Multidimensional Perspectives on the Faith and Giving of Youth and Emerging Adults

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1. Introduction

This volume includes eight studies of faith and giving for youth and emerging adults. Combined, we find organizational, cultural, institutional, educational, informal, familial, and developmental influences on the shape and contours of youth and emerging adult faith and giving. These studies provide some challenges to popular interpretations of Millennials, and to the ways researchers typically study religiosity and charitable giving. Accounting for the greater demographic and cultural diversity of Millennials may require changes to interpretations of young people by religious and spiritual leaders, parents, and scholars.

2. Youth and Emerging Adult Religiosity, Organizationally

In the first chapter of this volume, Williams, Irby, and Warner identify a paradox: "while (religious) attendance tends to decrease in adolescence and college, youth themselves often report that religious beliefs remain important and sometimes even increase during this period" (Williams et al. 2016, p. 1). To better understand youth faith and religiosity, this study investigated the characteristics of organizational participation for a group of college-age young people in Chicago, Illinois. Beneath the veneer of a millennial style that is ubiquitous, homogenous, and entirely individualized in its approach to faith and religiosity, these scholars instead find distinct styles. They focus on two subcultures: black young adults and white young adults, both within the religious context of their respective congregations. The organizational practices within the mostly white congregation in the study was to focus on the generational gap, to highlight the distinction between youth and their elders. Youth participated in youth-specific events and activities that functioned as an nearly distinct organization within the congregation. For the older congregants, there was fear about losing young people, and the idea was to provide youth with youth-specific activities as the way to minister to them, entrenching the view of youth as a different generation with separate needs. In contrast, the mostly black congregation had an integrationist approach to youth participation. Even amidst the youth-focused gatherings, the older congregants were present and engaged. Youth aided in the planning of the events but did not entirely run them on their own. Instead, the focus was on youth showing to the older congregants their mastery of religious content, as a way of displaying their growing maturity as full and equal congregants in the church.

Turning to the "organizational biographies" of participating youth, another distinction is revealed. Many of the white youth talked about religion as providing them with a needed service, gaining them useful skills and experiences. That orientation is most akin to the overall understanding of youth religiosity, that it is highly individualistic. Moreover, many of the white youth voiced skepticism of religion and sought to separate their authentic spirituality from the church as an institution, which could be viewed as irrelevant, suspect, or a hindrance to personal faith. While black youth also stressed

that they had a choice in their religious participation, they instead more often referred to the church as a family, implying that being involved was not completely voluntary since youth have obligations to their relations. Viewing the church more as a community than an organization, the black youth did not highlight what they received by participating nor did they describe themselves as separated from the religious institution, which they viewed with less suspicion and as more integral to their identity than did the white youth.

Though the sample for this study is small and geographically situated within a particular Midwestern and urban context, the findings reveal patterns that could be analytically generalizable. Perhaps some of the trends attributed to Millennials as a whole are actually more characteristic of the white majority that comprises statistical patterns that are not disaggregated by race and other subcultural statuses. For a notable group of young people in this study, at least, religion does not seem to be becoming individualized. As identified in the introduction, this study indicates a non-linear pattern to religiosity that requires in-depth investigating to understand. Religiosity is not unilaterally declining in its significance for all these young people. Many white youth remain engaged as a form of organizational participation, and many black youth are growing further engaged as an expression of personal and community identity.

One implication of this study is that separating youth away from the primary congregation, or in other ways highlighting separation across generations, may be counter-productive. This study did not investigate whether implementing the style of one congregation within a different religious context would cause changes. However, the findings raise questions as to whether the segregated approach of the white congregations was undermining the ongoing relevance of the church among its youth. It would be wise for religious and spiritual leaders to give pause in considering whether a more integrated approach better facilitates the intergenerational connections that it seems many young people value (in this study at least). Thus, one implication of this study is that an answer to "how can we engage young people?" is not to engage them as young people, with distinct needs and interests, but rather to treat them as integral and equal members of the religious community.

Likewise, parents who take approaches similar to the white congregations may also want to reconsider whether stressing generational differences is effective. While it can be natural to discuss the ways technological changes in recent decades have changed social interactions, youth value intergenerational connection across these changes (Boyd 2014). For example, in my own research, I find that intergenerational understanding is facilitated by focusing on how technology affects all generations similarly, such as through pressures to be "always on" and navigating setting healthy boundaries around the ability to be connected continually online. Thus, one implication of this study is that an answer to "how can we help young people emerge into religiously and spiritually mature leaders?" is to relate with them as people sharing the same culture, the same technology changes, but with distinct skills and experiences given their generational histories in relation to cultural and technological changes. Engaging in bidirectional learning about the strategies youth and their elders employ to navigate these changes could provide a helpful approach to integration that shifts away from highlighting generational distinctions toward finding common ground.

3. Youth Religiosity, Counter-Culturally

In contrast to the American culture of religiosity as mainstream and in slow decline across generations, the religiosity in China has been increasing. Wang, in Chapter 2 of this volume, reports that the number of religious affiliates in China increased sixfold in a mere two decades, with a sizable increase among young people (Wang 2016). This study sought answers to "What propels young people to begin religious attendance or affiliation?" To investigate that question, the study focused on a university town, which has a number of Christian campus groups increasing exposure to religiosity for young Chinese students. Despite these efforts, the vast majority of students studied still report having "no faith." Many of the college students surveyed reported gaining exposure to Christianity, but this did not readily convert to knowledge of or interest in learning about religion.

In that mostly atheist cultural context, one of the greatest correlates of knowing about Christianity was having friends who were Christian, and one of the main ways these college students had friends who were Christian was by participating in campus fellowships. Particularly appealing were fellowship activities that provided opportunities to experience Christian culture, and be around people who are Christian, without requirements to participate in religious rituals. One of the implications of this finding for religious and spiritual leaders is that missionary work in this Chinese college town appears to be most effective when provided in a relaxing and inviting space that allows fellow students to congregate with each other and discuss Christianity without the high-stakes for participation being immediate involvement in religious rituals. More generally, another implication of this study is a caution against over-generalizing dramatic religious increases. Increases in religiosity are not uniform across China, nor across different age cohorts. In this case of college students in an urban area, religious exposure has increased at a significantly higher rate than religious affiliation or participation. However, it is possible that religiosity may be in its early phases, beginning first with exposure and perhaps later leading to further engagement.

4. Emerging Adult Religiosity, Subculturally

In Chapter 3, Jeung, Esaki, and Liu study the religiosity of Chinese and Japanese American young adults (Jeung et al. 2015). Rather than explaining change in religious affiliation, this study sought to understand persistence in disaffiliation. Challenging the belief and belonging paradigm, the researchers of this study question whether the terms religion and belief aptly describe the kinds of spiritual activities in which Chinese and Japanese have traditionally engaged, which focus instead on rituals and relations. The Asian Americans in this study were found not to report high levels of belief in God and other religious concepts, but they did report belief in supernatural forces, such as spiritual energy within physical objects and persistence of ancestral spirits. Likewise, while few of the Chinese and Japanese Americans reported praying regularly, many reported having shrines at home and celebrating religious holidays such as Christmas and Lunar New Year.

Thus, one implication of this study is that the rise of religious nones in the U.S. could be, at least in part, due to a misinterpretation. Some American subcultures have a long-standing tradition of disaffiliation, and the representation of these groups among millennial Americans could lead some to conclude religious decline, where in fact merely religious difference exists. For those whose ancestry is from China, religion was regulated, leaving atheism as the dominant belief system. More generally, the word religion in Asia can be associated with colonization by westerners, especially in Japan where it was through military enforcement that Christians were allowed to be missionaries. When peering beneath the surface of the superimposed categories that religious affiliation implies, spiritual rituals are evident, and these rituals are akin to the religious practices of Asian religions. Many seemingly religious "nones" then, at least in this case among young Japanese and Chinese Americans, are in fact quite spiritual in ways that could also be understood to be religious.

Considering that Millennials represent the most diverse generation alive to date, with the highest rate of foreign-born population alive in the U.S., this study indicates that part of detecting a decline in religiosity among this younger cohort may rather be an indication of the way religiosity is expressed. As identified in the introduction, it seems that for the subcultural groups of this study that religiosity is expressed in less formal ways, with an emphasis on spiritual rituals rather than affiliation with a particular religious denomination. Yet the contours of this finding would likely still be missed by a dichotomous understanding of "spiritual but not religious," as in fact many of these rituals are akin to practices for traditional non-western religions. One implication then is that studying the religiosity and spirituality of Millennials may require more nuanced understandings of what "counts" as religious ritual, spiritual practice, belief and belonging. Perhaps a move from religion to faith may better tap the real beliefs and practices of the disaffiliated—who seem to be religious "nones," but who may not be entirely disaffiliated when properly understood.

For religious and spiritual leaders, one implication is the need to attend to the hybridized rituals and belief systems in which youth engage. Beginning from a Western and Christo-centric understanding of what counts as religion may miss the more nuanced ways that young people engage in religiosity and spirituality. Rather than assuming that disaffiliated means "unchurched," it is best with this diverse generation to ask and understand first. The questions need to cover more of a range than service attendance and prayer and can begin from inquiry into what holds meaning, what rituals are practiced because they are valued as transcending routine and everyday experiences. Then one can ask why these rituals hold meaning, from where those beliefs come from, and ultimately can gain a sense of a richer faith life than many typical religious categories convey.

5. Youth and Emerging Adult Religiosity, Institutionally

The fourth chapter of this volume presents results of a study that McCallion, Ligas, and Seroka conducted on youth ministry within the Archdiocese of Detroit. After documenting the history of decline in investment within the Catholic Church for youth ministry, these scholars state that: "one major issue confronting religious institutions is who will fill future leadership roles" (McCallion et al. 2016, p. 3). This can become a confounding effect, as many current church leaders report that they became interested in ministry because a religious leader affected and invited them. Moreover, youth and emerging adulthood are key developmental time periods in which to establish vocational commitment, yet youth and college ministry are under-supported. This raises numerous concerns for the continuation of religious institutions among younger generations.

In response, the Archdiocese of Detroit prioritized youth and young adult ministry as a top objective. However, the institutional analysis of this study reveals problems with the actualization of this goal. For one, the number of youth ministers has not grown substantially, and many remain employed only as part-time employees. Two, the salaries paid to youth ministers are the lowest of all the ministry employees. Three, interviews with youth ministers indicate that they do not feel supported institutionally in their mission to form youth and young adults. This lack of support extends beyond meager salaries to other infrastructural issues, such as not having access to up-to-date technology to engage youth. Youth ministers also reported feeling marginalized.

When interviewed, pastors spoke about the major obstacles preventing further engagement with youth and young adults. The number one response given was money, and not enough of it. Pastors also described how the sexual abuse scandals of the Church have diminished their connections with youth, and entered distrust into their relationships, especially from parents. Another primary issue, which mirrors what was found in the white congregations of the first study, is that pastors sometimes cited feeling disconnected from youth, viewing them as having different and relativistic views of life and morality. Some were also disheartened by the declines in participation among teens, reporting that youth prefer to be engaged in other, non-church activities.

More generally, this study provides an example of the decoupling between policy and practice, showing how declaring an objective to be a priority does not mean that institutional infrastructure necessarily changes to support the implementation of this goal. Instead, the support for youth and young adult ministry remains weak in this religious institution, despite the discourse. One implication of this study for religious and spiritual leaders, then, is to implement more than "lip service" to the challenges and opportunities for engaging younger generations in religious institutions. An objective to support youth and young adult ministry requires more than simply stating it is a priority. Cultural change to organizations is challenging, but it is also possible. The key is working through formal policies to informal rules for how things are done. The linchpin between the formal and informal is infrastructural support, and investing in youth ministers who are hired full-time, paid reasonably well, and provided with opportunities to engage with and/or train from other youth minsters is key to success. This ensures that youth ministers are equipped to perform the "one the ground" work to connect with and better engage youth and young adults.

Other implications for religious and spiritual leaders derive from the findings regarding the marginalization of youth ministers. Beyond economic resources alone, most people desire a degree of social status and honor in their work. Especially if pay has to be low, it is important to ensure youth ministers feel valued and esteemed for the services they provide to young people. Moreover, youth ministry has no clear occupational trajectory, no reward system for advancement and promotion. In contemporary society, professionalization is the norm, but the occupation of youth ministry often runs counter to this norm by providing few or no ways in which youth ministers are provided with professionalization opportunities. Thus, it is important for religious and spiritual leaders to recognize the muted career trajectory of youth ministers and to provide professionalization experiences whenever possible. Options include forming a local network of youth ministers who share best practices, sending youth ministers to national conferences and events designed to enhance youth engagement, and lead pastors meeting regularly with youth ministers to mentor them toward career development and fulfillment.

6. Emerging Adult Faith & Morality, Educationally

In Chapter 5, myself, Beadle, Harris, Hood, and Venugopal investigate a college course designed to facilitate moral maturity among emerging adults (Herzog et al. 2016). The class was instructed by Daniel Harris, as the Director of the Tyson Center for Faith and Spirituality in the University of Arkansas Sam M. Walton College of Business. Serving as a mentor to participating students, Harris stimulated emerging adult development through several techniques. One was to describe the changing contexts surrounding youth and emerging adult development, including how a deeper understanding of faith and moral maturity is necessary but not typically supported by cultural contexts. The instructor described examples of how working in religiously and culturally diverse organizational settings can be enriching and also present challenges to workforce dynamics. Rather than placating these cultural and religious diversities, by not acknowledging their existence or participating in the veneer that religious distinctions do not matter in a similar fashion to how being color blind whitewashes real differences, the emerging adults were invited to reflect on real distinctions among cultural beliefs.

In addition, guest speakers visited the class and represented different major faith traditions, including Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Atheism (also referred to as secular humanism). These guest speakers described the ways their faith undergirded their moral actions at work. For example, a Muslim landlord described how he put his faith before profit in deciding to allow tenants to remain during the economic downturn, despite their being behind in paying rent. Likewise, a Christian described how her faith supported getting through a difficult family challenge that could have otherwise more significantly affected her work life. Emerging adults participating in the class were also asked to read several texts reflecting on the ways faith (in any form) provides meaning and guides moral decision-making. Then students were required to write their top values and to later refine these into a personal mission statement, which they revised in multiple drafts. The culminating assignment was an essay in which students reflected on which aspects of the course impacted them, and about how they think these impacts will affect their future work.

The results of this study—comparing outcomes for participating students to emerging adults who instead completed a traditional ethics course—indicate that this pedagogical approach was effective in raising cultural awareness among students who were otherwise fairly religiously and culturally homogenous. Participating emerging adults gained greater clarity regarding their moral values and how to articulate these in the workforce in ways that would avert conflict, not by avoiding it but by respecting diverse approaches. The implications are that college educators are able to intervene in facilitating moral maturity, even within the relatively late life stage of emerging adulthood. The approach of this course is one that can be replicated in other universities, and also in different social contexts. Religious and spiritual leaders could implement a similar approach within youth ministry approaches, especially those designed to engage college students. Moreover, the implications for parents are that adult role models can impact emerging adults and may be important for their

cognitive and moral development. Perhaps these mentors could be parents themselves, and this study indicates that mentors outside the family can also be important.

7. Youth and Emerging Adult Generosity, Informally

In the sixth chapter of this volume, Fernandez, Schnitker, and Houltberg investigate charitable sporting events. The researchers state that information on *how* "adolescents make meaning of their spiritual and religious convictions in real-world contexts affect the development of generosity is an important line of research. This is especially true as changing social norms and ever-developing technology and social media continue to shape upcoming generations in new ways" (Fernandez et al. 2016, p. 1). The scholars theorize that motivations for engaging in generous activities can be religious and moral. The theory is that this occurs through a process of sanctification, in which aspects of life are viewed as having a spiritual significance. Sanctified goals can invoke more effort and satisfaction, and thus participating in an activity, such as a charitable sporting event, which is viewed as sanctified can be more compelling than alternative options. Sanctification and religiosity are not synonymous, as sanctification has to do with deriving meaning and purpose from aspects of life, which is not the same as attending services or praying regularly.

Meaning derives from having a narrative sense of one's identity as fitting together the disparate behaviors, preferences, and desires of one's life into a relatively coherent sense of self. Well-being is associated with meaning, especially when one views one's trajectory in life as growing in positive directions. This generativity is higher when one views their life as achieving a degree of self-transcendence, in contributing to the wellbeing of others. The idea, then, is that participating in charitable sporting events is a way to actualize, to visualize and represent to oneself, that meaningful generativity is achieved. Moreover, participating in such an activity can strengthen sense of belonging to a group and result in positive emotions (such as enjoyment).

Though the model proposed in this chapter is yet untested, there are implications worthy of consideration for religious and spiritual leaders. One is that participation in informal activities could be a way to express religious and spiritual inclinations. Especially for youth and emerging adults who have limited exposure or who are skeptical of organized religion, charitable events that allow for engagement with religious communities outside the context of a congregation can be a way for those interested to explore religiosity with a low initial bar for membership. Rather than investing high effort initially in membership, high effort is instead invested in something deemed to be spiritually worthy, a way of actualizing a willingness to de-prioritize personal benefit (through sacrificing physical exertion) in the service of a generous cause. Having made that initial service contribution, participants may then be more willing to engage within traditionally religious spaces, especially if invited by people with whom they formed a bond during the informal activity.

Hosting charitable sporting events on college campuses could be an especially effective way of engaging emerging adults, who are typically fairly disconnected from religious communities, either during college or throughout the multiple moves instead of college, or after, to find jobs. Moreover, this chapter has implications for the study of faith and spirituality. Would emerging adults who participate in a charitable sporting event due to religious motivations answer yes to having attended a religious service? Likely not. Would they answer yes to having volunteered time not for pay? Also likely not. Would any of the typical religiosity and spirituality questions count this form of engagement? Perhaps, maybe a participant would still rate their faith as important in their daily life. However, rating personal faith as important without social religious events is the recipe for what many scholars have called an individualized form of religiosity, which is purportedly higher among younger generations. The thought behind this chapter raises questions as to whether faith is truly becoming individualized or whether younger generations may be evolving the way that expressions of religiosity occur in social settings. In Christian theology, the Bible says in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them." Perhaps then it is time to broaden the scope of what congregating

is deemed to be and consider ways that younger generations can mobilize communities with shared religiosity or spirituality outside a building.

8. Emerging Adult Volunteering, Developmentally

In Chapter 7, DeAngelis, Acevedo, and Xu study secular volunteering among college attending emerging adults in Texas. The researchers state: "Young adults in higher educational settings are often faced with a series of competing interests that motivate and modify behavioral choices in the absence of direct parental supervision. Moreover, it is at this stage of the life course that young adults can go through a process of re-centering wherein they explore their religious identity and formulate and solidify their own religious beliefs in addition to or independent of their familial religious traditions" (DeAngelis et al. 2016, p. 9). The study indicates that childhood religiosity is linked across the life course to volunteering as an emerging adult. The key ingredient for volunteering as an emerging adult is religious participation as a child that is sustained as an emerging adult. Some psychological accounts view internalization of childhood socialization as the primary mechanism by which childhood forms of social participation continue to matter once children transition to adulthood. This study both supports and challenges the notion of recentering by showing that early religious socialization does relate to later volunteering, but only when emerging adults continue to participate in religious activities.

Central to this study is an understanding of private and public forms of religiosity. Private forms of religiosity include beliefs and faith dispositions. Public forms of religiosity include social events, such as participating in religious services or praying in small groups. The psychological notion of recentering theorizes that public forms of religious participation during childhood will matter in adulthood insofar as they are internalized to private forms of religiosity during emerging adulthood. However, sociological accounts theorize that social participation is central to the link between religiosity and volunteering persisting during emerging adulthood. This study indicates the latter account best explains that ongoing social participation in public forms of religiosity is more strongly linked to volunteering as an emerging adult than is private religiosity alone.

More generally, there are implications of this study for both religious leaders and parents. Social learning early in childhood appears to have a lasting effect later in life. Parents and religious leaders can take comfort (or be cautioned) in knowing that their efforts toward socialization appear to "work." However, key to children volunteering as emerging adults is continuing to sustain public forms of religiosity into emerging adulthood. It appears that attending while a child is not enough for sustaining long-term commitment to values, such as contributing time to improve the wellbeing of others. This finding runs counter to thinking of church as the "elementary school of morals," which many emerging adults (and their parents) have reported in my own research.

Often times the cultural perception of religiosity is that it is good to be exposed while young, but once the message is understood it is to many unclear why continued and regular religious engagement is necessary. "I got it" is the sense that many emerging adults in the National Study of Youth and Religion relayed in interviews. Akin to ongoing lessons in multiplication, the idea is that seems unnecessary once the lesson is learned. However, this study reveals a contour to religiosity that highlights its distinction from other lessons learned in childhood. Unlike multiplication, it takes concerted effort to maintain a commitment to contributing to the wellbeing of others, especially in the midst of the many and competing time commitments of college life. Exposure during childhood seems to be necessary but not sufficient in the recipe of ongoing volunteering, with the remainder of the ingredients including continued engagement in religious communities.

These findings could be good news or bad news for parents. Some parents like the idea of dropping their child off to Sunday school for several years during childhood and then shifting attention to sports and other activities as children age. I have heard that reported in multiple interviews with emerging adults thinking about what their future religious socialization of their children will be, and I have also heard it reported by the parents of youth participating in youth ministry activities in religious congregations of many denominations. In that case, this study presents some bad news,

as the implications are that more effort may need to be exerted beyond those early years to continue commitment to religiosity and to its values, such as volunteering, beyond elementary school years.

The good news is that there seems to be a relatively simple and practical outcome of this study. This is unlike the many studies investigating religiosity, which describe and explain the puzzle of declines in public forms of religiosity with persistence in private religiosity, leaving concerned readers with no sense of what can be done. For parents who want children to continue religious values into emerging adulthood and beyond, and for religious and spiritual leaders who work tirelessly to socialize youth into their religion, it can be disconcerting (at best) to know that many of the religious and generous activities socialized in childhood diminish over time. As an alternative, this study provides some hope to those interested in sustaining commitment to religious values, that there are some lasting effects for participating in generous activities such as volunteering. Many parents could take heed and advise their emerging adults to make the effort to get to service.

9. Youth Faith & Giving, Developmentally

In the eighth and final chapter of this volume, myself and Mitchell investigate the intergenerational transmission of religious giving among parents and youth who participate in religious youth groups (Herzog and Mitchell 2016). We asked: How do religious youth learn to give? Informed by prior studies, we viewed parents to be an integral part of learning to give to religious organizations, which we know from other studies is also associated with giving to non-religious charitable causes. From our in-depth interviews with parents, we identified nine approaches to teaching giving: (1) modeling giving by donating in children's presence; (2) providing money to children to give; (3) handing giving envelopes to children to place in donation baskets and plates; (4) teaching children to give through conversations about the importance of giving; (5) providing positive reinforcement to children for giving; (6) encouraging, expecting, or forcing giving; (7) a method called give, save, spend which explicitly categorizes a portion of children's money (such as allowances) for spending, a portion for saving, and a portion for giving; (8) describing giving of time as an alternative to donating money; and (9) emphasizing fiscal responsibility generally, in which giving was one part of a broader attention to finance discussions.

Viewing several of these methods as sharing in common their basic approach, we categorize these teaching styles into those that (a) model giving; (b) talk about the importance of giving; and (c) direct children to give. Of these, modeling methods were the most common across the different religious traditions included in this study, which consisted of a mainline Protestant church, an evangelical Protestant church, and a black Protestant church. Talking about giving did not differ across religious traditions but did differ in the gender of the parent, with fathers more often describing talking about giving than mothers. Directing methods for teaching giving were more common at the evangelical and black Protestant churches than they were at the mainline Protestant church. That was also a method employed more by mothers than fathers, and it was more common among those with lower incomes than those with higher incomes. Perhaps the most relevant finding of this study for parents and religious leaders is that the most common way to teach giving was to have a "diversified portfolio" of approaches, combining multiple methods.

In a rather unique study design, we also interviewed the youth of these parents and were able to analyze youth responses in relation to parent responses. Thus, unlike studies focusing on one or the other group, or which aggregate responses across groups, this study allowed us to see what the effect of different parental approaches appeared to be. Most studies employing this approach study youth and parents in laboratory experiments, which provide a greater ability to tease apart other explanations for cause and effect relationships. However, it is often unclear in those studies what, if any, bearing those findings have in the real world, once research participants leave the laboratory and resume everyday experiences. The approach of our study instead has greater strength in applying to everyday life, but readers should keep in mind that it is not possible in this approach to isolate the many other factors that could be related to the causes and effect patterns. In other words, the outcomes

for youth could be due to other factors beyond the parent teaching approaches, such as socialization within religious settings or by religious friends. But that was not too concerning for us, since other studies indicate that those forms of religious socialization are also influenced by parents. We thus view those to be an extension of parental teaching methods and, in research terms, do not understand them to be spurious to the findings of this study.

In interviewing youth, it was apparent that many youth do not regularly talk about giving. While they were articulate about other topics, giving discussions often consisted of one-word responses that treated giving as a fairly obvious and simple topic. Some youth were somewhat confused about how to talk about giving, described it as a feeling (such as "I feel good about giving"), or positioned the discussion about giving in the hypothetical (such as "If I were to give."). Overall, we did not find a high degree of articulateness about giving and were generally surprised by the low degree of alignment between the thoughtfulness of the parent interviewees and the seeming inattentiveness of the youth interviewees. However, upon further inspection we discovered something else unexpected, which we called a "delayed onset of giving." When we interviewed the parents about how they learned to give, many of them described having been taught by their parents to give but then had that essentially lay dormant until some later point in their adulthood when their inclination to give was personally triggered.

As with the study in the seventh chapter, then, we also see implications that the recentering process of emerging adulthood is important, understanding that social learning becomes internalized and activated for adults. It seems that adult religious givers were taught to give during childhood, but did not form their own understanding of or personal motivation for giving until some later point in their life course when the inclination to give was triggered. Taking a developmental approach to giving means viewing socialization into generous activities as situated within a dynamic process of changes across the life course. We do not have sophisticated longitudinal data in this study, which track changes over time and follow the same group of parents and youth as they age. That limits what we can know conclusively. Yet, if we take people mostly at their word and as relatively decent reporters of what is actually true in their cases, then it seems that giving as an adult is linked to (a) being taught to give as a child and (b) having some trigger that internalizes giving as an adult. Combining that with findings of the previous chapter, the implication is also that experiences during childhood continue to have lasting effects and that ongoing religious participation into adulthood appears to be key in activating childhood learning.

One implication of this study for parents is that it is important to teach youth about giving. Parents often express that youth do not listen to them and generally tend to undervalue the effect they have on their children. This study provides parents with a way to think more critically about that perspective, and to consider the ways that parenting does not always result in an immediate and visible indication of effects in youth, but can lay important foundation for later activity. For religious and spiritual leaders, an implication of this study is that parents are an important part of laying the foundation for religious giving and may need encouragement and teaching about how to transmit their values for generosity to their children. Another implication for both parents and religious leaders is that it appears having a diversified portfolio of parental teaching methods is a common, and potentially effective, way to teach youth to give. In essence, there does not seem to be a "one size fits all" approach that is the panacea for teaching giving. Rather, parents can model giving, talk about giving, and direct youth to give, knowing that these efforts are likely to pay off later in their life course. Yet, another implication is that it is important to support ongoing religious participation as a way to later trigger that childhood socialization.

10. Conclusions

In summary, the scholars in this volume find youth and emerging adults to be socially influenced by their organizational, institutional, and developmental contexts. Religiosity and spirituality are in part socially constructed processes. This is not be overstated, to the detriment of recognizing the

personal agency that youth and emerging adults have in navigating their faith and giving activities. Yet, given that American culture heavily emphasizes the role of individuals in shaping life outcomes, it is important to balance this with a counter cultural understanding that highlights the ways in which youth and emerging adults are affected by social participation.

Collectively, we find organizational differences in youth religious socialization, and we find ongoing development in response to religious stimuli as emerging adults. In addition, several of these studies complicate popular conceptions of Millennials as generally uninterested in religious participation. Instead, we find many non-traditional, but still social, ways of expressing religiosity. For example, participating in a charitable sporting event, having a shrine visible in households to venerate ancestors, or volunteering while in college. Perhaps the rise of religiously disaffiliated among Millennials may be an artifact of greater diversity in religious expressions, a caution to employing Western notions of what "counts" as religiosity, such as service attendance alone.

We also find that understanding youth disengagement from religion requires turning an eye toward the agents of socialization, revealing that weak infrastructural support for youth ministry may be part of the cause, as could be an orientation to youth that pits them as distinct from adults, such that their ministry is segregated from the broader religious community. Taken together, these studies indicate a need to study life course effects on adult outcomes, by investigating longitudinal data. This is a task I turn to in a forthcoming book that studies inequalities in the ways youth transition into adulthood and investigates the roles that religiosity and spirituality relate to these adulthood pathways (Herzog 2017). In addition, more studies are needed. Having listened to the practice-based knowledge of laypeople, with innovative ways of theorizing and studying faith and giving, and taken an inclusive approach, we contribute new insights worthy of further study.

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