

B. Johnson

INTRODUCTORY
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B. Processes and Examples

The distinction between a sect and a church was first made by Ernst Troeltsch in The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. In the United States we find hundreds of sects, small religious groups characterized usually by tension with the larger society. One of the major reasons for their proliferation is that the main source of ethical beliefs for these groups, the Bible, can be interpreted in various ways. The sect has been characterized as offering refuge to the downtrodden in a mass society. Some sects, however, have grown into the stature of churches, because of their dogma and orientation to the world. Benton Johnson, a sociologist of religion, stresses that certain sects stress ascetic norms which are similar to those of the dominant society.

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Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?

INTRODUCTION

It is the thesis of this paper that one of the most important functions of the Holiness movement in American Protestantism is the socializing of marginal, lower class groups in the values commonly called middle class, or more broadly, in the dominant, institutionalized values of the larger society. This thesis cannot now be conclusively proved, but enough evidence exists to give it substantial credibility. Some of this evidence has been gathered by other investigators in the course of research on other problems involving Holiness groups. Much of the evidence was gathered by the author in his own research on Holiness sects.¹ For the most part the available material requires us to limit whatever generalizations are drawn to the group of white Holiness adherents in the South.

From *Social Forces*, Vol. 39 (May, 1961), pp. 309-316. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

¹ G. Benton Johnson, Jr., "A Framework for the Analysis of Religious Action with Special Reference to Holiness and Non-Holiness Groups" (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1953). The purpose of this research was to compare the religious values of Holiness groups with those of non-Holiness evangelical groups on the same socio-economic level and in the same locality. A set of value conflict questions was asked verbally of 20 subjects with high religious commitment. Half of these were Holiness and half of them were non-Holiness in affiliation. The research sites, which were both rural and urban and included some mill villages, were in North Carolina. Evidence directly substantiating the present thesis was not deliberately gathered by this previous research, but much of what was gathered does uphold it.

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At first glance there seems to be much evidence to support a contrary view. Holiness church life is markedly different from upper and middle class Protestant church life. For example, Holiness groups encourage their members to display strong, uninhibited religious feelings at their public meetings. This striking emotionalism is not at all like the staid and dignified tone of worship at higher social levels. Holiness groups are fundamentalist in theology and other-worldly in outlook, and this too is counter to the less dogmatic, less other-worldly tone of belief in many Protestant churches. Finally, the legalistic approach to "morals" of the Holiness bodies contrasts with the increasingly permissive and tolerant attitude toward such matters that is characteristic of the middle and upper classes. It is our contention, however, that these differences should not be allowed to obscure the more fundamental fact of similarity of basic value orientation between Holiness groups and the more privileged classes. We will show that many of the strikingly different features of the Holiness groups probably function as mechanisms of socialization. And we will see that there is evidence that the values in which Holiness adherents are socialized are similar to the dominant, institutionalized values of the larger society.

Most previous research conducted on Holiness groups has not been concerned with the present problem. Broadly speaking, previous sociological investigation has presented the following picture of the Holiness movement: (1) it offers an other-worldly, escapist, and emotional compensation for low socio-economic status; (2) the movement is not interested in attacking directly the institutional causes of this low status, and is hence indifferent to the major social and economic problems of the time. We have no quarrel with this exposition as far as it goes, but we do insist that it is only a partial sociological analysis. In a very few places in the present literature there are allusions to the phenomenon which we shall treat. Boisen states that Holiness sects give their members "hope and courage and strength to keep going in the face of difficulties," and adds that "Insofar as they succeed in doing this, their economic and social status is likely to be raised."² Holt remarks, after characterizing the social views of Holiness groups as "reactionary" rather than "revolutionary or constructive," that nevertheless, these sects "are successful in inspiring hope and a type of behavior in individuals which may raise their individual or group status above that of their class."³ Somewhat more to the present point Yinger briefly states that "Many individual adherents are helped, by the self-discipline that the sect encourages, to improve their own status," but immediately adds that "the sect is irrelevant to the social and cultural causes that continue to create

² Anton T. Boisen, "Economic Distress and Religious Experience," *Psychiatry*, 2 (May 1939), p. 194.

³ John B. Holt, "Holiness Religion: Cultural Shock and Social Reorganization," *American Sociological Review*, 5 (October 1940), p. 741.

such disprivileged individuals."⁴ The emphasis in all but one of these statements is on courage in the face of adversity, and the consequence, in all the statements, is considered to be upward social mobility.

In contrast, our emphasis will be on the fact that the Holiness groups encourage an orientation toward the world that constrains their members to adopt both motivationally and behaviorally an outlook similar in many respects to that of higher, more privileged social strata. Upward mobility may be an important long-term consequence of this orientation, but more fundamental is the possession of the orientation itself, which governs the believer's behavior toward the secular world. This orientation which the Holiness sects espouse is a variant of what Weber has called the ethic of inner-worldly asceticism.⁵ Most authorities concede that there is an important connection between this orientation toward the world and the values and structure of industrial capitalism, specifically, and the dominant values of American society, more broadly. These values have been described frequently by sociologists.⁶ Central to all descriptions is the emphasis on individual achievement of concrete goals by the consistent application of appropriate means. Closely related to the central achievement theme is the emphasis on democracy, individualism, mobility, and moral respectability. We will argue that the specifically religious values of Holiness groups converge with several features of the secular value system. If this is so, it will be plausible to suggest that a latent function of Holiness groups is the socialization of their adherents in the dominant societal values.

Theologically, the Holiness movement is a part of a larger movement within American Protestantism that has reacted against the austerities of Calvinism and has instead stressed the general availability of salvation and the possibility of the believer's achieving a kind of spiritual perfection. Of Arminian and Wesleyan parentage, Holiness theology has gone on to elaborate the stages by which the believer attains perfection. The so-called Pentecostal branch of the Holiness movement, to which nowadays the term Holiness is popularly applied, conceives of three such stages. The mandatory "initial evidence" of arriving at the third and last stage is the believer's utterance of syllables of an unknown tongue. The Holiness movement is also heir to the tradition of revivalism. Many well-known orgiastic or emotional phenomena are common in Holiness meetings and some demonstra-

⁴ J. Milton Yinger, *Religion, Society, and the Individual* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), p. 173.

⁵ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans. by Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930). See especially Chap. 4, "The Religious Foundations of Worldly Asceticism," pp. 95-154.

⁶ See especially the following works: Robin M. Williams, Jr., *American Society* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1951), pp. 388-442; Clyde Kluckhohn and Florence R. Kluckhohn, "American Culture: Generalized Orientations and Class Patterns," in Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. McIver (eds.), *Conflicts of Power in Modern Culture* (New York: Harper & Bros. 1947), pp. 106-128.

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tion of strong feeling is considered an appropriate sign of attaining the various stages of perfection. The Holiness movement is fragmented into numerous sects. Some of these sects are congregational in polity but a number of them are episcopally organized.

Our concern will be with the Holiness groups of Pentecostal persuasion. We will also restrict ourselves to a consideration of the formally organized denominations in the Pentecostal tradition. There are many small groups, some confederated, some existing as individual "store front" congregations, that are in the Pentecostal movement. They seem especially prevalent among Negroes. We will not be concerned with these groups. It is freely admitted that the sociological generalizations which we hope to draw as to the effect of the Holiness movement on the value orientations of its adherents may not apply to the isolated "store front" variety of Pentecostal religion.

THE EMPHASIS ON CONVERSION

The great majority of the members of these newer Holiness sects of the Pentecostal persuasion are of low socio-economic status.⁷ But it has also been established that lower class persons tend to be less involved in religious activities than any other class of the population.⁸ Holiness groups are especially strong in the southern states.⁹ Now it is probably accurate to assume that the southern white lower class is less imbued with the dominant values of the society than any other large group of native non-Catholic whites in the country. Writing on this class in Old City, Davis and Gardner note:

By and large, lower-class behavior and ideology may be said to be characterized by a disdain for the government and laws which they see as creations of the upper class and middle class, a disdain for churches and associations and for the moral and religious values.¹⁰

The ordinary lower class person, and especially in the South, is not exposed

⁷ See Liston Pope, "Religion and the Class Structure," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 56 (March 1948), pp. 84-91; also Walter Goldschmidt, "Class Denominationalism in Rural California Churches," *American Journal of Sociology*, 49 (January 1944), pp. 348-355.

⁸ Hadley Cantril, "Educational and Economic Composition of Religious Groups: An Analysis of Poll Data," *American Journal of Sociology*, 48 (March 1943), p. 577; Frank D. Alexander, "Religion in a Rural Community of the South," *American Sociological Review*, 6 (April 1944), p. 245.

⁹ Holt, *op. cit.*, p. 742.

¹⁰ Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 80. See also pp. 79-83 and 118-136 [of *Social Forces*]. For other portrayals of the values of the southern white lower class, see W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1941), pp. 42-44, 44-53, 308-309, etc.; also Leonard W. Doob, "Poor Whites: A Frustrated Class," in John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937), pp. 445-484.

to a constant set of socializing pressures emphasizing middle class work and achievement values, as is the person at higher social levels. In view of his initial commitment to values that are different from those of higher social classes, the lower class person if he is to adhere to these higher values, must make a "decision" or a reformulation of motivations, considerably more hard for him than for the middle class person who has really never had any serious choice to make. The borderline that he must cross is a sharp one. It is not chiefly an economic or occupational borderline but an evaluational and motivational borderline. And it is a borderline which, in view of his background and possible continued participation in lower class circles, the individual is in danger of crossing again in the opposite direction.

The great attention that Holiness and other sects pay to the phenomenon of conversion is highly suggestive of the fact that these groups endeavor to reorient the individual's motivations and values in fundamental ways. Holiness believers usually insist that they and their colleagues are "changed" at the time of conversion. Most of these groups draw a sharp and rigid line between the converted and the unconverted. Like the emphasis on conversion, the drawing of this line again suggests that a value conflict of some importance is involved.

What impels individuals to become members of Holiness sects and, we assume, to cross a value orientational borderline? Prior to any important reformulation of motives there is likely to be an experience of heightened frustration or deprivation. A number of observers of the Holiness groups suggest that many join in order to compensate for the frustration occasioned by their low socio-economic position. As Holt points out, the areas within the South that have experienced the greatest growth of Holiness groups have been those characterized by an expanding economy, chiefly of an industrial nature, but also of an agricultural and recreational character.¹¹ It is very likely, as some have suggested,¹² that in these areas the awareness among lower class persons that they are underprivileged has been sharpened as they have increasingly been obliged to earn a livelihood in fairly regimented organizations under the supervision of persons of higher status than themselves. In view of this heightened sense of being on the bottom of society, Holiness religion enables the lower class individual to deny that he is really on the bottom in any meaningful sense. As Liston Pope has put it, Holiness religion allows the individual to "substitute religious status for social status."¹³ Or, as Goldschmidt has written, "Holiness religion denies the existence of this world and its woes; it denies the values in terms of which they [the adherents] are the underprivileged and sets up in their

¹¹ Holt, *op. cit.*, pp. 742-743.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 745; also Yinger, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

¹³ Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), p. 137.

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stead a putative society in the Kingdom of God, where, because of their special endowments . . . they are the elite."¹⁴

THE ACCEPTANCE OF SECULAR SOCIETY

That important reformulations of values or motives take place when a person joins a Holiness sect seems pretty well agreed on. But we have not yet established the direction which this reformulation takes other than to note that most observers emphasize that the other-worldliness of Holiness belief inclines the individual to make a kind of fantasy-like retreat from what many would call social reality.

Let us grant that Holiness sects place great emphasis on getting to heaven and correspondingly devalue the pursuit of empirical, social ends as ultimate goals in themselves. Still, we assume that these sects are obliged to adopt some orientation toward secular activities. Basically, such an orientation must reject or accept the values and institutions of society.

Yinger, Pope, and others have rightly pointed out that although Holiness groups preach against "worldliness" they do not attempt an organized protest against any important features of the social system.¹⁵ Now if a group espouses values in considerable opposition to those of the larger society, that group must face the problem of its relation to that society and the problem of how, specifically, to institutionalize its own values. This leads it to formulate a social policy aimed at securing these values in the face of opposition. The two possible polar types of such a social policy are outright attack on the larger social structure and a relatively total withdrawal from that society into exclusive religious communities. Holiness groups are not interested in "social action" or in attempts to reform society broadly so as to make it more "Christian" in any structural sense. Neither are they interested in forming themselves into segregated, tightly knit, self-sufficient communities.

Either the social action orientation or the withdrawal orientation would seem to be necessary adaptations if Holiness groups were seriously at odds with secular society. This leaves the alternative that Holiness groups basically accept society as constituted. There is evidence which can be immediately noted in support of the view that some kind of acceptance pattern characterizes the adaptation of these sects to the larger society. Even when we consider the many rules to which Holiness sects hold their members, these members are still for the most part left entirely free to participate in ordinary secular life. The church does not in any significant way attempt to be a regulator or coordinator of all its members' activities. Although the Holiness believer is held to certain distinct standards, he is able to pursue

¹⁴ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

¹⁵ Pope, *Millhands and Preachers*, pp. 164-166; Holt, *op. cit.*, p. 741; Yinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-173.

any legitimate private interest without being answerable to the congregation.

Although Holiness adherents are inclined to emphasize their distinctiveness and particularly their separation from "the things of this world," an examination of what they usually mean by this sentiment fails to reveal a sweeping rejection of secular norms. What Holiness people usually mean when they speak of their anti-worldliness is that they are opposed to religious disbelief and to a violation of their own normative standards. One Holiness pastor, when asked by the author to describe the chief evils of modern times, complained that "women will go downtown nude—I mean not wearing anything you'd call decent dress." Another pastor was concerned with "the material outlook on life . . . playing it high, wide and handsome." As we shall see, however, his objection is not to involvement in money-making activities per se, but to involvement without proper motivation and discipline.

Further evidence of the very restricted nature of the Holiness opposition to the ways of contemporary society is seen in the interest which some of our respondents showed in being respected in their own communities. An eagerness to be acknowledged as a legitimate movement by outsiders may be taken as a sign that the movement is not really so "different" and that it embodies beliefs and norms that outsiders might admire. A minister of the Pentecostal Holiness Church expressed great pride that he had been invited to sit on the platform at the public high school commencement exercises along with the usual group of Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian ministers. He acknowledged that when a Holiness church is founded in a community, ill will and opposition often arise. "They'll point us out and not want to have anything to do with us. . . . Call us liars and funny people," he said. This attitude is based on ignorance, according to the pastor, for "after they see what we really are they usually quiet down." Holiness people are simply "clean and decent folks" in his opinion. The emphasis on winning respect and acceptance of the non-Holiness community by showing them "what we really are," namely "clean and decent folks," seems to imply that there are important normative similarities between Holiness people and non-Holiness people.

THE PRIMACY OF ASCETIC NORMS

Still, acceptance of secular values can be a passive matter or it can be positive. There is evidence for the view that the Holiness acceptance of much of society and its values is of a positive and not of a passive nature. We make this statement because of the predominating influence of a form of Calvinist inner-worldly asceticism in determining the Holiness orientation toward the world. This asceticism underlies the specific norms to which Holiness adherents are held. These norms closely correspond, both in general orientation and in particulars, to the rules commonly incumbent

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on members of the older revivalistic denominations at an earlier stage of their development. Members of Holiness sects are forbidden to consume alcoholic beverages, to dance, to gamble or to play cards, to "smoke, dip or chew" tobacco. They may not attend places of "worldly amusement" such as plays, movies, fairs, ball games, or poolrooms. They may not engage in mixed bathing; women may not use makeup or wear short skirts, short sleeves, short hair or ornamental jewelry. Profanity is forbidden, and strict Sabbath observance is enjoined. Obligations, including debts, must be faithfully discharged. There are a few other specific commandments varying from denomination to denomination and from congregation to congregation, but the above list is the hard core of those categorical behavioral injunctions, chiefly of a prohibitive nature, to which most Holiness sects subscribe.

Almost all these rules are directed toward the suppression of the esthetic, the erotic, the irrational chance-taking or immediately pleasurable aspects of life. As Weber has argued, the "destruction of spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment"¹⁶ implied in such ascetic rules is related to the attempt which certain religious systems make to induce their adherents to devote their lives to the systematic pursuit of overriding ends.¹⁷ We assume that in general asceticism is a mechanism of the regulation of the gratification needs of individuals. It is especially important in a situation where behavior patterns stressing rational, purposeful activity are being inculcated. By cultivating the attitude of affective neutrality which is appropriate to any goal attainment process asceticism keeps the actor's gratification needs focused on the ultimate goal of action (salvation) by avoiding distracting or tempting gratifications that might enhance regressive tendencies or reinforce alienative motivations.

What is the relationship of these ascetic norms to the general observation that Holiness adherents are emotionally uninhibited? Much has been written about the fact that the emotionalism of Holiness meetings is erotically charged, that it appeals to persons who are emotionally "starved," and that it serves for lower class persons what more sublimated pursuits of immediate gratification serve for middle and upper class persons. No doubt all this is true, but from our standpoint the principal consequence of Holiness emotionalism is to secure and maintain the motivational commitment of individuals to the kind of life implied by the ascetic rules.

This commitment to asceticism is secured by playing on the individual's desire to escape punishment and find reward. The punishment is Hell. The reward is Heaven. The traditional Christian conception of man, destined without grace to go to Hell to suffer eternal torment, is usually presented at Holiness meetings. At the same time a "way out" is offered that promises

¹⁶ Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, p. 119.
¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 105, 166-169.

eternal joy instead. These alternatives are portrayed in the most vivid manner so as to induce the hearers actually to experience the extremes involved. Very likely the promise of immediate relief from a sense of general deprivation and meaninglessness is especially attractive to members of socially depressed strata. The "blessed assurance" of salvation is held to be attainable forthwith, as a kind of "foretaste of glory divine." Although Holiness religion does encourage a person to become satiated with the joy that he is saved, if he is to enter into full membership in the sect he must pay a price for this joy. The price is that he must frame his life according to the ascetic norms of the congregation. Hence for the full sect member the emotional permissiveness of Holiness meetings is likely to be seen as an opportunity to strengthen commitment to the obligatory norms of the group.

It is the ascetic norms and not the experiencing of a state of spiritual exaltation that are the substance of the day-to-day religious role of the Holiness believer. There are a number of common features of Holiness sects which attest to this fact. First, whereas an individual believer is only required to experience the initial stage of grace, that is of conversion itself, all members are required to abide by the set of ascetic rules which is typically referred to as the "discipline." Secondly, it is largely infraction of these rules that calls forth strong negative sanctions on the part of the congregation. Holiness sects are not typically lenient where infraction is concerned. They often practice a form of excommunication known as "disfellowshipping" or reading the offender out of the congregation. Finally, it is not possible among Holiness sects for an individual to claim a kind of spiritual exemption from these rules owing to his having received higher spiritual or emotional blessings. Quite the contrary: despite the fact that he may have received such a blessing, he is subject to negative sanctions if he fails to abide by the "discipline" of the sect. This policy is not the subject of controversy in Holiness circles and it is theologically supported by the Wesleyan doctrine of the possibility of a fall from grace.¹⁸

THE EFFECTS OF HOLINESS COMMITMENT

So far we have argued that far from being diffusely alienated from secular society, Holiness sectarians are positively oriented to it in terms of an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. This ethic is regarded as having made its most significant secular impact on the economy. Therefore, it is important to investigate whether Holiness adherents tend to possess traits or attitudes

¹⁸ These and other considerations have led the author to the conclusion that most Holiness sects are *ethical* in the sense in which this term has been defined by Weber. According to Weber, an ethical religion is one that stresses the ordering of everyday life according to a set of supernaturally legitimated norms. Such a religion stands in contrast to one that stresses contemplative or orgiastic union with the supernatural. See Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Trans. and ed. by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 287-291.

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¹⁹ Pope, *Millha*
²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140
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which make for their successful integration into productive enterprises. Liston Pope has pointed to the fact that many mills in the South encourage the establishment of churches among their workers by giving land, buildings, and financial support. From the mills' standpoint this encouragement has been more than a pious gesture. It has been given with the expectation that the churches will produce a more dependable kind of worker, in short, that they will inculcate traits in laborers that are desirable from a managerial or production point of view. Almost without exception the churches so subsidized are Protestant and in the tradition of inner-worldly asceticism. Pope states:

There is no doubt in the minds of employers that churches have succeeded, and still succeed, in providing better workers for the mills. Statements by employers in Gaston County may be taken as representative of employers throughout the brief history of the Southern textile industry.¹⁹

Although at the time of Pope's research in 1939 the mills tended predominantly to support non-Holiness evangelical denominations such as the Baptists, he did note an increasing tendency for them also to support Holiness sects, apparently as the employers came to recognize that these sects did not "upset the routine of the life of workers."²⁰

Pope's interest in the mills' encouragement of churches was centered about the opportunities for control of the workers by the mill management that this situation affords and in the generally conservative social doctrine espoused by most churches whether subsidized or not.²¹ This is a legitimate, and we think, valid analysis. But our interest here is in the simple fact that Protestant churches are directly encouraged by industrial concerns which feel it to be "good business" in the sense of enhancing the profit opportunities of the firm by providing a disciplined labor supply. A mill pastor very frankly spoke of this to the author in the following manner:

Take these mills around here. They figure that church people make a better type than other people and they know what they're saying. X Mills, for instance, they invest from 50 to 100 thousand dollars a year in churches. . . . They say it's a good investment because the fellow who goes to church regularly is a more efficient worker in the long run. Maybe here is a better workman, but he gets drunk. Well, he spends his weekend drinking and he's no good on Monday. A company can't have half of its force staying out on Monday. . . . Some people don't wait for the weekends either, they go out on a spree every night. In other words, the Christian man

¹⁹ Pope, *Millhands and Preachers*, p. 29.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

²¹ See especially Pope's chapter on "Churches and Sects," pp. 117-140, and his chapter on "The Control of Churches by Mills," pp. 143-161, both in *Millhands and Preachers*.

in the long run would prove the more efficient workman because he can be depended on.

The emphasis is on efficiency and steadiness, and a direct connection between these virtues and the ascetic norm of abstention from alcohol is noted. Pope notes that southern mill officials lay particularly strong emphasis on the fact that the churchgoing employee is thought to be a steady and reliable worker. Nonchurchgoing employees may be as efficient, but they are more prone to absenteeism and to quitting the job, both of which have been serious problems to the southern textile industry.²² We have argued before that asceticism is associated with a generally methodical long-term devotion to concrete tasks. The evidence presented by Pope establishes the plausibility of the proposition that the Holiness and other inner-worldly ascetic sects in the South actually do produce workers who consistently apply themselves to the tasks set for them in the industrial work situation.

Consistent self-application to one's work is not only a vital condition for building and maintaining a highly productive economy, it is one of the oft-mentioned characteristics of the dominant American value system. Self-application can be, and in many unskilled work roles possibly must be, essentially a routine matter requiring little initiative or independent decision-making. According to Weber, however, a further distinguishing characteristic of the ethic of inner-worldly asceticism is the concept of the calling. Self-direction, mastery, and positive achievement in occupational tasks are its central themes. Such an orientation is more appropriate to managerial and entrepreneurial roles than to lower level occupational positions. If, as we argue, the Holiness sects socialize in dominant values through the medium of an emphasis on the ethic of inner-worldly asceticism, they should produce values which stress mastery and self-direction.

What evidence is there that this is so? The author asked ten Holiness ministers in intensive interviews a question in which they were required to choose between two conflicting, generalized orientations toward life. One of these orientations was a statement of the self-direction and mastery theme of the ethic of the calling. The other orientation was stated so as to imply a less achievement-minded, more cautious outlook on life, and possibly to imply (if the respondent so chose) a rejection of the goal attainment process altogether. The question is reproduced below as it was read to the respondents:

Two young Christian men are talking about what they are going to do with their lives. One of them says that in his life he is going to aim high. He is going to use his opportunities as they come to him day by day, he is going to develop his talents to the utmost; he is even going to risk failure by setting his own aims so far beyond that he may only partly attain them. The other man says, no, that

²² Pope, *Millhands and Preachers*, pp. 29-30.

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— Processes and Examples
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in his life he isn't going to bite off more than he can chew, that he would rather do a little bit all right than make a big mess out of something that he can't handle. Now if you had to give aid and encouragement to one of these two young men, which one would you agree with?

Only one respondent to this question tended in any manner to deny the desirability of positive goal attainment in the occupational area. All the rest of the informants, regardless of whether they chose the first or second orientational alternative, demonstrated a positive approval of the goal attainment process. Almost all of those who chose the second orientational alternative called attention to the importance of ascetic or traditional moral norms. They did so, however, in order to set guides and limits to the achievement process and not in order to pose asceticism as a complete way of life. One minister of the Assemblies of God was disturbed at the prospect of "going after success for its own sake." A minister of the Pentecostal Holiness Church did not want a man's overriding ambition to cause him to "push himself anywhere that he wasn't prepared for." Still, this same minister held that "the higher positions will come if we've been consistent with our self-improvement."

Half the respondents voiced the kind of enthusiastic endorsement of the occupational goal attainment process that would have gratified an investigator such as Max Weber. All of them showed a clear comprehension and acceptance of the ethic of the calling. The following response was given by a Church of God pastor:

I think it pays to have a vision. That's a wonderful thing to have. If you have God in your life then I think you'll always go forward and never backward. You have to stress your goal and what you're aiming for and go forth to get it. . . . If you ain't got no vision then you're going to say, "No I can't do it." You're going to say good enough is good enough. Determine what you want to do, then press on, don't be defeated.

A minister of the same denomination echoed similar sentiments when he stated, "Where there's no aspiration, there's nothing done, there's no heights taken." Still another minister of the Church of God said that he had advised his son in school not to be "content with being in the middle of that class or at the tail end of it — be at the very top of it." He went on to remark that people "ought to desire to excel in their work," and "make up their minds to do well."

In many ways the most striking response was made by the minister of the Assemblies of God whose stricture against "material things" was noted above. In the present context he said:

Well, I believe God has a plan for every one of us. If we accept Him then we're obligated to follow that plan for the glory of God. . . . When we're doing what God has planned for us we ought to

give God our very best. We ought to aim high, like the man said. If you had a call to the grocery business, then you ought to be ambitious for the glory of God, to be successful for Christ's sake. That other man is a drifter. He's not interested in the glory of God. He's not industrious, just doesn't care. I'm trying to think of some Scripture. One that comes to mind is, "Be not slothful in business." . . . When I went into the painting business I said I was going to be the best in the business. And I was.

If we add this pastor's views on greed and worldly pleasures as well as his joy over his salvation and spiritual perfection, we can round out our presentation of the Holiness orientation toward life: It is other-worldly in the sense of expecting the greatest personal joy in the hereafter, but it involves as a condition of this the devotion to doing the will of God in this world. This will can be realized in almost any kind of activity, but it demands consistent output of effort, a denial of distracting pleasures, and a focus on achievement. The positive emphasis on self-application, consistency, and achievement, are the principal Holiness themes that directly converge with dominant American values.

C. Relationships with Other Institutions

A church is, to some extent, a primary group. It is a place where people come to meet with one another frequently and intimately. Since members of a social class associate with each other, it is unlikely that people from diverse social classes would be found in any given church. Undoubtedly, the class composition will vary from community to community, but within the given community it is quite homogeneous. Certain racial and ethnic groups were historically found in specific religious groups, and these patterns persist. It is for such reasons that Liston Pope, a professor of social ethics, can draw a neat relationship between religion and the class structure. Religion is related to other institutions through the family, through religion's role in social action and politics, and in other ways.

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