

# Religion, Values, Behavioral Constraints: Caveats and Dynamics



**Sourav Madhur Dey**

Assistant Professor,  
Deptt. of Sociology,  
The University of Burdwan,  
Burdwan, West Bengal, India

## Abstract

Whether God created man or man invented God, religious beliefs has demonstrated their potency of incessantly impacting human behaviour. It controls the actions humans take to formulate better informed decisions. Religion is influential because it does not only organize one individual, but rather govern clans, flocks, groups, and communities. Knowledge of religion and power are intrinsically connected, as knowledge augments, so does the power one have to manage and control. The elemental impact of religion on human behaviour is the very act of worship. Praying is influential because when one is in a state of prayer he/she is in charge of his/her own thought and in his/her own being. The article tends to look into these essential links and its overwhelming influence on human conduct and behaviour.

**Keywords:** Religion, Values, Indoctrination, Institutions, Compliance, Rewards and Punishments, Identities, New Age Religions.

## Introduction

Religious institutions serve as a primary source of values, morals, and ethics and these institutions, in turn, have directed much of their notice and resources toward the validation and enforcement of moral mandates. Religion offers an ideal testing ground for value construction. Since the 1940s, social scientists have gathered a huge volume of data on religious behavior, leaving us in better position to evaluate the moral impact of religions than that of other institutions. When it comes to the question of values, religion enjoys the dual distinction as the topic most relevant and least studied.

## Aim of the Study

The following sections attend to a series of related questions: What sorts of values and value-related behaviors do religions seek out to change? What means do religions utilize to frame these values and behaviors? Do religions really influence values? Why do some religions have more effect on their members than do others? And, what do the experiences of religious institutions inform about the confines to indoctrination and value construction?

## Religious Mandates

### Religion & other institutions

Nearly all institutions, to varying extents, work to articulate and inculcate values – families, firms, schools, political organizations, military components, and even jails. But no one is so devoted to this project as are religions. Religions represent the quintessential example of what Etzioni (1975:66) has called “the normative organization.” Other institutions conceal their efforts to maneuver people’s preferences; religions proudly declare their role in the transformation of hearts and minds. Other institutions recognize the restricted character of their claim on individuals; religions pronounce demands of unrestrained scope and extraordinary detail. Other institutions govern behavior through coercive force or compensatory payment; religions aim to achieve acquiescence through appeals to what is good and correct (though their normative pleas are often supported with bribes and threats).

### The Efficiency Argument

Religions appear willing to observe virtually any group of behavior in terms of ethical imperatives like diet, dress, and grooming; sexual demeanor, reproduction, and family life; rest, leisure, and social interactions; education; commerce, political acts; and, of course, all ways of specifically religious undertakings, such as prayer, church attendance, tithing, and plentiful of public and private ceremonies. The functional rationale for many religious imperatives is apparent: “You shall not kill. Neither shall you commit adultery. Neither shall you steal. Neither shall you

bear false witness against your neighbor. Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or anything that is your neighbor's" (Deut 5:17-21). According to Bhagvada Gita many virtues are manifest in right action: courage, purity, steadfastness in the discipline of knowledge, charity, sacrifice, study of sacred teachings, reparation, sincerity, non-violence, truth, absence of fury, disengagement, peace, loyalty, kindness for creatures, lack of greediness, gentleness, modesty, dependability, brilliance, patience, resolve, clarity, absence of jealousy and of pride (16.1-3). Be liberated of desire and anger, always content and independent (4.20), apathetic to success and failure, pleasure and pain. Be antagonistic to no creature (11.55). In general, do not be emotionally mixed up with your action, but be established beyond the level of [material] emotions. (<http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/syllabi/w/wattles/hkarma.htm>) In all holy texts and traditions, one encounters mandates that discourage malfeasance, reduce transaction costs, establish property rights, and smooth the progress of contracts. Standard efficiency arguments would seem to explain why communities and societies would welcome the collective obligation of such rules. The efficiency argument is put to stern challenge while dealing with religious regulations that seem to diminish efficiency by restricting economic activity or imposing non-productive costs, such as medical and dietary limitations with no apparent health benefits, burnt offerings and other sacrifices that obliterate valued resources, elaborate and time-consuming rituals, distinctive modes of dress and grooming that invite social stigma.

Schlicht (1995) examine a bizarre set of religious phenomena which seem to be inefficient, and indeed really damaging: male and female circumcision in Africa. These practices are greatly more drastic than Jewish male circumcision, tremendously painful, and potentially life-threatening. These practices are also widespread among Muslims. According to Schlicht, whatever the functions ascribed to such practice, it appears that there are better means to realize the same end. The birth rate may be ebbed by other practices, chastity could be imposed by religious and criminal law, and sexual enjoyment is certainly not increased by this practice – neither for the mutilated nor for the un-mutilated. It is not easy to confirm these assertions, but equally complicated to disprove them. One come across other religious rules as well such as Christian Scientists' rejection of medical treatment and the Jehovah's Witnesses' proscription on blood transfusions and vaccinations that almost without doubt lessen health outcomes. Cross sectional statistics powerfully put forward that practicing Christian Scientists experience significantly poorer health and lower life expectancies. A simple efficiency/functionalist approach also has complexity explaining why religions attach tremendous significance to precise behaviors and rituals like being baptized or the wearing certain clothes.

Despite their real or supposed involvement to social welfare, many religious mandates carry

considerable costs but few obvious profits for the individual. Faced with such commands, rational actors are strongly tempted to defy. Religions must therefore work very hard to attain conformity.

#### **Compliance and Commitment**

Religion obtains compliance and commitment in every way they can. Parents are enlisted from the beginning of a child's life and are reproved to publicly dedicate their children through various rites like baptism, circumcision, First Rice, Upanayana etc. to expose their children to religious observance and teaching in home and to register them in formal religious teachings. The incentive is clear, that is to train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not go away from it (Proverbs 22:6). When Adam Smith (1965:740) wrote about churches in *The Wealth of Nations*, he did so under the heading "Of the Expence of the Institutions for the Instruction of People of all Ages." The archetypal church employs several methods: formal instruction that communicate specific information about the religion's principles, rituals, and history; testimonials and endorsements intended to assure the listener that the religion's product conveys on its assurances; calls to history, tradition, and miracles; a regular cycle of activities (for example, weekly worship services, particular holy days, and social events) designed to reinforce and reward sustained involvement and to build social bonds between members of which the most significant ties, of course, are familial. So it is not a surprise that religions typically attach great significance to marrying within one's faith.

#### **Monitoring Activities**

Churches scrutinize the behavior of their members, rewarding high levels of involvement and commitment with augmented status and chances to serve in management roles. To varying degrees, churches also reprimand inappropriate behavior with status loss, reduced access to religious rewards and even outright exclusion. Whenever a particular religion has enjoyed the support of the state, religious leaders have often resorted to more stern sanctions like fines, thrashings, exile, torture, imprisonment, and the death sentence. Members are subjected to mutual encouragement, advise, and monitoring and to notify the authority whenever imperative strictures are being violated. In Islam, the Islamic criminal law acts in accordance with Islamic law. Strictly speaking, Islamic law does not have a separate corpus of "criminal law." The Sharia courts do not have prosecutors, and all matters, even criminal ones, are in principle handled as clashes between individuals. In contrast to other legal systems, in which crimes are generally considered infringement of the rights of the state, Islamic law separates crimes into four different groups on the nature of the right violated: Hudud or violation of a boundary of God; Ta'zir or violation of the right of an individual; Qisas or infringement of the right of God and of an individual in which the right of the individual is deemed to predominate; Siyasa or violation of the state right. Hinduism affirms that in order to be unchained from the never-ending rounds of birth, demise, and rebirth, one must follow a life totally

devoted to the Brahman. In the Jewish religion, they await the arrival of the Messiah, where he will hand out the perpetual judgment and reward to all. One great belief in Judaism is that their whole Jewish race and the entire creation will be judged, as opposed to individual men.

(<http://www.dailybuddhism.com/archives/1296>) In

Buddhism, there is no one to give rewards or punishments. (<http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/snapshot01.htm>)

Religions situate considerable emphasis on supernatural monitoring – the promise and threat of all-seeing, divine powers that reward noble actions and pure thoughts while punishing their evil opposites. All these methods of social control work to lift the net anticipated profits linked with good manners while increasing the net anticipated costs associated with bad behaviors, with “good” and “bad” being delineated by the religion, and thus not necessarily reliable with the understandings of society in general or some outside standard of efficiency.

### **The Impact of Religion**

The unrivaled durability of religions and their institutions, particularly the Catholic Church robustly suggests that most religions do produce credible promises, valued commodities and enduring commitments. More than 40% of Americans claim attend religious services in a particular week – a figure that has remained amazingly stable since the advent of (Gallup) opinion polls in the late- 1930's (Greeley 1989). If actual attendance is even half what this figure suggests, Americans expend more hours at religious services than other planned public gatherings combined, including movies, shows, and specialized sports events. This proposes the perceived worth of religion in America. More than half of all households add to religion which is far more than any other cause, including health (33%), human services (28%), or education (21%). Yearly gifts to religion average about \$800 per contributing household, or \$60 billion in total – thus constituting half of the entire charitable donations and to a great extent exceeding contributions to health, education, or human services. In regard to hours of attendance, the percentage of income given to religion has remained comparatively steady (around 1% of GNP) for at least forty years. (Greeley 1989).

### **Behavioural Influence vis-à-vis religious beliefs, identities & experiences**

That people's actions are shaped by their religious identities, beliefs, and experiences is what survey results and government statistics are indicative of. People exhibit lower levels of most deviant behaviors, including drug use and criminal activity when they possess stronger religious identities, more orthodox beliefs, and higher rates of religious participation (Bock and others 1987; Lipford and others 1993). Though children do not always practice what their parents and churches advocate, surveys time and again find that youth in highly religious residence and homogeneous locale are less prone to engage in criminal endeavors, use drugs or alcohol, or engage in premarital sex which suggests that a person's faith is more likely to affect his behavior and

is monitored by a “moral community” of like-minded believers (Stark and others 1982).

### **Health Impacts**

Religion seems also to improve mental and physical health. A positive correlation between individual religiosity and mental health is consistently seen in empirical research (Ellison 1993). Like for example Mormons and Seventh Day Adventists has propensity to live longer and enjoy better physical health because of their observance of strictures against drinking, drug use, smoking and other unhealthful behaviors. (Heaton 1986; Heaton and Calkins 1983).

Four most prominent such pathways of how spirituality/religion influences health and a number of pathways through which this happens, have been proposed: health behaviors (through prescribing a certain diet and/or discouraging the use of alcohols, smoking, etc., religion can guard and promote a healthy lifestyle), social support (people can have familiarity with co-religionists and have a network of social relations that can assist and protect whenever the case), psychological states (religious people can experience a better psychological health, added positive psychological states, more hopefulness and faith, which eventually can lead to a improved physical condition due to less stress) and ‘psi’ influences (supernatural laws that administer ‘energies’ not currently comprehended by science but possibly comprehensible at some point by science). Because spirituality/religion manipulates health through these pathways, they act in an indirect way on health (Oman & Thorensen, 2002). Another study compared a group of individuals from a housing area in Sweden participated in a yoga and meditation training program for three months with a set of individuals from a residential area in Germany that did not partake in the program (Schmidt et al., 1997). The participants in Sweden demonstrated decreased blood pressure following the three months program (particularly those with lofty levels) as compared to the German participants. Finally, a group of male college students following Dhammakaya Buddhist meditation program demonstrated a decrease in systolic and diastolic pressure, in comparison with a control group of male college students that did not follow the program (Sudsuang et al. 1991). Many studies have emphasized on Judeo-Christian practices, particularly synagogue/church attendance or prayer (Seeman et al., 2003), and only a small number of studies have looked into Islamic practices. Analyses were conducted to establish the effects of religiosity on the blood pressure (with the body mass index and age controlled). Religiosity has been demonstrated to have an effect on blood pressure through the capability to cope with stress.

### **Marital Impact**

Marriage patterns and marital stability also depends upon religious affiliation (Becker and others 1977). Lehrer and Chiswick (1993) in one of the most refined analysis up to the present, discover high rates of “religious endogamy” within all denominations (and particularly high rates among Jews, Catholics, and Mormons). They also find much higher rates of

divorce when marriage is between mixed religious groups, particularly if one or both members come from a sectarian denomination. Therefore, Mormons married to non-Mormons are three times more inclined to divorce than are Mormons married to other Mormons. A correlation exists between religious shared beliefs in marriage and marital satisfaction, although the character of the relationship is uncertain. (Koenig et.al., 2001) For example, some researchers have found that marital satisfaction has the propensity to increase religiosity (Booth et. al., 1997) while other studies of long-term marriages have indicated that resemblance in religious orientation, religious faith, and religious beliefs (Kaslow & Robinson, 1996) were frequently mentioned as key factors in marital success. Faith reportedly influenced not only parenting but also marriage. Specifically, faith-based beliefs in the importance of marriage, marital fidelity and strong aversion to divorce were frequently expressed. (Marks, 2003)

#### **Voting Impact**

Religious affiliation serves as a powerful indicator of voting styles. Jews vote overwhelmingly Democratic Catholics tend to vote Democratic and most white evangelical Protestants are now rigid followers of the Republican camp, (Jelen 1989; Wald 1992). Although Catholic voting model have become less distinctive over time and evangelical Protestant voting has lately become more distinguishing, the general magnitude of these results is analogous to those of race, gender, and social class.

#### **Economic behaviours & Outcomes**

People's religious identities show a relationship with other economically noteworthy behaviors and outcomes. Jews, for example, average considerably elevated levels of income and education. Still, religious impacts make clear a moderately small proportion of the total disparity in crime, health, fertility, income, or voting, and many behaviors and outlooks that appear mostly unrelated to a person's option of religion or level of religious pledge. For example, economic attitudes concerning income rearrangement, private property, free trade, and government rule. Despite media propaganda concerning the conservatism of the "Religious Right," opinion polls have time and again revealed that the economic stances of evangelical-fundamentalist Protestants are no more "conservative" than those of other Protestants (Pyle 1993). Certainly, when it comes to income redistribution and support to the poor, they are appreciably less conservative than the common American, even after controlling for their race, earnings, and education. This means that their conservatism rotates around a set of theological, ethical, and social issues mainly school prayer, abortion, and sexual demeanor which prove largely autonomous of their economic approach.

German sociologist Max Weber who was an economist, and politician, commenced as a series of essays, the original German text was written in 1904 and 1905, and was translated into English for the first time by Talcott Parsons in 1930. The book is called *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. In the book, Weber wrote that capitalism in Northern

Europe developed when the Protestant (particularly Calvinist) ethic influenced great numbers of people to take on in work in the secular world, mounting their own enterprises and engaging in trade and the amassing of wealth for investment. In other words, the Protestant work ethic was a significant vigor behind the impromptu and uncoordinated mass action that affected the growth of capitalism. This idea is also called as the "Protestant Ethic thesis."

#### **Why Some Religions Have More Impact**

Religions vary dramatically in their capacity to determine people's behaviors and, it would seem, in their capacity to shape the values related to those behaviors. For example a Mormon Church has such deep impact on its members when denominations like the Unitarian Church, have barely any quantifiable impact at all. Mormons attend a number of hours of church meetings each week, add 10% of their income, dish up the church in many formal capacities (and are expected to recognize any such "calling" that comes their way), have big families, and (if male) dole out two-year missions at their own expense. Mormons also abstain from caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco, wear special undergarments, involve themselves in particular rituals at (usually distant) temples, and, in the 19th century, practiced polygyny. (Lehrer & Chiswick, 1993) Mormonism is strange but hardly unique. Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Orthodox Jews, Protestant Fundamentalists and other so-called sects and cults exhibit similar character.

#### **Deviant Sects and Mainstream Churches**

Sociologists have developed elaborate classifications (dating back to Max Weber and perhaps even Adam Smith) that compared deviant sects and mainstream churches. The typical sect is typified by: a distinctive and expensive life-style; uniqueness and tension vis-à-vis the broader culture; elevated rates of involvement; and high levels of commitment. The conventional church is in every way the opposite: lax, inclusive, and requiring limited commitment and involvement. (Iannaccone 1988; 1992).

#### **Religious Risk**

Religions deal in risky supplies. Consumers tend to trim down the risk connected with their religious investments. In order to get the faith and support of consumers, religious suppliers will in turn adopt institutional arrangements that lessen the threat of deception and misinformation or at least the appearance thereof. Nearly all denominations, but especially sects, use testimonies to reassure members and demonstrate the efficacy of their claims. These testimonies are more credible when coming from a reliable source, such as a personal acquaintance or a venerated figure. They are especially believable when testifiers have relatively little manifested gain from having their claims heard and believed. The combined character of most religious activities and the congregational makeup of most religious organizations thus replicate the demand for dependable religious product endorsement. Fellow members have less motivation to overemphasize the profits of the religion than do

the clergy, whose livelihood depends on a sturdy stream of "sales." The religious authorities, in turn, are more credible when they do not get profited materially from their followers' faith or have hefty sunk costs invested in their standing. Thus many typical features of religious institutions reflect apparent efforts to decrease the risk of deception and misinformation. These include: a negligible professional staff whose financial compensation is little and largely free of customer contributions/payments; employment of part-time and volunteer workers (and thus dependence on payments of time and service rather than funds); a congregational arrangement, which confines the want for full-time professionals and offers a source of believable product endorsements; and normal group activities, which offer incessant guarantee through the eagerness, attachment, sincerity, and testimony of fellow members.

#### **Free-Rider Problems**

The downward side to congregational structure and collective activities is free riding. The pleasure and guarantee that a member of the protestant church for example obtain depends not just on his own contribution but also the contribution of others – how many others be present at, how affectionately they greet him, how fine they sing, how passionately they involve in activities, their manifested dedication and so on. This shows the way immediately to two related problems. The first is that members with small levels of participation and perhaps also low levels of belief are tempted to free ride off those with higher levels, since given the preference they are better off in groups whose regular level of participation is greater than their own. The second is that even in a homogeneous group, opportunistic behavior leads to suboptimal participation, since individuals exploit personal welfare by ignoring the external benefits of their participation.

#### **The Sectarian Solution**

Costly demands offer a solution to free-rider problems. These costs are apparently gratuitous costs – sacrifice and stigma – which discourage free-riding by prohibiting or penalizing activities, foreign to most secular contexts: burnt offerings, which tear down valued resources; distinctive dress and grooming that attract ridicule or scorn; dietary and sexual proscriptions that border opportunities for pleasure; limitations on the use of modern medicine or technology. In heterogeneous populations, sacrifice and stigma intends to screen out the less committed members. And even in homogeneous populations, it provokes a replacement effect that can raise average levels of group partaking and group utility. (Iannaccone 1992). Deviant norms thus alleviate the externality problems faced by religious groups. Typical diet, dress, grooming, and social customs limit and often stigmatize members, making participation in alternative activities more expensive. Potential members are forced to prefer: participate fully or not at all. Free-riding and low participation is purged.

#### **General Principles**

##### **Religious Benefits**

The preceding analysis helps elucidate how religions form values and behavior. Religions do good

to both individuals and groups through the production and distribution of wisdom, mandates, and promises that limit people's behavior. But a religion cannot produce these benefits unless a noteworthy fraction of its members recognize its inherently precarious supernatural claims.

#### **Rewards & Punishments**

Religions form behaviors directly, often without altering core values. They do so simply by rewarding certain behaviors (with public admiration, augmented status, and some material profits) while punishing others (with censure, reduced status, and possible prohibiting).

#### **New Age Religions**

Within New Age religions, group identity is feeble or not present, membership is mostly pointless, and group production gives way to private, buyer/seller dealings. Because free riding weakens any efforts to generate collective goods, New Age religions are required to specialize in the production of goods and services (such as books, crystals, and individualized therapeutic services) that a practitioner can put up for sale directly to individual customers. This leads to an significant forecast, which appears dependable with all the empirical research on New Age religions: Non-exclusive religions have small power to influence ethical values, group identity, and behavioral restraints. (Iannaccone 1995b).

#### **Sociological Insights**

Three important caveats emerge from the large sociological literature on new and deviant religious movements. First, it takes a huge deal of individual and organizational attempt to make converts. Second, inducing a brief change in a person's behavior is much easier than changing a person's fundamental beliefs. And third, to influence beliefs and behavior, religions make serious use of familiar methods such as convincing product endorsements, group monitoring, rewards and penalties, recurring contact to the product, and sturdy social networks.

#### **Shaping Beliefs & Behaviours**

All through the late 1970's and early on in 1980's psychologists, the media, and even many courts sincerely entertained the notion that Moonies, Krishnas, the Children of God, the Way, and many other "cults" were "brainwashing" numbers of college-aged youths, taking command of their resources. (Robbins 1988:72) To figure beliefs and behaviors takes continued effort at many levels: the moral/behavioral message must be understandable and consistent (and perhaps proves most persuasive when premised upon supernatural statements); the message must be armored through constant spotlight; usual group activities are significant to promote group identity and intra-group bonding; members must be enlisted to monitor each other's behavior; behavioral commands must be persuaded through a system of rewards and punishments. Within religious organizations, it appears that unproductive expenses – sacrifice and stigma – appear necessary to depress free riding and uphold elevated levels of participation.

#### **Conclusion**

Indeed, compared to other institutions, religions seem to take pleasure in a substantial comparative advantage in the creation and maintenance of ethics. Stronger religious institutions and superior rates of individual religiosity do associate with reduced rates of crime, criminal behavior, divorce, and many other socially complicated behaviors. Nearly all religious denominations like Jewish, Christian, and Islamic utilize a widespread range of techniques to draw members, shape behaviors, and values. But sectarian religions embrace these techniques more wholly, and as a result work out much greater consequence on their members' beliefs and behavior. At the reverse extreme, nonexclusive, New Age religions put up for sale products and promises with no strings attached and, as a consequence, have little or no moral impact.

A typical identity, collective activities, and costly demands appear to be the fundamental pre-requisites of religious commitment and limitation. In typical, identifiable ethical communities, compulsions on opportunistic impulses are most successfully fostered. To shape beliefs and behaviors takes continual effort at many levels: the ethical/behavioral message must be lucid and consistent (and perhaps proves most compelling when anchored upon supernatural assumptions); the message must be reinforced through recurring exposure; habitual collective activities are significant to promote group identity and intra-group bond; members must be enlisted to monitor each other's behavior; behavioral commands must be motivated through a system of rewards and retributions. Within religious organizations, it seems that unproductive expenses – sacrifice and stigma – appear essential to daunt free riding and preserve high levels of participation.

#### References

- Becker, Gary S., Elizabeth M. Landes, and Robert T. Michael. (1977). "An Economic Analysis of Marital Instability." *Journal of Political Economy* 85: 1141-1187.
- Bock, E. Wilbur, John K. Cochran, and Leonard Beeghly. (1987 ) "Moral Messages: The Relative Influence of Denomination on the Religiosity-Alcohol Relationship." *The Sociological Quarterly* 28 (1): 89-103.
- Booth, A. Johnson, D.R. Branaman, A. and Sica, A. (1997) "Belief and behavior: Does religion matter in today's marriage?" *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57: 661-671.
- Ellison, Christopher G. "Religion, the Life Stress Paradigm, and the Study of Depression." In *Religion in Aging and Mental Health*, ed. Jeffrey S. Levin. 78-121. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1993.
- Etzioni, Amatai. (1975) *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations: On Power, Involvement, and Their Correlates* (revised and enlarged edition). New York, NY: The Free Press,
- Greeley, Andrew M. (1989) *Religious Change in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,
- Heaton, Tim B. (1986) "How Does Religion Influence Fertility? The Case of Mormons." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 25: 248-258.
- Heaton, Tim B. and Sandra Calkins. (1983) "Family Size and Contraceptive Use Among Mormons: 1965-75." *Review of Religious Research* 25: 102-113.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. (1988) "A Formal Model of Church and Sect." *American Journal of Sociology* 9: s241-s268.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. (1992 ) "Sacrifice and Stigma: Reducing Free-Riding in Cults, Communes, and other Collectives." *Journal of Political Economy* 100 (2): 271-292.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. (1995 )"Risk, Rationality, and Religious Portfolios." *Economic Inquiry* 38 (2 b): 285-295.
- Jelen, Ted G. (1989) *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States*. New York: Prager Publishers.
- Kaslow, F. and Robinson, J.A. (1996) "Long-term satisfying marriages: Perceptions of contributing factors" *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 24: 154-170.
- Koenig, H.G. McCollough, ME. and Larson, D.B. eds. (2001)*Handbook of religion and health*. (New York: Oxford University Press,).
- Lehrer, Evelyn L. and Carmel U. Chiswick. (1993) "The Religious Composition of Unions: Its Role as a Determinant of Marital Stability." *Demography*.
- Lipford, Jody, Robert McCormick, and Robert Tollison. (1993) "Preaching Matters." *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 21: 235-250.
- Marks, Loren 'Marriage & Families' (2003), retrieved from:<http://marriageandfamilies.byu.edu/issues/2003/August/religiousbeliefs.aspx>
- Oman, D. & Thorensen, C.E. (2003). Without spirituality does critical health psychology risk fostering cultural iatrogenesis?. *Journal of Health Psychology* ,8, 223-229.
- Pyle, Ralph E. (1993) "Faith and Commitment to the Poor: Theological Orientation and Support for Government Assistance Measures." *Sociology of Religion* 54 (4): 385-401.
- Robbins, Thomas. (1988) *Cults, Converts and Charisma: The Sociology of New Religious Movements*. London: Sage.
- Schlicht, Ekkehart. (1995) "Economic Analysis and Organized Religion." In *Survival and Religion: Biological Evolution and Cultural Change*, ed. Eric E. Jones and Vernon Reynolds. Chichester: Wiley.
- Seeman, T. E., Fagan-Dubin, L. & Seeman, M. (2003). Religiosity/Spirituality and health: A critical review of the evidence for biological pathways. *American Psychologist*, 58, 53-63.
- Smith, Adam. (1965) *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations*. New York: Modern Library.
- Stark, Rodney and Laurence R. Iannaccone. (1994)"A Supply-Side Reinterpretation of the

- 'Secularization' of Europe." Journal of the Scientific Study of religion 33 (3):230-252.
- Stark, Rodney, Lori Kent, and Daniel P. Doyle. (1982) "Religion and Delinquency: the ecology of a 'lost' relationship." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 19: 4-24.
- Sudsuang, R., Chentanez, V. & Vevulan, K. (1991). Effect of Buddhist meditation on serum cortisol and total protein levels, blood pressure, pulse rate, lung volume, and reaction time. Physiology and Behavior, 50, 543-548.
- Wald, Kenneth D. (1992) Religion and Politics in the United States. Second ed., Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/syllabi/w/wattles/hkarma.htm> The Concept of Karma in the Bhagavad-Gita, Copyright 2002 - Kent State University - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
- <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/snapshot01.htm>
- <http://www.dailybuddhism.com/archives/1296>
- Deut, Revised Standard Version of Bible. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Revised-Standard-Version-RSV>