PLACE, SPACE, AND THE RELIGIOUS IDENTITY:

THE PHYSICAL WORLD AS SOCIAL STRUCTURE

IN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The physical world and its layout impacts how we interact with others in a number of ways that are so commonplace they often escape our notice. For social psychologists, this may be due to our intense focus on the ways in which individuals interpret meaning, including how these meanings in turn impact our behaviors in any given situation (Mead 1934; Stryker 1980). Given evidence that demonstrates how interpretations of status (Ridgeway 2001; Correll and Ridgeway 2003), of stigma (Goffman 1963), of commitment to others (Serpe and Stryker 1987; Stryker and Serpe 1994) and the self (McCall and Simons 1978; Rosenberg 1979) impact social behavior, our focus is well justified. However, once we shift our focus from the relational and psychological to the contexts in which such processes take place, the multitude of ways in which the layout of the physical world and our perception of it impacts not only the conduct of our behaviors in everyday life but also the ways in which we think about ourselves and others becomes apparent.

Take for example the partisan individual, who takes great pride in how they see their self as a Democrat and who attempts to enact this aspect of their self at every available opportunity. Using identity theory (Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009), one would focus on how the people with which the partisan comes into contact impact the likelihood that they will behave in partisan way, such as discussing the politics of the day and urging others to greater demonstrations of

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political action. However, implicit with a structural symbolic interactionist approach (yet generally under acknowledged in related research to date) is that social relationships occur in the *physical* world, and it is the *layout* as well as individual's perception of that layout that impact the degree to which the partisan engages in partisan interactions and behaviors.

To illustrate, if the partisan lives in a community in which there are few coffee shops, in which the greenspaces have been replaced by parking lots, and in which the pubs are only dominated by those interested in discussing the outcomes of the most recent sporting event, it is unlikely that the partisan will find ears willing to hear them disclaim day after day. For the partisan so situated, the *place* in which they live is poorly structured as to bring them into contact with others that will allow them to express this portion of their social being. Yet this is not the end of the physical impacting the social, for even if a coffee shop of patrons with receptive ears should exist, there still exists the reality that they must physically move through *space* to reach this site of interaction, and that every moment they spend traversing this space is one they cannot spend urging others to greater political action.

The above is just one example of how the physical layout of the social world is likely to impact the enactment of an identity. However, this example underscores the fact that any analysis of social interaction and behavior may benefit from consideration of the layout of the physical environment, as well as individuals' perceptions of that layout, as it impacts interactions and behaviors. In this dissertation, I argue that identity theory is ideally situated to incorporate such place and space considerations, and that including place and space as elements of social structure can advance the linkage between social structure and identity enactment because place and space themselves facilitate or constrain social action.

To demonstrate how this may be the case, consider a foundational question of identity theory revised to incorporate physical aspects of the social world: "Why does one partisan spend his free Saturday (at a café) discussing politics, while another spends it (at the local pub) discussing sports?" Without regard to the physical world, an identity theory approach would traditionally seek to answer this question by examining the location of each identity within the self, focusing on commitment to identity-related others (Stryker and Serpe 1983; Burke and Stets 2009). However, more contemporary work suggests that we should also consider how various levels of social structure (large, intermediate, and proximate) impact the probability of coming into contact with these identity-related others (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005; Merolla, Serpe, Stryker, Schultz 2012). In this contemporary work, intermediate social structures are conceptualized as a setting (such as a neighborhood or university) that impacts the probability of individuals coming into regular contact with identity related others (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005). I argue that the refinement of the definition to also include place and space sheds further light on individuals' identity-related behaviors. As such, certain questions become important to consider, like: How far away are the café and pub? How many cafés and pubs are there nearby? How much effort must the individual exert to go to a café or pub?

The main goal of this dissertation is to better understand identity-related behaviors by considering questions such as the ones above. In doing so, I use the religious identity as a core identity context of interest because it is a common identity to Americans as well as one that is highly associated with specific places (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques). Below, I start by exploring work on place and space that outlines their distinctive characteristics while also taking into account their interrelated nature. I then review prior research on place and space conducted in a variety of fields including geography and environmental psychology, with the goal of

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theoretically placing these elements of the physical world within the concept of social structures as explored by contemporary identity theory research. With the theoretical linkages established, I will then present recently collected survey research data which was specifically gathered to empirically examine the theoretical links between perceptions of place, space, and the identity-process. In short, this work shows one way in which identity theory can meaningfully incorporate the importance of the physical world. It also provides a model by which other areas of sociological social psychology may follow suit to better understand key foci of study, such as behavior.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Place versus Space

Starting from some of the earliest work in sociology, that the layout of the physical world has the potential to impact how individuals interact with one another has been clearly recognized. For example, Emile Durkheim examined how some places are symbolically transformed into sacred places through the repeated evoking of rituals (Smith 1999), and Frederick Engels examined how places become associated with a given social class and that the material state of these places reflects the larger social conditions of the individuals living therein (Engels [1844] 1984). As these lines of thought continued to develop in the later 20th and early 21st centuries, the physical world continued to receive a fair amount of theoretical and empirical attention centered mostly with respect to how the concepts of place and space impact the everyday lived experiences of individuals (Lofland 1973; Gieryn 2000; Labao, Hooks, and Tickamyer 2007; Lewicka 2011; Logan 2012).

What are place and space? Interestingly, nearly all literatures examining place and space tend to conflate the terms. As is often the tendency with concepts from emerging areas of work (see e.g., Stryker and Serpe 1994; Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stets and Serpe 2013), such conflation often results in the meanings of these concepts being used interchangeably. For example, in research that examines how the meanings associated with public parks and squares

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impact the types of interactions that take place there, such places are often referred to both as public places and public spaces (Lofland 1973; Fried 2000; Gottdiener and Hutchinson 2011). While such usage is understandable given the general lexicon, this treatment of place and space as interchangeable becomes problematic for research endeavoring to examine how place and space have independent effects on the individual and their subsequent behaviors.

Part of the difficulty in articulating coherent and yet distinct conceptualizations of place and space stems from the fact that all places are surrounded by and contain space. For example, though a church might exist as a place that is a bounded location with associated meanings, this place contains within it space (e.g., the distance between the doors and the altar). At the same time, the place of a church is itself surrounded by space (e.g., the distance between one's church and one's home). In this way, the existence of space is tied to the fact that there are distinct bounded places within the physical world (Fried 2000; Stedman 2002). However, despite this relationship, place should not be equated to space (Gieryn 2000).

For the purposes of this research, I follow distinctions as outlined by previous scholars (Gieyrn 2000; Kusenbach 2008; Lewicka 2010; Logan 2012). Here, *place* will refer to a unique spot in the physical world that is associated with various shared meanings, expectations, and values (Gieryn 2000; Stedman 2002). As such, place in this research is nominal, in that it refers to a specifically bounded location with the physical world. By contrast, *space* is conceptualized as the relative location of various places and phenomena located within the physical world (Gans 2002; Logan 2012). In this way, space in this research is relational.

Place, Perceptions, and Interactions

Broadly within the body of literature on place, there are two general themes that emerge as relevant to the goal of this dissertation. These place-focused themes include how places shape

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the perceptions of individuals due to their association with particular sets of meanings (including those sets of meanings that become internalized as identities) as well as how perceptions of places and their associated meanings structure the behaviors of individuals located therein. That is to say, though not framed in explicitly these terms, these two major themes concerning place are at their core ways of examining place as a social structure that shapes individual behavior through the meanings associated with it. As later identity theory research demonstrates (*see below)*, patterned sets of shared meanings regularly shape how we interact with specific identity-based others and in turn how we see ourselves as social actors.

Beginning with the former, one central theme of importance in the place-based literature is the recognition that places become associated with various meanings (Tuan 1975). That is to say, while places are bounded locations within the physical world, they are also imbued with social meanings, such as what it means for a given location to be a church. This line of thought is a particularly fruitful line of research within urban sociology. For example, work by Simmel (1969) noted that the meanings associated with the city and city life impacts how one perceives other city dwellers such as one's neighbors (Proshansky 1978; Lalli 1992). In addition to the city in general, however, specific meanings have also been associated with particular areas within a city (Gans 1968), with public places effectively being a stage upon which a given performance is played out (Goffman 1963; Lofland 1973). In this way, places become akin to social objects that individuals' reference and act upon as they conduct themselves in the social world (Rochberg-Halton 1984; Lofland 2003). These place-based meanings are the results of a continual process of symbolic interpretation wherein places become infused with meanings not only for the individual, but for the larger collective of individuals that regularly come into contact with a given place over time (Tuan 1975; Milligan 1998; Hauge 2007).

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Some work shows that, over time, meanings associated with a specific place often take the form of an identity, or those stables sets of meanings and associated behavioral expectations that are internalized by individuals as part of the self (Burke and Stets 2009). In one respect, this may involve the individual identifying as belonging to a place (e.g., identifying as an urbanite, as a Clevelander) (Proshansky 1978). More pertinent to this research, however, is that individuals may come to associate a class of places with a given identity (Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff 1983). For example, if a group that is associated with a particular identity (e.g., the religious identity) regularly interacts at a given place (e.g., a house of worship), that place is likely to become associated with the particular identity (see e.g., Hauge 2007). As it relates to this dissertation, this is important because it suggests that places of worships (e.g., churches), or generally accepted places to which one can regularly go should they wish to engage in interactions with others regarding religion, become associated with the religious identity.

The second central theme of importance in the place-based literature is the recognition that perceptions of a place can structure individual and collective behavior. One particularly fruitful vein of research that demonstrates this is work on place attachment, which is defined as a perceived emotional bond associated with a given place (Lewicka 2011; Brown, Raymond, and Corcoran 2015) that often leads to identification to that place (Rollero and De Piccoli 2010). Within this body of research, attachment to a location has been found to impact the degree to which individuals have ties with others located in that place (Lewicka 2005), become involved with local grassroots movements associated with the place (Perkins, Brown, and Taylor 1996), and even how individuals create new place-based meanings (e.g., nicknames) in interactions with one another. As it relates to this dissertation, this is also important because it suggests that place

is not only imbued with a series of meanings, but that it also has the potential to structure individual behavior via the ways in which individuals perceive that place.

Though these findings within larger place research have not directly examined place in the context of social structure explicitly, the findings of the two themes discussed here, and particular the research cited in regards to theme two above, provide several clear points that indicate place is ripe for examination as social structure (particularly within a structural symbolic interactionist and identity theory framework). First, the meanings associated with a place shape how likely a line of action will be seen as possible or desirable to an individual. Since individuals act upon the meanings associated with objects (Mead 1934), the meanings associated with certain places will call forth certain responses based on those place-based meanings, meanings in the situation, and meanings associated with the individual social actor. Second, place has been found to facilitate or constrain various lines of action by the nature of people that it brings into contact with certain others, who in part act as social resources. This is a common theme in how social structure has been examined in structural social psychology. For example, social structure in the "social structure and personality face" of social psychology has examined social structure in the form of an individual's social ties. These social ties act in a way that bring individuals into regular contact with specific others who serve as resources that impact mental health (Kohn 1972; Turner and Marino 1994). Though the social structure in this example is the relationship between people rather than the meanings associated with places, they share in common the way in which they shape the patterned behaviors/outcomes of individuals. In this way, place within the larger literature has been demonstrated to operate in much the same way that social structure in social psychology, and in particular structural symbolic interactionism (Serpe and Stryker 2011). As such, and with this concepts connection to several other disciplines, place

conceptualized as social structure in social psychological research is not only appropriate, but also represents a significant potential area of interdisciplinary collaboration.

On a final note, it is important to mention that related research focuses on how higher-order places facilitate or constrain social action. The term 'higher-order' place is used here to describe a place that contains within it several distinct 'lower-order' places that serve as the primary site of identity-based interaction and that facilitate/constrain various lines of action by impacting the opportunities to engage in various behaviors. For example, a higher-order place such as a neighborhood may contain within it several lower-order places known as houses of worship, which serve as a stable site of religious interaction. Research within environmental psychology and within sociology examining neighborhoods has found that the overall size of these higher-order places (e.g., city, community) shapes the ability of individuals to engage in interactions with one another (Swaroop and Morenoff 2006; Haberle 1987; Ross 2000). Furthermore, within these higher-order places, the availability of lower-order places structures the degree to which individuals engage in supportive interactions (e.g., providing emotional support during a difficult time) with other members of the higher-order place (e.g., neighbors; Wellman 1979; Wellman and Wortley 1990). In particular, a set of stable interaction partners within in a higher-order place has been found to impact the degree to which individuals engage in expressive place-based activities, such as involvement in religious or civic groups (Swaroop and Morenoff 2006). Thus, place in prior research has been found to structure behavior in two ways, though meanings associated with particular places that serve as the actual site of interaction, as well as the composition of a higher-order place that also structures behavior via its impact on the likelihood of individuals coming together with identity-related others in a stable

fashion. This second manner in which place structure behavior will be of particular importance when incorporating place as an element of intermediate social structure.

Space, Resources, and Interactional Potential

Within sociological literature on space, a major theme is that space shapes behavior through its effect on the probability of an individual coming into contact with a class of particular others at a given interaction site. Again drawing upon urban sociology in particular, clear demonstrations of the effect of space are found in studies pertaining to racial segregation and cross-race interactions (Hawley 1971; Gottdiener and Hutchison 2011). For example, friend-based interactions between individuals of different races are often more likely to occur in higher-order places where less space exists between the homes of individuals of different races, at least for whites (Sigelman, Bledsoe, Welch, and Combs 1996). Work by Grannis (1998) further demonstrates the impact of space (or rather the ability to traverse space) on behavior, with the author finding that the layout of streets used to traverse portions of a city has an effect on inter-racial interaction. That is to say, when the layout of the streets is more conducive to easy movement within the city, individuals of different races are more likely to regularly come into contact with one another. In short, space structures behavior through its facilitation/constriction of the probability of individuals coming into contact with one another.

Grannis (1998) also demonstrates a second important point to consider in regards to research on space, perceptions, and behaviors. That is, while the *distance* between the places to which the individual travels is one way to measure the relative locations of these places, it is not the only measure of importance (Miller 2005). The *time* it takes for individuals to traverse space also has been found to have an impact on the degree with which individuals regularly travel to a given place (Kwan 1998), with time acting as a finite resource that must be spent in order to

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engage in a given behavior (Brenner 2017a). For example, a review of the spatial mismatch

hypothesis literature by Holzer (1991) finds that travel time to any given employer, rather than

just distance via miles, is a significant factor when examining differences in White and Black

employment within urban areas. Other work (Handy and Neimeier 1997) examining accessibility

also addresses how the time it takes to travel a given space between two or more places (i.e.,

home and work) impacts the likelihood of an individual travelling to a particular place (i.e., a

particular employment site).

In addition to distance and time, I expect that the actual or perceived *effort* required to

traverse space also impacts the probability that individuals will come into contact with various

others at a given place. This is likely due to the fact that any movement through physical space

ultimately requires the expenditure of finite resources other than just time, such as money,

mental/physical energy, etc. (Brenner 2017a). To this point, the availability of resources that

impact expenditure necessary to traverse space are often shaped by geographic factors such as

the location of the higher-order place in a geographic region (Millward and Spinney 2011;

Pucher and Renne 2005). For example, the necessity of possessing an automobile as a means of

traversing space varies by the overall size of the community within which the individual is

located (Millward and Spinney 2011), with some communities being so congested that alternate

forms of transportation are often required (such as public transportation) (Cervero and Gorham

1995). This point is further compounded by the fact that many individuals must leave their

community to travel to important interactions sites such as the workplace, with those individuals

that have to travel further (and are often located in the countryside) Millward and Spinney 2011;

Shergold et al. 2012) being much more dependent on possessing an automobile. Thus, rather

than focus on just the distance between two social objects or the time it takes to traverse that

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distance, this research will instead examine a more overall perception of the effort required to traverse space. This focus on the perceived effort to traverse space also theoretically aligns with foundational identity work regarding social structures facilitating/constraining behavior, where the effort to act upon a choice constrains the likelihood of the individual acting upon a given opportunity to enact a portion of their self (Stryker and Serpe 1983).

A Place for Space and Place in Sociological Social Psychology

Detailed above, places are often associated with particular meanings (including identities), and the space between various places impacts the probability of individuals coming into regular contact with various others at a given place. The space between interaction sites is itself located within one or more higher-order places such as communities, which inherently contain a multitude of interaction sites and which structure the probability of engaging in a given line of action. From this work, it is clear that place as well as the space between places, including the need to traverse this space, structures the ways in which individuals conduct themselves throughout the course of their day-to-day lives.

While place and space are important concepts for understanding the lived experiences of individuals in the social world, these concepts have been largely limited to a few distinct areas of sociology, such as urban sociology. However, these concepts are ripe for incorporation into sociological social psychology. This is because the various frameworks (or 'faces') (House 1977) within sociological social psychology are all in some fashion oriented towards understanding the relationships between the structure of the social world and the individual (e.g., behaviors, perceptions, self-outcomes), and space and place can serve as indexes of social structure. In particular, structural symbolic interactionism and identity theory is a particularly fruitful framework to more fully incorporate place and space. I begin below by detailing this

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perspective and theoretical framework before arguing that the incorporation of place and space into identity theory would allow for a fuller understanding of those social forces that ultimately impact situated interactions.

The Self and Symbolic Interactionism

Rooted in the foundational work of the Scottish Moral Philosophers and early social psychologists, symbolic interactionism is a perspective that is primarily concerned with how individuals create and interpret social meanings, especially with respect to the self (Stryker 1980; Reynolds 2003; Burke and Stets 2009; Serpe and Stryker 2011). This early focus can be seen in the work of William James. James posits that individuals possess multiple selves, with the individual having as many distinct selves as there are people who recognize them in various capacities in the social world (James 1890; Stryker 1980). It can also be seen in the work of Charles Horton Cooley, who took as a prime area of interest the ways in which individuals consider how they are seen by others through the 'looking-glass self,' and how this imagined perception of one's self in the eyes of others is the point of reference from which much behavior is organized (Cooley 1902).

Operating within the same theoretical interests, the work by George Herbert Mead was particularly influential in the development of symbolic interactionism. Mead examines the ways in which significant social interaction is conducted on the basis of shared meanings and associated expectations for social behavior (Mead 1934; Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009; Serpe and Stryker 2011). In addition to inanimate objects in the physical world (such as a chair, or a building), human beings through their capacity for reflexive thinking are able to take their self as a social object. Accordingly, individuals are able to mentally view themselves as they believe others view them in any given situation and will plan their actions in accordance to how

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they believe their actions will be perceived by others located in any given interaction (Mead 1934). This is possible, according to Mead, because of shared social meanings that can be ascribed to the individual that also give rise to expectations for behavior in a given situation. For example, an individual understands that there are meanings associated with being a Christian (e.g., piousness), and that others with whom they may interact with recognize both that these meanings exist and that they apply to the individual. Accordingly, this individual would recognize that in order to be seen as successfully acting as a good Christian, they must engage in certain behaviors indicative of piety while in a given situation (e.g., singing with the rest of the congregation during a hymnal when present during worship service).

While the work of Mead and other early social scientists are often referred to as symbolic interactionism, the actual term was coined by Herbert Blumer (House 1977; Stryker 1980; Snow 2001). Blumer's contribution to this face of sociological social psychology was the recognition that while individuals act upon shared meanings and associated behavioral expectations, these meanings must be interpreted by individuals during the course of actual interaction. As such, symbolic interaction involves a constant process of recreating meanings through an interpretation process (Stryker 1980). This essential point of Blumer's symbolic interactionism was formed in response to social psychological research that assumed *a priori* how individuals perceived various meanings and behavioral expectations (Blumer 1969). In keeping with this point, much work within the traditional frame of symbolic interactionism has focused on the ways in which meanings and expectations are interpreted and reshaped through the course of interactions, such as the meanings associated with being homeless (Snow and Anderson 1987) or the establishment of trust in the activity of mushroom hunting (Fine and Holyfield 1996).

Though symbolic interactionism flourished for a time after Blumer, debate surrounding the premises he established would lead to the fragmentation and decline of this theoretical framework within sociological social psychology (Fine 1993). Fortunately, this period of fragmentation would allow for the evolution and re-emergence of symbolic interactionism through, in part, the incorporation of various elements of role theory (Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009). While Blumer asserted that meanings are constantly reinterpreted and negotiated in interactions, this (it would later be acknowledged) does not mean that all lines of action are equally probable (Stryker 1987). Rather, individuals are likely to act in reference to the meanings associated with roles, which are largely stable over time and which are associated with behavioral expectations for an occupied social position (e.g., a pastor, an usher). This does not imply that individuals simply adopt without unique interpretation the meanings associated with a given social position, as degrees of ambiguity in what specific behaviors are called for in a given situation result in individuals being able to role-make rather that blindly role-take (McCall and Simmons 1978). Rather, this incorporation of role theory into symbolic interaction leads to the acknowledgement that the ways in which symbolic interaction plays out is itself impacted by social structures which serve to both define individuals in social positions and which structure how open or closed a role is with respect to role-making (Stryker 1980).

Structural Symbolic Interaction and Identity Theory

From this merging of role theory with symbolic interactionism, a structural variant of symbolic interactionism emerged which asserts that there are regularly patterned ways in which society impacts how individuals perceive themselves and interactions (Stryker 1980; Serpe and Stryker 2011). As structural symbolic interactionism continued to grow, identity theory would slowly take form as a way to empirically test its propositions (Stryker 1968; 1980; Stryker and

Serpe 2011). Identity theory defines an identity as the meanings that an individual internalizes as a component of their self (Burke and Stets 2009). As an individual has as many identities as they have people who recognize them in different ways (James 1890), identity theory tests the proposition of structural symbolic interactionism by examining those social structures that impact the probability that an individual will acted upon a given identity out of all those possible. Or, to restate the foundational question of this theory presented in the Introduction, "Why does one partisan spend his free Saturday (at a café) discussing politics, while another spends it (at the local pub) discussing sports?"

In response to this question, identity theory research posits that identities are organized hierarchically within the self, both in regards to the importance of the identity to how the individual sees their self (i.e., identity prominence) as well as the likelihood of the identity being enacted across various situations (i.e., identity salience) (Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009). That is to say, while the individual may possess multiple identities, some of these identities are more prominent to the individual, and some are more salient and therefore are more likely to be enacted than other identities (for a review on how identity prominence and salience are overlapping and yet conceptually distinct elements of the self, see Stryker and Serpe 1994; Brenner et al. 2014).

In keeping with the structural symbolic interactionism premise that society shapes self shapes behavior, identity theory research originally posited that the arrangement of identities within the self would be reflective of the social ties that individuals have with identity-related others (Stryker 1968; 1980). Specifically, an identity is likely to be more prominent and salient to the individual when they are more deeply committed to the associated social relationships/ties with identity-related others (Owens, Robinson, and Smith-Lovin 2010). Prior research has indeed

found that the degree to which individuals feel close to identity-related others in personal and emotional terms (i.e., affective commitment), as well as the breadth of identity-related ties in regards to the number of identity-related others with which one interacts including the resources spent on interacting with these individuals (i.e., interactive commitment), both shape the location of an identity within the self-hierarchies (Stryker and Serpe 1994; Burke and Stets 2009). In this way, society (conceptualized as commitments to others) shapes self (identity salience and prominence) which in turn shapes the various lines of identity-related behavior and interactions an individual enacts (Stryker and Serpe 1983; 1987).

Evolution of Social Structure in Identity Theory

Over the years, identity theory has experienced significant theoretical growth, such as how the identity process is related to emotions (Stets and Burke 2014), the relationship between identities and self-esteem (Ervin and Stryker 2001; Owens and Serpe 2003), and even exploration of the various bases of identities in regards to person, role, and group identities (Burke and Stets 2009). For a vast majority of this research the focus has been on how identities serve as a force that impacts various outcomes. One area that has not received a great of attention is evaluating how social forces shape identities as a product (Elliott 2001; Owens and Samblanet 2013).

More recently, one particular line of research has concerned itself with how identities and their location with the self are shaped by society. This research refines the "society" element in the society-self-interaction relationship posited by structural symbolic interactionism and empirically examined by identity theory. Within this theoretical expansion, society is conceived of as various levels of social structure—large, intermediate, and proximate—with the "higher" or larger social structures impacting the probability of the individual's location with the "lower" or

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smaller social structures that are closer to the actual site of interaction (Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stets and Serpe 2013). In this refined conception of social structure, large social structure is conceptualized as systems of stratification (e.g., race, gender, SES) that shape the identity process via its effect on the individual's placement within a given intermediate social structure (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005). Intermediate social structure was initially conceptualized as a stable associational grouping/setting, such as a neighborhood or school, which would then in turn impact the composition of those individuals one regularly comes into contact with (i.e., proximate social structure).

While the current research, as discussed below, will examine intermediate social structure, it is important to fully flush out the current conception of how these three levels of social structure are connected in identity theory. For this research, the main focus will be on the link between intermediate and proximate social structure. The proposed relationship between these two levels of social structure in identity theory is that the various characteristics that define how "open" a social cluster is to contact with identity-based others (Stryker et al. 2005; Serpe and Stryker 2012), the greater the overall proportion of one's daily contacts (those individuals whom one is affectively and interactively committed in the original identity theory model: Serpe and Stryker 1994) who will share in the given identity. This openness can be thought of as the degree to which social structure facilitates contact with specific others. For example, in a community where everyone is a member of multiple organization, the probability of coming repeatedly into contact with individuals who share in a given identity is high (i.e., your pastor is also a member of the local softball team and also a member of the local Rotary Club). This, in turn, shapes the composition of one's primary social groups (and in turn those people the individual becomes interactively and affectively committed to), specifically in regards to how

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readily these groups call forth a specific identity in any given interaction. In this way, how open or closed a community is in regards to the likelihood of coming into contact with various others will shape in turn the overall proportion of individuals one knows who share in a given identity. The significance of this effect is described further below when describing research that has focused primarily on proximate social structure.

Despite the focus here on the link between intermediate and proximate social structure, it is also important to briefly expand on the relationship between large and intermediate social structures. Large structures, as society spanning systems of stratification, have the ability to impact almost every aspect of an individual's life (Stryker et al. 2005). In identity theory recently, the focus has been on how those systems of stratification impact the large social clusters individuals find themselves in. For example, due to racial discrimination and other factors, Black Americans are more likely to find themselves concentrated in various, de facto segregated communities. In this example, is the many interlocking inequalities empirically linked with race in America that shape the large cluster of groups the individual finds themselves in. It is at this point, when large social structure has impacted the likelihood of being placed in one cluster over another, that these social clusters (such as neighborhoods or communities) begin to facilitate/constrain contact with various identity related others. In short, this refinement to the "society" element of identity theory proposes that the degree to which individuals are committed to a given identity is shaped first by their location in society spanning systems of stratification, which impact the probability of individuals being located in an intermediate social structure that affects the likelihood of individuals regularly coming into contact with various others (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005; Merolla, Stryker, and Serpe 2012).

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In recent years, work with the structural paradigm of identity theory has focused primarily on either the effects of proximate social structure (Merolla, Serpe, and Stryker 2012; Yarrison 2016) or large social structure (Owens and Serpe 2003; Stets and Harrod 2004). In particular, much research has been conducted on the ways in which the homophily of one's social contacts (in regards to a given identity) has a significant impact on the identity process. Specifically, research has found that the greater the proportion of one's social contacts that share in a given identity, the more committed to that identity the individual will be (Yarrison 2016). In addition to group homophily, proximate social structure has been examined in regards to levels of institutional support pertaining to an identity. In regards to the science identity, which is to say identifying as someone who studies science, among college student, the relationship with a mentor was found to operate as a proximate social structure in the identity theory model. While this research offers an interesting way of examining proximate social structure, this research will be conducted by primarily focusing on the former conceptualization.

To date, the topic of intermediate social structure has received the least attention. Importantly intermediate social structure offers a theoretical bridge between the large-scale systems of stratification and the proximate groups in which identity-related interactions are played out. Through a renewed focus on the specific ways in which intermediate social structure operates as a mechanism that connects large and proximate social structures in the identity process, it is possible to gain a greater degree of understanding of the ways in which society shapes self shapes social behavior (Stryker 1980). Furthermore, such an examination of intermediate social structure as a mechanism that connects large and proximate social structures offers a path by which the concerns of mainstream sociology (i.e., large systems of social stratification) can be more fully integrated within sociological social psychology broadly and

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structural symbolic interactionism in particular. It is with regard to this profitable area of expansion, intermediate social structure, that this research is designed.

The Present Research

The primary goal of this dissertation is to examine the ways in which place and space impact social behavior via their effects on the self. Specifically, I posit that place and space operate as elements of intermediate social structure within identity theory, with place and space impacting the probability of individuals coming into regular contact with a group of stable others in the context of a given identity. This proposition is based upon previous research which finds: that the composition of a higher-order place, such as a community, structures the probability of various lines of interaction taking place (Wellman and Wortley 1990; Swaroop and Morenoff 2006), finds that individuals associate given proximate sites of interaction with specific identities (Tuan 1975; Rochberg-Halton 1984; Milligan 1998), and finds that the ability to traverse space facilitates/constrains the likelihood of individuals coming into contact with one another (Kwan 1998; Grannis 1998; Miller 2005).

The present study endeavors to identify specific mechanisms by which place and space impact behavior through their effect on the location of an identity within the prominence and salience hierarchies of an individual. Accordingly, this research is divided into two distinct yet related projects in order to isolate the effects of place and space on the identity process, with the focus being the religious identity. The religious identity is well suited for this research because it is an identity that is viewed as being associated with a class of places known as houses of worship. For the purposes of this research, the religious identity is assumed to be a series of shared meanings and expectations for behavior associated with belonging to a formal, organized group centered on the worship of a divine being. On a more practical level, the religious identity

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is whatever it means to be a religious person and act accordingly (e.g., in the survey used in this research, see below, respondents were asked to answer in regards to how they thought of themselves as a religious person, rather than specifying that they think of themselves in regards to holding a religious identity).The religious identity is also well established within identity theory as a normative role and/or group identity (Long 2016; Yarrison 2016).

Study One

  I examine space, place, and the religious identity in two interrelated studies. The first of these studies examines the effect of *space* on the identity process as an element of intermediate social structure. As prior research has demonstrated, the greater the space between an individual and a given place, the lower the probability that the individual will regularly interact with others in that given place (Sigelman et al. 1996; Gottdiener and Hutchison 2011). That is to say, the greater the effort required to act upon an opportunity, the less likely the individual will choose to act upon the opportunities for regular identity-based interaction (Stryker and Serpe 1983) that are found at the given place. Regarding the religious identity, and guided by the research mentioned above, I first hypothesize that:

  H1: The effort to reach one's primary place of worship will be negatively associated with the frequency of attending one's primary place of worship.

  Previous work within identity theory has proposed that intermediate social structure impacts the location of an identity in the individual's self-hierarchies and subsequent identity-based behaviors through its effect on the composition of one's proximate social structure (i.e., proximate social structure→commitment→identity hierarchies→identity-related behaviors). In the context of this research, it is proposed that the more frequently an individual attends their primary place of worship, the greater the proportion of the people they know and interact with on

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a daily basis (e.g., friends, close friends, daily acquaintances) that will share in the religious-identity (see e.g., Dovido, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003). As such, I predict that:

> *H2: The frequency with which one attends their primary place of worship will be positively associated with the proportion of one's proximate social structure that shares in the religious identity.*

To reiterate, I expect that the greater the effort required to traverse the space between one's home and primary place of worship, the less frequently one will attend that place of worship. Thus, frequency should partly shape the composition of the individual's proximate social structure. Furthermore, I expect that proximate social structure will be related to the degree to which individuals are affectively and interactively committed to their religious identity. The theoretical rationale for this is that when an individual's daily contacts share in a given identity, individuals will be more likely to interact with these people in the context of the religious identity while also having more to lose from no longer holding that identity (Serpe and Stryker 1994; Burke and Stets 2009). Accordingly, I predict:

> *H3: The proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity will be positively associated with one's interactive commitment to the religious identity.*
>
> *H4: The proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity will be positively associated with one's affective commitment to the religious identity.*

The final set of hypotheses for this first research project have also been previously supported by work within identity theory and represent that framework's mechanism by which society impacts the self. Specifically, prior work within identity theory asserts that the more committed an individual is to a given identity, the more likely they will enact that identity across a variety of situations (i.e., identity salience) and the more central the identity will be to how the

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individual sees their self (i.e., identity prominence). Prior work has also established a positive relationship between prominence and salience (Brenner et al. 2014), as well as linking proximate social structure directly to prominence and salience (Yarrison 2016). Accordingly, I predict:

H5a: Affective commitment to the religious identity will be positively associated with the salience of the religious identity.

H5b: Interactive commitment to the religious identity will be positively associated with the salience of the religious identity.

H6a: Affective commitment to the religious identity will be positively associated with the prominence of the religious identity.

H6b: Interactive commitment to the religious identity will be positively associated with the prominence of the religious identity.

H7a: The proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity will be positively associated with the prominence of the religious identity.

H7b: The proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity will be positively associated with the salience of the religious identity.

H8: The prominence of the religious identity will be positively associated with the salience of the religious identity.

Study Two

In the second project, the effect of *place* (specifically that of a higher-order place) on space and the identity process will be examined, as well as the overall impact of the identity process on identity-related (i.e., religious) behavior. The higher-order place whose qualities will be examined is the home community of the individual. The home community is defined as what the respondent considers to be the area around their home and neighborhood, and which does not

have to align with any official political boundary (Kusenbach 2008). The home community constitutes a higher-order place in that it contains several smaller places that serve as the actual site of interaction (i.e., a community containing several churches where the religious identity could be enacted). This higher-order place will be examined in regard to the opportunities present for regularly engaging in identity-based interactions.

Previous research has demonstrated that the availability of individuals/locations within higher-order places impact the likelihood of the individual engaging in various related behaviors (Swaroop and Morenoff 2006; Haberle 1987; Wellman and Wortley 1990). This finding mirrors theoretical and empirical work in identity theory, which asserts that an individual will be more likely to enact an identity when the opportunities to enact that identity are greater (Stryker and Serpe 1983; Stryker and Serpe 1987; Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005). Accordingly, the second project examines the assumption that, within a higher-order place, when individuals have a greater number of lower-order places (i.e., houses of worship) where they can enact a given identity, the individual will choose a location that requires less effort to traverse the space to that location. Accordingly, I predict:

> *H9: The number of houses of worship within an individual's home community will be negatively associated with the effort required to reach the individual's primary place of worship.*

When individuals have more options where to enact their religious identity, they will be able to choose a location that does not require as much expenditure of effort to reach it. Therefore, the qualities of the higher-order place in which the individual resides will structure the space between the individual and their primary congregation that must be traversed if interaction is to take place. Building off of this premise, another expectation for place is that the

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overall size of the higher-order place (i.e., the individual's home community) will be related to the number of opportunities to enact that identity (i.e., the number of identity-related interaction sites, or lower-order places). For example, one can imagine that in a community with a larger population, a greater number of churches are present, while in a smaller community of perhaps less than a thousand residents may only have one or two churches in the entire community. As such, I predict:

H10: The size of an individual's home community will have a significant impact on the number of houses of worship within that community.

As indicated earlier, the ultimate aim of this research is to identify how the layout of the physical world through place and space shape the everyday behavior of individuals via the identity process. Accordingly, the final hypotheses center on the relationship between identity hierarchies and the individual's subsequent identity-related behavior. As previous studies have demonstrated, identity prominence and identity salience correlate with identity-related behaviors (Merolla et al. 2012; Brenner et al. 2014). Furthermore, longitudinal identity theory research has found that over time, one's identity at a given time is a strong predictor of future behavior, even when holding constant the prior behavior that impacted the location of the identity within the self-hierarchies (Brenner, Serpe, and Stryker 2014; Stets, Brenner, Burke, and Serpe 2017). Therefore, within this research I predict that:

H11: The salience of the religious identity will be positively associated with the frequency of engaging in religious behaviors.

H12: The prominence of the religious identity will be positively associated with the frequency of engaging in religious behaviors.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Survey Design and Data Collection

    Data. In order to empirically examine the ways in which the physical layout of the social world operate as elements of larger social structures that shape the configuration of the self, data was collected via an online, non-full probability sample of survey respondents (Simmons and Bobo 2015). This sample is composed of individuals who self-select into an online panel, usually by the respondent reaching out to the panel provider with the expectation of receiving various forms of compensation for completing surveys. The use of non-full probability samples is problematic when attempting to create generalization that apply to an entire population, although this can be mitigated, when possible, through the appropriate use of raked-weighting procedures. In particular, the use of such panel data raises concerns that individuals share some form of bias that distinguishes them from the general population. For example, a common concern is that individuals that compose non-full probability panels (with a commonly referenced example being Amazon Turk workers) are all biased in regards to a demographic characteristic (e.g., age, income) or other personality trait (e.g., helpful people are more likely to go out of their way to sign up for panels; self-interested people being more likely to sign-up due to the panel provider's promise of reward).

Despite these limitations, there are several redeeming factors of employing non-full probability samples, particularly for identity theory based research. Of particular importance is that the use of non-full probability data allows for the collection of a large enough number of responses to allow for the employment of SEM techniques (and in particular groups SEM, which was the originally envisioned analysis plan for this research, see Chapter 4 below). For the purposes of this study and the three sample groups collected (see *Sampling Frame* below), 400 completed surveys were required to make groups SEM feasible. Drawing upon the Survey Research Lab at Kent State University, the cost of collecting the data used in this research via telephone using a full probability addressed-based sample (including cell phones and landlines) would cost (not including the cost of sample or indirect University fees, see below) would come to $64,283.63. Even if all questions except those related specifically to this study were dropped, resulting in an estimated survey completion time of 20 minutes, the total costs of the project excluding sample or indirect fees would come to $41,509.13. At this level, the cost of collecting this data is prohibitively high, especially in light of the fact that this research is the first to collect data specifically concerned with the physical world in identity theory. By employing a non-full probability panel sample, the cost of collecting this data was reduced by ~500% from the bare bones survey cost and ~800% for the full survey, allowing for the exploration of additional place, space, and identity related factors not covered in the present research. In short, the use of non-full probability data makes this research both feasible and able to explore additional topics that would have been prohibitively costly using another form of data collection.

In addition to this, the generalizability limitations of the non-full probability based sampling used in this research (as opposed to full probability based sampling) is warranted given the difficulty of reaching the particular groups of individuals examined in this research. In

particular, the additional resources necessary to reach individuals from largely rural counties which are already difficult to include in most survey research (Shebl et al. 2009; Boyer, Adams, and Lucero 2010) would have further inhibited the ability of this study to examine a wide range of identity-related factors, an element that is essential into any underdeveloped theoretical area if that research is to lead to additional research. Through the inclusion of individuals from these particular communities, which again would be prohibitively costly if a non-full probability sample was employed, this research also begins to rectify an additional issue in much social psychology research and identity theory in particular, the exclusion of individuals of largely rural backgrounds from meaningful participation in social psychology survey research (particularly survey and experimental research).

Finally, in addition to these general points regarding the value of non-full probability samples, there are a few specific points that also often apply to identity theory based research. First, as most identity theory research is process driven, the ratio of value gained by asking more questions to the value lost through lowered generalizability is affected differently. In this largely process focused research, a reduction in generalizability is acceptable because the goal at most stages of this research is not generalizability to the population. Rather, the goal is to explore various processes and identify areas of further consideration. Second, non-full probability panels are able to take measures to ensure that the final composition of any data reflects at least some key demographic characteristics through the use of quotas, particularly those demographic characteristics such as race, age, and gender. In this way, while the sample cannot be generalized to the larger national population, such a sample does not run the same risks as a convenience sample or other online panels that do not attempt to ensure a range of respondents were included for participation. Together, these factors that mitigate the impact of lowered sampling

generalizability as well as the advantages of using this form of sampling for this particular research and the larger identity theory paradigm have shaped the way much identity theory research has done. The use of online, non-full probability panels in previous identity theory research (Long 2016; Yarrison 2016; Markowski and Serpe 2018), particularly when it comes to new and emerging topics within identity theory research, has largely been driven by these specific and general points regarding the value of non-full probability sampling.

The respondents for this data collection effort were provided by Qualtrics®, an online survey panel provider. The online panel was composed of individuals who agree to receive invitations to complete surveys in exchange for various forms of compensation as determined by the panel provider, with compensation rates commensurate to the overall length of the survey and the nature of sampling frame. Respondent eligibility was initially determined by the panel provider using demographic information provided by panel members when they first signed-up to be a panel member. Due to the restrictions to the sampling frame put into place during data collection, Qualtrics® was selected as the panel provider for the additional reason that it serves as a panel aggregator. Through panel aggregation, Qualtrics® was able to draw on respondents registered from a variety of sampling vendors (e.g., Dynata) while maintaining the integrity of the sample by ensuring respondents are not able to complete the survey twice (even if they are members of multiple online panels).

Sampling Frame. At the outset of data collection, several criteria were established with the panel provider to ensure only qualified respondents were able to access/complete the survey. In order to qualify for participation in this study, respondents had to meet the following initial eligibility criteria: 18 years of age, identifying as either Christian or Jewish, attending a place of worship at least several times a year on average, and having attended a place of worship within

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the last 12 months. The age criteria was put into place for a variety of reasons, including the additional burden of gathering data from minors as well as the limited agency such respondents have in choosing their place of worship. As one of the key proposals of this research is that place and space shape the frequency of an individual engaging in place-based interaction (e.g., travelling to a specific location), the inclusion of respondents who have largely limited autonomy in regards to movement would introduce errors in interpreting the data.

The sample population was limited to individuals of Christian/Jewish faith for a variety of reasons, including the risk of other religious groups (e.g., Muslims, Buddhists) being limited to only one house of worship due to a variety of social factors, such as fewer congregation members, funds for the creation and maintenance of houses of worship and even the effects of xenophobia impacting the ability of houses of worship to even be constructed. In addition, many religious denominations/sects do not have houses of worship that are as common or readily identifiable as being houses of worship (e.g., Wiccans). Through this limiting of the sampling frame, this research will be able to get a better sense of how place and space shape the religious identity for those individuals whose identity often requires the navigation of space to a specific identity-related place. It is hoped that the findings of this research can then be uses to investigate the effect of place and space on identities that are linked to places that are not widely recognized as being associated with a given identity (e.g., how the presence/absence of coffee shops impacts the political identity, even though coffee shops are not explicitly connected to the political identity in general).

In addition to respondents possessing the specific religious identity of focus for this study (Christian/Jewish religious identity), respondents were also required to have attended a house of worship more than once within the last year. The first reason for this additional sampling frame

requirement was to ensure that all respondents were able to give valid responses to the key questions of this study, which focus on effort to reach a place of worship as well as various factors related to attending that place of worship (e.g., frequency, attachment). Given the large number of cases required to run structural equation models, particular group SEM with a large number of control variables, it was essential to ensure that the majority of respondents who otherwise would formally qualify for the study were able to provide a valid response. The second component of this requirement (more than one instance of attendance in the last year) was to prevent the data from being skewed by individuals who only attend a place of worship due to a religious holiday. In particular, such individuals, while being able to provide information regarding how much effort must be expended to reach a particular location, this effort likely did not impact their propensity to attend the given one time in a given year due to that one time likely being a significant religious holiday. Finally, such respondents were excluded due to the risk of these respondents reporting attending a religious ceremony in a place of worship far away from their actual community of residence (e.g., a man who attends Christmas day service when visiting his parents two states away on Christmas).

Respondents who did not meet all of these eligibility criteria were not included in the Qualtrics® sampling frame, and those that erroneously received an invitation to participate were automatically routed out of the survey after failing an eligibility criterion in the screening process. In addition to these criteria, respondent eligibility was also determined by place of residence and size of place of residence. This eligibility requirement was found to be essential during data collection of this project for a few reasons. First, while many individuals live within extremely large formal municipalities such as Chicago or San Diego, within these large formal municipalities are the smaller home communities the individual resides within. While this is not

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a problem for much research on urban studies, such an arrangement does pose serious methodological issues for this first attempt at examining intermediate social structure in regards to place and space. Most pressingly, there is no way to ensure that the respondents will be able to provide accurate information regarding the community they reside it because there are many ways in which respondents understand what is meant by their home community.

In order to address these issues listed above, respondent residence eligibility was established to prevent respondents living in larger communities from taking part in this study. Furthermore, in order to ensure that there was enough variation in community size to examine this effect of place on the identity process, three community size quota groups were established. The first of these groups included respondents who lived in communities of less than 1,000 residents, which here will be referred to as the "small" community. The second group consisted of respondents who lived in communities with 5,000 to 7,500 residents (the "medium" community group), and the third group was composed of respondents who lived in communities with 12,500 to 20,000 residents (the "large" community group).

This selection of community sizes was based upon initial investigations into the total population of these groups in Ohio (see below for further information regarding why Ohio was initially selected), which revealed that these community groups would yield total populations of roughly equal size. In addition, the decision to have these groups be non-contiguous in regards to population was designed to ensure significant variation in community size for this initial exploration into place as intermediate social structure.

Finally, in order to account for the fact that many small municipalities are contiguous with (and are often times located within) larger cities, only communities that were at least one mile in travel distance away from another community were included in the sampling frame.

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Using a combination of Census data and Google Maps, the zip codes of municipalities that fell within this sampling frame were provided to Qualtrics®. Survey invitations were sent to panel members who had previously indicated they resided in one of the provided zip codes. As an additional screening process to reduce the error in sampling across community size, within the survey individuals were asked to provide the zip code of the community in which they primarily lived. Any individual who did not enter a zip code from the sampling frame list provided to Qualtrics was subsequently routed out of the survey.

While this decision to restrict the sampling frame to these communities does represent a limitation of this research in regards to generalizability (see *Chapter 6 Discussion, Limitations below)*, this restriction was necessary in order to begin the process of examining place and space as intermediate social structure. With the limited resources available for data collection, the goal of this present research is to determine if the identity process is related to place and space using groupings that are most likely to show a relationship if one exists. From this initial research, future research would then be better positioned to identify ways in which this process does or does not apply to the larger population (see *Chapter 6, Future Directions below).*

As mentioned above, the final sampling frame restriction for this study was the state in which a respondent lived. Residency size was determined according to the 2010 Census[1]. Only residents of Midwestern states were eligible for participation in the survey to control for how the physical layout of the social world may vary drastically in different regions of the country (e.g., the sprawling layout of cities on the East Coast compared to a more methodical street layout in West coast cities). Initially, only Ohio was selected as the primary area of inquiry due to its

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[1] Due to the fact that only the 5-year American Community Survey data is available for small communities, and that this 5-year estimate often has large margins of error for the population of these communities, the 2010 Census was selected as a measure of community size when identifying communities for this study's sampling frame.

relatively diverse size of places (i.e., many small isolated communities as well as communities of moderate size) and sizeable state population, both of which allowed for a sizable number of places to be included in the sampling frame for each of the three community quota groups listed above. However, to expedite data collection, the sampling frame was expanded over time to include a number of Midwestern states bordering Ohio (Indiana, Kentucky).

Sample. Several hundred respondents were collected from each of the three community size groups listed above (small, medium, large). Data collection began in the late fall of 2018 and continued into the early spring of 2019. Quota sampling was employed to ensure at least a 60/40 woman/man split for each group in order to allow for examination of gender on the identity process. After removing problematic cases (e.g., failed sample qualification, entering nonsense instead of a church name), the final total for all three groups included 445 respondents from the large-size community group (12,500-20,000 residents), 384 respondents from the medium-size community group (5,000-7,500 residents), and 388 respondents from the small-size community group (1000 residents or less). Descriptive statistics for the entire sample are provided below in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics			
Measure	Mean (SD)	Range	*n*
Places in community--general	3.89 (1.25)	0-5	1196
Places in community--attended	1.36 (1.08)	0-6	1217
Places in community--available	3.45 (2.03)	0-11	1217
Effort to Traverse Space	1.74 (1.03)	1-5	1187
Frequency of Attendance	4.71 (1.86)	1-7	1209
Proximate Social Structure	3.58 (0.94)	1-5	1115
Affective Commitment	3.29 (0.69)	1-4	1114
Interactive Commitment	2.70 (0.98)	1-5	1017
Identity Prominence	3.28 (0.64)	1-4	1109
Identity Salience	5.62 (1.40)	1-7	1131
Frequency of Religious Behavior	4.05 (0.98)	1-6	1129
Age	44.81 (15.46)	18-91	1204
Female	60.86%	-	740
White	95.97%	-	1168
Education	3.62 (1.46)	1-7	1215
Household Income	4.69 (2.23)	1-11	1163

All respondents indicated that they were religious and that they had attended at least one place of worship within the last 12 months. As shown in Table 1, the majority of the respondents are white (96%) and just over half (61%) were female. The average age of the sample was 45 years old, with the average education level being some college but no bachelor's degree.

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Survey Design. The survey was programmed in Qualtrics® in six distinct parts: Qualifying/Screening, Home Community and House of Worship Information (Place); Effort to Reach Houses of Worship and Attendance (Space), Structural Identity Theory Measures (Identity); Religious Behaviors and Self-Outcomes (Identity Outcomes), and Additional Demographic Information (Controls). A full list of measures used in this dissertation can be found in Appendix A. In the qualifying/screening section, respondents were asked to confirm that they met all of the eligibility criteria for the survey as outlined in the sampling frame. If eligible, respondents were asked to provide basic information about their home community (e.g., size, available houses of worship, names of houses of worship attended). In the space section of the survey, respondents were asked questions regarding how the effort to traverse space impacted their ability to attend each house of worship listed in section two, as well as additional information regarding the traversing of this space (e.g., methods used to traverse space, who the individual traverses the space with).

After the space section, the survey then proceeded to ask questions commonly found in identity theory research. This section of the survey included measures of identity commitment, identity salience and prominence, and the composition of the individual's proximate social structure. Following these measures, section five gathered information on various self-outcomes such as self-esteem and self-worth, as well as identity-related behaviors. The last section of the survey gathered demographic information not included in the screening section of the survey, and included measures of household income, relationship status, educational attainment, and employment status.

Measurement

Place Size. Place size was assessed based upon the zip code the respondent provided during the initial screening section of the survey. This zip code was used to determine whether the respondent lived in a community of less than 1,000 residents, between 5,000 and 7,500 residents, or in a community of 12,500 to 20,000 residents. This grouping was determined by comparing the zip code provided with the population of that zip code as indicated in the 2010 Census. While it is likely that some change in population size has occurred since the 2010 Census, the population gap between each of the three groups combined with the overall small population change for these relatively small communities helps to ensure that this change would not have a significant effect on subsequent analyses. From this information, a series of dummy variables were created to represent living within each community size or not.

Place Opportunity. In order to gather information regarding places where the individual could regularly engage in identity-based interactions as well as to allow for subsequent data collection regarding these interaction sites, respondents were asked to provide the names of various identity-related interaction sites. First, respondents were asked to provide the name of their primary place of worship within their community. Respondents were then asked to list up to five other places of worship within their home community that they had attend in the last 12 months. Next, respondents were asked to list up to five places in their home community they could attend but choose not to attend for any reason. Finally, respondents were asked to list up to five places of worship they had attended outside of their home community in the last 12 months.

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From these questions, two measures were created to represent the identity-related interaction site composition of the respondent's higher-order place (i.e., the respondent's community). First, the overall opportunity to enact the religious identity was measured by counting the number of valid names of houses of worship provided by the respondent for places they have attended or could attend within their community. The range for the overall opportunity to enact the religious identity within one's home community was zero (for respondents who only attended a place of worship outside of their community) to eleven (one primary place of attendance plus up to five additional attended places and up to five places that could be attended but are not). It is this operationalization of place opportunity, the number of available houses of worship a respondent would provide the name of in their community, that is used for all subsequent analyses in this dissertation, with the other operationalizations of place opportunity provided for additional group comparison purposes only. The average number of houses of worship available in the large community group was 3.48, in the medium community group was 3.58, and in the small community group was 3.30.

From this primary measure of place opportunity, the actual number of identity-based interaction sites attended by the respondent was measured by counting the number of places within their community the respondents had actually attended within the last year. The range for opportunity enactment was zero to six (one primary house of worship plus up to five additional houses of worship within the community the respondent had actually attended). The average number of houses of worship attended in the large community group was 1.39, in the medium community group was 1.31, and in the small community group was 1.38. Finally, in order to account for the fact that respondents may have trouble providing specific names for churches in their community that they had never attended, a third operationalization of place opportunity

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simply involved respondents indicating the number of houses of worship in their community using an ordinal scale, with the response options of "0", "1", "2-3", "4-5", "6-10", "11 or more". For the community groups, the average response to this general measurement of places in one's community was 4.28 for the large community group, 4.06 for the medium community group, and 3.28 for the small community group.

Effort to Traverse Space. For all lower-order places that the respondent identified, they were asked a series of follow-up questions pertaining to each place. For the purposes of this project, only the primary place will be considered. If the respondent did not indicate they attended a place of worship within their home community, the first place of worship the respondent listed outside of their primary community was coded as their primary place of worship.

Effort to reach their place(s) of worship was assessed through a variety of measures designed to tap into the respondent's subjective perceptions of how burdensome traversing space to that place is. Respondents were asked to respond to the following statements on a five-point scale, where 1 indicates "Not at All" and 5 indicates "A Great Deal:" "How much does distance (e.g., miles to the place) factor into how often you attend each of the following places?" "How difficult is travelling to each of the following places?" "How much does travel time factor into how often you attend each of the following places?" and "How tiring is travelling each of the following places?" These items were chosen in response to prior literature that geographic distance is not the only way in which individuals perceive space and that individuals especially consider the resource expenditure required to traversing space (Kwan 1998). The average response value for effort to traverse space was 1.77 for the large community group, 1.71 for the medium community group, and 1.74 for the small community group.

Frequency of Attendance. For each of the houses of worship the respondent indicated they had attended in the last 12 months, respondents were asked to indicate how often they went that place of worship. Houses of worship were listed in the order that they were entered by the respondent, with the primary house of worship being displayed first and up to 10 additional houses of worship following. Respondents were provided with the following possible response options: Once a year or less frequently (1), Several times a year (2), At least once every two months (3), About once a month (4), Two or three times a month (5), Once a week (6), More than once a week (7), and Prefer not to answer (99). For the present research, only the frequency the respondent attends their primary place of worship is examined. The average response value for frequency of attendance was 4.67 for the large community group, 4.75 for the medium community group, and 4.42 for the small community group.

Proximate Social Structure. Within identity theory research, proximate social structure has been measured as the proportion of one's everyday contacts that share in the given identity (e.g., homogeneity) (Yarrison 2016) or as enrollment in stable identity-based programs (e.g., science training programs for college science students) (Merolla, Serpe, and Stryker 2012). Proximate social structure here is measured using the former measurement in order to assess how place and space impact the likelihood of coming into regular contact with various others. To measure proximate social structure, respondents were asked to rate the proportion of people that they know in four different capacities that were also religious using a five-point scale, where 1 indicated "Almost none" and 5 indicated "Almost all." The four groups of individuals included:

1. Close friends (people that you know and can count on if you need them)

2. Friends (people you know and do things with)

3. Family members (spouse/partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, etc.)

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4. People you interact with on a daily basis.

Using this response scale, a higher value indicates a proximate social structure that is more conducive to regularly enacting the religious identity. The average response value for an individual's proximate social structure was 3.63 for the large community group, 3.60 for the medium community group, and 3.51 for the small community group.

Identity Salience. Identity salience in this research was measured using a modified version of the 5-item contextual salience index employed by Yarrison (2016). These measurements were designed to capture the likelihood that the respondent would willingly discuss their religious identity (i.e., act upon the religious identity in interaction) in response to a variety of situations, with a greater score on these measures indicating a higher level of salience. The five specific prompts were preceded by the statement, "*For the next few questions, please think about meeting a friend of a close friend <u>for the first time</u> at a social gathering.*" Respondents were asked their likelihood of engaging in behavior contained the prompt using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating "Almost certainly would not" and 7 indicating "Almost certainly would." The five behaviors included the following:

1. During the conversation, they ask you about your religion. How likely is it that you will tell them about **being religious?**

2. During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would share with them that you are **also religious?**

3. During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you ask them more about **being religious?**

4. During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would buy them a drink?

5. During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would invite them to get together in the future?

When averaged together, these items create a score that represents the probability of an individual enacting their religious identity, with a higher value representing a greater probability of enacting the identity. The average religious identity salience value was 1.77 for the large community group, 1.71 for the medium community group, and 1.74 for the small community group.

Identity Prominence. Identity prominence was measured using a four-item index adapted from previous identity-theory related surveys (Yarrison 2016; Stets et al. 2017). For these items, respondents were presented with a statement and asked to rate their level of agreement using a 4-point scale. Response options for this scale consisted of: 1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Agree, 4. Strongly Agree, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. The content of each statement was designed to capture how the important the religious identity is to their self-image and overall sense of self. The four statements the respondents were asked to rate in terms of agreement/disagreement were:

1. Being **religious** is an important part of my self-image.

2. Being **religious** is an important reflection of who I am.

3. I have come to think of myself as a **religious** person.

4. I have a strong sense of belonging to the community of **religious** people.

As with identity salience, a higher the averaged value of the identity prominence responses, the more prominent the identity is to the individual. For religious identity prominence, the averaged value was 1.77 for the large community group, 1.71 for the medium community group, and 1.74 for the small community group.

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Interactive Commitment. Interactive commitment has traditionally been measured with a 3-item index. The first item asks respondents "How often do you do things with people who share your religious views?" and includes the response options: Never, Seldom, Once a month, Less than once a week, Once a week, Several times a week, Daily, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. The second item seeks to assess the amount of time respondents spend in interactions with identity-related others. To the prompt "In an average week, how many hours do you actively spend doing things with people who share your religious views," individuals were provided with the following response options: Less than 5 hours, 5 to 10 hours, 11 to 20 hours, 21 to 30 hours, More than 30 hours, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. Finally, the third item assesses the proportion of non-essential resources individuals spend on identity-related interaction, with a greater proportion of resources being spent representing a greater degree of interactive commitment to the identity. This component of interactive commitment was assessed by asking: "Of the money you do not need for rent, clothing and other essentials, how much do you spend on things you do with people who share your religious views (e.g., going out to a movie, gifts)." For this item, the response options were: Almost none, Less than half, About half, More than half, Almost all, Don't know, and Prefer to not answer. When averaged together, resulting in a range of 1-5, the value for interactive commitment was 2.71 for the large community group, 2.74 for the medium community group, and 2.67 for the small community group.

Affective Commitment

As with interactive commitment, affective commitment was assessed using a 3-item index. For the first item, respondents were asked how much they would miss the people they know because of their religion if they were not able to see them anymore, with the response

options for this item being: Miss them not at all, Miss them a little, Miss them somewhat, Miss them a great deal, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. For the second item, respondents were asked to assess how close they are in personal and emotional terms to those people they know because of their religious identity, with response options being: Not close at all, Not very close, Somewhat close, Very close, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. Finally, the third item asks respondents to rate how important to the respondent are the people they know because of their religion using the response options: Not at all important, Not very important, Somewhat important, Very important, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. The average response value for affective commitment was 3.27 for the large community group, 3.30 for the medium community group, and 3.29 for the small community group.

Identity-Based Behaviors. Religious identity-based behaviors were assessed by asking respondent to rate how often they engage in a series of activities commonly associated with being religious. These behaviors include both behaviors that may be solitary (e.g., praying) or by their nature inherently involve interactions with others (e.g., asking someone to pray for you). For each prompt, respondents were asked to rate how frequently they engaged in each of the behaviors using the following response options: Never, Less than once a year, A few times a year, A few times a month – 1 to 3 times, At least once a week – 1 to 3 times, Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week, Don't know, and Prefer not to answer. Using these options, respondents were asked to evaluate how often they engage in each of the following behaviors:

1. How often do you read the Torah, Bible, or other sacred texts?

2. How frequently do you watch religious programs on television?

3. How often do you pray or mediate outside of religious services?

4. How often do you participate in table prayers or grace before or after meals?

5. How frequently do you ask someone to pray for you?

The average level of religious behavior using the above 1-6 scale was 3.27 for the large community group, 3.30 for the medium community group, and 3.29 for the small community group.

Additional Questions. Demographic information was captured from respondents to be included as control variables. Of key concern among these are respondent gender, age, household income, education level, and race. Age was measured by asking respondents to enter their current age in year into a textbox. Gender was measured by asking respondents whether they identified as male, female, or some other gender. Respondents who did not identify as male or female were subsequently thanked for their time and routed out of the survey. For gender, a dummy variable was created where respondents identifying as male were coded as 0 and respondents identifying as female coded as 1. Race similarly measured by asking respondents to select the response option that best represented their race, with response options included: White, Black or African-American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian (including the Indian subcontinent), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Multi-racial, or Other. From these a dummy variable was created indicating whether the respondent was nonwhite, with white individuals being coded as 0 and nonwhite individuals being coded as 1.

Educational level and household income were both measured by asking respondents to choose from an ordinal list of response options the response option that best represented the respondent. For education level, respondents were asked to select the response that represented their highest level of formal education. The response options for education level were: Less than high school, High school diploma or GED, Some college but no degree, Associates degree, Bachelors degree, Graduate degree, Professional Degree. Household income was measured by

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asking respondent to select the response option that best represented their total household income last year, before taxes. The response options for household income were: Less than $14,999, Between $15,000 and $24,999, Between $25,000 and $34,999, Between $35,000 and $44,999, Between $45,000 and $59,999, Between $60,000 and $74,999, Between $75,000 and $99,999, Between $100,000 and $149,999, Between $150,000 and $199,999, Between $200,000 and $249,999, $250,000 or more.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Before conducting the analyses required to formally test each of the hypotheses presented above, it was necessary to assess the differences between the three groups on key variables as well as assess the basic structure of relationships between these variables through correlations. Table 2 below provides the descriptive statistics for the entire sample broken down by community sample groups (small, medium, large). Table 2 also includes the results of a series of one-way ANOVA in order to test differences between groups. One-way ANOVA was used in place of a series of t-test, as the use of such tests involving more than two groups increases the risk of committing a Type-1 error. In instances where the differences between groups was found to be significant, additional comparisons between the three groups was conducted employing the Bonferroni multiple-comparison test. The Bonferroni-adjusted significance of the difference value is provided next to each variable for each of the three paired comparisons. Table 3 shows the bi-variate correlations for the entire sample (separate correlation tables for each of the three community size groups can be found in Appendix B).

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Descriptive Stats	Large Community Mean (SD)	Medium Community Mean (SD)	Small Community Mean (SD)	Large-Small bonferroni sig. diff	Large-Medium Means bonferroni sig. diff	Medium-Small Means bonferroni sig. diff
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics By Group						
Places in Community (General)	4.28 (1.10)	4.06 (1.07)	3.28 (1.34)	0.000	0.026	0.000
Places in Community (Attended)	1.39 (1.01)	1.31 (1.04)	1.38 (1.18)	0.923	0.270	0.373
Places in Community (Available)	3.48 (1.96)	3.58 (2.03)	3.30 (2.10)	0.215	0.474	0.033*
Effort to Reach church (Average)	1.77 (1.04)	1.71 (1.01)	1.74 (1.05)	0.677	0.422	0.715
E1	1.50 (1.08)	1.44 (0.98)	1.45 (1.03)	0.546	0.432	0.864
E2	1.54 (1.14)	1.50 (1.06)	1.52 (1.11)	0.793	0.592	0.791
E3	1.92 (1.43)	1.87 (1.38)	1.90 (1.39)	0.836	0.659	0.818
E4	2.16 (1.57)	2.09 (1.54)	2.12 (1.56)	0.712	0.526	0.800
Frequency of Attendance	4.67 (1.89)	4.75 (1.84)	4.42 (1.85)	0.711	0.533	0.804
Proximate Social Structure (Average)	3.63 (.92)	3.60 (0.92)	3.51 (.97)	0.108	0.683	0.240
PSS1	3.74 (1.14)	3.68 (1.16)	3.56 (1.20)	0.028*	0.410	0.184
PSS2	3.67 (1.12)	3.56 (1.13)	3.46 (1.16)	0.008*	0.170	0.216
PSS3	3.80 (1.21)	3.80 (1.18)	3.86 (1.25)	0.545	0.936	0.506
PSS4	3.30 (1.13)	3.29 (1.14)	3.17 (1.17)	0.116	0.900	0.162
Affective Commitment (Average)	3.27 (.68)	3.3 (.71)	3.29 (.70)	0.742	0.620	0.868
A1	3.26 (.91)	3.3 (.86)	3.25 (.88)	0.908	0.537	0.468
A2	3.12 (.79)	3.19 (.81)	3.15 (.84)	0.547	0.195	0.518
A3	3.37 (.77)	3.38 (.75)	3.40 (.75)	0.565	0.848	0.709
Interactive Commitment (Average)	2.71 (.99)	2.74 (.99)	2.67 (.96)	0.610	0.714	0.387

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics By Group (Continued)

Descriptive Stats	Large Community Mean (SD)	Medium Community Mean (SD)	Small Community Mean (SD)	Large-Small bonferroni sig. diff	Large-Medium Means bonferroni sig. diff	Medium-Small Means bonferroni sig. diff
Prominence (Average)	3.27 (.66)	3.31 (.61)	3.25 (.65)	0.690	0.372	0.204
Prm1	3.23 (.83)	3.29 (.72)	3.31 (.75)	0.131	0.2267	0.733
Prm2	3.32 (.78)	3.36 (.69)	3.35 (.74)	0.574	0.405	0.798
Prm3	3.21 (.74)	3.28 (.69)	3.21 (.74)	0.9799	0.1517	0.1573
Prm4	3.18 (.77)	3.21 (.73)	3.09 (.79)	0.0976	0.6048	0.0333*
Salience (Average)	5.61 (1.50)	5.63 (1.32)	5.63 (1.38)	0.8744	0.9098	0.9625
S1	5.72 (1.80)	5.68 (1.61)	5.66 (1.73)	0.6325	0.7342	0.8823
S2	6.07 (1.56)	6.09 (1.37)	6.12 (1.40)	0.6593	0.8719	0.772
S3	5.04 (1.87)	5.11 (1.74)	5.03 (1.89)	0.9178	0.5692	0.511
S4	3.02 (2.16)	2.98 (1.99)	2.62 (1.95)	0.010*	0.8307	0.017*
S5	5.05 (1.63)	4.91 (1.56)	4.99 (1.67)	0.63	0.2284	0.4957
Behavior (Average)	4.03 (1.00)	4.04 (.98)	4.07 (.96)	0.5875	0.9017	0.683
Bx1	4.19 (1.48)	4.15 (1.50)	4.17 (1.42)	0.8374	0.6731	0.8248
Bx2	2.93 (1.49)	2.93 (1.41)	2.85 (1.54)	0.4772	0.9787	0.4972
Bx3	5.16 (1.28)	5.22 (1.87)	5.30 (1.08)	0.0839	0.4297	0.3599
Bx4	4.65 (1.50)	4.61 (1.54)	4.76 (1.52)	0.2835	0.6989	0.1643
Bx5	3.35 (1.45)	3.32 (1.38)	3.30 (1.43)	0.6521	0.8186	0.8251

*Means found to be significantly different at the $p < .05$ level

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Table 3: Zero-Order Correlations (Full Sample)

Correlation Matrix-- Structural	# of Churches	Effort to Reach Primary church	Freq. of attending church	Proximate Social Structure	Affective Commitment	Interactive Commitment	Prominence	Salience	Religious Behaviors	Female	Age	Household Income	Education Level
# of Churches	1												
Effort to Reach Primary church	-.0946***	1											
Freq. of attending church	.0590*	-.1598***	1										
Proximate Social Structure	.1471***	-0.0468	.2263***	1									
Affective Commitment	.1019**	-.0834	.2892***	.3443***	1								
Interactive Commitment	0.0176	0.0075	.1865***	.4234***	.3957***	1							
Prominence	0.035	-0.0241	.3376***	.3540***	.4248***	.2809***	1						
Salience	.090**	-.1029***	.2469***	2646***	.4333***	.2664***	.4314***	1					
Religious Behaviors	.0756**	-.0613*	.4458***	.2427***	.4688***	.3283***	.4299***	.4838***	1				
Age	.0934***	-.01680***	.1430***	0.0225	-0.0287	-.1605***	0.044	-.0818**	0.0436		1		
Female	0.0312	-0.0183	0.0162	0.047	0.0456	0.0489	0.0377	0.0106	0.0144	-0.039	1		
Household Income	.0695*	-.0747**	.0594*	.0987***	0.0289	0.0505	0.0554	-.0622*	-0.0331	.0764**	0.022	1	
Education Level	.1411***	-0.0443	0.0335	.1403***	-.0682	0.0554	0.0119	-.0929	0.0096	.1022***	-0.0254	.3688***	1

As shown in Table 2, there are few notable differences between groups which support general expectations of this research. For example, Table 2 shows significant differences between all three community groups in regards to the general number of perceived places of worship in the community. As one would expect, the largest community group (12,500-20,000 residents) has the highest average for general number of perceived places of worship (4.28 on average using a 1-5 ordinal scale), with the medium size community having the second highest average (4.08) and the small size community having the lowest average (3.28). This supports the initial premise of this research, which is that communities of different sizes have different apparent levels of opportunity to engage in a given identity. However, there are no differences between groups with respect to the number of places a respondent has actually attended as well as the number of listed places. Together, this preliminary analysis indicates that while size of community does appear to be related to general place opportunity, the way in which this translates into how individuals interact with the religious places in their community is more complex.

The correlation matrix results found in Table 3 offer additional initial support for the hypotheses of this research. Beginning with the key variables for the first hypotheses in analysis one, number of churches is correlated with effort to reach a particular interaction site (-.0946), and frequency of attending a particular interaction site is correlated with the proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity (-.1598). In addition, all previously established correlations between existing identity theory concepts are also found in this research. Proximate social structures shows a significant correlation with affective commitment (.3443), interactive commitment (.4234), identity prominence (.3540), and identity salience (.2646). Interactive and affective commitment were also found to have a significant correlation with

identity prominence (.2809 and .4278 respectively) and identity salience (.2664 and .4333 respectively), and prominence was also found to be significantly correlated with salience (.4314). Finally, both prominence and salience were found to have a significant correlation with religious behavior (.4299 and .4838 respectively).

Analysis One

The goal of the first analysis was to formally test whether the effort required to reach an identity-related interaction site impacts the identity process by facilitating/constraining the individual's access to identity-related others. In order to test this proposition, structural equation modeling techniques were employed. This analysis technique was chosen due to its ability to estimate latent concepts as well as estimate direct and indirect effects across multiple pathways simultaneously. Given that the vast majority of the concepts employed in identity theory research involve indexes, the ability to estimate the effects of latent concepts in this research is extremely valuable. In addition, as outlined in Figure 1 below, the structural identity model also includes a number of direct and indirect pathways, and so the ability to examine both direct and indirect pathways allows for a better understanding of the total effect the "society" elements of the model (commitment, proximate and intermediate social structure) on the self and subsequent behavior (*see Analysis Two below).* While not formally tested here, the standardized indirect effects of the structural equation models are reported in the tables below along with the direct and total effects. These indirect effects will be briefly discussed below where relevant.

Structural equation modelling was also initially selected as the analysis strategy for this study due to the ability of comparing models and effects across members of different groups. Before conducting the present analyses, outlined further below, a series of exploratory groups models were run to test for differences in pathway coefficients between groups. This was to test

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whether the entire identity process operated differently for individuals located in different intermediate social structures. The impetus for this examination was that the size of a community that one lives in may shape the overall strength of the proposed pathways at every stage in the structure identity theory model. For example, based on one reading of Stryker et al. 2005, one would expect that in a small rural community (compared to a mid-sized suburb) the intensive amount of contact with others and the overall limited number of those others would make not only the effect of proximate social structure on commitment greater, but also the effect of, say, affective commitment onto prominence. This may be the case because even after accounting for the effect of one's proximate social structure on the identity process, the limited number of contacts would also result in the affective cost of abandoning any given connection to be greater.

In short, this preliminary set of group SEM analyses was conducted to determine if the size of the pathway coefficients examined in this first project differed between residents of the small, medium, and large community survey groups. These initial analyses did not produce any significant differences between these groups. Furthermore, the models that results from this form of analysis was a relatively poor fit for the data, especially when compared to the the non-groups SEM models subsequently used. As such, the remainder of this chapter will be focused on the results of these non-groups models. The results of the initial attempts at groups modeling in SEM can be found in Appendix C, which includes all significant variables included in this research (including those examined in *Analysis Two* below).

Proceeding forward with a model using the data in aggregate, Figure 1 below provides a visual representation of the pathways estimated in this analysis. Not shown in this model are the control variables (i.e., age, gender, education, and household income) as they were estimated on all other constructs. Finally, a series of dummy variables were generated to represent community

group of residence (small, medium, large), with the large community excluded as the reference category in all analyses.

Figure 1: Space on the Identity Process
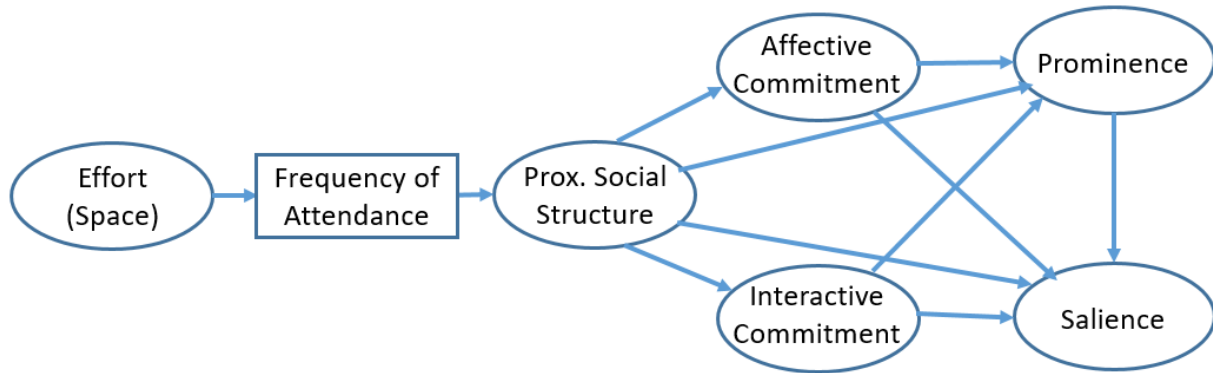
Goodness of Fit Statistics. Overall, the model for analysis one is a relatively good fit for the data. The RMSEA was .042 and the CFI score was .958, both of which are considered to be acceptable indications of model fit. Additionally, the coefficient of determination for the model was .18. This model fit is comparable with other identity theory research that has examined the effects of proximate social structures on the identity process (Yarrison 2016; Merolla et al. 2012) as well as more foundational research that has examined the relationships between identity commitment, identity salience, and identity prominence.

Measurement Model. The measurement model results for all latent constructs can be found in Table 4 below. These latent constructs include effort to reach one's primary place of worship, proximate social structure, affective commitment, prominence, and salience. Factor analyses (not shown) for all of these concepts indicated that all items loaded well onto their

respective factors. This includes all items for effort, which supports the variety of ways in which traversing space can be perceived as difficult (due to an expenditure of time, money, or physical comfort). When conducting factor analyses for interactive commitment, it was found that the items did not load well onto the interactive commitment factor. As such, the three items were averaged to create an observed variable, which was used in place of a latent construct.

Table 4: Analysis One Measurement Model (Standardized)

Parameter Estimate	Standardized	SE
->Effort to Reach Primary Place		
Eff1 (Physical Exhaustion)	.722***	.018
Eff2 (Perceived Burden)	.784***	.017
Eff3 (Travel Time)	.772***	.017
Eff4 (Travel Distance)	.697***	.019
->Proximate Social Structure		
PxSS1 (Friends)	.884***	.012
PxSS2 (Close Friends)	.923***	.011
PxSS4 (Everyday Contacts)	.631***	.020
-> Affective Commitment		
ACom1 (How much would you miss others)	.769***	.017
ACom2 (How close in personal/emotional terms)	.810***	.015
ACom3 (Importance of identity-related others)	.764***	.017
->Identity Prominence		
Prom1 (Rel. is important part of self-image)	.860***	.010
Prom2 (Being Rel. is important reflection of me)	.889***	.009
Prom3 (I think of myself as Religious)	.765***	.014
Prom4 (Strong sense of belonging to Rel. Community)	.722***	.016
->Identity Salience		
Sal1 (Likely to tell unknown other they are Religious)	.822***	.015
Sal2 (Likely to tell religious other they are Religious)	.860***	.014
Sal3 (Ask Religious other more about being Religious)	.631***	.021

***Significant at p<0.001 level

Structural Model. The structural model results are presented below in Table 5.

Table 5: Analysis One SEM Results (Standardized)

Parameter Estimate	Direct effects (SE)	Indirect effects (SE)	Total effects (SE)
->Effort			
Small Size Community	-.031 (.057)	--	-.031 (.057)
Medium Size Community	-.021 (.057)	--	-.021 (.057)
Age	-.190 (.002)*	--	-.190 (.002)*
Female	-.024 (.008)	--	-.024 (.008)
Income	-.070 (.012)*	--	-.070 (.012)*
Education	-.002 (.017)	--	-.002 (.017)
->Freq. of Attendance			
Small Size Community	.016 (.127)	.005 (.024)	.021 (.128)
Medium Size Community	.012 (.127)	.004 (.024)	.015 (.128)
Effort	-.168 (.087)***	--	-.168 (.087)***
Age	.108 (.004)***	.032 (.001)***	.140 (.003)***
Female	.016 (.018)	.004 (.003)	.020 (.018)
Income	.033 (.026)	.012 (.005)	.045 (.026)
Education	.001 (.039)	.001 (.007)	.002 (.039)
->Proximate Social Structure			
Small Size Community	-.089 (.070)**	.007 (.022)	-.082 (.073)*
Medium Size Community	-.041 (.070)	.005 (.022)	-.036 (.074)
Effort	--	-.056 (.016)***	-.056 (.016)***
Freq. of Attendance	.332 (.016)***	--	.332 (.016)***
Age	-.002 (.002)	.047 (.001)***	.044 (.002)
Female	.055 (.010)	.007 (.003)	.062 (.011)*
Income	.053 (.015)	.015 (.004)	.068 (.015)
Education	.116 (.021)***	.001 (.007)	.117 (.022)***
->Affective Commitment			
Small Size Community	-.089 (.049)**	-.043 (.028)	.017 (.052)
Medium Size Community	-.041 (.049)	-.019 (.028)	.038 (.053)
Effort	--	-.029 (.006)***	-.029 (.006)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.173 (.008)***	.173 (.008)***
PSS	.521 (.030)***	--	.521 (.030)***
Age	-.047 (.001)	.023 (.001)	-.023 (.001)
Female	.016 (.007)	.032 (.004)	.048 (.008)
Income	-.055 (.010)	.035 (.006)	-.019 (.011)
Education	-.089 (.015)**	.061 (.009)***	-.028 (.016)

Table 5: Analysis One SEM Results (Standardized); Continued

Parameter Estimate	Direct effects (SE)	Indirect effects (SE)	Total effects (SE)
->Interactive Commitment			
Small Size Community	.012 (.067)	-.040 (.037)*	-.027 (.071)
Medium Size Community	.040 (.067)	-.018 (.037)	.022 (.072)
Effort	--	-.070 (.009)***	-.027 (.008)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.160 (.010)***	.160 (.010)***
PSS	.483 (.041)***	--	.483 (.041)***
Age	-.198 (.002)***	.021 (.001)	-.176 (.002)***
Female	.011 (.009)	.030 (.005)	.041 (.010)
Income	.009 (.014)	.033 (.008)	.042 (.015)
Education	.003 (.021)	.056 (.012)***	.059 (.022)
->Prominence			
Small Size Community	.043 (.044)	-.019 (.027)	.024 (.049)
Medium Size Community	.042 (.044)	.002 (.027)	.044 (.049)
Effort	--	-.026 (.006)***	-.026 (.006)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.154 (.007)***	.154 (.007)***
PSS	.293 (.032)***	.170 (.018)***	.463 (.028)***
Affective Commitment	.319 (.040)***	--	.319 (.040)***
Interactive Commitment	.009 (.025)	--	.009 (.025)
Age	.038 (.001)	.004 (.001)	.042 (.001)
Female	.004 (.006)	.034 (.004)*	.037 (.007)
Income	.044 (.009)	.014 (.006)	.058 (.010)
Education	-.029 (.013)	.026 (.009)	-.003 (.015)
->Salience			
Small	-.015 (.094)	.008 (.062)	-.007 (.108)
Medium	-.017 (.094)	.024 (.061)	.007 (.108)
Effort	--	-.021 (.010)***	-.021 (.010)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.124 (.013)***	.124 (.013)***
PSS	.054 (.066)	.321 (.051)***	.374 (.059)***
Affective Commitment	.332 (.089)***	.095 (.034)***	.428 (.090)***
Interactive Commitment	.018 (.054)	.003 (.016)	.021 (.056)
Prominence	.299 (.079)***	--	.299 (.079)***
Age	-.064 (.003)*	.004 (.002)	-.060 (.003)
Female	-.005 (.013)	.031 (.009)	.026 (.015)
Income	-.030 (.019)	.015 (.013)	-.014 (.022)
Education	-.071 (.029)*	-.003 (.019)	-.074 (.033)*
Goodness of Fit: RMSEA = .042; CFI = .985; CD = .177; Chi2 = 209 (p>Chi2=.000)			

In short, the results of the structural model provide support for many of the proposed relationships, with all of exceptions involving proposed relationships between interactive commitment and another concept. Each proposed relationship is explained in further detail below. In hypothesis 1, I predicted that the effort to reach one's primary church would be negatively correlated with the frequency individuals attend their primary church. Results show that effort is significantly, negatively correlated with frequency of attendance (β=-.168), supporting this hypothesis. Living in the small or medium size community was not found to directly impact either the effort required to attend one's primary place of worship nor the frequency which individuals attended their primary church. Though at first this appears to contradict the idea that place and space matter for the identity process, this result was within expectations. This is because it is expected that the number of churches available for attendance will primarily shape the effort required to traverse to one's home community, and this in turn is where the properties of higher-order place will take effect. Specifically, it is expected that size of community will have a direct effect on number of churches in one's community, which would then in turn impact the effort required to reach one's primary place of worship (see *Analysis Two* results below). Finally, age alone of the control variables was found to have a direct impact on frequency of attending their primary place of worship (β=.108), with older respondents attending their primary place of worship more frequently. Age was also the only variable to have a significant impact on perceived effort to reach one's primary place of worship (β=-.190).

For hypothesis 2, I predicted that the frequency that an individual has attended their primary place of worship would have a positive effect on the proportion of the individual's proximate social structure (i.e., family, friends, daily acquaintances) that shares in the religious identity. This hypothesis was supported, with frequency of attendance having the largest impact

on proximate social structure (β=.332). Of the other control variables, education level, being female, and living in a small community were all found to have a significant impact on an individual's proximate social structure composition (β=.12, β=.05, and β=-.09 respectively). This final significant control variable is interesting in that it implies that the qualities of higher-order place may impact the identity process in addition to the ways proposed below in Analysis Two (by shaping the number of identity interaction sites available to the individuals for stable contact with identity-related others).

For hypotheses 3 through 8, much less need be said due to these pathways having been repeatedly tested in prior identity theory work. In hypotheses 3 and 4, I predicted that proximate social structure would have a positive impact on affective commitment and interactive commitment. Both of these hypotheses were supported (β=.52 and β=.48 respectively). In hypotheses 5b and 6b, I predicted that interactive commitment would have a significant, positive effect on identity prominence and salience. Neither of these hypotheses were supported, with the coefficients from interactive commitment to prominence (β=.01) and salience (β=.02) failing to achieve levels of significance. In hypothesis 5a and 6a, I similarly predicted that affective commitment would have a significant, positive effect on identity prominence and salience. For this form of commitment, there was a significant positive effect on prominence (β=.32) and salience (β=.33), supporting both hypotheses. Proximate social structure was also found to have a significant direct effect on both prominence (β=.29), supporting hypothesis 7a, but the direct effect to salience (β=.05) did not reach significance. However, while hypothesis 7b was not supported, it is useful to note that the total effect of proximate social structure on salience, including its indirect effect (β=.37) did reach significance at the p=.000 level. Finally, identity

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prominence was found to have a significant positive impact on the reported level of identity salience (β=.30), supporting hypotheses 8.

For hypotheses 3-8, there were no consistent direct effects of the various demographic controls on the key variables in the model. Living in a small community was found to have a direct impact on proximate social structure, while living in the medium size community group was not found to have a significant impact on any variable. Of the other control variables, educational attainment level was found to have the most consistent impact on the model, with significant effects on proximate social structure, affective commitment, and identity salience. Age was also found to significantly impact interactive commitment.

Summary of Findings. While not all of the initial predictions for this analysis were confirmed (specifically those focusing on interactive commitment), overall the results of this analysis indicate that the religious identity operates largely as expected within identity theory and that this identity process is impacted by space. Of particular interest are the findings that indicate that perceptions of space (specifically the effort needed to traverse space) impacts the identity process via frequency of attending a place and its impact on the composition of one's proximate social structure. Additionally, it is interesting that the community size variables were not found to have an impact on perceptions of space and the identity process. The impact of one's higher-order place will be more fully examined in the second analysis below.

Building off of the first analysis, the goal of the second analysis was to determine whether the higher-order place (e.g., a place of distinct places, such as a municipality) in which individuals reside also operates as an element of intermediate social structure. As with the first analysis, structural equation modeling was employed. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the model.

Figure 2: Place, Space, and Identity-Related Behavior
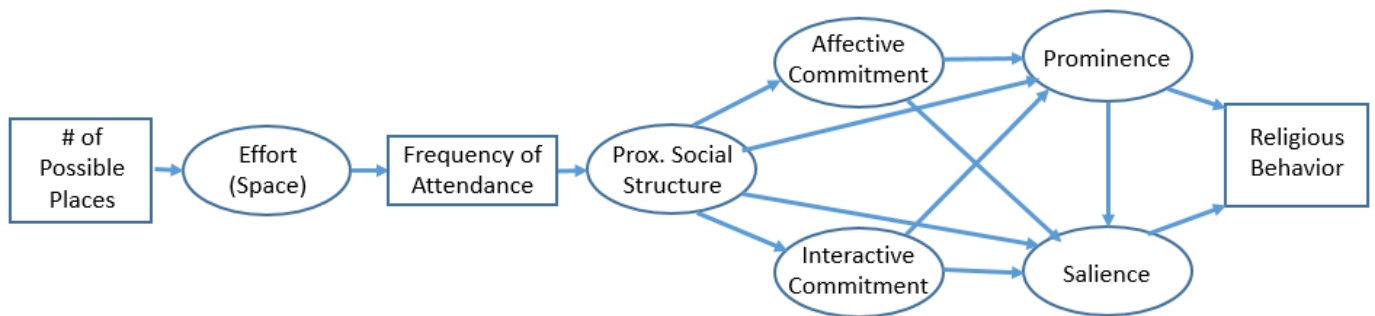
Goodness of Fit Statistics. As with the first analysis, this model was also found to fit the data well. The RMSEA was slightly higher than before (.048), while the CFI (.936) was slightly less than in the previous model. Both of these values remain within the acceptable range for model fit. The coefficient of determination for the model was .20.

Measurement Model. Several latent concepts were included in analysis two. These include the effort to reach one's primary place of worship, the proportion of one's proximate social structure that share in the religious identity, one's affective commitment to their religious

identity, identity prominence, and identity salience. Table 6 below provides the measurement

model for this analysis. In addition to these latent concepts (not shown below), the number of

available houses of worship a respondent could attend in their home community was included as

a continuous variable. Measurement of religious behavior is included as an averaged index of the

level of enactment across all the behavioral items. Finally, interactive commitment was included

as an averaged, observed item due to factor analyses that found the three items did not reliably

load onto one factor.

Table 6: Analysis Two Measurement Model (Standardized)		
Parameter Estimate	Standardized	SE
->Effort to Reach Primary Place		
Eff1 (Physical Exhaustion)	.658***	.043
Eff2 (Perceived Burden)	.704***	.042
Eff3 (Travel Time)	.825***	.050
Eff4 (Travel Distance)	.742***	.044
->Proximate Social Structure		
PxSS1 (Friends)	.803***	.022
PxSS2 (Close Friends)	.825***	.022
PxSS4 (Everyday Contacts)	.682***	.022
-> Affective Commitment		
ACom1 (How much would you miss others)	.766***	.017
ACom2 (How close in personal/emotional terms)	.821***	.015
ACom3 (Importance of identity-related others)	.754***	.017
->Identity Prominence		
Prom1 (Rel. is important part of self-image)	.855***	.010
Prom2 (Being Rel. is important reflection of me)	.887***	.009
Prom3 (I think of myself as Religious)	.766***	.014
Prom4 (Strong sense of belonging to Rel. Community)	.729***	.016
->Identity Salience		
Sal1 (Likely to tell unknown other they are Religious)	.819***	.014
Sal2 (Likely to tell religious other they are Religious)	.838***	.014
Sal3 (Ask Religious other more about being Religious)	.654***	.020

Structural Model. The full results of this second analysis can be found in Table 7 below, the analysis of which will be broken into two parts, with the first part focusing on the effects of place on the identity process, while the second focuses on the impact of the identity process (now including place and space as intermediate social structure) on identity-related behaviors. Starting with the inclusion of number of churches in the model, we find that the number of places where an individual can regularly enact a given identity has a negative impact on how much effort is required in order to traverse space to the individual's primary place of worship (β=-.20), supporting hypothesis 9. This finding overall supports the claim the higher-order places an individual is located within structures the identity process through the availability of lower-order places that serve as identity interaction sites. However, the results of this research do not support the initial proposed relationship for how the community in which an individual lives impacts the availability of places to express one's religious identity. As shown in Table 7 below, living in a small or medium sized community did not have a significant impact on the number of places of worship an individual was able to identify within their home community, resulting in hypothesis 10 not being supported.

Table 7: Analysis Two SEM Results (Standardized)

Parameter Estimate	Direct effects (SE)	Indirect effects (SE)	Total effects (SE)
Number of Churches			
Small	-.036 (.140)	--	-.036 (.140)
Medium	.020 (.140)	--	.020 (.140)
Age	.054 (.004)	--	.054 (.004)
Female	.053 (.020)	--	.053 (.020)
Income	-.028 (.028)	--	-.028 (.028)
Education	.118 (.043)***	--	.118 (.043)***
->Effort			
Small Size Community	-.036 (.051)	.007 (.009)	-.029 (.051)
Medium Size Community	-.013 (.050)	-.004 (.009)	-.017 (.051)
# of Churches	-.199 (.011)***	--	-.199 (.011)***
Age	-.179 (.002)***	-.011 (.000)	-.190 (.002)***
Female	-.014 (.007)	-.010 (.001)	-.024 (.007)
Income	-.067 (.011)*	.006 (.002)	-.062 (.011)
Education	.021 (.015)	-.023 (.003)***	-.002 (.016)
->Freq. of Attendance			
Small Size Community	.017 (.127)	.005 (.023)	-.036 (.128)
Medium Size Community	.012 (.127)	.003 (.023)	.020 (.129)
# of Churches	--	.033 (.008)***	.033 (.008)***
Effort	-.164 (.089)***	--	-.164 (.089)***
Age	.109 (.004)***	.031 (.001)***	.140 (.003)***
Female	.016 (.018)	.004 (.003)	.020 (.018)
Income	.034 (.026)	.010 (.005)	.044 (.026)
Education	.002 (.039)	.000 (.007)	.002 (.039)

Table 7: Analysis Two SEM Results (Standardized); Continued

Parameter Estimate	Direct effects (SE)	Indirect effects (SE)	Total effects (SE)
->Proximate Social Structure			
Small Size Community	-.089 (.070)**	.007 (.022)	-.082 (.073)*
Medium Size Community	-.041 (.070)	.005 (.022)	-.036 (.073)
# of Churches	--	.011 (.001)***	.011 (.001)***
Effort	--	-.055 (.017)***	-.055 (.017)***
Freq. of Attendance	.334 (.016)***	--	.334 (.016)***
Age	-.002 (.002)	.047 (.001)***	.044 (.002)
Female	.055 (.010)	.007 (.003)	.062 (.011)*
Income	.052 (.015)	.015 (.004)	.067 (.015)
Education	.117 (.021)***	.001 (.007)	.117 (.022)***
->Affective Commitment			
Small Size Community	.059 (.049)	-.043 (.028)*	.017 (.052)
Medium Size Community	.057 (.049)	-.019 (.028)	.038 (.053)
# of Churches	--	.006 (.001)***	.006 (.001)***
Effort	--	-.029 (.007)***	-.029 (.007)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.174 (.008)***	.174 (.008)***
PSS	.521 (.030)***	--	.521 (.030)***
Age	-.046 (.001)	.023 (.001)	-.023 (.0001)
Female	.016 (.007)	.032 (.004)	.048 (.008)
Income	-.055 (.010)	.035 (.006)	-.020 (.011)
Education	-.089 (.015)**	.061 (.009)***	-.028 (.016)
->Interactive Commitment			
Small Size Community	.013 (.067)	-.040 (.037)*	-.027 (.072)
Medium Size Community	.039 (.067)	-.018 (.037)	.022 (.072)
# of Churches	--	.005 (.001)***	.005 (.001)***
Effort	--	-.026 (.009)***	-.026 (.009)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.162 (.010)***	.162 (.010)***
PSS	.484 (.041)***	--	.484 (.041)***
Age	-.198 (.002)***	.021 (.001)	-.176 (.002)***
Female	.011 (.009)	.030 (.005)	.041 (.010)
Income	.009 (.014)	.032 (.008)	.042 (.015)
Education	.003 (.021)	.057 (.012)***	.060 (.022)

->Prominence			
Small Size Community	.043 (.044)	-.019 (.027)	.024 (.049)
Medium Size Community	.042 (.044)	.002 (.027)	.044 (.049)
# of Churches	--	.005 (.000)***	.005 (.000)***
Effort	--	-.026 (.006)***	-.026 (.006)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.156 (.007)***	.156 (.007)***
PSS	.291 (.032)***	.177 (.018)***	.468 (.028)***
Affective Commitment	.328 (.040)***	--	.328 (.040)***
Interactive Commitment	.012 (.025)	--	.012 (.025)
Age	.039 (.001)	.003 (.001)	.042 (.001)
Female	.003 (.006)	.034 (.004)*	.038 (.007)
Income	.044 (.009)	.013 (.006)	.057 (.010)
Education	-.028 (.013)	.026 (.009)	-.003 (.015)
->Salience			
Small	-.017 (.094)	.008 (.063)	-.009 (.107)
Medium	-.019 (.094)	.025 (.063)	.006 (.108)
# of Churches	--	.004 (.001)***	.004 (.001)***
Effort	--	-.021 (.011)***	-.021 (.011)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.129 (.014)***	.129 (.014)***
PSS	.050 (.066)	.335 (.051)***	.386 (.059)***
Affective Commitment	.363 (.089)***	.091 (.033)***	.454 (.089)***
Interactive Commitment	.034 (.054)	.003 (.015)	.037 (.055)
Prominence	.277 (.079)***	--	.277 (.079)***
Age	-.061 (.003)*	.000 (.002)	-.061 (.003)*
Female	-.007 (.013)	.032 (.009)	.025 (.015)
Income	-.032 (.019)	.013 (.013)	-.018 (.022)
Education	-.071 (.029)*	-.003 (.020)	-.074 (.033)*
->Behavioral Outcomes			
Small	.017 (.059)	.003 (.042)	.020 (.070)
Medium	-.019 (.060)	.014 (.042)	-.005 (.070)
Effort	--	-.015 (.005)***	-.015 (.005)***
Freq. of Attendance	--	.093 (.006)***	.093 (.006)***
PSS	--	.277 (.027)***	.277 (.027)***
Affective Commitment	--	.269 (.038)***	.269 (.038)***
Interactive Commitment	--	.018 (.020)	.018 (.020)
Prominence	.259 (.049)***	.112 (.026)***	.371 (.047)***
Salience	.405 (.025)***	--	.405 (.025)***
Age	.066 (.002)**	-.014 (.001)	.053 (.002)
Female	-.003 (.008)	.020 (.006)	.017 (.010)
Income	-.045 (.012)	.007 (.008)	-.037 (.014)
Education	.058 (.018)*	-.031 (.013)	.027 (.021)

Goodness of Fit: RMSEA = .049; CFI = .936; CD = .200; Chi2 = 245 (p>Chi2=.000)

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The second part of analysis two attempts to examine the impact of the identity theory process (now expanded to include elements of place and space as intermediate social structure) on identity related behavior. As predicted in hypotheses 11, identity salience was found to have a significant, positive impact on the frequency individuals engaged in religious behaviors (β=.41). In addition, prominence was found to also have a significant impact on religious behavior (β=.26), with the effect remaining significant even after taking into account the indirect impact of prominence on behavior through salience (an effect that was also found to be significant). This supports hypothesis 12, and is significant due to its demonstration that even when accounting for identity salience and the relationship between salience and prominence (Stryker and Serpe 1994; Brenner, Serpe, and Stryker 2014), identity prominence was still found to have a significant impact on identity-based behavior.

In regards to the various controls, only age and education level were found to have a significant direct impact on religious behaviors, with the standardized coefficients being relatively small (β=.07 and β=.06 respectively). These results were not surprising, as these society spanning systems of stratification are conceptualized as large social structures which impact the identity process primarily by impacting the intermediate social structure the individual is located within. As a final note, as seen in Table 7 above, effort to traverse space was found to have a significant indirect effect on religious behavior. This significant effect, despite its very small effect size, demonstrates the reach of effort on constructs in the identity process and behavior is detectable even after accounting for proximate social structure and other traditional elements of the structural identity model (e.g., commitment, prominence, salience).

Summary of Findings. In this second analysis, three of the four proposed relationships were found to be significant and in the predicted direction. Regarding the impact of place on the

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identity process, hypothesis 9 was supported which found that the number of churches (i.e., identity interaction sites) impacts the effort to reach one's primary place of worship. However, the size of the individual's community was not found to have a significant impact on the perceived number of identity-related places in the community, resulting in hypothesis 10 not being supported. Finally, this second analysis confirmed that the location of the religious identity in the identity salience and prominence hierarchies (hypotheses 11 and 12) both have a direct impact on the frequency with which individuals engage in various religious behaviors. It is also worth mentioning that this second analysis found that the indirect impact of place and space on religious behaviors through the identity process was significant (although with small effect sizes).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Goal and Purpose

The primary goal of this dissertation was to more fully integrate considerations of the layout of the physical world through individuals' perceptions of it into identity theory. This goal was based on several bodies of research on space and place, all of which suggest that an understanding of the self and social behavior would be incomplete without understanding the impact of the layout of the physical world and our social perceptions of it (Lofland 1973; Tuan 1975; Proshansky et al. 1983; Gieryn 2000; Gans 2002; Logan 2012). Within identity theory, I argued that intermediate social structure was ripe for the incorporation of space and place considerations. This is because intermediate social structure within identity theory is conceptualized as those localized forces that impact the probability of individuals coming into contact with identity-related others in a stable fashion. In this way, I argued that space and place can readily be incorporated into understandings of these "localized forces" and thus serve to index them.

I tested the incorporating of space and place into identity theory through two projects using recently collected data designed specifically for these projects. I briefly summarize these two projects below. I then identify how the results of this specific research have advanced our understanding of the relationship between society, self, and behavior, along with the limitations of this research and projected future research endeavors.

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How Does the Perceived Layout of the Physical World Impact the Identity Process?

The primary goal of analysis one was to empirically test if perceptions of space impacted the identity process. Prior research examining the impact of space has found that the distance between individual homes impact the formation of stable role-identity relationships (i.e., interracial friendships; Sigelman et al. 1996). While distance has been found to impact identity related behaviors, additional research has identified other space related factors that structure contact between individuals living within a community/municipality. Specifically, the need to acquire and spend valuable resources (e.g., time, money), which themselves are often shaped by the community an individual is located within (Pucher and Renne 2005; Millward and Spinney 2011), have been found to impact the likelihood of individuals coming into contact with given others at a particular place (Holzer 1991; Brenner 2017a). Thus, I specifically examined if perceptions of the effort it would take to traverse space impact the identity process via its impact on an individual's proximate social structure.

The results of this analysis confirm that the religious identity in this research operate in a similar manner to other identities examined in prior identity theory research. Specifically, proximate social structure was found to impact affective commitment, interactive commitment, and identity prominence, although in this analysis the direct effect from proximate social structure to salience was not significant contrary to expectations. Affective commitment was also found to impact identity prominence, with identity prominence also impacting identity salience. Moving on to the key focus of analysis one, there is strong support for the proposed relationships between space and the identity process. Specifically, perceived effort to attend one's primary place of worship was found to negatively impacting the frequency with which an individual

actually did attend that place of worship, which in turn had a positive impact on the proportion of an individual's proximate social structure who shared in the religious identity. In short, the more effort an individual perceived they had to expend when traversing the physical world, the less frequently they would actually traverse that world; additionally, when individuals traversed the world less, their regular contact with identity-related others also decreased. In this way, the layout of the physical world (or at the least the perception of it) structures an individual's contact with others and subsequently the entire structural identity process.

The goal of analysis two was to build upon the propositions of analysis one by both incorporating considerations of place in the analysis, as well as examining how the expanded structural identity theory model including elements of intermediate social structure impact identity-based behaviors. Place in this analysis was examined with respect to how much the location in which an individual lived impacted the identity processes in analysis one. Results showed that the number of identity interaction sites (i.e., places that serve as the proximate site of identity-based interaction) available impacted the overall opportunity for individuals to interact with identity-related others. In this way, the composition of a higher-order place (i.e., a place of places; e.g., a community, neighborhood, campus) serves as the opportunity element that, when considered alongside the effort required to act upon these opportunities, structure an individual's self and their subsequent behaviors.

As with space, how individuals perceived the higher-order place in which they are located was found to operate as an element of intermediate social structure that impacted the probability of individual's coming into regular contact with identity related others. In the second analysis, I also found that the more opportunities an individual has to enact their religious identity in a stable fashion (by attending a house of worship), the less effort individual's perceive

as being required to traverse the space to their primary place of worship. Those communities with more places of worship were therefore more open in regards to intermediate social structure, with individuals living in communities with many churches being more likely to regularly come into contact with identity related others compared to individuals living in communities with relatively few churches. In this way, place and space together act as opportunity and effort to enact a given identity in the physical world, thereby structuring the overall location of the identity within the individual's self-hierarchies.

While the vast majority of the proposed hypotheses for these two analyses were supported, it was surprising to find that Hypothesis 10 (that community size would have a significant, positive impact on the number of houses of worship within that community) was not supported in this research. Given that pains were taken to ensure variability between community groups in regards to size (e.g., having the group sizes not be contiguous in regards to resident population), it appears unlikely that this null result was due to their being little difference in the actual size of the communities members of the three groups lived in. The surprising nature of this null result is further compounded by the results of the preliminary analyses, which found that the average number of identified churches available was significantly different between all three community-size groups.

Clearly, the lack of a significant effect here of community size on place availability, despite the theoretical and preliminary evidence that would indicate otherwise, warrants further investigation. While no conclusive statements about what caused this null result can be made, some thoughts can be offered which may be useful in framing subsequent examination of this finding. First, the null result here may be due to the measurements used in this study. In particular, residents of larger communities may be less aware of the actual number of houses of

worship in their community compared to residents of smaller communities. Further examination of place and space as intermediate social structure will do well to collect both objective and subjective measures of place and space (*see Chapter 6 Discussion, Future Directions below). A second possible explanation for this lack of significant effect may be due to the fact that at a certain size, the effect of an increase in population does not generate additional houses of worship. This may be due to a critical mass of houses of worship having been achieved. Future research examining a wider range of community sizes will be useful in providing additional insight into this finding.

While this final hypothesis was not supported, the vast majority of the proposed relationship between place, space, and the identity process received support. In short, this research found that perceptions of the layout of the social world do have an impact on the identity process by facilitating/constraining the likelihood of individuals coming into contact with one another. This is via movement through space acting as a barrier to engaging with identity-related others, which is reduced when there are a greater number of identity-related interaction sites within one's community.

Theoretical Rationale for Examining Place and Space in Identity Theory

There are several reasons why examining place and space as elements of intermediate social structure within identity theory is both appropriate and offers significant potential for continuing the integration of the works of sociological social psychology, environmental psychology, and geography. First, much research concerned with place and space finds that these social forces impact the probability of individual's engaging with various others. In particular, research on space and movement finds that individuals engage in less frequent interactions with given others when it is more difficult to traverse the space to those others, whether that be due to

distance to be travelled (Sigelman et al. 1996), avenues of movement that are restrictive/difficult to navigate (Grannis 1998) or require the expenditure of valued resources such as time or money (Kwan 1998). Other more place focused research has also found that bounded locations in the physical world take on social meanings that individuals references when engaging in various lines of social interaction (Milligan 1998; Hauge 2007), and that the presences of various meaning-associated places impact the probability of engaging in various behaviors (Perkins et al. 1996; Lewicka 2005). In this way, both place and space in prior research have been found to impact social behaviors in part by facilitating/constraining the ability of individuals to engage in regular interactions with a stable set of social others, which is how intermediate social structure has been conceptualized in prior identity theory research (Stryker et al. 2005; Brenner et al. 2014).

In addition to the theoretical justification for examining place and space as elements of intermediate social structure within identity theory, the exploration of these concepts is justified by the potential theoretical gain of further integrating the foci of geographers, mainstream sociologist, and sociological social psychologists. As will be discussed in more detail shortly, examining how individual's perceive the layout of the physical world allows for the integration of areas of concern within mainstream sociology with a structural symbolic interactionist perspective on the reciprocal relationships between society, self, and interaction. Specifically, by including consideration of how the layout of the social world impacts the identity process, future identity theory research will have a mechanism through which it can link research on large scale, society spanning systems of inequalities (i.e., large social structure in identity theory; e.g., race, class, gender) to the self and ultimately identity-based behavior (e.g., racist behavior, partisan behavior, religious behavior). Below, I now turn to identifying how the results of this specific

research have advanced our understanding of the relationship between society, self, and behavior, along with the limitations of this research and projected future research endeavors.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this dissertation carry theoretical implications for research not only within identity theory, but for other sociological social psychological disciplines. As this research was designed to be the first step in more fully integrating the work of mainstream sociology and geography into identity theory conceptualizations of social structure, the greatest theoretical implications of this research will likely be the continued refinement and integration of these various fields. While these future direction will be talked about further below, it is first essential to clearly link the findings of this study with their current theoretical implications before outlining the next steps in this research agenda.

Identity Theory and Structural Symbolic Interactionism. Since this research was situated firmly within a structural identity theory perspective, the findings carry two major theoretical implications for identity theory. First, this work demonstrates one way in which intermediate social structure can be operationalized in future identity theory research. This is important because large social structures and proximate social structures have received the most empirical attention in prior research, to the detriment of intermediate social structure as a mechanism between the other two. This has resulted in difficulty within the theory for accounting for how large, society spanning systems of inequalities (i.e., race, gender, class) impact the identity process and behavior, since theoretically these large social structures would not impact an individual's self or behavior directly but rather primarily through their effect on an individual's location within a given intermediate social structure. Since this dissertation provides a viable way to assess intermediate social structure through space and place considerations, this work

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helps to even out the other theoretical advances that have occurred for the other two levels of social structure.

Second, the findings of this work carry theoretical implications for the relationship between identity theory and more mainstream sociology. Specifically, this work provides a specific mechanism by which to examine how one's placement in a large social structure (race, gender, class, etc.) results in the composition of individual's social networks and other identity-related concepts. Consider for example race/ethnicity. By connecting systematic racial/ethnic inequalities to higher-order places in which individuals live as well as their access to various places to enact certain identities, it might be possible to refine our understanding of how social structures result in variation in differences in identity-based behavior across racial/ethnic groups (Taylor et al. 1996; Chatters et al. 2009).

Theoretical Advancements Beyond Identity Theory. In addition to theoretically advancing identity theory and structural symbolic interactionism, findings from this research have the potential to significantly contribute theoretically to other social psychological paradigms. This is because one of the key foci for all social psychology research is determining the relationships between social structures and organizations as well as aspects of individuals (House 1977). Of these paradigms, I explain the potential of this work to enrich the sociology of mental health and illness in particular.

In the sociological study of mental health, much research within this body of study concerns the ways in which social structures impact the state of one's mental health (Pearlin 1999; Ross 2000), whether that be in the form of mental flourishing or languishing (Keyes 2002). This body of research is particularly suited to benefit theoretically from the findings of this dissertation because not only does work combine the mental illness and identity theory

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perspectives, but work on mental health from the stress process model readily incorporates properties of the neighborhoods as factors that impact the distribution of stress.

How might the findings of this research enrich the study of the sociology of mental health? An example includes expanding the stress process work on neighborhoods to include the layout of the physical world in regard to place and space. For example, it is likely that it not only does the 'state' of one's neighborhood opportunity serve as ambient stressors related to mental health (Ross 2000), but that the effort required to reach locations in which to engage in behaviors that are beneficial to their mental health might serve as a stressor by perhaps impacting the frequency with which individuals can readily engage such in behaviors. Furthermore, another example includes work on social networks and mental health. For example, interacting with others who an individual knows in multiple role-identity contexts (e.g., the other is both a co-worker and spouse, a co-worker and a friend) has been theorized to improve individual's mental health because such overlapping ties are regarded as strong, beneficial ties (Ibarra 1995) that have shown association with the utilization of mental health resources in times of need (Holschuh and Segal 2002). However, at present, this work does not consider how place and space shape the probability of individuals forming such overlapping relationships with others.

To illustrate this latter point, if the space between one's home and one's work requires a fair amount of effort to traverse, the individual might be less likely to engage with their coworkers in friend-based interactions outside of work (operating on the same principles established in this present research, where individuals are less likely to engage in frequent interactions with others when the cost of doing so is high). At the same time, a lack of recreational places (e.g., bowling alleys, bars, movie theaters) near one's place of work in such a situation would further reduce the likelihood of engaging co-workers regularly in a friend

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capacity due to the relative lack of places that would serve as the sites for such identity-based interaction. Thus, incorporating space and place concerns to the structure of social relationships would help further specify this work.

The above points serve as only one example of the incorporation of space and place concerns as examined in this dissertation to other areas of social psychological work. However, other possible areas may the relationship between the physical world's layout and self-outcomes (e.g., self-esteem) or the formation and cohesion of social groups. Despite its potential, however, this work exhibits several limitations that need to be considered for the implications of this work to identity theory and other areas of social psychological work.

Additional Questions

In addition the contribution of this research to understanding the importance of place and space not only in identity theory but social psychology more broadly, this research has raised significant questions pertaining to the particular subject matter of this research. Specifically, this research that focuses, fundamentally, on people's understandings of their communities and their religious proximal groups raises questions specifically attuned to those topics. For example, in regards to the former, as not all members of a community lived within that community for their entire lives, we come to the question of why some individuals choose to remain in their home communities while others choose to leave, and how this may in turn impact the identity process examined here. While this cannot be answered empirically with the data collected here, it does raise an interesting question regarding how these particular religious individuals may differ from others and the role that identity plays in larger community relations.

A second question raised by this research is how, even among individuals who are of the same general religion, denominational differences shape the identity process for religious

individuals described here. This question is of particular interest since all religious identities, despite being socially normative (i.e., an identity category that it is considered normal or even expected to hold), may not operate in the same way socially regarding perceptions of stigma. For example, certain evangelical Christian groups have often stated on conservative media outlets that their way of life is under attack. In this way, members of this group are operating as members of a "stigmatized" group despite the religious identity commonly being seen as normative. In this case, it is highly unlikely that perceived effort to traverse space would impact the identity process for these individuals in the same way it would for members of religious denominations who do not feels as though they are under attack by members of the wider society in which their identity-interaction sites are located.

Limitations

There are at least three main limitations of this research. Limitations include the measurement of the layout of the physical world, the sample employed to test the relationships proposed here, and the cross-sectional nature of the present data. I address each of these three major limitations in more detail below.

First, in regard to measuring the layout of the physical world, it is important to highlight that, rather than examining information on the *actual* layout of the physical world, this work examines individuals' *perceptions* of the physical world. This is an issue because perceptions often differ from reality. However, foundational work within symbolic interactionism tempers the degree to which these concerns undermine the value of this study. For example, symbolic interactionist works hold that individuals do no act upon things as they *actually* exist, but rather upon the meanings the individual *perceives* to be associated with the given social object (Mead 1934). These meanings themselves even do not exist in an absolute state but are constantly being

interpreted and recreated through a process of symbolic interaction and interpretation (Blumer 1969). Because of this, though individuals' perceptions of the layout of the physical world may differ from the actual layout of the physical world, these perceptions are still real in that they result in real consequences for individuals' behavior (Merton 1995). Thus, though future research would benefit from the inclusion of established geography theory in regards to how to measure the actual layout of the physical world (Kwan 1998; Miller 2005; Miller 2010), this work is still useful to partially understand how space and place impact identity-related behaviors.

The second major limitation of this research centers on the sample that was used for this study. Specifically, the sample employed here consisted only of individuals who actually attended a place of religious worship at least several times a year. The decision to sample only identity holders who attended a place of worship was based on the concern that allowing religious individuals who did not attend a place of worship into the sample would result in a great deal of missing data for three of the key variables for analyses one and two (place opportunity, effort to reach place, frequency of place attendance). As such, while this sample was able to demonstrate the impact of place and space on the religious identity *for those that actually traversed space to reach a specific identity related place,* this sample was not able to determine if place and space impacted the religious identity for those that do not attend places of worship. In addition, this sample only included individuals from communities of 20,000 residents or less. While it is likely that the patterns demonstrated here will be found in communities of greater size, this remains to be seen in future research. In particular, this research will need to potentially redefine the nature of the home community for individuals living in densely populated places.

The third limitation of the present research is the cross-sectional nature of the data employed here. In theory, the relationship between society, self, and behavior is cybernetic in

that it involves a constant feedback loop in which one element impacts another in a continual process of change over time (Stryker 1980). So conceived, not only should past interactions and connections with others (society) impact the individual's self via structuring the location of a given identity within the self and behavior, but individuals' behavior should also in turn impact individuals' relationships with others and the individual's location within multiple social structures. In this way, past behavior can be thought to structure future behavior through this cybernetic relationship between society, self, and interaction.

Unfortunately, the cross-sectional nature of the present data offers only a limited perspective of this cybernetic model, and thus, the degree to which individuals may select into higher-order places commensurate with the effects seen here is unclear. Ideally, using longitudinal data, research would assess the degree to which this selection effect impacts the results seen here. However, while this effect cannot be determined here, the results of this research are still promising in that they establish a relationship between two particular levels of social structure (intermediate and proximate), with one of the goals of future research being the uncovering of how the relationship between past and future behavior impact the identity process in regards to these levels of social structure.

Future Directions

When the theoretical implications of this research are examined in conjunction with the limitations of the present research, it is clear that subsequent work can build upon this dissertation in many ways. Accordingly, below I outline three potentially profitable future directions for this research: continuing to refine how place and space are conceptualized in identity theory research, expanding the scope of identities examined, and identifying specific

mechanisms that results in large scale social structures impacting the intermediate social structures the individual finds themself located within.

Refinement of place/space operationalization. In order to address one of the limitations of this research mentioned above (focusing on perceptions of place and space rather than more objective measurements), future research will benefit from identifying additional ways to measure the impact of the effort to traverse the physical world on the identity process. Specifically, future research would benefit from employing new technologies that allow for the creation of custom data collection cellphone applications. This line of data collections offers a variety of potential for refining of the operationalization of space (i.e., effort to traverse space) and place (i.e., the availability of places to enact an identity) within identity theory and social psychology more broadly for two reasons. First, such technologies can capture the location data of users, allowing the researcher to map the respondent's movement through the physical world. The use of such data would heavily reduce the reliance on respondent recollections of the physical world. Second, the convenience of a phone application would allow behavior data to be captured in the fashion of a time-diary rather than a traditional survey. This would allow for the collection of more accurate behavioral data, as prior research has shown that such data collection results in less bias on the part of the respondent when asked about socially desirable behaviors (Brenner and DeLamater 2016; Brenner 2017b), including the frequency with which they attend a given place and the overall number of specific identity-related places they have attended.

Counter-normative Identities, Place, and Space. While the results of the present research finds that perceptions of place and space operate as social structures impact the location of an identity within the prominence and salience hierarchies, this research has left unaddressed whether this is true for all identities. In particular, recent work on identity has focused on examining the ways in

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which normative and counter-normative identities differ in regards to the identity process and how it is shaped by social structures (Stets and Serpe 2013; Long 2016; Yarrison 2017). As opposed to normative identities which are often expected to be acquired over the course of one's life (e.g., parent, spouse) (Long 2016), counter-normative identities are those identities that one is not expected to acquire and are often stigmatized (Goffman 1963). This research has found that social structures do not impact counter-normative identities in the same fashion as normative identities (Yarrison 2017), and with the effect of social structures on counter-normative identities differing between those that are held voluntarily and those that are not (Long 2017).

Given the above, one of the next logical steps for the present research is extending this research to examine if place and space structure counter-normative identities in a way that is different from normative identities, if at all. Of particular interest would be the non-religious identity, which has been established as a counter-normative identity in prior research (Yarrison 2016; Yarrison 2017; Long 2017). Examining this identity in the context of place and space operating as intermediate social structure would result in establishing a baseline for whether counter-normative individuals perceive specific locations as being associated with a non-religious identity where they can regularly interact with non-religious others, as well as determining whether place and space impact the location of the counter-normative identities in the identity hierarchies. Based on prior research, I expect that place and space will have a similar effect on the identity process for individuals who hold a counter-normative identity by choice but not for those who did not perceive in having a choice to hold the given identity (Long 2017). *Large-to-Intermediate Social Structure.* As said repeatedly when framing the value of examining place and space as elements of intermediate social structure, this current research is valuable because it begins the process of bridging large social structures (i.e., society spanning systems of

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inequalities) and proximate social structures, with the goal being to better understand how the various levels of social structure impact the identity process. With the evidence provided here that perceptions of place and space do facilitate/constrain the likelihood of individuals coming into regular contact with others, the next logical step is to identify the ways in which one's location in a given large social structure impacts the type of intermediate structure an individual finds themselves located within. In particular, the initial steps of connecting large and intermediate social structures should focus on the ways in which race (a spanning systems of stratification) impact the identity process via intermediate and proximate social structures. I envision this area of initial inquiry will be the most valuable when identifying the relationship between large and intermediate social structures due to previous research which has established that one's race has a significant impact on the community one lives in due to a variety of factors (Zenou and Boccard 2000; Emerson, Chai, and Yancey 2001; Sampson and Sharkey 2008). While much of this research is concerned with establishing the relationship between race, location, and certain outcomes (e.g., crime), the structure of this research (examining how placement in one social structure impacts placement within another) lends itself to adaptation by identity theory.

Given the potential importance of this line of expanded research, a more detailed example is warranted here. Prior research has found that the strength of a student identity is a significant factor in educational outcomes, at least for college enrolled students (Stets, Brenner, Burke, and Serpe 2017), and that to a degree various assets (such as having a mentor) impact this identity process. Prior research has also found that racial segregation in education is still a powerful factor impacting the life chances of Black Americans in a significant fashion. This segregation impacts not only who these young individuals come into contact with, but their ability to access

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various resources that would promote a student identity (access to tutors, public libraries, etc).
Taking these sets of findings together, we are able to paint a theoretical framework of large
social structure shaping intermediate shaping proximate, a framework that lends itself to future
empirical examination. For this research shows that race (a society spanning system of
stratification) not only impacts the intermediate social structure (e.g., community, school district,
village) one is located in, but here even impacts elements of that intermediate social structure
(e.g., white flight resulting in a drain of readily available resources).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

How does the physical world in which we find ourselves impact our daily lives? How are religious practices and the self shaped through shared meanings and social spaces? These questions, though often examined separately, have in one form or another been asked for decades, if not centuries, in the social sciences and sociology. Fortunately, some of the earliest leading sociologists have attempted to address these two points of concern together. Specifically, research by Durkheim was concerned with how some places, locations within the physical world, shape social life through their infusion of shared meanings (Smith 1999). Building off of this recognition that the religious self and the physical world, this research has attempted to examine these two distinct but related phenomena through the lens of identity theory and the construct of intermediate social structure.

Though structural symbolic interactionists have taken as their focal concern the ways in which society impacts self impacts behavior (Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009), the social aspect of the physical world has largely been underexplored within this body of research. There is clearly promise in pursuing the context of the physical world within identity theory because there is a wealth of previous research that demonstrates the ways in which the physical world structures social behavior (Lofland 1973 Gieryn 2000, Lewicka 2011, Logan 2012), and because structural symbolic interactionist research has in recent years been particularly focused on the

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ways in which social structures impact the self by facilitating/constraining identity-related opportunities (Stryker 1980; Stryker and Serpe 1982; Serpe and Stryker 2011).

Fortunately, these two bodies of research at their cores are fundamentally compatible in that they are concerned with how human behavior is shaped, allowing for new considerations of how place and space impact the self and subsequent behavior. This is true because, at their core, both disciplines are concerned with understanding how human action is not simply a series of random events, where all possible lines of action are equally probable (Stryker 1987). Though they have for a long time focused on different ways in which this behavior is shaped (one being more focused on the physical world, the other on the people one interacts with in the physical world) a common appreciation that humans act upon meanings (Mead 1934), whether that be the meanings associated with a place (Rochberg-Halton 1984; Lofland 2003), the meanings associated with the cost of traversing space (e.g., how burdensome travel is), or the meanings we associate with a given situation (Yarrison 2016) makes a more full integration of these bodies of research possible.

This consideration of place and space as structures that shape the self and ultimately social behavior was the driving goal of this dissertation. Given prior research that demonstrates how both the space one must traverse to engage in various actions as well as the opportunities to engage in various actions within a given place impact the likelihood of the individual engaging in various lines of social behavior (Grannis 1998; Kwan 1998; Swaroop and Morenoff 2006), it was predicted that both place and space would operate as elements of intermediate social structure in the structural identity process (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005). Specifically, for this research it was predicted that qualities of a higher-order place (e.g., a place of place, such as a community or even a neighborhood) would impact the perceived costs associated with traversing

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the space within that higher-order place to reach a specific identity interaction site (e.g., a place that is associated with a specific identity that often serves as the proximate context in which identity-based interaction occurs, often with a group of stable identity-related others). It was also predicted that this perceived cost of the effort to traverse space (viewed in regards to the various economic, physical, mental, and social costs associated with moving physically through space) would in turn impact the degree to which individuals interact with others at a specific identity interaction site. Overall then, previous place and space research depicts a social world in which its layout and the costs associated with traversing that layout shapes the lines of action engaged in by the individual actor.

Given this clear relationship between place, space, and the lines of action taken by individuals, it was only a matter of time before these concepts were incorporated into an identity theory framework (particularly as the natural outgrowth of that theory continued to focus with increasing intensity on the social factors that structure who one becomes socially committed to). The conceptualization of place and space as intermediate social structure in this research was a natural outgrowth of a long trend in structural symbolic interactionism and the structural paradigm within identity theory in particular, which was and continues to be focused on connecting identity theory to the actual structural social relations that individuals come to find themselves in. While this research initially focused on the levels of commitment to identity-based others, this research has grown to now focus on those larger social factors that shape how committed one is to identity-related others.

Through this research, it has been empirically demonstrated that the perceived effort to traverse space as well as the perceived availability of places to engage in identity-related behavior both impact the composition of one's self by facilitating/constraining contact with

various others. Though this work represents only the first step in more fully incorporating considerations of place and space into structural symbolic interactionist theory, it does firmly establish that the layout of the social world is an important factor when considering the ways in which social forces and structures impact the very composition of our social selves. Through this initial finding, it is now possible to more easily incorporate concepts and measurements from other disciplines into an expanded examination of social structure in identity theory. In particular, future research is now better positioned to incorporate GIS measurement techniques, as well as new ways of gathering data that avoid issues with respondents being able to accurately report on both their own social behavior and the physical world in which they interact.

Finally, as prior research has demonstrated that composition of one's self impacts the quality of one's life in a variety of ways (Cast and Burke 2002; Burke and Stets 2009), it is hoped that this more full understanding of how that self is shaped can be employed in the future to improve individual quality of life. In particular, this research on the relationship between the physical world and the self via the identity process is situated to improve this quality of life through identifying mechanisms by which positive identity-relations and identity-based communication can be nurtured. By examining the degree of effort individuals are willing to invest in committing to interactions with others, we can identify both specific areas that contribute to this perceived burden as well as begin to identify mechanisms to decrease the effort required to form a stable, identity-based proximate social structure. Although in of itself such information would be relegated to simply an intellectual curiosity, the relationship of this research with urban sociology and geography also illuminates one path by which this information can be made to have an immediate and significant impact on the social world: urban planning and design. Through successfully incorporating considerations of the identity process in

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urban planning, communities would be able to foster an increased sense of local identity and

citizenship through simply investing in an infrastructure that brings people together in a stable

fashion in various places that serve as identity-interaction sites.

Demographics

Which of the following best describes your race?
1. White
2. Black or African-American
3. American Indian or Alaskan Native
4. Asian (includes Indian subcontinent)
5. Pacific Islander
6. Multi-racial (please specify)
7. Other (please specify)

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer to Not Answer

What is your age, rounded to the nearest whole year?
[Number box]

Please select the response option that currently describes your gender.
0. Man
1. Woman
2. Other gender not listed **[SKIPTO DISQUAL AT END OF BLOCK]**

98. Don't Know **[SKIPTO DISQUAL AT END OF BLOCK]**
99. Prefer to Not Answer **[SKIPTO DISQUAL AT END OF BLOCK]**

Which of the following best describes your education?
1. Less than high school
2. High school diploma or GED
3. Some college, but no degree
4. Associates degree
5. Bachelors degree
6. Graduate degree
7. Professional degree

8. Don't Know
9. Prefer to Not Answer

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Below are some income categories. Please choose the category that best represents the total annual income of your household last year, before taxes. Please be sure to include your own personal income, as well as the income of all other individuals living in your household.

1. Less than $14,999
2. Between $15,000 and $24,999
3. Between $25,000 and $34,999
4. Between $35,000 and $44,999
5. Between $45,000 and $59,999
6. Between $60,000 and $74,999
7. Between $75,000 and $99,999
8. Between $100,000 and $149,999
9. Between $150,000 and $199,999
10. Between $200,000 and $249,999
11. Between $250,000 and $299,999

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer to Not Answer

Place-Based Questions

Which of the following states is your primary residence located (the home where you spend the majority of your time)?
  [State List]

Please enter the zip code in which your primary residence is located.
  [Number box]

Within your community, what houses of worship do you go to the most? Please enter the name of this place of worship in the textbox below.
(Please type "Don't Know" if you do not know the name of this place of worship)
  [TEXT BOX]

In addition to **[SHOW: "Primary"],** what other places of worship within your community do you go to less frequently? Please list up to 5 of these places in the text boxes provided below. You do not need to fill all of the boxes.
  [TEXT BOX; up to 5]

In addition to **[SHOW: "Primary"],** what other places of worship **within your community** could you attend but choose not to? Please list up to 5 of these places in the textboxes provided below. You do not need to fill all of the boxes.
  [TEXT BOX; up to 5]

In the textboxes provided below, please list up to 5 of the places of worship **outside of your home community** you have attend within the last 24 months. You do not need to fill all of the boxes.

[TEXT BOX; up to 5]

Space-Based Questions

Using a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates "Not at all" and 5 indicates "A great deal", please rate how much distance (e.g., miles to the place) factors into how often you attend each of the following places of worship. **[SHOW all response options for houses of worship they have attended]**

1. Not at all
2.
3.
4.
5. A great deal

98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Using a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates "Not at all" and 5 indicates "A great deal", please rate how much travel time factors into how often you attend each of the following places of worship. **[SHOW all response options for houses of worship they have attended]**

1. Not at all
2.
3.
4.
5. A great deal

98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Using a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates "Not at all" and 5 indicates "A great deal", please rate how difficult traveling to each of the following places of worship is. **[SHOW all response options for houses of worship they have attended]**

1. Not at all
2.
3.
4.
5. A great deal

98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Using a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates "Not at all" and 5 indicates "A great deal", please rate how physically tiring traveling to each of the following places of worship is.
[SHOW all response options for houses of worship they have attended]
    1. Not at all
    2.
    3.
    4.
    5. A great deal

    98. Don't know
    99. Prefer not to answer

For each of the places of worship that you have actually attended, please select the response option that **best** represents how frequently you go to that place.
    1. Once a year, or less frequently
    2. Several times a year
    3. At least once every two months
    4. About once a month
    5. Two or three times a month
    6. Once a week
    7. More than once a week

    98. Don't Know
    99. Prefer not to answer

Proximate Social Structure

How many of your **close friends** (people that you know and can count on if you need them) are **also religious?**
    1. Almost none
    2. Less than half
    3. About half
    4. More than half
    5. Almost all

    98. Don't Know
    99. Prefer to Not Answer

How many of your **friends** (people you know and do things with) are **also religious?**
1. Almost none
2. Less than half
3. About half
4. More than half
5. Almost all

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer to Not Answer

How many of your **family members** (spouse/partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc) are **also religious?**
1. Almost none
2. Less than half
3. About half
4. More than half
5. Almost all

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer to Not Answer

How many of the people you interact with on a daily basis do you think are **also religious?**
1. Almost none
2. Less than half
3. About half
4. More than half
5. Almost all

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer to Not Answer

Affective Commitment

If you were not able to see them, how much would you miss the people you know because of your religion?
1. Miss them not at all
2. Miss them a little
3. Miss them somewhat
4. Miss them a great deal

98. Don't Know
99. Prefer Not to Answer

How close (in personal and emotional terms) are you to the people you know because of your religion?

      1. Not Close at all
      2. Not very Close
      3. Somewhat Close
      4. Very Close

      98. Don't Know
      99. Prefer Not to Answer

How important to you are the people you know because of your religion?

      1. Not at all important
      2. Not very important
      3. Somewhat important
      4. Very important

      98. Don't Know
      99. Prefer Not to Answer

Interactive Commitment

How often do you do things with people who share your religious views?

      1. Never
      2. Seldom
      3. Once a month
      4. Less than once a week
      5. Once a week
      6. Several times a week
      7. Daily

In an average week, how many hours do you spend doing things with people who share your religious views?

      1. Less than 5 hours
      2. 5 to 10 hours
      3. 11 to 20 hours
      4. 21 to 30 hours
      5. More than 30 hours

      98. Don't know
      99. Prefer not to answer

Of the money you do not need for rent, food, clothing and other essentials, how much do you spend on things you do with people who share your religious views (e.g., going out to a movie, gifts)?
  1. Almost none
  2. Less than half
  3. About half
  4. More than half
  5. Almost all

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

Identity Prominence

For this next section, please rate how much you agree/disagree with each of the following statements about your religious identity using a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates "Strongly Agree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Disagree."

Being **religious** is an important part of my self-image.
  1. Strongly Agree
  2. Agree
  3. Neither Agree or Disagree
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

Being **religious** is an important reflection of who I am.
  1. Strongly Agree
  2. Agree
  3. Neither Agree or Disagree
  4. Disagree
  5. Strongly Disagree

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

I have come to think of myself as a **religious** person.
>   1. Strongly Agree
>   2. Agree
>   3. Neither Agree or Disagree
>   4. Disagree
>   5. Strongly Disagree
>
>   98. Don't Know
>   99. Prefer Not to Answer

I have a strong sense of belonging to the community of **religious** people.
>   1. Strongly Agree
>   2. Agree
>   3. Neither Agree or Disagree
>   4. Disagree
>   5. Strongly Disagree
>
>   98. Don't Know
>   99. Prefer Not to Answer

Identity Salience

> *For the next few questions, please think about meeting a friend of a close friend for the first time at a social gathering…*

> During the conversation, they ask you about your religion. How likely is it that you will tell them about **being religious?**
>   1. Almost certainly would not
>   2.
>   3.
>   4.
>   5.
>   6.
>   7. Almost certainly would
>
>   98. Don't Know
>   99. Prefer to Not Answer

During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would share with them that you are **also religious?**

    1. Almost certainly would not

    2.

    3.

    4.

    5.

    6.

    7. Almost certainly would

    98. Don't Know

    99. Prefer to Not Answer

During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you ask them more about being religious?

    1. Almost certainly would not

    2.

    3.

    4.

    5.

    6.

    7. Almost certainly would

    98. Don't Know

    99. Prefer to Not Answer

During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would buy them a drink?

    1. Almost certainly would not

    2.

    3.

    4.

    5.

    6.

    7. Almost certainly would

    98. Don't Know

    99. Prefer to Not Answer

During the conversation, they tell you they are religious. How likely is it that you would invite them to get together in the future?

    1. Almost certainly would not
    2.
    3.
    4.
    5.
    6.
    7. Almost certainly would

    98. Don't Know
    99. Prefer to Not Answer

Religious Behaviors

How often do you read the bible, Quran, Torah, or other scared text?

    1. Never
    2. Less than once a year
    3. A few times a year
    4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
    5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
    6. Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week

    98. Don't Know
    99. Prefer Not to Answer

How frequently do you watch religious programs on television?

    1. Never
    2. Less than once a year
    3. A few times a year
    4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
    5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
    6. Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week

    98. Don't Know
    99. Prefer Not to Answer

How often do you pray or meditate outside of religious services?
  1. Never
  2. Less than once a year
  3. A few times a year
  4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
  5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
  6. Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

How often do you participate in table prayers or grace before or after meals?
  1. Never
  2. Less than once a year
  3. A few times a year
  4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
  5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
  6. Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

How frequently do you ask someone to pray for you?
  1. Never
  2. Less than once a year
  3. A few times a year
  4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
  5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
  6. Nearly every day – 4 or more times a week

  98. Don't Know
  99. Prefer Not to Answer

APPENDIX B: ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS BY SAMPLE GROUP

Appendix B: Zero-Order Correlations (Large Community)												
Correlation Matrix--Structural	# of Churches	Effort to Reach Primary church	Freq. of attending church	Proximate Social Structure	Affective Commitment	Interactive Commitment	Prominence	Salience	Religious Behaviors	Female	Age	Household Income	Education Level
# of Churches	--												
Effort to Reach Primary church	-.2567***	--											
Freq. of attending church	.1202**	-.1325**	--										
Proximate Social Structure	.1708***	.0132	.2067***	--									
Affective Commitment	.0981*	-.0163	.2680***	.3561***	--								
Interactive Commitment	.0729	.1322**	.1260*	.4554***	.3837***	--							
Prominence	.0561	.0346	.3600***	.3969***	.4174***	.3433***	--						
Salience	.1516***	-.1363**	.1970***	.3139***	.3752***	.2267***	.4700***	--					
Religious Behaviors	.1038*	.0179	.3881***	.2752***	.4612***	.3117***	.4202***	.4811***	--				
Age	.1466***	-.2494***	.1940***	.0648	.0123	-.1706***	.0352	-.1095*	.0549	--			
Female	.0291	-.0762	-.0272	.0924	.1439**	-.0004	.0318	.0457	.1419**	-.0179	--		
Household Income	.1672***	-.0642	.1484**	.1692***	-.0630	.0218	.1382***	-.0153	-.0172	.1034*	-.1338**	--	
Education Level	.1620***	-.0360	.14**	.1787***	-.0940	.0194	.0823	-.0777	.0634	.0980*	-.1184**	.3404***	--

Appendix B: Zero-Order Correlations (Medium Community)													
Correlation Matrix--Structural	# of Churches	Effort to Reach Primary church	Freq. of attending church	Proximate Social Structure	Affective Commitment	Interactive Commitment	Prominence	Salience	Religious Behaviors	Female	Age	Household Income	Education Level
# of Churches	1												
Effort to Reach Primary church	-.0395	1											
Freq. of attending church	.0613	-.2453***	1										
Proximate Social Structure	.1514**	-.1221*	.2218***	1									
Affective Commitment	.1803***	-.1791***	.3022***	.3650***	1								
Interactive Commitment	.0336	-.1064	.1995***	.3675***	.4102***	1							
Prominence	.0718	-.1027	.3601***	.3441***	.5070***	.2591***	1						
Salience	.0591	-.1204*	.2661***	.2007***	.4049***	.3097***	.4387***	1					
Religious Behaviors	.0979	-.1372**	.5202***	.2950***	.4805***	.3725***	.4933***	.5011***	1				
Age	.0922	-.1066*	.1449**	-.0041	-.0088	-.1379**	.0704	-.0931	.0193	1			
Female	-.0071	.0064	.0533	.1090*	.0805	-.0636	.0660	.0770	.0319	-.0296	1		
Household Income	.0293	-.1173*	-.0263	.1317**	.0139	.0422	-.0120	-.1667**	.1281*	.0632	-.0707	1	
Education Level	.1059*	-.0542	-.0711	.1751***	-.0270	.1283*	-.0599	-.1325**	-.051	.0919	-.0644	.4073***	1

Correlation Matrix--Structural	# of Churches	Effort to Reach Primary church	Freq. of attending church	Proximate Social Structure	Affective Commitment	Interactive Commitment	Prominence	Salience	Religious Behaviors	Female	Age	Household Income	Education Level
Appendix B: Zero-Order Correlations (Small Community)													
# of Churches	1												
Effort to Reach Primary church	-.0089	1											
Freq. of attending church	.0131	-.1093*	1										
Proximate Social Structure	.1038*	-.0421	.2531***	1									
Affective Commitment	.0728	-.0652	.2995***	.3152***	1								
Interactive Commitment	-.0603	-.0253	.2391***	.4409***	.3995***	1							
Prominence	-.0306	-.0216	.2890***	.3126***	.3690***	.2325***	1						
Salience	.0785	-.0454	.2921***	.2691***	.5291***	.2753***	.3799***	1					
Religious Behaviors	.0605	-.0833	.4402***	.1622**	.4658***	.3058***	.3852***	.4741***	1				
Age	-.0114	-.1440**	.0814	-.0166	-.0789	-.1803***	.0267	-.0555	.0578	1			
Female	.0688	-.0247	.0269	.0655	.0582	.0955	.0593	.0071	.0067	-.0569	1		
Household Income	.0057	-.0472	.0378	-.0475	-.0329	.0890	.0162	-.0269	.0403	.0712	.0601	1	
Education Level	.1431**	-.0439	-.0027	.1031	-.0818	.0198	-.0094	-.0745	.0080	.1126*	-.0249	.3638***	1

APPENDIX C: GROUPS MODEL SEM

Groups Model SEM (Analysis Two) Unstandardized Effects (Direct)			
	Large Community	Medium Community	Small Community
Number of Churches			
Age	.009	.015*	-.002
Female	.639***	.481*	.026
Income	.007	-.014	-.046
Education	.262***	.104	.129
Effort			
# of churches	-.088***	-.081***	-.029
Age	-.011***	-.004	-.006*
Female	-.084	.046	-.004
Income	-.015	-.045*	-.016
Education	.018	.021	-.012
Freq. of Attendance			
Effort	-.338*	-.628***	-.287*
Age	.017***	.016***	.008
Female	-.055	.195	.009
Income	.073	-.025	.023
Education	.125*	-.096	-.042
Proximate Social Structure			
Freq. of Attendance	.142***	.170***	.192***
Age	.005	-.004	-.001
Female	.397***	.239*	.013
Income	.072***	.080***	-.041
Education	.045	.068	.122***
Affective Commitment			
PSS	.391***	.310***	.279***
Age	-.002	.000	-.003
Female	.083	.013	.003
Income	-.057***	-.016	.007
Education	-.025	-.025	-.054*

Interactive Commitment			
PSS	.553***	.340***	.419***
Age	-.016***	.011***	-.012***
Female	-.193*	-.240*	.007
Income	-.024	-.036	.060**
Education	-.019	.086*	-.051
Prominence			
PSS	.146***	.128***	.180***
Affective Commitment	.265***	.428***	.336***
Interactive Commitment	.089*	.034	-.019
Age	.000	.005*	.002
Female	-.057	.009	.003
Income	.030*	-.014	.018
Education	.011	-.020	-.022
Salience			
PSS	.179	.000	.024
Affective Commitment	.683***	.509***	1.032***
Interactive Commitment	-.117	.228***	.118
Prominence	.782***	.560***	.419***
Age	-.012**	-.004	.001
Female	-.062	.174	-.006
Income	-.007	-.079*	.015
Education	-.098*	-.067	-.045
Behavioral Outcomes			
Prominence	.391***	.528***	.264***
Salience	.237***	.305***	.317***
Age	.005*	.001	.005
Female	.240**	-.079	-.003
Income	-.039	-.020	.011
Education	.071*	.025	.022

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