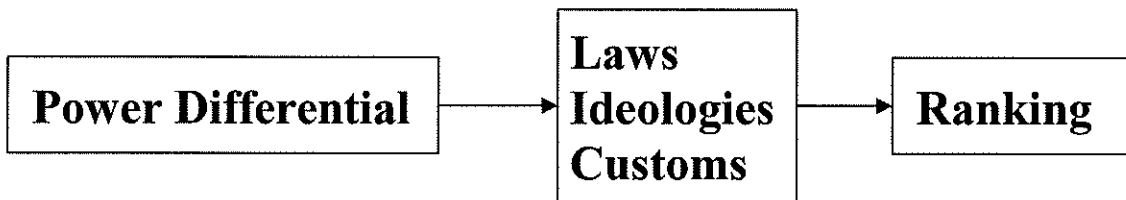
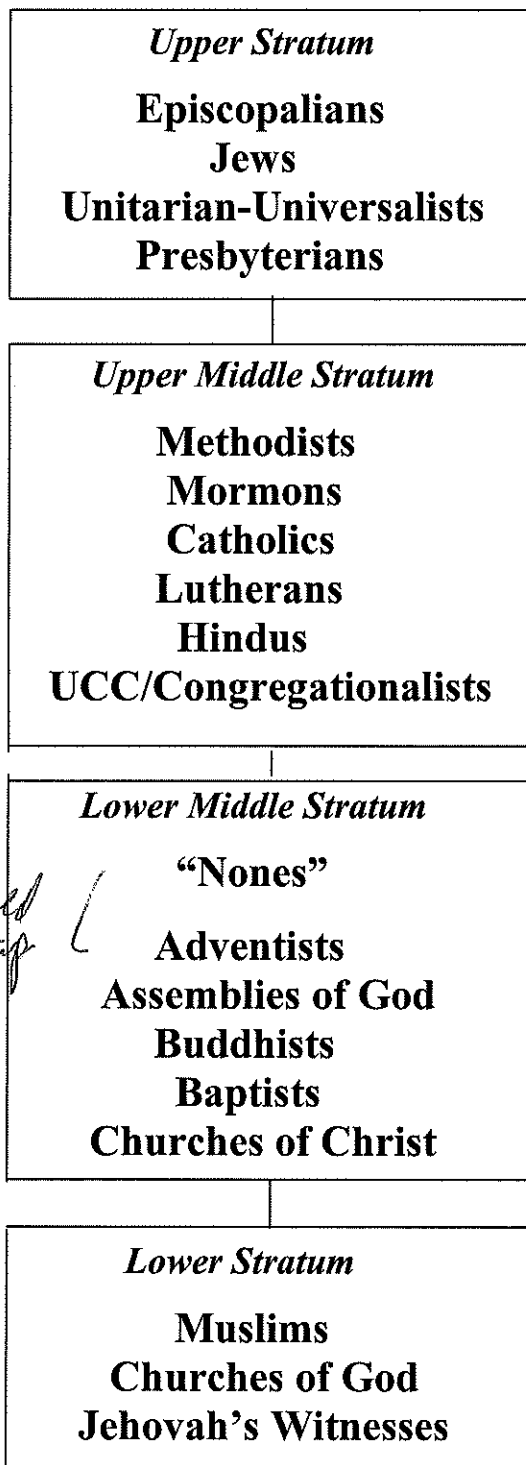


Figure 4

Current Ranking

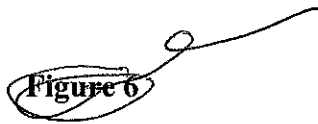


Groups ranked by score and (if ties) alphabetically

~~Figure 5~~

Rankings in the Colonial Period and the Present

		Present			
		Upper Stratum	Upper Middle Stratum	Lower Middle Stratum	Lower Stratum
Colonial Period	Upper Stratum	Epis Pres	UCC		
	Upper Middle Stratum	U-U			
	Lower Middle Stratum		Meth Luth	Bapt	
	Lower Stratum	Jews	Cath	Nones	



Hate Crimes by Type: 1995, 2000, 2005

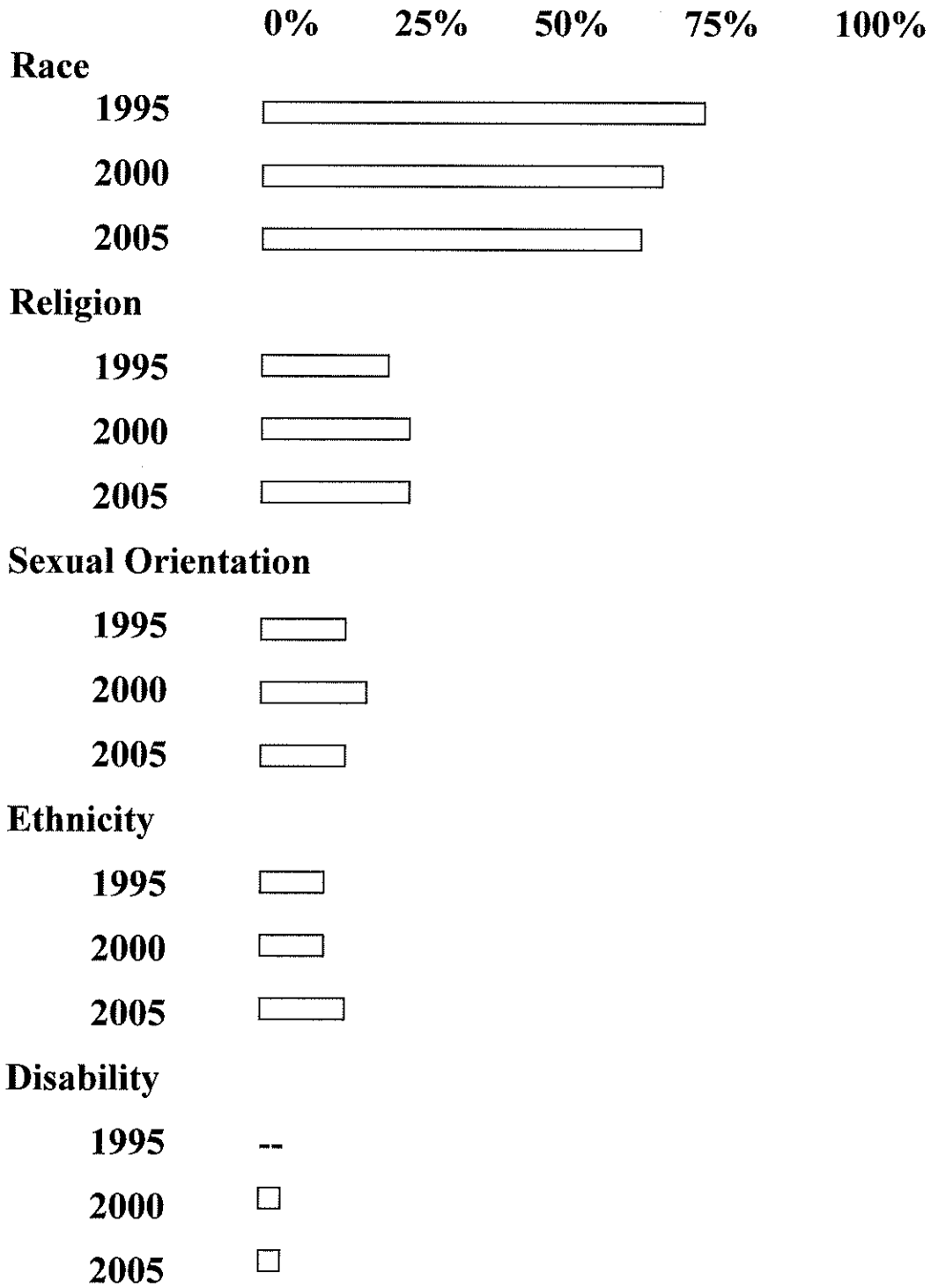
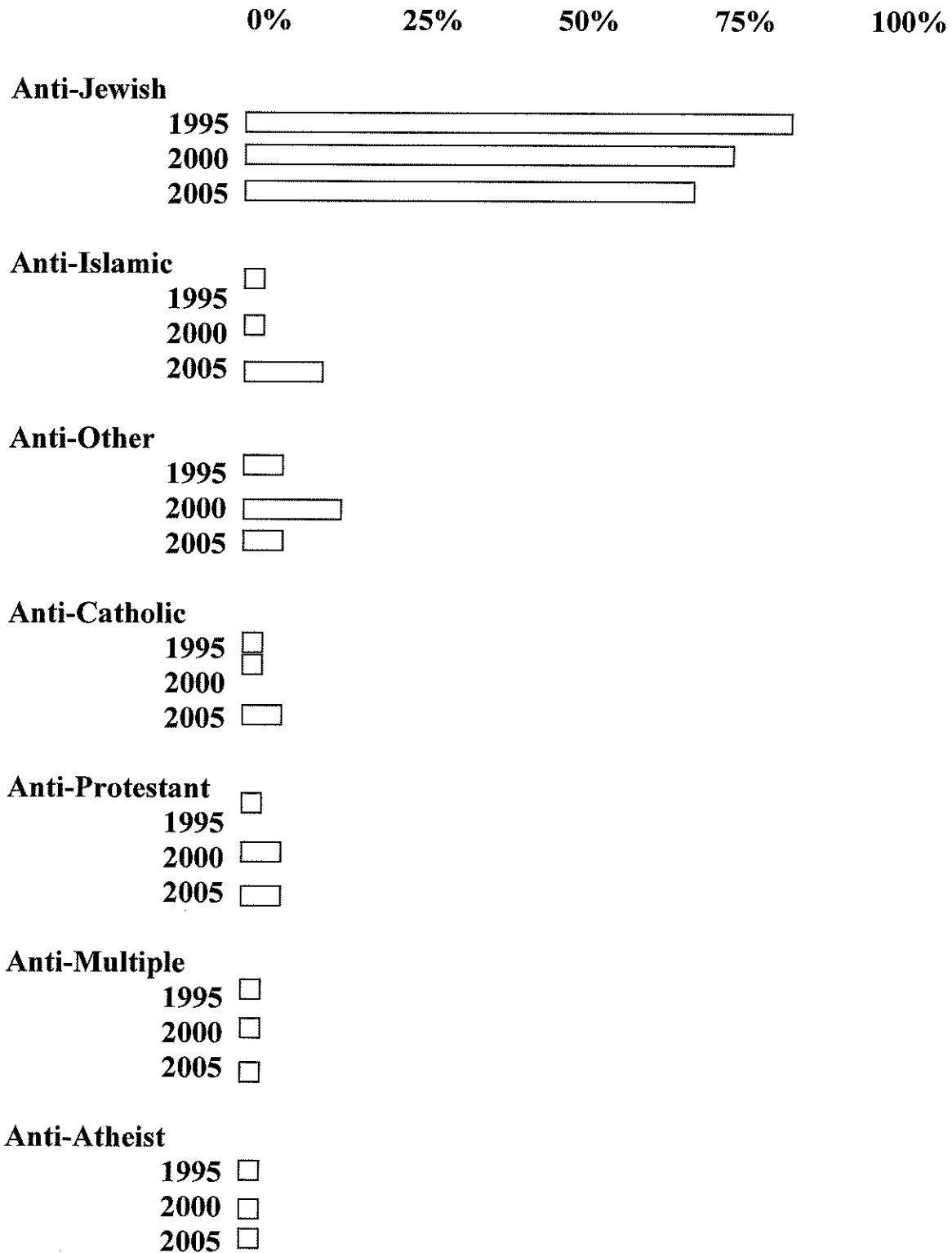


Figure 7

Victims of Religious Hate Crimes: 1995, 2000, and 2005



Implications

For future research

Macro: First-, second-, third world countries
Origins, persistence/change, consequences

Meso: Regions, states, cities, small towns
National pattern and local variations

Micro: Individuals' access to resources
Religion as help or hindrance

For public policy

Preventing religious stratification
Minimize ethnocentrism
Curtail competition
Reduce power differential

Reducing religious stratification and consequences
Reduce power differential; build coalitions
Promote laws that provide equal
protection; prosecute violations
Question pro-mainline Protestant
ideology; foster multi-culturalism
Challenge elite customs that exclude non-
elites; encourage non-elites to create
customs that increase members'
access to resources