

## Religious Affiliations Among Adult Sexual Offenders

Donna Eshuys · Stephen Smallbone

Published online: 2 August 2006  
© Springer Science+Business Media, Inc. 2006

**Abstract** This article examines associations between self-reported religious affiliations and official offense histories among 111 incarcerated adult male sexual offenders. Four categories of religiosity were devised according to self-reported continuities and discontinuities in life-course religious affiliations: atheists, dropouts, converts, and stayers. ANCOVAs indicated that stayers (those who maintained religious involvement from childhood to adulthood) had more sexual offense convictions, more victims, and younger victims, than other groups. Results challenge assumptions that religious involvement should, as with other crime, serve to deter sexual offending behavior. Results are discussed in terms of social control and situational theories of crime.

**Keywords** Sexual offenders · Religiosity · Social control theory

Religiosity has been a topic of concerted interest for delinquency and crime researchers at least since Hirschi and Stark (1969) published their seminal “hellfire and delinquency” paper. However, the direction and magnitude of the effects of religiosity on crime continue to be contested. Hirschi and Stark’s findings that church attendance and beliefs in supernatural sanctions were unrelated to delinquency were followed by a number of investigations that, by contrast, reported significant negative associations between religiosity and crime, mainly for juvenile delinquents, but also for adult offenders (Albrecht, Chadwick, & Alcorn, 1977; Baier & Wright, 2001; Cochran & Akers, 1989). Other researchers have concluded that, consistent with Hirschi and Stark’s findings, religious affiliation does not have a significant deterrent effect on unlawful behavior (Evans et al., 1996; Benda & Corwyn, 1997).

The relationship between religiosity and crime may be mediated by offense type and gender. In a meta-analysis of 60 studies, Baier and Wright (2001) found support for the deterrent effects of religiosity on ascetic behaviors such as gambling, premarital sexual intercourse, and illicit drug use. However, religiosity appeared to serve as a weaker deterrent

on serious personal or property crimes such as murder and theft. More recently, Regnerus (2003) found that parental religious devotion may protect girls from delinquent behavior but may amplify delinquency among boys.

Moving beyond the individual level religiosity-criminality relationship, Ellis and Peterson (1996) compared crime rates of 13 countries. Their findings suggest that more religious societies, measured by church membership and attendance, tend to have lower rates of crime than do less religious societies. The strongest association was found between religiosity and property crime.

Johnson et al. (2001) suggest that disagreement about the religiosity-criminality relationship is due largely to conceptual and methodological problems. Many studies measure religious commitment as a singular, rather than as a multidimensional, construct. Church attendance, for example, may measure a valid facet of religious behavior but may not adequately quantify religious experience or commitment (Benda, 2002; Fulton, 1997). Allport and Ross (1967) conceived of religiosity as comprising both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. Extrinsically religious individuals use religion as a means towards some other end, whilst intrinsically religious individuals internalize their religious experience, considering it an end in itself. Extrinsically religious individuals may be further divided into two categories: extrinsic personal (use of religion as personal security or protection), and extrinsic social (use of religion as a means to achieve social rewards). In addition to church attendance, then, it has been suggested that the construct of religiosity should also encompass beliefs, values, and spiritual experiences (Kirkpatrick, 1997). Notwithstanding these conceptual and measurement problems, religious affiliation has generally been viewed as an agent of social control, promoting conformity and inhibiting deviance (Cochran, Wood, & Arneklev, 1994; Durkheim, 1951).

Research into the relationship more specifically between religiosity and sexual offending has a much shorter history, and seems to have emerged largely as a response to a heightened social awareness of sexual offenses committed by active and sometimes prominent members of religious institutions. Although in the last five years there has been a substantial increase in research into the causes and implications of sexual misconduct by clergy (Plante & Daniels, 2004), relatively little is yet known about the impact of religious experiences and activities on sexual offending. There have now been numerous empirical investigations of perpetrators of sexual abuse in all major denominations: Anglican (Blair, 1999; Gearing & Griffith, 2003), Catholic (Plante, 1999), Lutheran (Sevig, 2002), Hindu (Rodarmor, 1983), Buddhist (Adam, 1998), and Rabbinic (Gross-Schaefer, 2001; Eden, 2002). Taken together, this work suggests that sexual abuse by priests and male members of religious orders may follow a different pattern to that of other sexual offenders.

Previous empirical investigations of the relationship between religiosity and sexual offending have thus concentrated on the characteristics of clergy who have committed sexual offenses. However, there may be unique situational influences associated with sexual offenses in church or other religious settings, such as unusual opportunities for clergy to engage emotionally and privately with vulnerable children and adults, who may in turn place special trust in religious leaders. It is therefore unclear whether clergy sexual abuse results from unique situational factors, or whether there may be an individual-level relationship between religiosity and sexual offending. No study to date has investigated the religiosity-sexual offending relationship in the general sexual offender population.

The present study aimed to examine associations between religiosity and offending behavior in a general (i.e., non-cleric) sample of sexual offenders, none of whom had offended in a church or other institutional religious setting. We hypothesized that, since the weight of evidence suggests that religiosity may serve a deterrent effect on general criminal behavior,

there would be an inverse relationship between religious affiliation and offending behavior. Specifically, we expected that offenders who reported continuity of religious affiliation from childhood to adulthood would have fewer sexual and nonsexual offense convictions, and fewer sexual offense victims, than those who reported no religious affiliation. Given anecdotal evidence that many sexual offenders undergo religious conversions after being convicted of their sexual offenses, we expected that ‘converts’ might have fewer sexual and nonsexual offense convictions. We reasoned that religious conversion may be partly a result of offenders trying to come to terms with behavior that they themselves may see as ‘out of character’. Finally, although we had no specific expectations about the relationship between religiosity and the age of sexual offense victims, we were interested to examine the relationship between religiosity and victim age.

## Method

### Participants

The sample consisted of 111 adult males serving prison sentences for sexual offenses and who had been accepted into a specialized treatment program for sexual offenders. Participants’ ethnicity, education level, and marital and employment status are summarized in Table 1. The mean age of participants at the time of their current sentence was 38.5 years ( $SD = 14.2$ ), and at the time of their most recent sexual offense 32.7 years ( $SD = 11.3$ ). Of the 111 participants, 71 (64%) had a previous official history of non-sexual offenses, and 43 (38.7%) had a previous official history of sexual offenses.

**Table 1** Sample characteristics ( $n = 115$ )

	Frequency	%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Non-indigenous Australian	75	65
Indigenous Australian	17	15
Other	23	20
<b>Highest level of education achieved</b>		
Primary school	8	7
Junior secondary	78	68
Senior secondary	18	16
Tertiary	11	9
<b>Marital Status at time of index offense</b>		
Single	28	24
Married or Defacto	34	30
Separated	52	45
Widowed	1	1
<b>Employment at time of index offense</b>		
Unemployed	14	12
Retired	4	3
Unskilled	54	47
Trade	23	20
Professional	11	10
Self employed	9	8

Most offenders reported some current identification with a Christian denomination: 27% Anglican, 28% Catholic, 10% Uniting Church, 3% evangelist, and 3% other denominations. Almost one quarter (24%) did not identify with any religious grouping.

## Procedure and measures

Treatment program files for all offenders involved in the Sex Offender Treatment Program between 2000 and 2004 were examined. One of the earliest tasks in the program was to prepare a written autobiography, giving answers to set questions about certain events in their lives as children, adolescents and adults.

## Religiosity

The independent variable was offenders' self-reported religious affiliations. Current literature suggests that religiosity is best measured on multi item dimensions and would ideally include religious activity (e.g., attendance level at religious services and social events; reading religious material and listening to broadcasts), religious salience (the influence of religion in daily life and extent that religious beliefs have daily impact) and "hellfire" beliefs (specific beliefs in and fear of the supernatural sanctions such as God's punishment, evil people will suffer, and so on) (Baier & Wright, 2001). These researchers argue that religion consists of beliefs, values and spiritual experiences that go beyond the one-dimensional concept of church attendance.

For the purposes of the present study, data on religious behavior and experience in childhood were obtained from participants' responses to the following questions contained in the autobiography outline: "What was the religious, spiritual and ethnic/cultural background of your family?"; "Did your family participate in spiritual or religious practices? If so how often?"; "What Church or spiritual group did your family belong to?"; and "How important was religion in your family." Data on religious behavior and experience in adulthood were obtained from their responses to the following questions: "Do you belong to a church? If so, what denomination"; "Have you been Born Again?"; "Do you believe in a hell where people are punished forever for their sins?"; "Do you feel that you have lived by the principles of your faith? If not, what principles have you not lived by?"; and "In what way does your religion guide your sexual activities?."

Responses to these questions were rated by the first author on two 4-point Likert-type scales – one for childhood experiences and one for adult experiences-ranging from 1 (not important) to 4 (very important). The scores on both childhood and adulthood religiosity were then combined to construct a trend variable based on dichotomous low/high groups. Those registering either not important or somewhat important were placed in the low religiosity group. Those scoring either often or very important were placed in the high religiosity group. The final categories resulted in participants being placed in a high/low childhood religiosity group and high/low adult religiosity group. Offenders who recorded a high level of religious affiliations in both childhood and adulthood were labeled "stayers" ( $n = 23$ ). Those recording a high level of religious affiliations in childhood but in not adulthood were labeled "drop outs" ( $n = 27$ ). Respondents who registered a low level of religious affiliations in childhood but high level as an adult were labeled "converts" ( $n = 16$ ), and finally those who reported low level of affiliations as a child and adult were labeled "atheists" ( $n = 45$ ).

**Table 2** Mean (*SD*) number of victims and age of youngest victim, by religiosity group ( $n = 111$ )

	Religiosity group			
	Atheists ( $n = 45$ )	Stayers ( $n = 23$ )	Dropouts ( $n = 27$ )	Converts ( $n = 16$ )
Number of victims	1.93 (1.53)	3.87 (2.05)***	2.14 (1.40)	2.00 (1.32)
Age of youngest victim	18.09 (15.71)	9.52 (5.23)	16.70 (13.74)	15.50 (6.42)

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

### Offense variables

The dependent variables in the current study were the age of victims, number of victims, victim gender, number of previous sexual and non-sexual offenses, and number of current sexual and non-sexual offenses. Official records were used for measures of past criminality. This provided a comprehensive profile of conviction and incarceration rates.

### Results

Preliminary analyses revealed a significant age difference between atheists, converts, dropouts, and stayers ( $F(3,107) = 4.27, p = .001$ ). Post hoc analysis revealed that stayers ( $M = 46.52$  years,  $SD = 13.81$ ) were significantly older at the time of sentencing than were the atheists ( $M = 34.40$  years,  $SD = 13.76$ ),  $t = 3.43, p < .001$ . Age was used as a covariate for all subsequent analyses.

Two ANCOVAs were computed to compare the four religiosity groups on the number of victims and the age of the youngest victim (see Table 2). The groups differed in the number of victims after controlling for offenders' age at the time of sentencing,  $F(3,106) = 3.90, p < .01$ . Tukey post-hoc analyses revealed that stayers had more victims ( $M = 3.87, SD = 2.05$ ) than all other religious groups: atheists ( $M = 1.93, SD = 1.53$ ), dropouts ( $M = 2.14, SD = 1.40$ ) and converts ( $M = 2.00, SD = 1.32$ ). Although atheists' youngest victims were on average almost twice the age of stayers' youngest victims, within-group variance was too great to produce a statistically significant difference,  $F(3,106) = 1.37, ns$ .

Comparisons of the four religiosity groups on number and ages of victims were conducted separately for those who had offended against child victims. Results are summarized in Table 3. Again controlling for the age of offenders at the time of sentencing, ANCOVA revealed significant differences in the number,  $F(3,74) = 3.83, p < .01$ , and ages,  $F(3,74) = 3.27, p < .05$ , of victims. Stayers had both more ( $M = 4.30, SD = 2.04$ ) and younger ( $M = 8.00, SD = 3.27$ ) victims than did the other groups.

Just over one third (38.7%) of the sample had previous convictions for sexual offenses, and almost two thirds (64%) had previous convictions for nonsexual offenses. Percentages

**Table 3** Mean (*SD*) number of victims and age of youngest victim, by religiosity group, for offenders against children only ( $n = 79$ )

	Religiosity group			
	Atheists ( $n = 31$ )	Stayers ( $n = 20$ )	Dropouts ( $n = 17$ )	Converts ( $n = 11$ )
Number of victims	2.13 (1.48)	4.30 (2.04)**	2.70 (1.49)	2.36 (1.43)
Age of youngest victim	10.26 (3.49)	8.00 (3.27)*	9.76 (3.28)	12.00 (2.28)

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 4** Percentages of offenders with prior offending histories, by religiosity group

	Religiosity group			
	Atheists ( <i>n</i> = 45)	Stayers ( <i>n</i> = 23)	Dropouts ( <i>n</i> = 27)	Converts ( <i>n</i> = 16)
Previous sexual offenses	23.3	27.9	34.9	14.0*
Previous non-sexual offenses	43.7	19.7	22.5	14.1
Any previous offenses	40.2	20.7	24.1	14.9

\* $p < .02$ .

of atheists, stayers, converts and dropouts with previous convictions for sexual, non-sexual, and any offenses are shown in Table 4. Fewer converts (14%) had previous convictions for sexual offenses, compared to the other groups,  $\chi^2(3, N = 111) = 10.15, p < .02$ . While the groups also differed in the percentages of offenders with previous nonsexual offense convictions, 43.7% of atheists for instance had nonsexual offense histories compared with 19.7% of stayers, the difference was non significant ( $\chi^2 = .84, df = 3, p > .80$ ).

Finally, the groups differed in the total number of sexual offense convictions after controlling for offenders' age at the time of sentencing,  $F(3,111) = 2.99, p < .05$  (see Table 5). Post hoc analyses showed that the stayers had significantly more sexual offense convictions than the other religious groups. Although the converts had on average almost three times more non-sexual offense convictions than any of the other religious groups, within-group variance was too great to produce a statistically significant difference,  $F(3,111) = 1.82, ns$ .

## Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine whether sexual offenders' commitment to religion impacts on the extent of their sexual and nonsexual offending. In accordance with the bulk of previous literature which suggests an inverse relationship between religiosity and criminality, we anticipated that offenders with a continuity of religious affiliation throughout life and those who converted to religion as adults would have fewer sexual and non-sexual convictions and fewer victims than those with no religious affiliation. The findings provide unexpected evidence that religiosity in sexual offenders is positively related to the number of their sexual offense victims and the number of their sexual offense convictions.

Stayers, who reported regular church attendance, belief in supernatural sanctions (e.g. "God will punish sinners") and religious salience in their daily life, were found to have more victims, younger victims and more sexual offense convictions than all other groups. They were much more likely to have a prepubescent child victim (average age under 10 years) while all other groups have victims at least of adolescent or young adult age (15 years and above). This group also averaged almost nine separate non-sexual offense convictions. With the exception of the atheists, all groups recorded a similar number of non-sexual offense

**Table 5** Mean (SD) number of sexual and non-sexual convictions, by religiosity group ( $N = 111$ )

	Religiosity group			
	Atheists ( <i>n</i> = 45)	Stayers ( <i>n</i> = 23)	Dropouts ( <i>n</i> = 27)	Converts ( <i>n</i> = 16)
Sexual offense convictions	8.47 (10.97)	19.39 (14.97)*	8.78 (8.61)	9.08 (9.73)
Non-sexual offense convictions	7.49 (8.46)	8.87 (14.78)	8.51 (16.12)	21.19 (48.97)

\* $p < .05$ .

convictions indicating extensive criminal versatility. This finding is consistent with growing evidence suggesting many sexual offenders do not restrict their criminal activity to sexual misconduct (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000; Soothill et al., 2000). The two groups who reported religious affiliation during childhood, *stayers* and *dropouts*, both had more extensive sexual offending histories.

We had assumed that those who had converted to religion while incarcerated possibly do so as a form of repentance for having committed an act that they considered out of character. However, it was the converts in this study who recorded on average two to three times more non-sexual convictions than the other groups. On average, the converts' child victims tended to be older and this trend away from younger child victims may be indicative of more generalist but persistent offending behaviour. Contrary to our expectations, the converts did not have fewer sexual and nonsexual convictions. This finding is perhaps not surprising and we speculate that instead it may reflect the converts' reaction to being repeatedly apprehended, arrested and detained for a variety of offending behaviours. The respondents of this group do not appear to be converting because they view their sexual offending as out of character. Rather their conversion to religion may reflect an offence burnout effect. By means of conversion to religion, this group may be endeavoring to exit the offending pathway, perhaps by seeking to establish new attachments to social institutions.

The atheists made up the greatest percentage of offenders with a non-sexual offending history. As a group they were more likely to record generalist offending behaviour and consequently had the greater likelihood of having non-sexual offence convictions. This group, characterized by their lack of prior or current religious affiliation, was made up of the youngest offenders, while their victims were likely to be the oldest. This offender youthfulness and older victim age may well provide explanation for the atheists' sexual offending behaviour, which possibly occurs as part of a more general antisocial pattern. While the heterogeneity of sexual offenders is clearly evident from the literature there appears to be patent differences between those who offend against children and those who sexually offend in a generally antisocial manner. For instance, compared to those who offend against children, the general sex offender is less likely to target younger victims but is more likely to act impulsively and aggressively, displaying antisocial behaviour, low self-control and criminal versatility (Kalichman, 1991).

The final group, the dropouts, was identified as such after reporting a childhood characterized by salient religiousness and active religious participation in church activities but as adults they fail to identify with any religious beliefs. Of all the groups, the dropouts were slightly more likely to have been convicted in the past of a sexual offence but the average number of convictions per person in this group is less than half that of the stayers. This finding raises questions regarding the differential effect of early childhood religious and spiritual exposure on sexual and non-sexual offending behaviour.

Spirituality is expressed in many different ways and, given its intangible nature, religiosity is difficult to define. Possible explanations for the relationship between strength of religiosity and age and number of victims remain complex. First, specific spiritual cognitive distortions that allow the individual to justify their offending may be present in this sample. For instance Saradijan and Nobus (2003) found religious beliefs held by the clergy offenders removed inhibitions and were instrumental in facilitating offending behaviour against children. Statements such as "*I would go to a priest and confess my sins and promise not to do it again*" reduced inhibitions against acting out with a child while "*God has called me to be a priest. I believe this fully. When he called me, he knew what I was like, what my needs were and how I could have them met*" successfully reduced internal responsibility. Pro-offending thinking was supported with beliefs such as "*How could it be that bad if He (God) allows it?*" While

the participants in Saradijan and Nobus' (2003) study were exclusively clergy, conceptually their cognitive distortions may be similar to those who hold strength of religious belief and who may have life long exposure to the dynamics of the church community.

Second, an explanation for the positive relationship between religious affiliation and sexual offending may be found in current research indicating a peak in sexual offending once offenders' reach their late 30's (Hanson, 2002). It has been suggested that this peak is the result of increased opportunities (eg. greater access to victims as offenders become fathers, attain trusted positions in the workforce or family). It is highly possible that situational dynamics within the church community may lead to a rise in opportunities for unsupervised access to vulnerable victims. It is a reasonable assumption that the "stayers" possibly continued to offend because the proximate causes of the crime, such as environment, lack of supervision, and continued opportunities, were not disrupted (Sampson & Laub, 2004).

Finally, religion has been largely considered a social bond (Hirshi, 1969), promoting conventional values and often deterring behaviours considered deviant either indirectly through socialization mechanisms such as the prevalent church community norms or internal individual expectations (Smith, 2003). In this study the social bonds of religious commitment did not have the anticipated inverse effect on criminal behaviour that prior research has confirmed. Our findings are contrary to Hirshi's (1969) Social Control Theory which predicts that individuals with strong social bonds are usually immersed in time consuming activities such as church attendance, are more insulated from criminal involvement and less likely to commit crimes. Research during the intervening years has provided support for Hirshi's theory (Agnew, 1985; Sampson & Laub, 1990, 2004). Much of this research, however, has focused on juveniles not adults and has been inconsistent in relation to seriousness of the behaviour. Tests of social control theory have rarely been applied to more serious offending rather the theory has been used to explain desistance from minor forms of criminal involvement (Alarid, Burton, & Cullen, 2000). In their recent study of self-control, social bonds and adult male offenders, Longshore et al. (2004) found that social bonds appear to mediate the negative relationship between low self-control and drug use. However the influence appeared to be through internal restraint (moral belief) rather than investment in a conventional lifestyle (religious commitment). Due to the nature of the available data this study was unable to measure levels of self-control or moral belief both of which may be an avenue for further research in order to explain the influence control factors exert on sexual offending behaviour.

There have been limitations: First, there are inherent limitations in the use of retrospective self-report methodologies. Such methodology relies on retrospective recall of events by the participants and inaccuracies due to time lapse or perception distortion are possible making it impossible to distinguish whether beliefs or experiences came first. Most self-report measures are transparent and this is a very real limitation when assessing sexual offenders. Second, although this study found the direct significant effects of religiosity on sexual offending the data do not allow for an examination of just how religiosity commitment is associated with an increased number of victims as well as a younger age of victims. With no prior religiosity research conducted on the general sexual offender population we can only compare our data with that of clergy sexual offenders. Quite possibly there are unique situational influences associated with sexual offenses perpetrated in religious settings that may be attributed to seminary training and socialisation experiences. In such environments clergy are exposed to unusual opportunities whilst engaging emotionally and privately with vulnerable children and adults. It is noteworthy that few previous studies have explored the cleric's level of religiosity which may be a contributory factor to the significance of the current findings with a sex offending population.



In conclusion this preliminary research has highlighted a number of future directions. Considering the present findings, the overall lack of investigation into the etiological importance of religion to the study of sexual offenders is disturbing. Whether a specific relationship between religiosity and sexual offending behaviour exists is unclear and the current findings raise more questions than answers. The validity of the findings will need to be tested further with studies based on larger samples and more detailed information. However, further investigation is warranted and in particular while recent research has focused on clergy sexual offending and situational factors there has been a paucity of attention paid to the contributing dynamics of cleric individual level religiosity. It is possible that research of a qualitative nature with cleric sexual offenders and non-offenders will enable researchers to understand more fully the mechanisms at play and may further explain differences between types of religious groups, individual level religious beliefs and the influence of situational variables on opportunity to offend. The current study was based on a sample of convicted offenders who have already been incarcerated for reacting to situational demands with offending behaviour. As Piquero and Benson (2004: 161) pose, the real question of interest is “of those who experience situational pressures, how many respond to the pressure with offending? And further, what separates those who respond with offending from those who do not?”

**Acknowledgments** The assistance of the Queensland Department of Corrective Services is gratefully acknowledged. The views expressed in this article are not necessarily those of the Department.

## References

- Adam, E. (1998). Echoes of Nalinika: A monk in the dock. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 5.
- Agnew, R. (1985). Social control theory and delinquency: A longitudinal test. *Criminology*, 23, 47–62.
- Alarid, L. F., Burton, V., & Cullen, F. T. (2000). Gender and crime among felony offenders: Assessing the generality of social control and differential association theories. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 37, 171–199.
- Albrecht, S., Chadwick, B., & Alcorn, D. (1977). Religiosity and deviance: Application of an attitude-behavior contingent consistency model. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 16, 263–274.
- Allport, G. W., & Ross, J. M. (1967). Personal religious orientation and prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5, 432–443.
- Baier, C. J., & Wright, B. R. (2001). If you love me, keep my commandments: A meta-analysis of the effect of religion on crime. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38, 3–21.
- Benda, B., & Corwyn, R. F. (1997). Religion and delinquency: The relationship after considering family and peer influences. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 36, 81–92.
- Benda, B. B. (2002). Religion and violent offenders in boot camp: A structural equation model. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 39, 91–121.
- Blair, K. (1999). New clergy screened more tightly. *Anglican Journal*, 1 October, 6–7.
- Cochran, J., & Akers, R. (1989). Beyond hellfire: An exploration of the variable effects of religiosity on adolescent marijuana and alcohol use. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 26, 198–225.
- Cochran, J. K., Wood, P. B., & Arneklev, B. J. (1994). Is the religiosity-delinquency relationships spurious? A test of arousal and social control theories. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 31, 92–123.
- Durkheim, E. (1951). *Suicide*. New York: Free Press.
- Eden, A. (2002). Orthodox Rabbi issues warning on sexual abuse. *Forward*, 3 May, 4–5.
- Ellis, L., & Peterson, J. (1996). Crime and religion: An international comparison among thirteen industrial nations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 20, 761–768.
- Evans, T. D., Cullen, F., Burton, V. S., Dunway, R. G., Payne, G. L., & Kethineni, S. R. (1996). Religion, social bonds and delinquency. *Deviant Behavior*, 17, 43–70.
- Fulton, A. S. (1997). Identity status, religious orientation and prejudice. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 26, 1–11.
- Gearing, A., & Griffith, C. (2003). Governor General to face new claim on priest. *The Courier Mail*, 28 July, 1–2.

- Gross-Schaefer, A. (2001). Rabbi Sexual Misconduct: Crying out for a communal response. *The Reconstructionist: A Journal of Contemporary Jewish Thought and Practice*, 63.
- Hanson, R. K. (2002). Recidivism and age: Follow-up data from 4673 sexual offenders. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17, 1046–1062.
- Hirschi, T., & Stark, R. (1969, 2002). Hellfire and Delinquency. In J. Laub (Eds.), *The craft of criminology: Selected papers of Travis Hirschi*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 91–104.
- Johnson, B. R., Sung Joon, J., Larson, D. B., & De Li, S. (2001). Does adolescent religious commitment matter? A re-examination of the effects of religiosity on delinquency. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38, 22–43.
- Kalichman, C. S. (1991). Psychopathology and personality characteristics of criminal sexual offenders as a function of victim age. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, 20, 187–196.
- Kirkpatrick, L. A. (1997). A longitudinal study of changes in religious beliefs and behavior as a function of individual differences in adult attachment style. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 35, 207–217.
- Longshore, D., Chang, E., Hsieh, S., & Messina, N. (2004). Self-control and social bonds: A combined control perspective on deviance. *Crime and Delinquency*, 50, 542–564.
- Piquero, N. L., & Benson, M. L. (2004). White-collar crime and criminal careers: Specifying a trajectory of punctuated situational offending. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 20, 148–165.
- Plante, T. G. (1999). *Bless me Father for I have sinned: Perspectives on sexual abuse committed by Roman Catholic priests*. Santa Clara, CA: Santa Clara U.
- Plante, T. G., & Daniels, C. (2004). The sexual abuse crisis in the Roman Catholic church: What psychologists and counselors should know. *Pastoral Psychology*, 52, 381–393.
- Regnerus, M. D. (2003). Linked lives, faith, and behavior: Intergenerational religious influence on adolescent delinquency. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 42, 189–203.
- Rodarmor, W. (1983). The secret life of Swami Muktanana. *Coevolution Quarterly*, 40, 104–111.
- Sampson, R. J., & Laub, J. H. (1990). Crime and deviance over the life course: The salience of adult social bonds. *American Sociological Review*, 55, 609–627.
- Sampson, R. J., & Laub, J. H. (2004). A general age-graded theory of crime lessons learned and the future of life-course criminology. *Advances in Criminological Theory*, 13, 1–13.
- Saradjian, A., & Nobus, D. (2003). Cognitive distortions of religious professionals who sexually abuse children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 18, 905–923.
- Sevig, J. (2002). Crossing boundaries. *The Lutheran*, 15, 16–17.
- Smallbone, S. W., & Wortley, R. (2000). *Child sexual abuse in Queensland: Offender characteristics and modus operandi*. Brisbane: Queensland Crime Commission.
- Smith, C. S. (2003). Theorizing religious effects among American adolescents. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 42, 17–30.
- Soothill, K., Francis, B., Sanderson, B., & Ackerley, E. (2000). Sex offenders: Specialists, generalists or both? A 32 year criminological study. *British Journal of Criminology*, 40, 56–67.