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Religious Reality Construction and  
Helping Action

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## Introduction

Recent investigations of the importance of religion in promoting helping activity have produced contradictory findings. A few researchers have found religion importantly related to behaviors labeled "altruistic" (Sorokin, 1950; London, 1970) and attitudes reflecting a strong "social responsibility" orientation (Berkowitz and Lutterman, 1968). Others, however, have reached different conclusions, finding that "churches ... have apparently failed to induce much sense of responsibility toward one's fellow man" (Cline and Richards, 1965: 577; cf. Kirkpatrick, 1949; Stark and Glock, 1968:75), and that "there is no discernible relationship between church involvement and charitable acts" (Glock, Ringer, and Babbie, 1967:182-183).

Discrepancies in findings of previous research into the importance of religion in stimulating helping may have several sources.

One limitation of several previous investigations is that while studies of religion and helping have typically been oriented toward religion's potential effects on social action, such inquiries have often considered attitudes toward helping rather than helping action (cf. Stark and Glock, 1968; Berkowitz and Lutterman, 1968; Cline and Richards, 1965; Kirkpatrick, 1949) -- a procedure which is demonstrably inadequate for predicting behavior (cf. Tittle and Hill, 1967).

A second barrier to the apprehension of religion's effect on helping is that a few studies exploring the relationship have employed data in which only populations of church members were sampled (cf. Stark and Glock, 1968; Glock, Ringer, and Babbie, 1967). The viability of religion in affecting any type of behavior, however, is probably indeterminable without knowledge of the prevalence of the activity of interest among those for whom membership in religious organizations is not meaningful.

Finally, inadequate operational specification, especially of dependent variables, has characterized several studies. While social scientists now frequently consider the multidimensionality of religion in research and eschew unqualified statements asserting effects of "religion" on the basis of indicators tapping only one or a few religion dimensions, comparable recognition that "helping" is not a unitary phenomenon is far less common. As will be shown later, however, different types of helping have different social consequences and thus might be differentially related to any causal variables which might be considered; but researchers have frequently sought to isolate helping tendencies and activities by reference to such general terms as "being a Good Samaritan," "Having love and compassion for one's fellow men" (Cline and Richards 1965:577), "the performance of charitable acts" (Glock, Ringer, and Babbie, 1967:182), and "doing good for others" (Stark and Glock, 1968:46-48).

#### Framework of the Study

In the study reported here, exchange theory provides the overarching framework for examining the significance of one religion dimension -- religious reality construction -- in stimulating helping which is theoretically related and operationally defined. The empirical investigation focused on helping activity, not attitudes; and the population from which the sample of respondents was drawn was geographically circumscribed, not organizationally limited.

#### Religious Reality Construction and Exchange

Religious reality construction is a subset of the more general process by which actors order and interpret experiences in ways which "make sense" to them. Differential interpretations and selective perception of stimuli and situations result in varying behaviors, actions, and personalities (cf. Mead, 1962; Cooley, 1964; Thomas, 1923; Parsons, 1951). The distinctiveness of

religious, in contrast to secular, reality construction is that the former produces claims of cosmic legitimation for its product. In the process of religious reality construction, gods become significant others (cf. Berger, 1967:38); and interaction assumes a transcendent, as well as social, dimension (cf. Vernon, 1962:80).

Several researchers have commented on the social implications of the expansion of an actor's frame of reference to include felt transcendental persons. Role performance approved by not only a social reference group but also by transcendental significant others becomes more meaningful to the role occupant, and "his self identification with the role becomes correspondingly deeper and more stable" (Berger, 1967:37). Durkheim similarly emphasized the activating potential of religious reality construction: "The believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is stronger" (1915:416).

#### Helping Action and Social Compensation

Helping roles are clearly encouraged both in contemporary United States society and among the major institutional religious bodies in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. "The evidences of humanitarian values meet all our tests for a major value," concludes Williams (1955:399); and other observers readily agree that most people think those in need -- especially those not responsible for their states of dependency -- should be helped (cf. Kaufmann, 1970:98-99; Lerner, 1970:206; Nagel, 1970:79-80; Cooley, 1964:401; Kropotkin, 1921:217). An example of the salience of helping norms among Christian groups can be seen in the results Stark and Glock (1968) report from the question, Is "doing good for others absolutely necessary for salvation?" (Other possible choices were "would probably help" and "probably has no influence.") Even though a significant proportion of the respondents did not find the term

"salvation" meaningful, and others did not relate their meanings for "salvation" to "works" of any kind, 52 percent of the Protestants and 57 percent of the Catholics reporting answered affirmatively. As Stark and Glock point out, in some Christian denominations a higher proportion of respondents reported that doing good for others is "absolutely necessary for salvation" than the proportion of members in the same denominations who stated on another question that faith in Christ is necessary (47).

Since helping action (here defined as purposive assistance-giving behavior) is socially approved, it is also frequently socially rewarded. Gouldner contends that, but for the expectation of future reward for costs incurred by helping actors during dependency events, helping action would often not be undertaken. He explains the prevalence of helping action stimulated by expectation of social compensation through reference to the "norm of reciprocity":

When internalized in both parties, the norm of reciprocity obliges the one who has first received a benefit to repay it at some time; it thus provides some realistic grounds for confidence, in the one who first parts with his valuables, that he will be repaid (1960:177; cf. Simmel, 1950:387-395; Blau, 1964; Parsons, 1967:20-22).

The prevalence of several types of helping action for which social compensation is apparently not expected has, however, recently drawn the attention of several researchers (cf., for example, Berkowitz and Daniels, 1963; Schopler and Bateson, 1965; Test and Bryan, 1969; Macaulay and Berkowitz, 1970).

Religious Reality Construction and Socially Uncompensated Helping Action

Transcendental reference persons become especially important to action when social others provide few rewards for costs incurred in approved role

performance. If, under such conditions, one "can assume that, at any rate, God remembers, his tenuous self-identifications are given a foundation seemingly secure from the shifting reactions of other men" (Berger, 1967:38).

It follows, then, that religious reality construction should be especially useful in promoting socially uncompensated helping action. Religion may stimulate helping in such situations by providing felt rewards of immediate approval from transcendental significant others and expectation of future repayment for costs incurred while performing religiously sanctioned action -- rewards not available to actors for whom transcendental reality constructs are not intensive or meaningful. While uncompensated action costs of helping in dependency events may be rationalized in several ways [Berkowitz, et. al., for example, suggests that an adherent to the so-called "social responsibility norm" expects to receive for his efforts only a "symbolic pat on the back that he will give himself for having behaved in a socially desirable manner" (1964:328),] it is here hypothesized that legitimation of socially unrewarded actor costs may be particularly convincing if the legitimations can be cosmatized, and thus that the prevalence and intensity of religious reality construction will be positively related to the performance of socially uncompensated helping action.

#### Variables Important to the Inquiry

Operational measures employed to tap theoretical constructs and to control for one possible source of spuriousness are described below. The difficulty of specifying valid operations to measure religious reality construction and the prevalence of a variety of helping activities which seem to be socially uncompensated resulted in the inclusion of two independent and ten dependent variables for analysis.

### Independent Variables

The independent variables employed to measure predominant manifestations of religious reality construction in contemporary United States society are church attendance and devotionism.

Church attendance rates are clearly not pure measures of religious reality construction, even among Christian collectivities; the social meaning of church attendance has frequently been emphasized (cf. Goode, 1966; Estus and Overington, 1970). Yet social scientists almost unanimously affirm the collective nature of religion. The assumption that religious reality construction of great felt importance is accompanied by high levels of collective religious ritual observance is compatible with current sociological knowledge. Respondents are ranked on the church attendance variable on the basis of answers to the question, "How often do you attend church worship services?"<sup>1</sup>

Levels of devotionism are determined by scaled scores from responses to three questions: "How often are table prayers said at mealtimes in your home?"; "How often do you pray privately or with only your wife (excluding mealtimes at home)?" and "How important is prayer in your life?"<sup>2</sup> The coefficient of reproducibility for the scale, which was calculated by pairing response choices for each of the three questions, is .962.

Both independent variables are trichotomized for analysis.<sup>3</sup>

### Control Variable

That church attendance is not a pure measure of religious reality construction has already been noted. Goode found that secular organizational activity and church participation are frequently related, especially among members of the white-collar occupational level. He concluded, "It appears that church activity can be subsumed, at least partially, under general associational activity" (1966:111). To assure that any relationships found between religious reality construction and indicators of helping action are not consequences of

organizational activity effects, secular organization membership is employed as a control variable in all tabulations in which independent and dependent variables are cross-classified. Low organization membership indicates membership in no secular organizations; high organization membership signifies membership in one or more such organizations.

#### Dependent Variables

Helping action for which social compensation is generally not expected or provided is characteristic of at least two types of dependency relationships: those in which the helping actor and recipient are strangers, and those which are part of an actor's program of diversified helping activity.

Irrelative helping action describes responses to dependency events in which helpers and dependents are strangers. While people "often go to great trouble to help their associates and enjoy doing so" (Blau, 1964:16), the "advantageous consequences" of good deeds toward relatives and friends (Blau, 1964:16) do not follow helping action rendered to strangers. Some helping action even among strangers is socially rewarded; blood donors, for example, usually receive direct monetary payment for their aid. Among the kinds of irrelative helping action examined in this study, however, such direct social rewards are not apparent.

A second type of helping action which may frequently fail to yield social compensation is extensive helping action. The diversification of helping activities probably precluded the establishment of lasting bonds which are cultivated by the helper and the recipient -- bonds which are thought to be crucial to the vitalization of the "norm of reciprocity" (cf. Gouldner, 1960:176; Goranson and Berkowitz, 1966:227-228). It is here suggested, then, that the characteristic of extensiveness of helping action, when that extensiveness entails diversification, inhibits the operation of the reciprocity norm which could provide social compensation for costs incurred in helping relationships.

Both irrelative and extensive helping action may be performed in two types of situations which seem, on the basis of past research, sufficiently dissimilar to warrant separate investigation. These two situational types of dependency events produce ordinary helping action, which is defined as helping in the course of day-to-day living; and emergency helping action, which is a response to a chronologically and spatially limited unchosen and unexpected dependency-producing event. That helping action may have qualitatively different causes in emergency, as contrasted with ordinary, situations is suggested by several researchers, who describe a "disaster syndrome" evoking "altruism" (Wallace, 1956:124), maintain that "disasters cause changes in the social environment from a Gesellschaft to a Gemeinschaft" (Shaskolsky, 1967:19), and observe that "disasters tend to produce the optimum conditions for the development of altruistic norms and behavior among those situations which cause mass suffering" (Dynes, 1969:109).

Investigation of the relationship between religious reality construction and emergency helping action, then, should provide a stringent test of religion's effect on socially uncompensated helping action, since exceptional levels of helping are apparently exhibited among societal members in general during disaster situations. According to this orientation, should religion be related to emergency helping action, confidence that the relationship holds under other conditions would be increased.

In this study relationships between religious reality construction and both irrelative and extensive helping action are explored in ordinary and emergency dependency situations.

#### Ordinary Helping Action

Ordinary irrelative helping action -- characterized by helping relationships among strangers under normal, as contrasted with pervasive emergency, conditions -- is evidenced in the study by regular contribution of funds to social service

agencies, regular participation in volunteer social service work, regular or occasional donation of goods through social service agencies, and provision of aid to motorists with car trouble and furnishing rides for hitch-hikers. (The latter two types of services are hereafter called ordinary irrelative highway services.)<sup>4</sup>

The extensiveness of ordinary helping action is measured by performance or non-performance of several kinds of activity: regular contribution of funds to social service agencies, regular participation in volunteer social service work, regular or occasional donation of goods through social service agencies, and performance of any of a variety of ordinary services for acquaintances or strangers.<sup>5</sup> Cumulated responses are scaled;<sup>6</sup> the coefficient of reproducibility for the scale is .922.

#### Emergency Helping Action

The determination of specific measures of emergency helping action for analysis was partially dependent on types of helping action readily performable among the sample population. Types of helping opportunities and options salient in the post-disaster period for the population sampled in the study will first be outlined, after which the dependent variables chosen to tap emergency helping action will be described.

The Lubbock, Texas, tornado of May 11, 1970, provided an emergency situation demanding extensive and varied helping activities. The deaths of 26 persons, injuries to many more, and widespread property damage created a need for disaster relief funds, goods, and services.

Many Lubbock residents were aided in response to the tornado's destruction. The night following the tornado 3,000 refugees were sheltered by the Red Cross alone (Avalanche-Journal, Wednesday evening, May 13, 1970:1). Numerous permanent service organizations and churches coordinated emergency helping action of

various types; a temporary organization was formed to receive money donations for disaster relief; and numerous kinds of irrelative services were solicited by individuals and public agencies. Public appeals for disaster relief were both highly visible -- being carried through radio, television, and newspaper messages -- and persistent. On Monday, May 18 -- a week after the tornado -- the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal reported that the Red Cross needed more furniture to distribute to victims and that the Salvation Army needed furniture, kitchen utensils, food, and volunteer workers (Monday morning, May 18, 1970:1). Other service agencies, also, were still requesting additional volunteer aid days after the disaster.

Available information describing relief efforts in Lubbock, then, indicates considerable opportunity and need for the performance of emergency helping action among Lubbock residents as well as extensive diffusion of information detailing specific areas of need. In short, Lubbock residents were alerted to the need for many types of helping action, and those who wished to perform disaster relief services had adequate opportunity for such activity.<sup>7</sup>

Four indicators of emergency irrelative helping action are employed in the study: donation of funds to permanent or temporary relief organizations, provision of relief goods through organizations or churches, performance of disaster relief services for strangers -- services not related to duties of regular employment, and volunteering to perform emergency services.<sup>8</sup>

The extensiveness of emergency helping action is measured by participation or non-participation in four types of helping activity: donation to relief funds, any kind of donation of relief goods, performance of non-job-related disaster relief services for acquaintances or strangers, and volunteering to perform emergency services. Cumulated responses are scaled;<sup>9</sup> the coefficient of reproducibility for the scale of extensiveness of emergency helping action is .922.<sup>10</sup>

The Sample

Questionnaires were mailed early in 1971 to a random sample of males who reside in the City of Lubbock, Texas. The sample was selected from the Lubbock telephone directory, and names were included in the sample only if the first name appeared to be that of a male. The questionnaire return rate was 69.5 percent; the usable number of responses is 650.<sup>11</sup>

Findings and Discussion

Controlled relationships between religious reality construction measures and irrelative and extensive helping action are indicated in Tables 1 and 2.

The findings support the hypothesis of an effect of religious reality construction on socially uncompensated helping action in emergency situations. Of the ten potential controlled relationships between each independent variable and emergency helping action, both church attendance and devotionism are related to helping in seven cross-classifications at the five percent significance level. Religious reality construction and extensive emergency helping action are consistently related; the only exceptions involve the irrelative helping action measures of volunteering to perform disaster relief services (not the actual performance of services) and the performance of disaster relief services among those low in organizational membership.

While volunteering to perform disaster relief services is unrelated to measures of religious reality construction, such volunteering after the Lubbock tornado may have frequently involved relationships of kinship or friendship -- relationships in which the volunteering of helping action could be explained in terms of the norm of reciprocity and thus may not be as critical to the theoretical framework of the study. Further, some volunteering which seemed irrelative may not have produced the expectation among volunteers of a cost-reward imbalance. Hundreds of Lubbock residents volunteered to donate blood

following the tornado,<sup>12</sup> but the donation of blood in this context was a form of helping action which produced direct economic rewards. Blood donation has also been found unrelated to religious reality construction among members of another Lubbock sample (Nelson, 1971:94-100).

In ordinary situations, of the nine potential relationships involving each independent variable, church attendance and helping are related in two, and devotionalism and helping in five.

Neither church attendance nor devotionalism is related to the performance of ordinary irrelative highway services or regular contribution of funds to social service agencies. The lack of relationship between performance of ordinary irrelative highway services and both church attendance and devotionalism is probably the most damaging of the nonsignificant cross-classifications, since such activity seems to be of the type which would, according to the theory and in a motorized society, be associated with religious reality construction. It may be that offering help on the highway is severely inhibited by a feeling of potential threat.

Church attendance is also unrelated to regular or occasional donation of goods through a social service agency among those both high and low in secular organization membership and to extensive ordinary helping action among those high in organization membership, although the trend in all three cross-classifications is in the expected direction.

The hypothesized relationship between religious reality construction and socially uncompensated helping action is not generally supported, then, by the church attendance measures, although some types of ordinary helping action seem related to church attendance. When devotionalism is employed as the independent variable, the hypothetical association receives more support; and we suggest that this expected relationship be further investigated. Of related interest is the question of the relative validity of the two independent variables employed in the study to tap religious reality construction.

The finding that religious reality construction and helping action are more consistently related in emergency than in ordinary situations was unanticipated. Whereas disaster relief aid was expected to provide a stringent test of the hypothesized relationship, emergency helping action furnished the strongest support for the hypothesis.

A possible explanation of the attenuation of a religious reality construction effect in ordinary, as contrasted with emergency, situations is that strong adherents to religion may view dependents under ordinary circumstances as more responsible for their states of dependency than may the general population -- a factor found related to helping action in past research (cf. Schopler and Matthews, 1965; Lerner, 1970).

Differential religious reality construction effects could also result from the failure of the ordinary helping action measures employed in the study to effectively isolate kinds of ordinary helping action which are socially uncompensated. Uncompensated helping action may be generally more prevalent during emergencies than in ordinary situations; multifaceted day-to-day activity which includes the donation of funds, the performance of volunteer social service work, or the donation of goods through social service agencies may provide opportunity for the cultivation of social reward sources which compensate for helping actor costs. Blau's concept of indirect exchange is useful in this regard; such indirect rewards as approval from one's associates for help rendered to another (1964:260) may be more likely in ordinary situations than under those emergency conditions in which accustomed patterns of social interaction are disrupted and priorities of preferred activity rearranged.

The findings of this study, while not definitive, provide partial support for the hypothesized effect of religious reality construction on socially uncompensated helping action. In some dependency situations -- most notably among several kinds prevalent during emergencies -- the salience of felt transcendental

significant others seems related to the performance of irrelative and extensive helping action. Religion apparently provides for some actors rewards not available to others for whom transcendental reality constructs are not meaningful.

Reinforcement theorists are frequently unable to explain helping action in situations producing few social rewards and in which social sanctions against non-helpers are weak. Blau, for example, assumes the presence of "some individuals who selflessly work for others without any thought of reward and even without expecting gratitude." Unable to explain such a seeming cost-reward imbalance, he adds, "... but these are virtually saints, and saints are rare" (1964:16).

Learning theory makes no provision for saints. The proposition that felt transcendental exchange, as well as social exchange, is causative in social interaction suggests that selflessness should not be uncritically ascribed.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE "YES" OR "HIGH" ON DEPENDENT VARIABLES, BY CHURCH ATTENDANCE, CONTROLLING FOR SECULAR ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

Dependent Variables	HI Org Membership		Lo Org Membership		HI Org/Lo Org <sup>x<sup>2</sup></sup>
	HI Attd Md	Lo Attd	HI Attd Md	Lo Attd	
<u>Ordinary irrelative helping action</u>					
Contribution of funds	60.3 (116) (N)	62.0 (92) (132)	40.4 (94)	48.9 (45) (107)	0.18 / 3.22
Volunteer social service work	33.6 (119) (N)	22.3 (94) (132)	98 <sup>a</sup> (98)	48 <sup>a</sup> (48) (111)	14.39 <sup>b</sup> /
Donation of goods	55.5 (119) (N)	53.2 (94) (132)	46.9 (98)	37.5 (48) (111)	3.72 / 4.66
Performance of highway services	60.0 (120) (N)	66.3 (95) (133)	56.0 (100)	68.8 (48) (111)	4.19 / 3.78
<u>Emergency irrelative helping action</u>					
Contribution to relief funds <sup>c</sup>	57.6 (99) (N)	53.4 (73) (107)	52.3 (86)	36.1 (36) (87)	6.73 <sup>b</sup> / 6.29 <sup>b</sup>
Volunteered disaster services <sup>c</sup>	22.9 (96) (N)	21.1 (71) (101)	10.1 (79)	12.1 (33) (83)	1.19 / 0.55
Donation of relief goods <sup>c</sup>	66.7 (99) (N)	55.6 (72) (106)	58.8 (85)	52.8 (36) (87)	8.69 <sup>b</sup> / 6.06 <sup>b</sup>
Performance of disaster services <sup>d</sup>	45.4 (86) (N)	25.0 (64) (91)	21.6 (74)	25.8 (31) (75)	16.00 <sup>b</sup> / 0.44

TABLE 1 -- Continued

Dependent Variables	Hi Org Membership			Lo Org Membership			$\chi^2$
	Hi Atd	Md Atd	Lo Atd	Hi Atd	Md Atd	Lo Atd	
<u>Extensive helping action</u>							
Extensive ordinary helping action (N)	57.5 (120)	50.0 (94)	42.9 (133)	39.0 (100)	31.9 (47)	23.4 (111)	5.41 / 5.99 <sup>b</sup>
Extensive emergency helping action <sup>c</sup> (N)	67.7 (99)	58.3 (72)	45.4 (108)	54.7 (86)	47.2 (36)	34.5 (87)	10.58 <sup>b</sup> / 7.20 <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Too few "yes" responses for chi-square analysis.

<sup>b</sup>Chi-square significant at .05, two d.f. (two-tailed test).

<sup>c</sup>Controlling for residence in and presence in Lubbock at the time of the tornado.

<sup>d</sup>Controlling for residence in and presence in Lubbock at the time of the tornado and unrelatedness of services to duties of regular employment.

TABLE 2

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PERCENTAGE "YES" OR "HIGH" ON DEPENDENT VARIABLES, BY DEVOTIONALISM,  
HOLDING SECULAR ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP CONSTANT

Dependent Variables	Hi Org Membership		Lo Org Membership		x <sup>2</sup>
	Hi Dev	Lo Dev	Hi Dev	Lo Dev	
<u>Ordinary irrelative helping action</u>					
Contribution of funds	65.2 (115)	62.0 (71)	51.9 (108)	44.1 (93)	4.36 / 4.16
Volunteer social service work	32.8 (119)	21.9 (73)	14.8 (106)	a	10.27 <sup>b</sup> /
Donation of goods	57.6 (116)	50.7 (73)	38.7 (106)	50.5 (97)	8.11 <sup>b</sup> / 11.95 <sup>b</sup>
Performance of highway services	62.2 (119)	65.8 (73)	72.2 (108)	62.2 (98)	2.60 / 0.16
<u>Emergency irrelative helping action</u>					
Contribution to relief funds <sup>c</sup>	60.2 (93)	42.2 (64)	43.4 (83)	55.3 (85)	6.89 <sup>b</sup> / 12.61 <sup>b</sup>
Volunteered services <sup>c</sup>	25.8 (89)	11.3 (62)	22.2 (81)	13.0 (77)	4.89 / .087
Donation of relief goods <sup>c</sup>	64.9 (94)	44.4 (63)	46.9 (81)	61.9 (84)	8.39 <sup>b</sup> / 6.56 <sup>b</sup>
Performed disaster services <sup>d</sup>	40.7 (81)	20.7 (50)	28.8 (73)	26.7 (75)	6.62 <sup>b</sup> / 3.12

TABLE 2 -- Continued

Dependent Variables	Hi Org Membership		Lo Org Membership		HI Org/Lo Org
	Hi Dev	Md Dev	Lo Dev	Hi Dev	
<u>Extensive helping action</u>					
Extensive ordinary helping action	60.5 (119)	53.4 (72)	36.1 (108)	43.9 (98)	21.2 (52)
	(N)				22.2 (71)
Extensive emergency helping action <sup>c</sup>	64.9 (94)	43.8 (64)	55.4 (83)	57.7 (85)	34.9 (43)
	(N)				35.2 (54)
					14.08 <sup>b</sup> /12.14 <sup>b</sup>
					6.93 <sup>b</sup> /14.30 <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Too few "yes" responses for chi-square analysis.

<sup>b</sup>Chi square significant at .05, two d.f. (two-tailed test).

<sup>c</sup>Controlling for residence in and presence in Lubbock at the time of the tornado.

<sup>d</sup>Controlling for residence in and presence in Lubbock at the time of the tornado and unrelatedness of services to duties of regular employment.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Forced choice response categories are "once a week or more," "once a month to three times a month," "less than once a month," and "never." 1

<sup>2</sup>The devotionalism scale is based on responses to a modified battery of questions presented by Glock and Stark (1966). Glock and Stark did not, however, use the first question as a measure of devotionalism, nor did they scale responses in the manner described here. 1

Four choices were possible in answering each question, and the scale utilizes information from each probe. The range of the devotionalism scale is thus nine (high devotionalism) to zero (low devotionalism). Scoring was as follows: respondents received three points for each of the activities of daily table prayer and daily private prayer and for stating that prayer is "extremely important" in their lives. Two points each were assigned to answers reflecting mealtime prayers at least weekly but not daily, private prayer at least weekly but not daily, and the statement that prayer is "fairly important" to respondents. Respondents received one point each for the responses to the three questions determining scale scores indicating that table prayers are said at least monthly but not every week, that respondents pray privately less often than weekly, or that prayer is "not too important" to respondents. No points were given for responses stating that table prayers or private prayers are said less often than monthly, only on special occasions, or never; or that private prayer is "unimportant" to respondents.

<sup>3</sup>High church attendance signifies attendance at least weekly; medium church attendance indicates average attendance between once per month and three times per month; and respondents who attend church services less often than monthly are considered low in church attendance. Devotionalism scale scores are trichotomized into the numerically most similar categories: high devotionalism includes

scale scores of seven through nine; medium devotionism is represented by scores of four through six; and low devotionism includes scores of zero through three.

<sup>4</sup>All the above activities are attributes and, with the exception of regular contribution of funds to social service agencies, are credited to respondents on the basis of "yes" answers to pertinent questions. For a respondent to be credited with regular contribution of funds to a social service agency he must indicate an average yearly contribution of \$11 or more.

<sup>5</sup>Including helping motorists with car trouble, providing rides for hitchhikers, taking food to bereaved families, aiding friends or neighbors during illness, and other similar types of services listed by several respondents.

<sup>6</sup>Respondents are given one point for each of the first three of the above activities in which they participate. Because several kinds of ordinary services for acquaintances or strangers may be checked on the questionnaire, performance of one or two types counts one point, while performance of three or more types counts two points. Thus the range of the scale of extensiveness of ordinary helping action is five to zero. For the analysis scores are dichotomized into the two categories most similar numerically; thus high extensive ordinary helping action includes scores of three through five, and low extensive ordinary helping action is designated by scores of zero through two.

<sup>7</sup>The City of Lubbock, Texas, was chosen as the sample population for the study because of both the recent demand for emergency helping action there and the population size of the city. The estimated population of Lubbock as of December 31, 1969, was 175,200 (Sales Management, 1970:D-156) -- a size large enough to allow considerable anonymity and thus preclude the intense social pressure to aid disaster victims which might presumably be prevalent in a small town.

<sup>8</sup>Any of the above activities are credited to respondents who answer "yes" to the appropriate questions.

<sup>9</sup>Performance of each of the four types of helping action counts one point; the range of the scale is thus four to zero. For the analysis scores are dichotomized into the two categories most similar numerically; thus high extensive emergency helping action includes scores of two through four, and low extensive emergency helping action is designated by scores of zero and one.

<sup>10</sup>Coefficients of reproducibility for each of the scales of extensiveness of helping action (ordinary and emergency) were, coincidentally, exactly the same.

<sup>11</sup>Of the 1,362 questionnaires mailed to random sample members, 215 were found to have been sent to people who had moved from Lubbock (in which case they became ineligible for inclusion in the study) or who had died. Five additional sample members were found in follow-up telephone communications to be unable to speak English, leaving an effective sample size of 1,072. From that group, 745 questionnaires were received. Eighty-five of the returned questionnaires had been completed by women and eight by high school students, whose responses were not tabulated. Responses from two additional questionnaires did not appear to be meaningful, thus reducing to 650 the number of usable responses. Among that number, several questionnaires were returned partially completed, in which cases responses furnished were tabulated.

<sup>12</sup>Information provided in a telephone conversation with an employee of Blood Services of Lubbock on July 28, 1970.

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