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**A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE ON
SPIRITUALITY AND DESISTANCE FROM CRIME**

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ABSTRACT

Spirituality has become a part of many drug and alcohol treatment strategies, and faith-based programming is also common within prison settings. Yet research on religion and crime linkages has often relied on general youth or adult samples, or included a short time line for gauging positive effects. Life course researchers focused on serious delinquents, in turn, have often emphasized other factors associated with long term crime patterns, such as marital attachment and job stability. This study draws on quantitative and qualitative data derived from a long term follow-up of a sample of serious adolescent male and female offenders to explore the role of spirituality as a predictor of adult patterns of criminal involvement and substance abuse. The respondents were first interviewed as adolescents, in 1982, and again as adults in 1995 and 2003. Results of cross-sectional analyses indicate a significant inverse relationship between two indices of spirituality and these outcomes, net of traditional predictors of adult desistance; yet longitudinal results show only modest long-term effects. Our analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted with the total sample, and 41 additional interviews focused specifically on faith and religion add depth to our understanding of the role of spirituality in the life course experiences and desistance efforts of these respondents.

KeyWords: Spirituality, religion, desistance, life course, female crime

A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE ON SPIRITUALITY AND DESISTANCE FROM CRIME

Researchers frequently have examined factors related to the movement into criminal activity, but the processes associated with movement *away* from a criminal lifestyle have not as often been investigated. This situation is changing rapidly, however, as a number of researchers have given greater attention to the factors associated with desistance from criminal behavior. Sampson and Laub (Laub and Sampson, 2003; Sampson and Laub, 1993), in particular, have focused on the role of marital attachment and job stability as two life circumstances that predicted desistance in a long term follow-up of a large sample of men who were delinquent as boys.

One limitation of this important study is that respondents were youths who grew into adulthood during the 1950s; moreover, the sample did not include women or minorities. In a more contemporary study of a diverse sample of juvenile female and male offenders followed into adulthood (the Ohio Lifecourse Study--OLS), we documented that job stability was not reliably associated with desistance, and a “good marriage effect” appeared beneficial for only a subset of the respondents (authors, 2002). Further, our analyses highlighted that the partner’s level of criminal involvement was a key consideration, as contrasted with the emphasis of Sampson and Laub’s informal social control theory on level of attachment to one’s spouse (authors, 2003). This research also focused more attention on subjective processes, including cognitive changes, recognizing that a number of different ‘hooks for change’ might catalyze cognitive transformations that we argued logically precede, accompany, and follow sustained behavioral change (see also Maruna, 2001; Shover, 1996; Farrall, 2005).

In this paper, continuing these emphases, we focus on spirituality, one hook for change described by some respondents in the OLS study as critical to behavioral changes they had made. We present results of a new wave of structured interviews with OLS respondents as well as additional in-depth interviews conducted with respondents who indicated at the first follow-up (1995) that spirituality had an effect in turning their lives around. This adds to prior work on

religion and crime linkages, and to current interest in faith-based initiatives such as programs for prisoners that have a religious component (see e.g., Sumter, 2006). Also, spirituality is a key element of many self-help programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, suggesting the importance of documenting links between spirituality and long-term patterns of criminal behavior and substance abuse behaviors. This study differs from prior research, however, in focusing on females and males, and providing a life course perspective on these processes, as contrasted with cross-sectional studies or short-term assessments of a particular faith based program.

We first examine whether spirituality (as measured by perceived closeness to God as well as involvement in a church) as reported at the first adult follow-up (1995) is associated with lower self-reported adult crime and problem use of alcohol and drugs, net of traditional predictors. We examine cross-sectional associations, and subsequently longitudinal effects predicting behavior at the second adult follow-up eight years later (2003). We also assess whether spirituality is more significant as a predictor for female in contrast to male respondents (women were more likely to mention religion in their own life history narratives, but we have not explored this association systematically), and whether race/ethnicity conditions the nature of any effect. Next, we examine the role of spirituality under varying conditions of network (intimate partner and peer) criminality, since the latter emerged as significant predictors in our earlier analyses, as well as in studies based on other data sets (see e.g., Simons et al., 2002). Finally, we rely on the narrative interview data to add depth to our understanding of the role of spirituality in the life course experiences and desistance efforts of these respondents. The specific goals of the qualitative analyses are to understand how respondents construct and define their own experiences of personal religiosity and how this connects to behavioral changes, as well as to identify barriers to experiencing positive benefits, and factors associated with derailments from a pattern of forward progress. While it is important to understand more about the universal features of religious experiences, our emphasis is upon the role of religiosity in the life course trajectories of a highly marginal population such as the one we have followed-up in this longitudinal investigation.

BACKGROUND

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION AND CRIME

Laub and Sampson's examinations of desistance processes have not emphasized the role of religion or spirituality among the men who were the focus of their study. Only a few of the Glueck men seemed to have benefited from religion or spiritually oriented self-help groups. The authors cite one example, but the respondent's narrative emphasized the key role of his spouse in insisting that he get help for his alcohol problems, and threatening to leave him if he did not (Laub and Sampson, 2003:139-140). Indeed, Laub and Sampson (2003:246) quoted one respondent, Mickey, as typifying the views of the Glueck men on religion ("It's a crock"). Nevertheless, the idea of religion influencing individual conduct is compatible with a control theory perspective. The conception of the individual as controlled by structural or external forces is predominant not only in general treatments of religion (Durkheim, 1915), but also in studies focused on the connections between religion and crime. Not surprisingly, given its sociological roots, criminology historically has been sympathetic to theories that view humans as vulnerable to the temptations of crime. Control theory (e.g., Hirschi, 1969; Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990) assumes that all people are equally drawn to deviance; similar to the doctrines of some religions, Hirschi (1969) views individuals as inherently prone to deviance, and whether individuals become involved in crime will depend on whether there are in place sufficient bonds to society that will control individuals' natural impulses. The logic is that as an individual obtains bonds to religion and religious institutions, these bonds will deter the individual from realizing his/her natural proclivities to criminal activity.

Although religion's effects can usefully be viewed through the lens of social control, acquiring a spiritual foundation is also compatible with the principles of differential association theory, particularly symbolic interactionist versions (authors, 2002; Matsueda and Heimer, 1997; O'Connor, 2004). Thus, religion can be viewed, not only as a source of external control over

individual conduct, but as a catalyst for new definitions of the situation and as a cognitive blueprint for how one is to proceed as a changed individual. In the process, aligning with a spiritual presence, whether through formal affiliation with an organized religion or church or based on more personal experiences, may facilitate the development of a new and more favorable identity (e.g., child of God) to replace the one associated with previous antisocial behavior patterns (e.g., crack addict, ex-felon) (see Terry, 2003; Maruna, 2001; see also Heimer and Matsueda, 1997 for a more general discussion linking identity and criminal behavior over the life course). It is also likely that acquiring these new perspectives on the self involves emotional as well as cognitive changes. For example, Rambo (1993) argued that the experience of a religious conversion itself entails a strong emotional component. Thus an additional mechanism potentially linking spiritual experiences and desistance is that religion provides a resource for emotion-coping. This accords well with the idea that at least some aspects of criminal involvement, particularly violent responses and substance abuse as related to emotional reactions to stress (see e.g., Agnew, 2006; Cullen, 1994). This is also consistent with a larger body of research on the underlying dynamics linking religiosity and more favorable health outcomes (for a useful review of this literature, see Koenig et al., 2001).

Whether viewed from the logic of control, differential association or even general strain theory, then, there is reason to expect that a strong spiritual orientation would be associated with lower levels of antisocial behavior. However, for economically and socially marginal offenders such as those we have followed in this investigation, less ethereal considerations also continue to influence their lives. As scholars such as Caspi and Moffitt (1995) have emphasized, early involvement in crime has the effect of knifing off conventional opportunities, and structuring future social contacts. Although spirituality may open up the individual to new prosocial contacts (O'Connor, Duncan, and Quillard, 2006), some individuals may have developed bonds to antisocial romantic partners or continue to associate with criminal/drug using peers. In turn, these more antisocial contacts may overshadow the positive benefits that derive from a strong spiritual

orientation and/or association with prosocial individuals through one's church or religious affiliation. The focus on implications of the prosocial/antisocial orientation of friends and romantic or marriage partners is especially resonant with basic tenets of differential association theory. Our analyses in this paper will thus document not only whether a spiritual orientation influences criminal involvement, but whether spirituality makes a difference for desistance from crime and drug use once the nature of the individual's social network characteristics has been taken into account.

PRIOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON RELIGION AND CRIME

The hypothesis that religion and crime are negatively related is intuitive, and supported by sociological and criminological theories. The evidence supporting this claim, however, has shown mixed results. In their landmark study, Hirschi and Stark (1969), for example, hypothesized that religious participation and belief in an afterlife would be associated with lower rates of delinquency. But contrary to expectations, religious and non-religious youth offended at similar rates. In contrast, several research efforts following Hirschi and Stark's (1969) study revealed that religiosity does deter various forms of deviant and criminal behavior (e.g., Evans et al., 1995; Higgins and Albrecht, 1977; Jang and Johnson, 2001; Jensen and Erickson, 1979; Rohrbaugh and Jessor, 1975;). For instance, Burkett and White (1974) found that religion has a strong effect on adolescents for victimless crimes that are in violation of religious principles, such as drug and alcohol abuse. Other research endeavors, however, support the null hypothesis offered by Hirschi and Stark (1969) and find no difference between religious and non-religious youth in criminal offending (e.g., Krohn et al., 1982; Evans et al., 1996; Benda and Corwyn, 1997). Baier and Wright (2001) conducted an important meta-analytic review of the research linking religion to crime, and their findings tend to confirm religion as operating as a social bond. The authors emphasized that "religion deters individual-level criminal behavior through the threat

of supernatural sanctions and promotes normative behavior through the promise of supernatural reward” (Baier and Wright, 2001:4).

While the work of Baier and Wright and other scholars adopting a life course perspective in criminology are meant to apply to broad populations of individuals, some work has examined more directly the role of religion among criminal offenders themselves. Benda, Toombs, and Peacock (2003) found that religiosity, along with traditional life course transition events such as marriage and employment was associated with less recidivism in a five year follow-up of boot camp graduates. Johnson et al. (1997) compared rates of recidivism among former prisoners and found that prisoners who had high levels in participation in Bible study had lower rates of recidivism. A recent analysis by Camp et al. (2006) complicates this view; they find that participants compared with non-participants may differ in ways that affect such findings (i.e., the idea of selection effects). For example, those who chose to participate in the faith-based prison program studied scored higher on a ‘motivation for change’ scale, suggesting that these individuals may have evidenced a personal readiness that facilitated the more favorable outcome.

Treatment programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous have shown varying rates of effectiveness, and spirituality is generally a component of such programs (Fuller and Hilles-Sturmhöfel, 1999; Montgomery, Miller, and Tonigan, 1995). However, it is not clear whether positive benefits observed derive from the spiritual aspects of the self-help approach, group support, selection effects, change in social networks, or the unique combination that facilitates members’ success in abstaining from alcohol and drug use. A number of recent qualitative studies of desistance processes have highlighted a role for religiosity that contrasts with the focus of Laub and Sampson (2003) on more traditional predictors such as marriage, job stability, and military service, and with the observed lack of importance of religion within the Glueck men’s own life history narratives. For example, Maruna (2001), in a study of British male and female offenders, found that religion was one pathway to ‘making good’ or perceived ‘redemption.’ Similarly, Terry (2003) observed that spirituality was often important to ex-addicts’ stories of

change, and our own previous research documented that for a subset of the OLS respondents (particularly women), religion appeared as a key theme (authors, 2002). This foregrounding of religion in recent studies may reflect the central role of spirituality in twelve step programs, greater availability of bible study and other church related programming within prisons, as well as the rise of a variety of less traditional evangelical churches, particularly in economically and socially disadvantaged neighborhoods in which offenders are likely to reside. In addition, as we have noted previously, the contemporary landscape of desistance is also likely influenced by aggregate declines in marriage, decreased stability of marital unions, lack of opportunity for those with little education/training to obtain meaningful employment, and the marginalizing effects of heavy drug use (see e.g., Booth, Crouter, and Shanahan, 1999; authors, 2002, 2007). Thus, lacking structural advantages in key domains, contemporary offenders may be more likely to attempt to “pull themselves up by their own bootstraps” in a variety of ways that they perceive to be objectively and subjectively available. For some, becoming ‘closer to God’ appears to be one of these ways. This suggests the importance of examining the influence of spirituality on crime and drug use patterns more systematically from the vantage point of a long-term follow-up of a sample of serious offenders.

ANALYTIC STRATEGY

Relying on three waves of interviews with a sample of delinquent youth first interviewed as adolescents (1982) and later in two adult follow-up interviews (conducted in 1995 and again in 2003), we first determine whether two indices of spirituality (closeness to God and church attendance) assessed in 1995 are associated contemporaneously and longitudinally with lower scores on self-reported criminality and problem use of alcohol and drugs. Regression models include controls for sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (age, gender, minority status), initial level of delinquency involvement (measured in adolescence), adult social bonds (marital attachment and job quality) and measures of network criminality (partner and friends’

involvement in crime). Second, we estimate models including interactions of the spirituality variables with gender, minority status, and level of network criminality, in order to determine whether religion is more strongly associated with levels of criminal involvement and drug use among women respondents, for minority in contrast to white respondents, or based on level of network criminality. Third, as a further means of exploring links between network deviance and spiritual orientation, we assess mean levels of crime and drug abuse for four categories of respondents: those high in spirituality and low on criminality within their (partner and peer) networks, those high on spirituality but high on network criminality, those low on spirituality and high on network involvement, and finally, those low on spirituality, but also low on network crime. Supplementary analyses investigate the overall pattern of spiritual involvement, differentiating the sample based on responses to both the 1995 and 2003 follow-ups. We construct a variable indexing closeness to God at both waves, and subsequently contrast the crime/drug use scores of those whose responses reflect a consistent spiritual orientation with others in the sample, in order to determine whether this more sustained spirituality differentiates long-term patterns of crime and substance abuse.

We rely on the qualitative data to add depth to our understanding of spirituality-crime linkages as understood by respondents themselves. We explore conditions under which religion appears to exert a positive effect, as well as factors that may make it more difficult for some respondents (even those who have experienced what appear to be meaningful spiritual transformations) to cement long-term behavioral changes.

DATA

The data used in this analysis are drawn from the Ohio Lifecourse Study (OLS). OLS is a three-wave panel study of adolescents originally surveyed in 1982 when youths resided in state-level juvenile correctional institutions. These respondents were subsequently interviewed in 1995 and again in 2003. We note also that the criterion for selection was similar to that used in the

Glueck study (see Glueck and Glueck, 1950; Sampson and Laub, 1993; Laub and Sampson, 2003). The original sample includes the entire 1982 population of the only state-level institution for females in Ohio (n = 127), and males randomly selected from three state-level institutions for delinquent boys (n = 127). Thus the first wave of the study included 254 institutionalized adolescents, evenly divided by gender. The average age of the respondents was 16.3, and the sample included 37.5% African American, and 62.5% white youths.

The first follow-up conducted in 1995 included 210 subjects. Due to the long time period between waves of the study (13 years) and the highly marginal lifestyles of the majority of the sample members, many of the respondents were difficult to locate for the follow-up study. Nevertheless, an intensive effort was made to locate as many of these adolescents as possible and 83% were eventually located and interviewed for the follow-up study. The second follow-up study conducted in 2003 included 152 of the 210 (72.4%) subjects from the follow-up sample. This latest wave includes 75 males (50.7%) and 77 females (49.3%) and is 39.5% minority.¹ Based on the content of the 1995 qualitative interviews and answers to structured questions asked during that interview, we also selected 48 individuals for re-interview who indicated that spirituality had an important place in their lives. We were eventually able to locate and interview 41 of these respondents. Age at the time of the second wave of structured and in-depth interviews averaged 38.2 years. The addition of the third wave of data to the Ohio Lifecourse Study adds to prior life course studies of criminal offending as it provides a detailed account of offending well into adulthood for a contemporary sample of serious female and male juvenile offenders.

¹ Logistic regressions comparing those interviewed in 2003 and those who were missing revealed no significant differences by race, adolescent delinquency, age, gender, drug use, alcohol use, peer deviance, or partner criminality. Further, neither offending nor desistance status at the second wave of the study predicts third wave attrition (analyses not shown). Sample attrition across the three waves of the Ohio Lifecourse Study, therefore, while a concern, does not appear to introduce systematic bias that would influence these results.

Dependent Variables

Self-Reported Adult Crime. Adult criminal offending was measured at each wave (1995 and 2003) using a modified version of the Elliott et al. (1985) self-reported delinquency scale with age inappropriate items, such as status offenses, removed from the scale. Each offense is assigned a seriousness weight derived from the National Survey of Crime Severity (Wolfgang et al., 1985) and then multiplied by the self-reported frequency of each behavior to create an offending scale that accounts for the frequency of offending as well as the seriousness of each offense (alpha .89).²

Problem Drug and Alcohol Use. The extent of problems stemming from the use of alcohol or drugs is assessed in 1995 and 2003 with a modified version of Jessor and Jessor's (1977) scale, as revised for use in the National Youth Survey (Elliott et al., 1985) (alpha .88). Respondents were asked how often they experienced various problems associated with the use of alcohol or drugs.

Independent Variables

Spirituality. We measure self-perceptions of spiritual involvement using two single-item indicators. The first references perceived closeness to God, recognizing that some measures of religiosity such as denomination or general belief in a higher power may not discriminate subjectively held feelings. We ask: "How close do you feel to God most of the time? Would you say (1) extremely close, (2) somewhat close, (3) not very close, and (4) not close at all." Responses are reverse coded so that higher scores indicate a closer relationship to God. A second measure indexes *participation* in church activities, and includes responses to the following item: How often do you attend church services? Responses range from 1 to 6, with higher scores reflecting a greater level of participation in church activities. Although we rely primarily on the

² See Appendix A for a complete list of items used in the self-report crime, criminal network, and substance abuse scales.

1995 measures of these constructs, supplementary analyses take into account responses to similar questions asked in 2003. We construct an index of *sustained spirituality* based on responses across both the adult waves. This was done by dummy coding respondents above the sample mean for spirituality at both follow-up interviews.

Social Network Criminality. In the 1995 interview, respondents are asked to report on their *romantic partner's involvement in criminal behavior* (alpha .85). The items in this scale are similar to those in the respondent's self-report measure and are coded in the same fashion. We also include a measure of the *criminality of the respondent's friends* (alpha .93). This index contains fewer items than the self and partner indices, and asks how many of the respondent's friends engage in a range of criminal activities. Responses to these items range from all, most, some, to none of the respondent's friends.

Control Variables

Juvenile Delinquency. Adolescent involvement in delinquency is measured by the 27 item version of the Elliott et al. (1985) scale. 'Juvenile Delinquency' includes most of the items in the self-reported adult crime scale as well as questions concerning status offenses and school behavior. This scale was administered as a part of the adolescent interview conducted in 1982. Seriousness weights are also used in calculating total scores on this scale (alpha .92).

Relationship Happiness. We rely on a slightly revised version of Spanier's (1976) single item measure of marital happiness (1995). Respondents are asked to consider the following: "The numbers on the line (from 1 to 7) represent degrees of happiness in relationships. The middle point (#4) represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please tell me which number best describes the level of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship with your spouse/partner or girl or boyfriend." Responses range from 1 (extremely unhappy) to 7 (perfect).

Occupational Prestige. Aside from our interest in marital or relationship happiness, a further measure of the quality of adult social bonds is an occupational prestige ranking that

classifies the respondent's occupation ranging from executives, administrators, and managers (coded 7) to service workers and laborers (coded 1) [1995 measure is used].

Sociodemographic Controls. Age, is measured in years, gender (male = 1, female = 0), and race (minority = 1, white = 0), are both dummy coded.

We also analyzed male and female life history narratives elicited from all respondents in 1995 and 2003. While these analyses were useful in exploring the role of spirituality across the sample as a whole, in this analysis we rely primarily on in-depth interviews conducted in 2003 and 2004 with respondents who had indicated at the first follow-up that spirituality was the source of positive life changes. Appendix B provides detail about procedures used to analyze the qualitative data.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents results of analyses that investigate the association between perceived closeness to God and church participation and self-reports of crime and drug/alcohol problems at the time of the first adult follow-up (Appendix C provides descriptive results for all of the variables under investigation). In a multiple regression model that includes controls for sociodemographic characteristics of the respondent, level of delinquency reported in adolescence (1982), measures of social bonds (marital happiness and occupational prestige), and indices of network criminality, perceived closeness to God and church attendance are both inversely related to level of self-reported criminal involvement. In this model, minority status, the romantic partner/spouse' level of criminal involvement, friends' level of involvement and prior delinquency are also significant predictors. Thus, cross-sectionally it appears that the two measures of religiosity are associated with greater desistance, net of other known correlates.

We also estimate a series of models that include interactions of the two spirituality measures and gender, and minority status. The results of these interactions are not significant, indicating a generally similar influence of spirituality on this dependent variable regardless of

gender or race/ethnicity. We note that, consistent with the hypothesis developed on the basis of prior qualitative analyses, women and minority respondents were more likely to report high levels of closeness to God (analyses not shown), but the above findings indicate that spirituality appears to be similar in its effects across gender and minority status. Next we introduced an interaction of network criminality and perceived closeness to God. This interaction is significant, indicating that high levels of perceived closeness are related to a somewhat reduced impact of network criminality on the respondent's own self-report of criminal involvement. None of the interactions assessing links between church attendance and these other variables (gender, minority status, and network criminality) were significant.

Turning to the second model described in Table 1, we focus on the index of problems associated with the use of alcohol and drugs. We find generally similar patterns, although only perceived closeness to God is significant as a predictor of level of substance abuse; that is, church attendance is not significantly associated with fewer problems due to drug or alcohol use. The network criminality measures continue to be highly significant as predictors of reports of these problem areas, and the measure of marital happiness is also significant, consistent with the emphasis of Sampson and Laub's control theory. None of the interactions were significant

Table 1 also presents results describing a longitudinal assessment of the influence of spirituality as measured in 1995 on later crime and substance abuse as reported at the second follow-up conducted in 2003. Results of these analyses suggest that over the eight year period neither perceived closeness to God nor church attendance predicts criminal involvement or problems associated with alcohol and drugs. In these models, gender is related to lower levels of criminal activity, and the partner's criminal involvement (as measured in 1995) and initial level of delinquency (as measured in 1982) continue to be significant predictors of self-reported criminal activity. The same predictors are significantly associated with substance abuse. In these models, interactions of gender and minority status with the spirituality measures indicate similar effects across the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. In models that include an

interaction term for closeness to God by level of network criminality, as well as substance abuse, the interactions were significant. This indicates a similar relationship as described in the cross-sectional results: as level of closeness to God increases, the impact of network criminality on crime and substance abuse decreases. It is also interesting to note that when viewed over this longer period, church attendance interacts with the level of criminality of the respondent's network: among those who attend church the effect of partner criminality on later crime, especially substance use, is reduced.

The above findings show some positive effects of closeness to God, viewed at a particular point in time, and interaction results in some instances suggest a softening effect of the generally strong influence of network crime. However, it is important to note, as shown in Table 2, that the most dramatic impact remains the level of criminality within one's social network. The results in this table show that, regardless of level of religiosity, the two groups reporting the highest levels of criminal involvement are those enmeshed in very deviant networks. A similar pattern is observed when we examine mean differences between groups as reflected by responses to these questions in connection with the 2003 interview, as shown in the second column of Table 2. We also examined drug/alcohol use in 1995 and 2003 as a function of membership in these four groups, and again high network deviance appears important relative to the impact of religiosity.

The results described in tables 1 and 2 depict either cross sectional results or 2003 crime and drug/alcohol problem levels as predicted by 1995 measures of religiosity. Although the longitudinal perspective does not reveal a significant main influence of these variables, we also estimated models that assessed whether a consistent pattern of religious responses across the two waves might better predict crime over this longer period of time. Thus, we included a measure of consistent religiosity as a predictor of 2003 crime and drug/alcohol abuse. We examined consistently high scores on closeness to God, consistent church attendance, and an overall index that took into account both dimensions. None of these measures predicted 2003 crime or drug

and alcohol abuse. Finally, in order to better capture offending patterns across the two waves of adult interviews, we estimated multinomial models which compared a pattern of complete desistance across both adult waves with persistence across both waves, and as a contrast with a more episodic pattern.³ In these models, neither the 1995 measures of spirituality nor the measures of consistent spirituality predicted these overall patterns of offending (results not shown.)

SPIRITUALITY-CRIME CONNECTIONS: THE LIFE HISTORY NARRATIVES

The results of the quantitative analyses described above show some positive influences of spirituality, but strong longitudinal main effects were not observed for either criminal involvement or substance abuse although some interactions were significant. However, the in-depth interviews we conducted, both at the initial (1995) and second adult follow-up (2003), as well as those focused specifically on spirituality (n = 41) provide additional context for understanding the role of spirituality in the lives of these respondents.

Our view, based on analyses of these data, is that a subset of the respondents have indeed benefited (in terms of behavioral changes as well as life satisfaction) from some type of spiritual transformation (Pargament, 1997 and/or involvement in a religious community. Spirituality is more often a ‘hook for change’ highlighted in the narratives of women as well as minority respondents, but some men also emphasized the importance of religion to their lives and behavioral change efforts (i.e., “the only thing that’s kept me from going to prison is... God;” “I thank the Lord” [for my turnaround]. As noted in prior work that was not focused specifically on spirituality, in order to move away from a life of crime and/or substance abuse, one must

³ We developed this offense classification scheme by classifying *desisters* as those subjects who had self-report offending histories free of frequent and/or serious offending and were not incarcerated at both follow-up periods, and *persisters* are classified as those subjects who show frequent and/or serious offending and/or were incarcerated at both follow-up data collection periods. The more episodic *unstable* offenders included those subjects who had desisted at the first follow-up but revisited offending by the second follow-up as well as those subjects who had discontinued offending shortly before the second-follow up. See authors (2007) for a more detailed description of this analytic strategy.

evidence a general motivation to change, but also resonate with and have access, objectively and subjectively, to particular hooks for change that will prove useful to such a self-improvement project (authors, 2002).

Religion has significant potential in this regard, as the tenets of most religious denominations are specifically prosocial in orientation, and a spiritual transformation is sometimes associated with cognitive and emotional changes as well. Finally, a strong spiritual orientation can connect the offender to social networks that not only reinforce emerging changes in their identities, but provide an alternative to previous social contacts that often prove a significant detriment to sustained behavior change. The basic finding that approximately 58 percent of the sample indicated a strong closeness to God across both adult interviews and an additional 26 percent felt close to God at one wave suggests that religion is far from irrelevant in the lives of many of these offenders. However, the in-depth narrative data point to variations in life circumstances that help us to specify conditions under which spirituality links more successfully to long-term behavioral changes, as well as factors associated with either: a) a lack of impact, or b) derailments from a pattern of forward progress.

Answering affirmatively on a structured interview that one feels a level of closeness to God or goes to church does not fully convey variations observed in the *depth of commitment* to one's spiritual life or level of involvement in a broader religious community, sources of variation that become more apparent in the in-depth interview. Some individuals within the sample who have made significant behavioral changes that they tie to a spiritual transformation develop narratives that reflect almost a complete immersion in their spirituality and religious life. For example, in the home interview conducted with 39 year old Laura, the interviewer noted that almost every surface of Laura's home was covered with religious symbols, plaques or statues—these included verses from the Bible, numerous statues of the Virgin Mary, and even a Jesus night light in the bathroom. Laura joked that even though she was considered somewhat deviant on her block, the source of this deviance (as she put it, being considered something of a religious nut)

was a more positive basis upon which to be viewed as marginal than her previous lifestyle (i.e., being known as a drug addict).

A further complication involves the need to distinguish those respondents who describe a generally positive orientation toward religion from those who make a specific *cognitive connection* such that their religious involvement is perceived as fundamentally incompatible with continued deviation. This may or may not involve a dramatic turning point, as the contrast in the following stories of change illustrate:

Uh ever since I was born, I was raised in the church. I went to rehearsals and I had Bible study and regular church services on Sunday but um it just all stopped when I started going out and just started hanging with the people, unsafe people and unsafe environment... I go from trying to be a mother and a call girl at the same time. I was living out on the street, hanging the bars... You know, just doing all kinds of crazy stuff. And um, He began to talk to me and you know He let me know, "You've been asking everybody to pray for your child but you have not said anything to me. I need to hear from you." What God was saying to me. I heard His voice, I heard Him. I didn't see anything but just lights all in my room but I heard His voice speaking and He told me, "Open your book, your Bible, and read Psalm 24," and I read it and at first I was just reading it, I wasn't really reading it to get anything from it, I was just you know reading it. But when I got to the end of the chapter He, you know, revealed himself to me more in those last three verses. And then from then on I've been serving Him faithfully and I don't take anything that I get or anything that I do for granted because I know that God is the sole provider in my life for the rest of these years. [Dana]

Well it's not like a matter of hearing His voice but it's just knowing that He's calling me closer to Him. Uh... just to be a disciple. Yeah just to serve and then to become a Christian. Uh... well it's just I don't know how to describe it really. It's just hearing the Lord's voice interiorly calling to me that... to come close now. Well that made me uh... look at Christ and it made me want to know more about Him. Because I didn't know how to change my lifestyle which was I thought fun and carefree you know which is a big lie. That you know thinking that you know life outside of Christ is carefree and fun I believe that that is a lie. It's not true. I mean real freedom comes in knowing Him and uh... serving Him. Uh... probably within two years of you know that first calling at the church at my sister's wedding. Uh... there was a complete difference in me. . . The change is I put everything into His hands and He takes care of us and He does. I do my part and He does His part. We rely on Him. It took a lot and lot and lot of prayer to come to this, yes. You don't start off with that confidence in Christ right away. It takes a lot of years and it takes lots of prayer. [Julie]

Dana described a circuitous path, from an initially strong level of involvement in the church, to a falling away period when she became involved in drug use and prostitution, and an eventual epiphany experience (Farrall, 2005). Dana connected this spiritual event to cognitive as well as

behavioral changes, but such shifts of perspective would not be well captured by responses to the survey questions (i.e., Dana indicated high levels of closeness to God at both adult follow-up interviews). Julie also experienced a significant transformation that she connected to her spiritual life, but her narrative points to a much more gradual process of increased commitment and accompanying behavioral change. Nevertheless, an important aspect of this change was Julie's recognition that her definition of the lifestyle she led as being "fun and carefree" turned out to be "a big lie." These shifts in the perceived seductive qualities (Katz, 1988) or meaning of her former behavior are critical to the transformation process, including internalization of the view that continued involvement in the party lifestyle would be fundamentally incompatible with her newer and more spiritually centered self.

Forging these connections may be central to sustained change, as the mere presence of a prosocial bond does not appear to be sufficient to sustain a pattern of conformity. Note, for example, that Dana actually grew up with 'Bible study and regular church services,' but this did not effectively inoculate her from 'unsafe people and [an] unsafe environment.' This is analogous to variations we observed in the role of parenting as a pathway out of crime. Although scholars have suggested that childbearing is, for most women, a strong factor in desistance, many women in this serious offender sample had children, and yet continued a long-term pattern of criminal involvement and substance abuse. One problem with relying on one's children as a hook for change is that the children are young and inexperienced, and cannot literally teach the parent a different way of life. In contrast, involvement with a religion, for those with a level of receptivity, offers specific lessons—that is, a *prosocial blueprint* for how to proceed as a changed individual:

Reading the Bible. Getting instruction from the Bible. It clearly says in the Bible how we're suppose to act, how we're suppose to treat people. How we are suppose to deny ourselves and follow him. How we're suppose to leave self and... and have the spirit take more and more of our and... and it's through that consciousness that I have stayed in constant contact with God that makes it not okay to let these... to leave these people hanging on. [Rochelle]

It's about starting to obey the commandments. All of them. You know that's how you start. You give up sin, you know what I mean you fight that. That's how you begin to hear. It took time. I was you know set in my ways and you know I... I like to go out on the weekends and you know drink or whatever not that I drank a lot it... anything like that but all that kind of stuff closes you down. [Wanda]

Oh just, I think just having a personal relationship, a real relationship with God and knowing who he is and how he operates and just being in the body of Christ is, in all aspects of my life, he is involved in everything that I do. I mean there is nothing that I do that I don't consult God first about it. And it makes it better for me because he prepares me for what I need to know. And um, it just, just letting him take control of me and letting him guide me in everything. It's just awesome. [Tracy]

As these narrative excerpts highlight, these women not only adapt a religious language in describing their lives (e.g., Tracy describes herself as being in the body of Christ), but indicate a very active reliance on spirituality as providing them with a new cultural toolkit (Swidler, 1986). This cognitive blueprint thus includes general guidelines for behavior (as in references to the Ten Commandments and the scriptures), but is also viewed as a source for more specific advice and direction (there is nothing that I do that I don't consult God first about it). This is an important consideration as the individual moves forward and inevitably encounters novel situations, stresses, life events and negative social influences (or as Rochelle put it, "these people hanging on").

These discussions of the more successful religiously oriented desisters have a deliberate quality. For example, Wanda notes that, "it took time," and Julie pointed out that it took "a lot and lot and lot of prayer." However, the in-depth interviews conducted with these respondents also highlight the role of *positive emotional changes* associated with the narratives of more successful desisters. This offers support for Rambo's (1993) contention that the experience of conversion involves an emotional component, but also allows an important extension of the basic tenets of differential association theory. This criminological theory emphasizes the role of social networks in providing definitions either favorable or unfavorable to the violation of law (Sutherland, 1939). Prior discussions of the theory—in general—and in relation to desistance

processes—have emphasized the role of social network contacts and other life experiences in facilitating changes in attitudes and perceptions (authors, 2002).

Focusing only on such cognitive processes, however, provides an incomplete accounting of the mechanisms underlying change. Indeed, as we have argued recently, the focus of control based (e.g., Sampson and Laub, 1993) and cognitively oriented theories of desistance (e.g., authors, 2002) sheds more light on the *hows* than the *whys* of change. A focus on the emotions, in contrast, highlights that positive feelings connecting to one’s spirituality provide an additional source of energy or motivation for new lines of action (Collins, 2004; Engdahl, 2004). Thus, the respondents do not simply focus on the specific content of what has been learned, but convey strong *positive affect* concerning their spirituality and new lifestyle. For example, Tracy described her situation as “just awesome,” and another respondent told the interviewer “I’m 1000% happier because of Jesus.” The following references describe positive meanings associated with a spiritual life that help to explain why the individual is willing to engage in the “hard work” and difficulties (“you fight that [temptation]”) this new life may entail:

And that’s, I don’t know it’s just the calm and the serenity and the spirituality that I have, it’s unexplainable. I just have it. ... The only thing that I can say is if you guys do a lot with addictions and alcoholism and things like that, the only thing that I can say is that when you find that calm and that peace within you, it’s wonderful and you don’t ever want to give it up and that’s what helps keep you sober. And I know that’s what it does for me. I’m too peaceful. [Angela]

I thank God that he saved me and given me peace to where I can raise my kids... So God taught me how to persevere and press on even though it looks bleak because he is always at the end of whatever the storm is. [Denise]

I don’t worry like I used to before. I know all things are in the Lord’s hands and I know he takes care of me. [Jennifer]

Spirituality for some respondents, then, is a source of life’s meaning, a worthy end-point (Rokeach, 1973). The quotes above also suggest, however, that their spirituality provides a source of emotional capital (Reay, 2002), a key resource in the face of stressful circumstances (i.e., when “it looks bleak,” or when there is a “storm”).

A strong spiritual orientation has the potential to be especially beneficial in relation to angry emotions and associated hostile or destructive coping. In a recent analysis we documented that within this sample, those respondents who scored higher on an anger identity scale were more likely to persist in criminal behavior and drug use than those who scored lower on this identity index, net of traditional predictors (authors, 2007). It is intuitive that a strong anger identity would be associated with violent behaviors, but we also documented a longitudinal effect on crime and a significant influence on involvement in substance abuse as well. Focusing on these self-views is important because these dimensions of the self-concept can flourish somewhat independent of such major role transitions as marriage and employment. As delinquents mature into adulthood, theft activities may be less central to the offender's portfolio, while such charges as domestic violence, child abuse and drug offenses continue as a source of legal difficulties. Thus, more successful desisters who relied on their spirituality often mentioned that their faith helped them cope with angry emotions:

Because Christ said that you have to love your enemies, you have to bless those that hate you, bless you know. You have to pray for those that spitefully use you. You know people hurt you but you have to learn how to get past that because there is a greater crown and glory waiting for you. [Martha]

And dealing with their father and his crazy ways, um, the Lord has kept in that because there are some times I really wanted to rip his head off. But because of the children and God using me as a witness and letting him see the changes because had I acted the other way, it would of just proved that I didn't change. That I still had some of the old me in me...Because when he calls with his silly attitude and um, and when he says things like lies to the kids and you know God gives me the character to be able to talk to him, not so much in argumentative ways...I know its God and I know it's him because the stuff that Mark put me through, I don't even think that I could look at him without wanting to smack him or just anything to get him out of my face. I don't think I could stomach him without God. [Pam]

Symbolic interactionists emphasize that cognitive and emotional processes, including changes, link directly to the social realm. Engdahl (2004) argues, for example, that emotional experience necessarily involves self-feelings ("I'm 1000% percent happier") *as well as a stance*

toward the outer world (“love your enemies”). The two excerpts above reference this in different ways: Martha points to a general change in attitude, while Pam indicates how God has helped her specifically in dealing more calmly with a difficult former husband.

While the accounts emphasize that these respondents believe that they are now better able to deal with others in their social circle, they nevertheless highlight what are primarily seen as inner or personal changes. In other instances, we see evidence of a *coalescing* of positive influences as other family members also experience, benefit from and reinforce the new direction. As the quantitative results document, higher levels of perceived closeness to God may soften or lessen the negative impact of the other network members’ criminal involvement, but the latter remains a highly significant predictor of persistent crime and drug abuse. However, respondents appear to be in a more favorable (for desistance) position when others close to them affirm and also participate in their religious lives. Spirituality for some respondents is seen as a factor that helps to cement and enrich their marital and parent-child relationships. These, in turn, serve not only to reinforce the respondent’s spiritual direction, but to solidify commitment to the prosocial potential of spouse and parenting roles:

Without Christ and church we would never be together. And I mean we already know that. We prayed a lot and we know it’s through prayer that we’re together and our family’s together. [Tammy]

Um, that is one of the best things that I think, I’m so proud of them because they’re in church and they love what they do. They’re all in the Ministry. Heather is in the choir, James in the choir, Cate’s in the children’s choir and um, they enjoy, they enjoy um church and they like to go. They go to everything...she don’t miss nothing. She goes to Bible Studies and... they do it because they want to and it’s something that they enjoy doing. And so I’m just blessed to have kids that love to go to church, that love to be a part of um, worship and everything. [Pat]

Our analysis thus far has endeavored to identify conditions under which religion is associated with positive changes in respondents’ lives. The discussion has proceeded on the assumption that religion is generally positive and specifically prosocial in its impact. The narratives have been useful as they highlight significant variations in the degree of spiritual

commitment and involvement, level of cognitive or emotional changes that occur and actions of others that influence spirituality-desistance connections. However the quantitative findings, particularly the longitudinal results, show that *in the aggregate* links between religiosity and desistance overall are quite modest. Thus, it is also important to consider factors that limit the reach and long-term potential of religion as a ‘hook for change.’

First, some respondents simply do not resonate with the ideas and practices associated with religion; this is an obvious group that is unlikely to benefit from spirituality as a catalyst for change. As stated at the outset, opportunities (whether to become involved in crime or to move away from this lifestyle), must be subjectively as well as objectively available (see Steffensmeier and Ulmer, 2005 for a particularly nuanced discussion of opportunity in relation to criminal involvement). However, the quantitative results indicate that a relatively high percentage of the sample did indicate that they felt close to God during at least one and many times at both adult follow-ups. The qualitative interviews also contain many references to religion and spirituality. Thus, we cannot conclude that for many of these contemporary offenders religion lacks salience (in contrast to Laub and Sampson’s finding based on their study of the Glueck men). Instead, it is necessary to confront some of the difficulties these respondents face, either in maintaining a strong religious faith, or in translating that faith into sustained behavior change.

First, it is important to underscore that these respondents are extremely marginal in almost every sense—they have low levels of education, few work at full time jobs, a majority do not have stable marriages, and most reside in extremely poor housing conditions. In addition, many have criminal records that diminish housing and employment options further, as well as limiting marriage prospects. Finally, not only their immediate social networks (e.g., partners) but other family members (parents, siblings, extended family) often have an array of legal, drug, and health problems, and recent interviews of children born to this cohort indicate numerous developmental and behavioral difficulties of the next generation (author, 2006). In short, even if a respondent completely abstained from the use of drugs or further criminal involvement at a

particular point in time, many problems and difficulties would continue to unfold due to their extremely marginal location in the social structure. These problems and the problems of the extended kinship network may overwhelm the individual even in the presence of a strong belief in God. For some respondents, these difficulties are themselves accorded religious significance, a viewpoint that increases feelings of demoralization or what religious scholars such as Pargament (1997) might call a negative spiritual transformation:

I've always felt from a child all the way up that I've... my life has been nothing but a... a catastrophe you might say. That I was put here just not for to have any happiness in my life. Not to have any love. Anybody that cares. And... when He took my mother-in-law away. And they say God controls everything well I've sit and I've looked at my life and it's like my life has been wrong since the day I was born. There's not... there hasn't really been anything in my life that has went right. [Suzanna]

Well it states in the Bible God controls everything. God controls all, well it's like I... I feel that God has put me here for nothing other than pain, to go through pain and to suffer because that's all I do. Is everyday I get up and... and from the time I get up to the time I go to bed I... it's causes pain, hurt. [Lisa]

Recent research has documented that while spirituality generally is associated with more favorable health outcomes and even lower mortality, this is not the case for those who indicate that they have experienced religious doubts/struggles (Manning-Walsh, 2005; Pargament et al., 2001). Thus, while it is common, even in general population surveys, for a crisis event such as death of a child, divorce, and the like to precipitate a turn toward greater religiosity, in many instances such respondents' lives may return to relative stability/normalcy after an illness, loss or other crisis. In contrast, the lives of these respondents often continue to be difficult, a daily reality that may increase questioning and doubts and directly increase stress and eventually a drug relapse or other negative coping strategy.

Another factor that limits the potential of spirituality as a factor in sustaining a pattern of desistance relates to the social nature of religion for many individuals. While some respondents did point out that, as Dave said, "you don't have to go to church to believe in a higher power," church participation can provide a much needed entrée to a more prosocial network and an important layer of social support. Nevertheless, church communities have many constituents and

may not be focused exclusively on the need to assist particular respondents with their desistance efforts:

I started there and I felt really comfortable, I got into the choir, I started working with the youth which I really enjoyed, working with youth. I'm kind of drawn to working with them. And um, I kind of got shot down on something and um I wasn't a licensed ordained minister and someone else came in that was and came from a previous church where they had also worked in the youth ministry. So I kind of got kicked to the curb and this person got my spot. [Jane]

From the point of view of the church as an ongoing organization, replacing Jane may be the most rational decision, but this example illustrates that Jane's lack of education and other valued social capital may place her at a disadvantage in the context of her involvement in a religious community, as it has in other economic and social arenas.

Even when respondents evidence commitment to God and find a comfortable church community, unfortunately these positive developments cannot in themselves provide for other key elements of the "respectability package" that is often linked to long-term desistance. This includes adequate housing, meaningful employment and ideally a prosocial romantic partner. Some respondents attempt to isolate themselves from negative influences, but their disadvantaged economic and social circumstances make this especially difficult to sustain:

Then I got my own place and I was trying to walk with God but I had a neighbor downstairs that used crack, used to phone me all the time, and I used to lay up here and cry and pray, ask to restrict these urges but it didn't work.

[I was afraid] of being abandoned and I know that He was still there but everybody else at that moment was gone and I was there by myself and I couldn't feel God, I couldn't see God, I couldn't touch God and at that moment when that pain came I couldn't see past the pain. [Gina]

CONCLUSIONS

This study adds to research on spirituality and crime linkages, as prior research has often relied on a very short time-line for gauging effects. For example, some research has documented that individuals who participate in religiously oriented programming within prisons have fewer disciplinary problems, and follow-ups to gauge post-prison adjustment provide an assessment

across a relatively short window of time. Respondents in this longitudinal study may have been exposed to spiritually based programs due to their involvement in a range of treatment and correctional facilities, and some individuals reference early family socialization or later life experiences outside of treatment settings as catalysts for spiritual transformations.

Our goal in this investigation was to determine whether spirituality as measured by feelings of being close to God and religious participation were related to more favorable outcomes over the long haul, once traditional predictors of criminal persistence and desistance had been taken into account. Quantitative assessments document that when viewed at a particular point in time (in this case, at the time of the first follow-up completed in 1995), these measures of spirituality are indeed significantly associated with less criminal involvement and lower levels of problem substance use. These results are potentially important, since controls for sociodemographic and other lifestyle variables were included in the analyses. However, longitudinal results did not reveal a significant long-term association, whether we examined reports of spirituality provided at the first adult follow-up or took into account a pattern of consistently high levels of spirituality across the two waves of adult interviews. The models we estimated highlight a significant role for the criminality of the others in the respondent's immediate network, but it is notable that spirituality interacted with these network characteristics, suggesting that to some extent high levels of spirituality can buffer the negative effects of network deviance. However, a straightforward presentation of the mean levels of self-reported crime at various levels of spirituality and network deviance (Table 2) foregrounds the impact of the latter and suggests that it is important not to overinterpret the interaction results.

Our view is that while the quantitative results indicate modest (long term) impact of spirituality for the sample as a whole, future life course studies of the relationship between religion and crime might well uncover positive benefits of spirituality and religious participation. More frequent assessments of religiosity as well as self-reports/arrest records would be useful, and analyses of the qualitative data suggest the need to further explore the possibility that

particular types of offenders are more likely than others to benefit. Analyses of the respondents' life history narratives and over forty interviews focused specifically on spirituality also pointed to factors distinguishing the narratives of more successful religiously oriented desisters. The latter, for example, often described lifestyles that were literally dominated by the respondent's religion, including social contacts that support this way of life. Others professed a strong religious belief or foundation, but had not fully connected this spirituality to behavioral choices they were making. This is somewhat analogous to the distinction between those who expressed deep love for their children as contrasted with those who did so, but also described in detail how parenting was the basis for specific attendance and associated behavioral changes. We also found that desisters often focused heavily on positive emotional changes they connected to their spirituality, changes they viewed as life enhancing, and as a means for coping with stressful life circumstances.

Future research might benefit from person-centered approaches to assessing religion-crime linkages, as it is clear that many respondents in this highly marginal sample face numerous difficulties, even if they have acquired a strong religious faith. Thus, it would be useful to determine how particular combinations of life circumstances fit together with spirituality to influence the respondent's potential for maintaining a consistent pattern of desistance from crime. This line of research accords well not only with the interaction results reported above, but with recent efforts to include, for example, employment counseling and job training along with spiritual guidance in prison programming and other faith-based initiatives (Johnson and Larson, 2006).

Additional qualitative research on religion and crime is needed that provides a more nuanced portrait of the sequencing of spiritual interest and criminal involvement over the life course. Clearly, some of the offenders in this and other studies turn to religion because of their drug use problems and legal difficulties—this confounds the inverse relationships between spirituality and deviance typically observed in population-based surveys. It is important to

distinguish fleeting situational use of spirituality in some trying circumstances from spiritual transformations that seem to have a more fundamental long-term impact on offenders' lifestyles. Methodological strategies that track within-person changes would also be a useful addition to this line of research.

Finally, research in this area would benefit from a broader focus on areas of life other than criminality that may be enhanced by a strong religious faith, including mental health and parenting outcomes (see also Clear et al., 2000). We have recently completed interviews with the adolescent children of the OLS respondents, and found, for example, that a number of the more 'successful' children (i.e., low rates of delinquency involvement, high levels of attachment to school) were well integrated into church activities and professed a strong religious faith.

APPENDIX A: Scales Used in the Quantitative Analyses

Problem Use of Alcohol and Drugs.—Respondents are asked: “How often in the past 12 months you have experienced these things?” Not felt so good the next day because of drinking? Not felt so good the next day because of using drugs? Felt unable to do my best job at work or school because of drinking? Felt unable to do my best job at work or school because of using drugs? Gotten into trouble with my relatives or friends while drinking? Gotten into trouble with my relatives or friends while using drugs? Hit one of my family members because of my drinking? Hit one of my family members because of my using drugs? Gotten into fights with others because of my drinking? Gotten into fights with others because of my using drugs? Stolen money or other things in order to get cash to buy alcohol? Stolen money or other things in order to get cash to buy drugs? Responses range from 0 (never) to 8 (more than once a day) (alpha .88)

Adult Crime — Respondents are asked: “how often in the past 12 months have you done the following things?” Damage property on purpose? Steal something with less than 5 dollars? Steal worth more than 50 dollars? Drank alcohol? Got drunk in public? Used drugs to get high? Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife? Hit or threaten to hit someone? Took something worth more than 50 dollars? Steal or tried to steal an automobile? Get involved in gang fights? Attack someone with the idea of seriously hurting him/her? Use force or threat to get money or other things, Sell marijuana or hash? Sell hard drugs like cocaine, heroine, or LSD? Have (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will? Break into a vehicle or building (or tried to break in) to steal something or just look around? Responses range from 1 (never) to 9 (more than once a day) (alpha .89).

Juvenile Delinquency— *Delinquency.*—Adolescent involvement in delinquency is measured by the 27 item version of the Elliott et al. (1985) scale. This scale was administered as a part of the adolescent interview conducted in 1982. Seriousness weights are also used in calculating total scores on this scale (alpha .92).

Friend Crime — These refer to “How many of your friends have done the following in the past 12 months?” Used marijuana? Used hard drugs? Stole something worth < 5 or > 50 dollars? broken into a building? Sold drugs? Suggested you do something against the law? Gotten drunk? Been paid to have sex with someone/ hit someone? Responses range from (0) none of them to (4) all of them (alpha .93).

Partner Crime — These refer to “How often has your partner done the following in the past 12 months?” Damage property on purpose? Steal something with less than 5 dollars? Steal something worth more than 50 dollars? Drank alcohol? Got drunk in public? Used drugs to get high? Carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife? Hit or threaten to hit someone? Took something worth more than 50 dollars? Steal or tried to steal an automobile? Get involved in gang fights? Attack someone with the idea of seriously hurting him/her? Use force or threat to get money or other things? Sell marijuana or hash? Sell hard drugs like cocaine, heroine, or LSD? Have (or tried to have) sexual relations with someone against their will? Break into a vehicle or building (or tried to break in) to steal something or just look around? Responses range from 1 (never) to 9 (more than once a day) (alpha .85).

APPENDIX B: Methodological Approach to the Qualitative Data

Life history narratives do not provide direct access to the causes of crime or desistance processes, and necessarily involve a reconstruction of past and current circumstances from the point of view of the actor telling the life story (Neisser, 1994). Nevertheless, such materials are useful as they point to conceptual areas, including subjective processes that may be overlooked when relying on traditional quantitative methods. We began the analysis by flagging emotion related sections of the narratives for further study. The first stage involved a long period of open-coding, memo writing and discussion of these segments and a general assessment of the place of emotions in the total life history. As the analysis progressed, we developed more specific codes linked to particular emotions, either as described by the respondent (pissed me off), or as reflected in emotions actually elicited during the interview (respondent is crying). Several stages of the analysis are not immediately obvious within the discussion that follows, but were a necessary step in the process of developing the points we have chosen to highlight. For example, gender issues are of interest, but are not the central focus of the current analysis. Nevertheless, comparing men and women's narratives was an important step in the analysis. Based on these analyses, we concluded that while many aspects of adult development are gendered, the very basic emotional and cognitive processes described in this study are useful in understanding life course patterns evidenced by woman as well as men. Later stages of the analysis involved the development of second order constructs (e.g., the concept of derailments), and a closer examination of links between cognitive and emotional processes. We initially began to study these connections because of difficulties and in coding certain examples. That is, it was often difficult to consider a given section or story predominantly emotional because it also contained references to the cognitive domain. Further study of such stories thus led to our emphasis on alignments or connections between cognitive, emotional and control-related processes. Similarly, while it was useful in certain ways to develop files that contained shorter segments of emotion talk, we also regretted the lost connection to the broader set of life circumstances reflected in the complete narratives. This eventually led to our focus in the final section on structural influences, emotional vulnerabilities and criminal involvement.

APPENDIX C: Descriptive results for variables under investigation

	Mean or Percent	Range
<i>Demographics</i>		
Age in 1982	16.28 (1.40)	12 to 21 years
Percent Male/Female	48.10/51.90%	
Percent Minority	37.14%	
<i>Crime and Delinquency</i>		
Juvenile Delinquency in 1982	119.93 (106.37)	.10 to 569.42
Adult Crime in 1995	11.35 (7.69)	6.79 to 39.79
Adult Crime in 2003	10.13 (6.49)	6.89 to 49.06
Substance Abuse in 1995	1.02 (1.44)	0 to 7
Substance Abuse in 2003	1.14 (1.77)	0 to 8
<i>Criminal Network</i>		
Partner Crime in 1995	8.82 (4.96)	6.20 to 37.12
Friend Crime in 1995	1.17 (1.02)	0 to 4
<i>Adult Social Bonds</i>		
Relationship Happiness	4.35 (1.41)	1 to 7
Occupational Prestige	2.33 (1.47)	1 to 7
<i>Religious/Spiritual Indicators</i>		
Church Attendance in 1995	1.97 (1.21)	1 to 6
Church Attendance in 2003	1.96 (1.17)	1 to 4
Closeness to God in 1995	2.91 (0.86)	1 to 4
Religious Importance in 2003	2.88 (1.17)	1 to 4

N = 210 for 1995. N = 152 for 2004

Standard deviation in parenthesis

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Table 1. The Influence of Spirituality on Adult Crime and Substance Abuse

	Crime in 1995	Substance Abuse in 1995	Crime in 2003	Substance Abuse in 2003
<i>Socio-Demographics</i>				
Age	-0.028	0.004	-0.052	-0.098
Race (Minority = 1)	0.151*	0.166**	0.101	0.182
Gender (Male = 1)	0.101	-0.008	0.191*	-0.007*
<i>Spirituality</i>				
Closeness to God	-0.130*	-0.149*	0.011	0.052
Church Attendance	-0.105†	-0.074	-0.044	-0.084
<i>Adult Bonds, Criminal Networks, and Juvenile Delinquency</i>				
Relationship Happiness	-0.051	-0.104†	-0.066	-0.009
Occupational Prestige	0.001	-0.003	0.048	0.021
Partner Crime	0.243***	0.235***	0.311***	0.262**
Friend Crime	0.250***	0.385***	0.084	0.031
Juvenile Delinquency	0.211***	0.133*	0.204**	0.164*
N	210	210	152	152
F	10.47***	13.19***	5.28***	3.02**
R ²	.345	.399	.273	.177

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2. Self-Reported Criminal Involvement by Variations in Religiosity and Crime within the Respondent's Network

	First Adult Follow-Up (1995)	Second Adult Follow-Up (2003)
High Religiosity/High Network Criminality	15.698 ^{bd}	13.156 ^{bd}
High Religiosity/Low Network Criminality	9.706 ^{acd}	8.852 ^{ac}
Low Religiosity/High Network Criminality	16.519 ^{bd}	12.306 ^{bd}
Low Religiosity/Low Network Criminality	7.298 ^{abc}	7.243 ^{ac}

^a Significantly different from High Religiosity/High Criminality ($p < .05$)

^b Significantly different from High Religiosity/Low Criminality ($p < .05$)

^c Significantly different from Low Religiosity/High Criminality ($p < .05$)

^d Significantly different from Low Religiosity/Low Criminality ($p < .05$)