Religious Beliefs for War, Peace and Species Survival

Key Words: Religious beliefs, religious fundamentalism, warmongering, evolution

Abstract

Two religious beliefs factors from major world religions, Fundamentalism and Kindly Religious Beliefs, are found to correlate with a variety of antisocial and prosocial traits respectively. These correlations and related frequency data lead to the hypothesis that Fundamentalism has evolved with the trait of warmongering to serve a species survival function of periodic population reduction when stress on life resources is perceived as extreme. Kindly Religious Beliefs predominate to support species survival in times of resource plenty by promoting human rights, sustainable and ecology-conscious programs, and relationships with other groups and nations characterized by cooperation, trade and other peaceful cultural exchanges. Fundamentalism serves believers as a very comprehensive and unified worldview, providing both general and specific beliefs in common across believers. In contrast, Kindly Religious Beliefs are used only as a general core of kind and loving beliefs complemented by a wide diversity of specific beliefs and tolerance for this diversity. Implications for political recruiting in times of war and peace and for a possible Ameta religion@ are discussed.

Religious Beliefs for War and Peace, and for Species Survival

Religion is perhaps the most prominent, long-standing social belief system of the human species. Religion is evident in earliest recorded history and appears to have permeated music, art, family life and politics. Indeed, its very prominence would suggest an important contribution to species survival. Political leaders have seen themselves as agents of supernatural beings or even as supernatural beings themselves, presumably to bolster their authority and power. Political leaders have wielded immense power in human affairs, for good and as often for evil, as in warmongering. Throughout human history nations have been fraught with internal and international conflicts and wars, frequently motivated or justified in part by religious beliefs. Warmongering has led to genocide, with implicit group selection effects; thus, perhaps, shaping to a degree the nature of the species. It behooves humans to maximize their understanding of the possible species survival mechanisms of religion, as through politics in general and warmongering in particular.

Efforts to understand religion as a human behavior have fallen to theologians, philosophers and academics. Most of this effort has been of a nonscientific nature. Even the groundbreaking ideas of William James early in the 20th century were, by his own admission, heavily colored by his own philosophic prejudices, instincts and common sense (James, 1994, p. 359). As such, he was speaking as a theologian, or as a theoretical scientist. While he cited historical examples as empirical support for his ideas, he apparently developed no scientific measurements of his concepts or conducted scientific tests of his ideas.

Among his special contributions are boldness in examining the personal meaning of religion to people and several proposed dichotomous ways of categorizing types of religious behavior, such as stoic resignation versus joyous love and psychologically sick versus healthy.

Sigmund Freud and Eric Fromm contributed further theories as to the origins, functions and major types of religious behavior. As practicing psychiatrists and professors, they were certainly concerned with accurate understanding of the role of religion in human behavior. However, neither were scientists in the modern sense of the term. They did not measure the concepts they used or test their theories with formal experiment or research.

Fromm proposed another dichotomous typology, two basic types of religion that he referred to as authoritarian and humanistic (Fromm, 1950). In the authoritarian type God is seen as an authoritative, controlling force and power to be obeyed by humans in complete subservience. He points out that secular expressions of this religion reflect this same blind obedience of and subservience to authority, such as to the AFuhrer,@ the Father of the people, in Nazi Germany. Alleged ends justify every means.

In contrast, Fromm=s humanistic type of religion supposes that every person must think for oneself, developing one=s own power of reason. Reference to facts and to one=s own reason and feelings lead to truth for each individual person. Virtue is not blind subservience to the dictates of authority but self-realization. Virtue is also found in love of self, one=s fellow humans and all life forms.

Religion as human activity has also been studied and described by academics specializing in theology and religion per se. Their efforts are not scientific but have theoretical import for science. In reviewing the philosophy of religion, Ian Barbour, a professor specializing in both physics and the philosophy of religion, provides a concise and clear review of various

philosophies of religion, which attempt to explain the respective roles of religion and science in human behavior. He reports that science is said to be used by humans to explain the real, publicly observable world, whereas religion is used to explain the spiritual world, which is only personally experienced and observed (Barbour, 2000).

However, in building their arguments, Barbour and other philosophers and theologians quote other philosophers and theologians but do no scientific research to support or refute their speculations. For example, it would seem possible that some people use religion not just to explain to themselves the spiritual world but also to explain the real world, e.g., the origins of the universe, the world and the human species. And some scientists use the real world, specifically biology, to try to explain religious behavior, and thus the spiritual world as manifested in human beliefs. This and many other issues raised by philosophers of science can be explored by scientific research.

There is a rich body of research on the psychology of religion, well-surveyed in a recent textbook (Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 2003). Several germinal themes and issues characterize this research. One is the frequent conceptualization of dimensions of religion in dichotomous format, reminiscent of Fromm=s categories: authoritarian and humanistic. Gordon Allport defined Extrinsic religious beliefs as ones serving personal needs, versus Intrinsic beliefs for the sake of faith itself. Allen and Spika developed scales measuring Committed versus Consensual beliefs. Batson and Ventis offered Internal versus External beliefs scales. Lenski offered Doctrinal versus Devotional concepts (Spilka, et al., p. 30).

These models are interesting because they are again dichotomous. Like those of theorists before them, they implicitly categorize religions into two general camps. These theories about

types of religion are based on logical and empirical data but rarely, if ever, on factor analysis of measured beliefs.

Measurement and factorial studies *have* been used to study the concept ⌐god.@ These studies have similarly yielded what can be viewed as corresponding dichotomous concepts: God can be viewed as considerate, helpful, kind, redeeming and forgiving or harsh, punishing, damning and distant (Spilka et al., 2003, p. 33).

This repeated dichotomous phenomenon in the study of religion could reflect a general human tendency to explain things dichotomously, or it could reflect an underlying reality about human religion itself. Biologists who first studied mammals would have been justified in noting a fundamental dichotomous difference across mammals, a difference existing in reality and eventually defined as gender: male versus female. Perhaps at some deep level human religious behavior *does* fall into two importantly different types. Indeed, some researchers have contemplated an evolutionary component in human religious behavior (Spilka et al., 2003, p. 54 ff.).

While factor analysis has been used to study aspects of religion, such as definitions of deities, it does not appear to have been used to study basic types of religions or basic religious beliefs as a whole. One possibly basic belief type, religious fundamentalism, has been operationally defined by Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992). Their questionnaire items initially were based on brainstorming by themselves and colleagues (Altemeyer, personal communication, September 7, 2006). These items were written to tap fundamentalist beliefs believed to occur in general form across major religions such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Subsequent studies have shown that this reliably measurable belief style does indeed appear across several major world religions (Hunsberger, 1996). This supports the notion that

fundamentalism as defined by this questionnaire has universal expression in the species. This

universality suggests a possible evolutionary value.

Notably lacking from the Spilka et al. (2003) textbook is inclusion of research by

Saucier, perhaps because Saucier presents his findings in the context of social attitudes and

beliefs rather than the psychology of religion. This area of psychology has perhaps a richer

history than does the psychology of religion, a history thoroughly reviewed by Saucier in

introducing his studies (Saucier, 2000). His studies reveal a clear overlap between social attitude

and belief psychology and the psychology of religion.

Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992) used brainstorming to create their measure of

fundamentalist religious beliefs. To study social beliefs Saucier has used a more comprehensive

and formal approach, lexical factor analysis, analyzing all English dictionary words ending in

Aism@ (Saucier, 2000). This lexical approach, used with success by Saucier and Goldberg to

define the Big Five personality traits (Saucier & Goldberg, 1996), begins with the assumption

that the most salient human traits are captured in human speech. In the study of personality traits

per se, the focus has been on adjectives, the words humans use to describe each other.

In reviewing the history of psychological research on social attitudes and beliefs, Saucier

notes that the primary factor documented in repeated studies is one that overlaps with

psychological studies in religion. This factor involves Conservatism, Authoritarianism and

Dogmatism, all substantially intercorrelated, and is also correlated with Religious

Fundamentalism, Religiousness, Right Wing Authoritarianism, Ethnocentrism and Anti-

Semitism. This factor appears across cultures.

Saucier comments that Americans have widely disparate views of this Aabsolute

authority@ factor embodied in tradition and religion, some turning to it as a sacred source of

guidance and some seeing it as a threat. This brings to mind a paradox touched on by Spilka, et

al. (2003): some religions encourage and embody prejudice while other religions try to reduce

prejudice. Saucier notes that additional social beliefs factors proposed by researchers are

Humanitarianism, Nationalism, Hedonism/Self-interest, Realistic/Rational versus

Emotional/Sentimental, and Personal versus Political (Saucier, 2000, p. 367 ff.). Again we see

dichotomous categories.

Saucier=s factor analytic studies are based on the lexical assumption that the most salient

human belief systems have been captured in words used to describe not individual persons with

adjectives but comprehensive belief systems with words ending in Aism,@ e.g., materialism,

spiritualism, hedonism. His studies have yielded four factors, or basic belief systems, labeled by

Saucier as Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. The present author, from analysis of the item content

of these scales, labels them Afundamentalism,@ Aselfish materialism,@ Arational/scientific

humanism@ and Aeclectic spirituality.@

While Saucier=s fundamentalism trait is clearly similar in content to Altemeyer and

Hunsberger=s Religious Fundamentalism, his other four traits are not directly suggestive of

classical religious beliefs per se. Thus, while his starting point, all dictionary words for belief

systems in general, is certainly a more basic initial starting point than simple logic or

brainstorming, his factors do not appear to embrace the full breadth of religion as reflected in the

many dichotomous categories proposed by many psychology of religion theorists.

Saucier followed his initial work with a subsequent factor analysis of a wide variety of

traits (Saucier & Skrzypinska, 2006). This study of 375 adults included measures of many traits,

including his Alpha and Delta Aism@ dimensions, the Big Five personality traits, measures of

eccentricity and conformity, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, irrational beliefs,

fantasy-proneness, and collectivism and individualism. He did not include religious beliefs per se, such as Altemeyer and Hunsberger=s Religious Fundamentalism, perhaps because Saucier considers his field human personality rather than religious beliefs.

He interpreted the findings of his study as confirming several of his original hypotheses, such as that two primary factors underlie the many traits he included in his investigation, Atradition-oriented religiousness@ (TR) and Asubjective spirituality@ (SS). Again, we see a dichotomous categorization.

The present author has developed measures of two basic religious belief traits based on a new approach, factor analysis of a sample of beliefs from the world religions, as well as the first measure of warmongering. The present author has developed measures of other politically relevant traits and done studies to explore the relationships between all of these traits in general and to seek answers specifically to several questions:

1. Are there different general types of religious beliefs represented specifically among a representative sample of the *basic beliefs from the major world religions* and therefore implicitly common across those religions and characteristic of the human species itself?

2. If so, do these religious beliefs relate differently to various politically relevant beliefs in general and to endorsement of traits directly related to war and peace in particular?

3. If so, how can we explain relationships between religious beliefs and endorsement of war, both in terms of short-term social dynamics and in terms of the evolution and survival of the human species?

4. Does religion have at least some common meaning for all believers, across all basic religion types, which might provide grounds for a Ameta@ religion that could unite people of different faiths in peace-promoting behaviors?

5. What implications, if any, flow from basic religious beliefs types to support for political

parties that espouse warmongering, or that support peaceful national activities, such as

participation in meta-religious services?

Method

Several studies were conducted in sequence by the author, beginning with

the development of a measure of the Eidelson worldviews and leading to development of several

related measures of traits such as warmongering, sustainable policies and programs, positive

foreign policy endorsement, human rights endorsement, government types endorsement, and

religious beliefs (McConochie, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c).

To study religious beliefs, a sample of 24 beliefs was gleaned by the

author from brief descriptions of core beliefs from major world religions, including Christianity,

Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. An effort was made simply to create a sample of

widely different basic human religious beliefs, but specifically as embodied in long-standing

major world religions. In addition, two anchoring items reflecting basic attitudes for cooperation

or conflict were included, as were six items defining deities.

These items were administered to several different groups of subjects, including

churchgoers from protestant and Unitarian churches, community college and university students,

and university students and other adults from foreign lands. The subjects also included 80 first

generation immigrant Slavic Americans and persons from three Midwestern states, as well as

Oregon. The studies included measures of several other traits, permitting exploration of the

relationships between traits. The present paper covers the findings specifically on religious

beliefs.

Results

Repeated factor analyses, in different groups of subjects, of the 32 religious questionnaire items consistently yielded the same two primary factors. They are labeled ⱯReligious Fundamentalism@ and ⱯKindly Religious Beliefs,@ based on the content of the items loading on the two factors. Scales were created to measure the two factors based on their factor loadings.   Scores were simply summed across items loading heaviest on a factor, with some reverse-scored items. These scores were compared with factor scores and found to be very close to factor scores in statistical properties. The 32-item religious beliefs questionnaire is presented in Appendix A and the scales for the two beliefs factors are presented in Table I. Basic statistical properties of these two religious factor scales are presented in Table II.

The fact that the same two factors have consistently appeared in various samples, including a sample of 80 Slavic Americans new to America, and the fact that one of these, the Fundamentalist factor, has been shown by Altemeyer and Hunsberger to appear across most major world religions, implies that there are two basic primary religious belief orientations represented in beliefs from the world religions. Thus, the answer to research question #1 appears to be yes, that there are basic different belief types represented among the world religions, the two most salient of which can be labeled reasonably ⱯFundamentalist@ and ⱯKindly Religious Beliefs.@

The Fundamentalist orientation is similar in content to that of other measures of this trait by Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992) and Saucier (2000), emphasizing literal interpretation of scriptures, respect for authority, favoring one=s own religious beliefs exclusively and competing against others. It is also similar to Fromm=s Authoritarian type (Fromm, 1950).

The Kindly Religious Beliefs Orientation is similar to the Humanistic and Humanist type offered by Fromm and others. Fromm=s Humanistic beliefs type is characterized by flexible beliefs about deities, tolerance of religious beliefs different from one=s own, love and kindness toward others, cooperation with others, and disavowal of violence.

Data bearing on the second research question as to the relationship between religious beliefs and attitudes toward war and peace is evident in correlations between these two religious belief types and other measures, presented in Table III. The characteristics of the many scales developed by the author and used in these various studies are available in a manual (McConochie, 2006b). Characteristics of the scales developed by Altemeyer, Saucier and others are available in publications by those authors.

In Table III we see correlations revealing direct correspondence between the author=s Religious Fundamentalism scale and those of Saucier (.70) and Altemeyer (.72). Fundamentalism correlates positively with Warmongering (.61) whereas Kindly Religious Beliefs correlate negatively with Warmongering (-.55). Fundamentalism correlates positively with religiousness (praying, going to religious services, viewing self as Avery religious@) (.72). An antisocial attitude among Fundamentalists is reflected in Prejudice Against Muslims (.53), and negative correlations with endorsement of Positive Foreign Policies (-.42), Sustainable Policies and Programs (-.55), and Human Rights (-.55). Clinical fearfulness is associated with Fundamentalism.

In consistent contrast to Fundamentalism, persons higher on the Kindly Religious Beliefs orientation have attitudes reflecting a pro-social, non-fearful orientation.

Thus, the answer to research question # 2 appears to be yes: Fundamentalist religious thinking is associated with antisocial attitudes, including

warmongering, whereas Kindly Religious thinking is associated with disavowal of warmongering and endorsement of prosocial traits such as endorsement of human rights and a positive foreign policy.

Frequency data provides clues to explaining the possible reason for the existence within the human species of these two basic religious orientations and for the existence of the other related traits. The traits in these studies are all measured with questionnaire items in 5-option Likert scale format. To define a person holding a particular attitude, a mean item score of 3.5 or above was used. A mean item score of 5 would mean the person ΑStrongly agreed@ with every questionnaire item definitive of the trait (after reverse-scoring of some items, as appropriate). A mean item score of 4 could mean he ΑAgreed@ with every item. A score of 3.5 could reflect ΑNeutral@ on half the items and ΑAgree@ with half the items. Thus, the ΑNeutral@ range is defined as between 2.5 and 3.5 in terms of mean item score. At or below 2.5 means Αdoes not have the trait,@ at or above 3.5 means Αdoes have the trait.@

Using this definition, the percent of persons holding attitudes measured by the central traits in various research study populations is presented in Table IV. In this table we see very similar percentages of persons holding the Fundamentalist and Warmongering traits (about 6%), and of persons holding Kindly Religious Beliefs and the prosocial traits of human rights, ecology/sustainability endorsement, and endorsement of the government type Αpublic democracy@ (90% plus). Public Democracy is defined in research questionnaires as government serving the best interests of the community overall, as opposed to special interest groups.

Furthermore, data from studies by the author reveal that the trait of warmongering correlates strongly with endorsement of Military Dictatorship (.57) and significantly with Special Interest Group Serving Democracy (.37), but not with Public Democracy (-.36).

Endorsement of Public Democracy is positively associated with endorsement of Human Rights

(.35), Sustainable Policies and Programs (.43) and Positive Foreign Policy endorsement (.38).

Additional frequency data of interest was gleaned in a study by the author in conjunction

with professor Holly Arrow of the University of Oregon (McConochie, 2005). In this study of

238 university students, the frequency of persons willing to participate in war was determined.

Seventy percent saw themselves as defensive warriors and 25% saw themselves as pacifists,

while only 5% saw themselves as preemptive warriors (warmongers).

These frequency correspondences and correlations lead to the hypothesis that the two

religious orientations found among the major world religions have evolved in the human species

to support warmongering and peaceful activities in times of resource scarcity and plenty,

alternately. The content of the Fundamentalist orientation is clearly compatible with standard

military practices. The Fundamentalist orientation includes almost blind respect for and

obedience to authority, views of one=s in-group as superior to rejected out-groups, and views of

deities as vengeful against wrongdoers. In contrast, the Kindly Religious orientation is tolerant

of ethnic and other diversity and promotes love, fairness, kindness and nonviolence. Thus, while

each of the two major religious belief systems will seem Abad@ to the other, from the perspective

of human species evolution they have both been Agood.@

For predicting politically relevant behavior, the greater power of basing one=s measures

of religious beliefs on sample beliefs of the world religions rather than on a lexical approach

(Saucier, 2000) is reflected in data gathered by the author (McConochie, 2006d). Table V

presents multiple correlations that document stronger power of the author=s religious belief

measures based on world religion beliefs versus Saucier=s lexically derived measures for

predicting warmongering and human rights endorsement. Multiple correlations based on other traits are included for reference.

The implication of this data is that religious beliefs as experienced in terms of belief statements typical of religious tracts and sermons are more direct reflections of politically relevant and species survival relevant issues than are more abstract, esoteric concepts, such as phrases definitive of belief systems themselves (Aisms@).

The idea of two different human dispositions that independently foster war or peace is further supported in a study by John Orbell of the University of Oregon and others (Smirov, Arrow, Kennet, & Orbell, 2006). Twenty thousand computer simulations of human behaviors for each of various possible combinations of traits most strongly supported the notion of two separate human traits, one that promotes success of the species via heroism in war and another that promotes success of the species through Acommunitarian@ (cooperative) behaviors in times of peace.

Thus, from these studies, in answer to research question # 3, we can speculate as to the relationship between religious beliefs versus warring and peaceful behavior. Two types of basic religious belief orientations can be viewed as psychological traits that alternately support war and peace in the short run. In the long run, these behaviors help the species survive by reducing population numbers when resources are scarce and promoting cooperation, trade and tolerance of neighbors in times of resource plenty. Thus, while warmongers themselves may die more frequently than more peace-loving persons, the species as a whole has had a better chance of survival via these two alternating modes of being.

Research question # 4 raises the possibility of beliefs common to all that might provide a basis for a meta-religion, to unite persons at some level across even the fundamentalist and

kindly types. To explore this possibility, the author conducted a study with two samples, 46

community college students and 29 members of a Universalist Unitarian fellowship. The

questionnaire included items asking how meaningful subjects found 84 aspects of religious

activities (McConochie, 2006e). These activities included the full range of values religion can

have for people, such as enjoyment of sermons and singing, reading religious literature and

praying, relying on religion for guidance with spiritual and emotional problems, explaining the

origin of the universe and life, and explaining one=s purpose in the world. Fifty-one of these

items formed a highly reliable scale (alphas of .97 and .98 in the two separate groups) termed

ΑValue of Religion-51@ (Appendix B). This scale is a measure of the tendency to *value religion*

comprehensively, to use religion as a guide for virtually all aspects of one=s life.

In addition, four other questionnaire items measured endorsement of the idea of a

meta-religion, as by having one religious service per month on a theme of universal

understanding across all world religions. Religiosity was measured by a reliable 4-item scale

(alpha .89) consisting of these items:

I go to religious services at least once per month.

I am a very religious person.

I go to church almost every week.

I try to say prayers daily.

Tables VI and VIII present the basic statistics for the two groups of subjects on the

variables studied.

None of the Unitarians were Fundamentalists, compared to 4 percent of the students.

Ninety-seven percent of the Unitarians were of the Kindly Religious orientation, compared to

89% of the students. This is consistent with the principles of that faith, found in their church

flier, which include AThe inherent worth & dignity of every person,@ AJustice, equity & compassion in human relations,@ and AThe goal of world community with peace, liberty & justice for all.@ Forty-five percent of the Unitarians, as might be expected being churchgoers, saw themselves as religious, compared to only 20% of the student sample. However, only 4% of the Unitarians highly value specific religious activities, as measured by the 51-item Value of Religion scale, versus 33 percent of the students. Eighty-nine percent of the Unitarians endorse the idea of a universal church service, the same percentage as in the student sample.

In the student group we see an interesting tight cluster of correlations (see Table VII). Religious fundamentalists see themselves as highly religious (.55**) and value religious activities comprehensively (.71**). Students who see themselves as religious also value religious activities comprehensively (.83**). In Table IX, we see the corresponding correlations for the Unitarians. The relative absence of Fundamentalists in the Unitarian group may explain the absence for them of a relationship between Fundamentalism and Religiosity (.16). However, those Unitarians who see themselves as very religious also value religious activities comprehensively (.80**), as in the student sample.

The implication of the student sample data is that fundamentalists seem to use religion as an emotional, spiritual and intellectual Asecurity blanket,@ depending on it heavily for managing their understanding of the world and how to live in it. They think much alike in this, endorsing a tight cluster of 51 items measuring value of religion.

In contrast, those of the Kindly Beliefs orientation share in common only a few basic beliefs of kindness, good will and tolerance. They have much diversity otherwise in their personal, specific religious beliefs and are very tolerant of that diversity among others of this

Kindly Beliefs orientation. In addition to religion, they trust science, traditional mental health

care and other resources for guidance in understanding the world and living in it.

Regarding endorsement of a meta-religion per se, in the last row of Table VII for the

student sample we see weak but suggestive evidence that persons of the Fundamentalist

orientation are less likely to endorse a meta-religion (-.15) than persons of the Kindly Religious

orientation (.34). Because the reliability of the Meta-Religion Endorsement scale is rather

modest (.61), the correlations were corrected for attenuation, revealing somewhat stronger values

in the last row (-.20 versus .49). This tendency is much stronger in the Unitarian sample, with

corresponding correlations of -.52** and .58**, corrected for attenuation: -.73 and .79. Among

Unitarians, we clearly see that the stronger they endorse the Kindly Religious orientation, the

stronger they endorse the idea of religious services of a universal theme. This is consistent with

one of their seven institutional charter principles, AThe goal of world community with peace,

liberty and justice for all.@

Data from another study by the author is relevant in this context (McConochie, 2006a). In

studies of 68 churchgoers and 47 community college students data were gathered measuring

Religious Fundamentalism, Kindly Religious Beliefs and endorsement of each of five types of

national government: Anarchy, Military Dictatorship, Monarchy, Tribal Democracy

(government serving special interest groups), and Public Democracy (government serving the

best interests of the community overall). Table X provides correlations between these variables

for the combined group of 115 adults.

These correlations reveal a consistent tendency for Fundamentalists to

endorse authoritarian forms of government. In clear contrast, persons of the Kindly Religious

Beliefs orientation do not, preferring instead government serving the best interests of the community overall.

Thus, the answer to research question #4 seems to be Ano.@ The core beliefs of fundamentalists differ in important ways from the core beliefs of those of the Kindly Religious orientation. Fundamentalists have in common an additional tightly coherent group of specific beliefs about the value of religion, which they use to govern their lives very comprehensively. In contrast, persons of the Kindly Beliefs orientation have a wide diversity of specific religious beliefs about the value of religion and are tolerant of that diversity. Fundamentalists do not support universal or meta-religious services, while Kindly Beliefs types of persons do.

There are several implications of these data for research question # 5 regarding political activity. If one=s political party endorses competition and warmongering, then one=s political message can be addressed to persons who want strong, authoritarian, even militaristic (dictatorial) government. One should attempt to recruit persons of the fundamentalist religious orientation. The political party can be offered as an authoritarian savior, a source of guidance in handling all life problems. One can persuade fundamentalists to wage war by describing the world as a fearful place, touting outsiders as Abad guys,@ promoting the idea that deities want to punish them as wrongdoers, and by promoting the idea that one=s own group and nation is superior to others. Because only about 6% of the population are of the fundamentalist religious orientation and endorse warmongering (preemptive war), the majority of citizens will have to be persuaded to participate in war by use of propaganda, stirring up fear, lying, and appealing to them as Adefensive warriors@ or condemning them as traitorous Apeaceniks,@ as recommended by Hermann Goering, Hitler=s second-in-command:

AWhy, of course, the people don=t want war. Why would some poor slob on a farm want to risk his life in a war when the best that he can get out of it is to come back to his farm in one piece. Naturally, the common people don=t want war; neither in Russia nor in England nor in America, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But, after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people alongYThat is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same way in any country.@ (Gilbert, 1947, pp. 278B279).

If one=s political party promotes peace, cooperation, environmental protection treaties, and related prosocial themes, then citizens of the Kindly Religious orientation would be the preferred source of supporters. They are in a strong majority (90%). They can be appealed to as the majority of the public who are tolerant, understanding and kind people who appreciate the diversity among themselves and between themselves and persons of other religions, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities and customs. They can be appealed to as persons who enjoy international travel, are not irrationally fearful, do not overreact to fears or threats, and see the value of peaceful cooperation and international trade. They can be appealed to as persons eschewing authoritarian and militant government, preferring government that serves the best interests of the community overall as opposed to special interest groups. In terms of war, they can be addressed as persons who avoid war unless absolutely necessary as a defensive activity, minimizing harm to helpless and vulnerable civilians and to the environment.

Based on other research findings by the author (McConochie, 2006a, p. 144), the majority of citizens can be expected to appreciate the importance of separation of church and state in general and separation of religious leadership and government leadership in particular.

Therefore, meta-religious services are perhaps best promoted not by governments but by religious leaders of the Kindly Religious orientation addressed to citizens of this same orientation.

Discussion

Because religious beliefs are robustly related to political attitudes and particularly to warmongering, it behooves behavioral scientists to clarify how these psychological traits can lead to destructive and constructive political activity. Fortunately, from initial studies, the Fundamentalist orientation and Warmongering trait are found in only about 6% of the population. In contrast, the peace-loving Kindly Religious orientation is found in 90% or more of the population.

Warmongering is hypothesized to be a primitive population control mechanism evolving to help promote the survival of the species. However, it appears to be a relatively inefficient mechanism at this stage of human history, for world population has doubled and redoubled in the past century in spite of scores of millions of war-related deaths. Humans have become very effective in reducing deaths from disease and very effective in providing and distributing food, clothing and shelter. Inadvertently, however, they exacerbate the pressure on resources, as population numbers increase exponentially.

They have compromised their environment in the process, which may eventually increase death rates significantly via global warming, lowland flooding, air and water pollution, etc. Thus, in terms of the survival of the species, human resources would seem much more wisely invested in vigorous but peaceful population control, pollution reduction, environmental protection and related activities than in making war.

Uniting citizens in constructive collective behavior to these pro-survival ends poses interesting challenges, as those most likely to support cooperative, tolerant, peace-promoting behaviors (Kindly Religious types) tend to share only a simple core of kindly attitudes and otherwise are quite diverse in their specific beliefs. They *do* in common tend to endorse public democracy, sustainable programs, environmental protection and human rights. They are tolerant of diversity. The challenge is to emphasize to them their commonalities in such a way as to respect their diversity and not let that diversity undermine their common efforts toward important collective goals in the interest of species survival. One such effort can be meta-religious activities, which are perhaps best promoted by religious leaders and educators rather than governments.

Implications for appeal to citizens in support of political party activity are several, and hint at the need for a new form of democracy; government serving not special interest groups, such as military industry and warmongers, but the best interests of the community overall. Data gleaned in the above and related studies provides much detail that is encouraging in this regard. For example, 90% of the public endorses such a new form of government over special interest group (tribal) democracy, which is endorsed by only 18%. Thus, there is hope that a new and advanced form of democracy can be clarified via research and realized by the collective activity of peace-loving citizens, who are in a strong majority. Details of this issue may be addressed by the author in a subsequent paper and have been covered in another publication (McConochie, 2006a).

There are limitations of the present research findings. Research population samples, while diverse in several respects and running into the hundreds, are not from formal random samples of large populations. Such studies would be desirable to confirm or refute the

implications of universality of these initial findings and hypotheses. A larger and more diverse

sample of beliefs from the world religions might yield somewhat different factors with different

implications. Studies of larger and more diverse populations, especially from other cultures,

might also reveal interesting and novel results.

Summary

Initial studies of human religious beliefs and related political attitudes have yielded

insights with implications for war and peace in the short run and for species survival in the long

run. Fortunately, the majority of citizens appear to be peace loving and embrace religious beliefs,

human rights and other attitudes compatible with peace. The challenge for researchers,

educators, religious leaders and politicians is to follow up these initial findings with further

studies and efforts to clarify and apply them to pressing political and community needs in the

interest of cooperative, peaceful survival of individuals, nations and of the human species itself.

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Appendix A

32-item Religious Beliefs Questionnaire

Basic Ethical Principles:
Please circle one number to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each item, using this code:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**

As the world becomes smaller through improvements in communications, transportation and trade, we face challenges between ideologies, both religious and other ideologies. How strongly do you agree with these general statements?

1 2 3 4 5   1. The peoples of all nations should learn to live peacefully together, resolving differences not by economic or military might but by discussion, working together, increasing understanding of one another and compromising.

1 2 3 4 5   2. The peoples of all nations should compete with each other in business, trade and, if necessary, in war, to let the ʌbest nation win@.

Which source of ethics should guide the peoples of the world in relating to each other? There are different sources of social ethics one can turn to, including those embodied in religions, those embodied in universal charters and those that guide international organizations. Consider the ethical principles below, selected from various sources. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each as an ethical principle or value that should guide interactions between nations.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**

From various world religions:

1 2 3 4 5   3. There is only one true god (or God) that all people of the world should worship.

1 2 3 4 5   4. All religions that do not ascribe to this belief (#3, above) are wrong.

<u>1 2 3 4 5</u>   5. Violence toward one=s fellow humans is not appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   6. Stealing from one=s fellow humans is not appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   7. Lying, slander and tattling are not appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   8. We should strive for good and stop bad.
1 2 3 4 5   9. Meditating on feelings of personal inner serenity is appropriate.

<u>1 2 3 4 5</u>   10. *Any* specific personal religious beliefs are appropriate and acceptable as long as they respect human dignity and welfare.

1 2 3 4 5   11. Killing other people is not appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   12. One should love his neighbor as himself and treat others as he would like to be treated.

1 2 3 4 5   13. One should not treat others the way he would not want to be treated.

1 2 3 4 5   14. Using a god=s name as an excuse for or justification of evil against one=s fellow man is inappropriate.

<u>1 2 3 4 5</u>   15. One should forgive rather than retaliate against wrongdoers.

1 2 3 4 5   16. One should help others who are less fortunate or are suffering.

1 2 3 4 5   17. One should submit to the will of god (or God).

1 2 3 4 5   18. One should submit to the will of religious or political leaders who say they know what god (or God) wants.

1 2 3 4 5   19. Unquestioning loyalty to superiors, including political leaders, is appropriate.

<u>1 2 3 4 5</u>   20. Feeling envy or jealousy is inappropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   21. Experiencing life as a good person is more important than practicing rituals or believing certain ideas or obeying any code of fixed rules, Ados@ and Adon=ts@.

1 2 3 4 5   22. One should joyfully accept nature.

1 2 3 4 5   23. One cannot and should not own the land.

1 2 3 4 5   24. Practicing rituals and taboos is appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   25. Honoring and respecting parents and elders is appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5   26. Worshiping the spirits of dead ancestors is appropriate.

What features do you think an ideal god (or God) should have?

1 2 3 4 5   27. Is vengeful, punishes wrongdoers.

1 2 3 4 5   28. Is kind and forgiving of wrong-doers.
1 2 3 4 5   29. Is the creator of the universe and everything in it, including people.

1 2 3 4 5   30. Is an abstract concept, a creation of humans to help them live constructively with each other.

1 2 3 4 5   31. Can be well-defined simply as the spirit of human kindness and love.

1 2 3 4 5   32. Takes many forms that guide the religious lives of many different peoples around the world.

Appendix B

Value of Religion Scale

Note: Researchers can ask subjects to circle an number, 1-5 format (left column) or have answers put on an optically-scanned answer sheet, e.g. A-E.

On the answer sheet, mark one letter to indicate your answer for each item. Use this code:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree.
A	B	C	D	E

1 2 3 4 5   **1. I get much comfort from religious services I attend.**
1 2 3 4 5   **2. I don=t think religion provides me much of any value at all.**
1 2 3 4 5   **3. Religion provides me much of value on a regular basis.**

How important are each of the following as aspects of church activities you participate in? Use this code:

Not at all important	Not important	Neutral	Important	Very important
A	B	C	D	E

1 2 3 4 5   **4. Reminders from church leader(s) to be a good person.**
1 2 3 4 5   **5. Statements of encouragement and comfort from church leader(s).**
1 2 3 4 5   **6. Reminders from sermons, hymns, etc. to feel humble before a supernatural being.**
1 2 3 4 5   **7. Explanations from church leaders about how to understand and react to current events, such as community disasters or problems, national problems, world problems.**
1 2 3 4 5   **8. An opportunity to pray and ask for things, support and comfort that I need.**

How important (valuable and meaningful) are each of the following aspects of religion to you in your personal life?
1 2 3 4 5   9. Prayer or meditation by myself.
1 2 3 4 5   10. Prayer or meditation with others, such as saying grace at mealtimes.

1 2 3 4 5   11. Reading religious or spiritual writings.
1 2 3 4 5   12. Attending religious or meditative services.

How important is each of the following for you personally as to what religion provides you that you find helpful...
1 2 3 4 5   13. An explanation of how the world began.
1 2 3 4 5   14. An explanation of how life on earth began.
1 2 3 4 5   15. An explanation of how the universe began.
1 2 3 4 5   16. An explanation of what will happen to me after I die.
1 2 3 4 5   17. An explanation of the meaning or purpose of my personal life, as by giving me goals, helping me discover or clarify goals, etc.
1 2 3 4 5   18. An explanation of the meaning or purpose of human life in general.
1 2 3 4 5   19. Answers to questions about free will.
1 2 3 4 5   20. An explanation of how supernatural beings are defined.
1 2 3 4 5   21. An explanation of my relationship to such a being or beings.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following items?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree.
A	B	C	D	E

Religion provides me helpful...
1 2 3 4 5   22. Guidance in handling death.
1 2 3 4 5   23. Guidance and strength in handling intense or chronic personal problems.
1 2 3 4 5   24. Guidance in handling unpleasant feelings and emotions, such as depression, anger, fear and guilt.
1 2 3 4 5   25. Guidance and strength of willpower in handling addictive urges.
1 2 3 4 5   26. Guidance and strength of willpower in handling temptations, such as for sexual indiscretions, theft, cheating, etc.
1 2 3 4 5   27. Rather than religious guidance, I would prefer mental health counseling or psychotherapy for help in understanding and dealing with personal, family, and emotional problems.
1 2 3 4 5   28. Rather than religion, I prefer the findings of science to explain how the world and life began.

What would you like more of from your present religion or one that you might consider?

1 2 3 4 5   29. More and better guidance about how to handle weekly personal problems and worries.

What are your thoughts and opinions about the relationship between science and religion?
1 2 3 4 5   30. Religion is more important than science.
1 2 3 4 5   31. Science is more important than religion.
1 2 3 4 5   32. Science is better than religion as a source of information about how the world works.

1 2 3 4 5   33. Religion is a better source of spiritual and social comfort and guidance than science.

1 2 3 4 5   34. Psychotherapy and counseling is a better source of personal, social and emotional guidance than religion.

1 2 3 4 5   35. I believe the universe is about 13.7 billion years old, as the sciences of astronomy and physics explain.

1 2 3 4 5   36. I believe that such scientists are wrong and that the universe is only 5,000 years old, as stated in the Bible.

1 2 3 4 5   37. I believe that dinosaurs lived for about 165 million years and died out about 65 million years ago, as science explains.

Opinions about definitions of God:
          God is...
1 2 3 4 5   38. ...a human concept, created by humans.
1 2 3 4 5   39. ...a supernatural being that created itself or was created by some force beyond itself.
1 2 3 4 5   40. ...appears or exists in only one correct or true form.

The power of the supernatural.
1 2 3 4 5   41. God, (a supernatural being), causes everything to happen.
1 2 3 4 5   42. Nature, without any God or gods involved, causes all physical world things, such as the movement of the planets, volcanic eruptions and storms, to happen.
1 2 3 4 5   43. God causes even bad things, like storms and wars.
1 2 3 4 5   44. Both God and humans cause some good and some bad things to happen.
1 2 3 4 5   45. If the weather is nice and sunny on a day I wanted to have a picnic, then God caused the good weather.
1 2 3 4 5   46. If the weather on this picnic day is bad, then I caused it by behaving badly and I am being punished.
1 2 3 4 5   47. If the weather on this picnic day is good, then I caused it, by being good and I am being rewarded.
1 2 3 4 5   48. The weather on this picnic day is caused simply by nature and it has nothing to do with my past behavior.
1 2 3 4 5   49. The weather is caused simply by nature, independent of a supernatural being=s influence.
1 2 3 4 5   50. Some things, such as clouds, can be beautiful without anybody or a god or God designing them to be the way they are.
1 2 3 4 5   51. Because a flower is beautiful, God had to design it rather than it developing simply by natural evolution.

End.

Reverse scored items: 2, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 42, 48, 49, 50
18-item brief version consists of items 6, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 37, 38, 39, 42. (Alpha of brief version is .82).

Beliefs

Table I

*Typical Religious Beliefs Factors loadings from a Sample of World Religion Beliefs*_____

Scale item	Religious Fundamentalism scale items (17)	Kindly Religious Beliefs scale items (13)
Ge 1		.42
	-	
Ge2		-
	.25	
1.		-
	.66	
2.		-
	.69	
3.		.73
	-	
4.		.61
	-	
5.		.62
	-	
6.		-
	-	
7.		.37
	R .47	
8.		-
	R .65	
9.		.68
	-	
10.		.50
	-	
11.		.48
	-	
12.		.41

Beliefs

Scale item	Religious Fundamentalism scale items (17)	Kindly Religious Beliefs scale items (13)
13.		- .50
14.		- .49
15.	- .44	-
16.	- .42	-
17.	.28	-
18.		.43
19.	- R .53	.35
20.	-	-
21.	R .41	-
22.	-	-
23.	.25	-
24.	R .40	-
25.	-	-
26.	-	-
27.	.46	-

Beliefs

28.   -

                                        -

29.   -

                        .39

30.   -

                     R .46

31.   -

                     R .45

32.   -

                     R .74

Note. Each scale consists of the scores across the 17 or 13 items that load on each of the

respective factors. Each item score can range from 1 to 5. ΑR@ items are reverse-scored.

Table II

Statistical Properties of Religious Beliefs Scales

Scale	Sample size	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Alpha reliability
Religious fundamentalism	246	14	73	41.65	12.70	.83

<center>Beliefs</center>

Kindly Religious Beliefs	246	33	65	53.19	5.80	.81

Table III

Correlations between McConochie Religious Beliefs Types, Warmongering and other Traits

Trait	Sample size	Religious Fundamentalism	Kindly Religious Beliefs

Beliefs

Trait	Sample size	Religious Fundamentalism	Kindly Religious Beliefs
1. Saucier Alpha (fundamentalism)	78	.70**	-.10
2. Saucier Beta (selfish materialism)	78	-.03	-.40**
3. Warmongering	78, 27, 35, 33	.61**, .59**, .66**, .38*	-.55**, N/A, -.70**, -.49**
4. Positive foreign policy	78, 35, 33	-.42**, -.38*, -.36**	.41**, .54**, .44**
5. Sustainable programs	78, 35, 33	-.55**, -.65**, -.47**	.40**, 68**, .53**
6. Human Rights Endorsement	78, 35, 33	-.55**, -.52**, -.37**	.49**, .76**, .56**
7. Altemeyer=s Religious Fundamentalism	35, 33	.72**, .68**	-.54**, -.42**
8. Prejudice against Muslims	27	.53*	-.16
9. Religiousness	27	.72**	.24
10. Fear of small	27	.41*	-.12

Beliefs

creatures

11. Claustrophobic	27	.48*	.16
12. Fears of fate, evil spirits	27	.55**	-.03
13. Fears of body weight changes	27	.44**	-.08
14. Fears of travel	27	.56**	-.02
15. Fears of heights	27	.67**	-.06
16. Fears of being along	27	.61**	.12

Table IV

Percentage of Persons Holding Various Traits

Beliefs

Trait	Percent holding trait	Sample size used to compute data
Fundamentalism	6,6.1, 11	111, 238, 249
Warmongering	6.1, 5 to 6	376, 238
Kindly Religious Beliefs	97, 91	111, 249
Human Rights Endorsement (44-item scale)	94	249
Ecology/Sustainability Endorsement	92	248
Public Democracy form of Government.	91, 91	214, 249

Table V

Beliefs

Multiple Correlations between Traits and Warmongering and Human Rights Endorsement

*Among 92 Community College Students*_____

Warmongering	Human Rights Endorsement	Traits used to predict
.48 (.001)	.35 (.054)	Saucier=s Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta
.73 (.000)	.60 (.000)	McConochie=s Religious Fundamentalism and Kindly Religious Beliefs
.36 (.084)	.30 (.260)	Big Five Personality traits measured with single items in 7-option Likert format
.60 (.001)	.54 (.006)	10 emotion-handling skills, via 80-item questionnaire (author=s McEmot scale)
.80 (.000)	.68 (.000)	Verbal I.Q., Big 5, Religious Fundamentalism, Kindly Religious Beliefs, Positive Feeling Skill, Negative Feeling Skill.

Note. Significance levels in parentheses.

Beliefs

Table VI

Basic Statistics for 46 Community College Students

Scale	%>3.5	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Alpha
Relig. Fundam.	4.3	24	65	42.9	9.47	.89
Kindly Religion.	89	32	65	53.0	6.70	.80
Religiosity	20	4	20	9.20	4.80	.89
Value of Religion-51	33	57	249	152	53.2	.97
Meta religion/ Universal service	89	8	20	14.4	2.9	.61

Beliefs

Table VII

Correlations between Religious Orientations, Religious Meaning and Other Variables Among 46

Community College Students

Trait	Religious Fund.	Kindly Rel.	Religiosity	Value of Religion-51	Meta religion endorsement
Relig. Fund.	1.00				
Kindly Rel.	-.04	1.00			
Religiosity	.55**	.33	1.00		
Value of Religion-51	.71**	.31	.83**	1.00	
Meta Religion	-.15	.34	.33	.33	1.00
Meta Rel., corrected.	-.20	.49	.45	.43	N/A.

Beliefs

Table VIII

*Basic statistics for 29 Unitarians*_____

Scale	%>3.5	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Alpha
Relig. Fundam.	0	22	51.0	33.4	6.2	.84
Kindly Religion.	97	39	65.0	59.1	6.2	.90
Religiosity	45	4	20	13.0	3.0	.56
Value of Religion-51	4	66	179.0	115.7	29.9	.98
Meta religion/ universal Service	89	12	20	16.6	2.2	.60

Beliefs

Table IX

Correlations between Religious Orientations, Religious Meaning and Other Variables Among 29

Unitarians

Trait	Religious Fund.	Kindly Rel.	Religiosity	Value of Religion - 51	Meta religion endorsement
Relig. Fund.	1.00				
Kindly Rel.	-.66**	1.00			
Religiosity	.16	.20	1.00		
Value of	.56**	-.17	.80**	1.00	

Beliefs

Religion-51

Meta Religion	-.52*	.58*	.15	-.13	1.00
Meta Rel. corrected	-.73	.79	.26	-.17	N/A

Table X

Correlations between Religious Beliefs Factors and Endorsement of Government Types___

Government Types	Religious Fundamentalism	Kindly Religious Beliefs
Anarchy	.18	-.27**
Military Dictatorship	.35**	-.37
Monarchy	.29**	-.16

	Beliefs	
Tribal Democracy	.23*	-.27**
Public Democracy	-.09	.38**

Note. N = 115.

p = .05. ***p* # .01.