RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF PUNITIVE ATTITUDES

by

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ABSTRACT

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Considerable research has been conducted on the causes of punitive attitudes towards criminal offenders. This study focuses on the possible effects religion may have when influencing opinions on correctional practices. Researchers have primarily focused on Christian fundamentalists and have come to the conclusion that fundamentalist affiliations and belief in biblical literalism has been related to punitive attitudes towards criminals. Religious individuals have been found to support harsher punishments for offenders such as mandatory sentencing and capital punishment.

In this study, the relationship between religion and punitive attitudes was examined. It was found that those who believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible were more punitive. Those who claimed religious affiliation were also found to be more punitive than those claiming atheism and agnosticism.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is to provide a better understanding of punitive attitudes and what may cause them. The dramatic shift towards harsher punishments over the last thirty years has impacted all three divisions of the criminal justice system. Over the last few decades more individuals have been arrested because of tougher legislation and police practices. Judicial discretion has been diminishing and offenders are serving longer prison terms. The United States penal population has increased six fold between 1972 and 2000 and continues to increase today (Pettit & Western, 2004).

Tougher legislation and support for harsher correctional practices in recent years has led to a criminal justice system that has become more focused on incapacitation and punishment and less willing to promote rehabilitation when dealing with criminal offenders. It is believed that many factors have contributed to the incarceration increase over the years including increased crime and victimization rates in the 1970's and 1980's (Blumstein, 2007). However, incarceration rates have still continued to increase over the years, even when crime rates have been decreasing.

Several psychological factors have been examined as a way to understand punitive attitudes. Anger and fear of crime have been studied and show mixed results when causing support for punitive correctional practices. Demographic influences such as race, gender, political preferences, and religion have also said to contribute to correctional attitudes.

Religion plays an important role in many lives. According to the American Religious Identification Survey 2008 (2009), only 15% of Americans do not identify with a religion of any kind. Approximately 85% of Americans consider themselves as a part of religious denomination and may have the possibility of acquiring behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions from their

religious organizations. Religion often provides individuals with guidance in their everyday lives. Because religion has played a large role in shaping this country and is often intertwined with political views (Unnever, Cullen, & Bartkowski, 2006), it is important to examine the relationship that exists between religion and punitive attitudes.

Unnever et al. (2006) believe individuals form preferences on social issues as a result from their symbolic predispositions and deeply held beliefs. Religion has been found to directly influence beliefs on many types of social and policy issues (Unnever at al., 2006). Past research has found that individuals who believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible will most likely support harsher penal practices (Evans & Adams, 2003; Grasmick, et al., 1992; Greer et al., 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2006). Research on religious denominations has shown to be mixed. Protestants have been found to view criminal behavior as morally wrong and deserving of punishment, therefore supporting harsher correctional practices (Curry, 1996). The Catholic Church is openly opposed to capital punishment and research has found that Catholics are more likely to oppose the death penalty, although the results are mixed (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004).

This study will focus on the possible effects religion may have when influencing attitudes on correctional practices. The relationship between religion and punitive attitudes will be examined as well as an attempt to understand how religion plays a role in causing individuals to support punitive practices such as capital punishments and harsher prison sentences.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Punishment is defined by Garland as "a legal process whereby violators of the criminal law are condemned and sanctioned in accordance with specific legal categories and procedures" (1990, p. 3). He believes that punishment is very problematic and is not very clear. He mentions that over the last century and a half; penal objectives have consisted of several competing themes, elements, and principles. Garland (1990) mentions key terms that have been used as correctional objectives; treatment, moral reform, correction, rehabilitation, deterrence, and incapacitation to name a few; and that many of them have failed. He believes the basic principle of modern punishment is the presumption that crime is a social problem. He states the failure of the system exists because it is difficult to convert a social issue into a technical task. Garland (1990) argues that the primary function of punishment is not to reduce or control crime, but to express moral outrage.

2.1 Punitive Attitudes

For years we have been leaning towards a more punitive system (Grasmick, Cochran, Bursik, & Kimpel, 1993; Mauer & Coyle, 2004). More individuals are sentenced to prison and sentences are becoming longer. We have shifted from a rehabilitative criminal justice model to one that focuses on retribution and punishment (Stith, 1993). We have moved to harsher punishments for many reasons, including the feeling that nothing works coupled with the increased victimization rates and fear of crime that resulted from the high crime rates of the 1980's (Grasmick et al., 1993).

The incarceration rate from 1925 to the mid 1970's remained the same and then began a rapid escalation over the next 40 years which suggests increased punitiveness (Blumstein, 2007). Emile Durkheim believed that societies resort to punishment as a way of establishing

rules and demonstrating the inappropriateness of breaking them (as cited in Blumstein, 2007). According to his theory, society would continue to look for more ways to punish individuals, even when the crime rate was low. For 50 years the national inmate population was steady until 1972 when it began and rapid and continuous rise through the next few decades (Mauer & Coyle, 2004).

In the mid-1970's, the US prison population began to grow exponentially at a rate of 6-8% per year (Blumstein, 2007). However, in 1999 the rate of growth declined to 2% per year due to the need to slow incarceration rates and decrease prison populations in order to reduce state budgets (Blumstein, 2007). Zimring (1991) believes that time was an expansion in the risk of imprisonment for low level felons and drug offenders (as cited in Frost, 2008). Between 1980 and 2006, the number of inmates in state and federal prisons increased by 77% (Costelloe, Chiricos, and Gertz, 2009). At the end of 2006, 1 of every 39 US residents were either in jail, in prison, or on parole or probation (Costelloe et al., 2009). Frost (2008) believes the increase in harshness by longer prison terms regardless of the offense is still in effect today.

There are numerous researchers that attempt to explain the reasons for the increase of harsher punishments and growth of incarceration. Cultural and political changes (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004; Blumstein, 2007; Garland, 1990), the war on drugs (Blumstein, 2007), personal and emotional attitudes from the public (Johnson, 2009); as well as demographic, background, and cognitive factors including race/ethnicity, gender, religion, racial prejudice, fear of crime, and political conservatism (Johnson, 2009) have all had an effect on the country's incarceration growth. The United States continues to have the highest expected time served in prison per crime and per conviction (Blumstein, 2007).

2.1.1 Cultural and Political Changes

Research has shown that the 'baby boom' generation had an effect on the growing crime rates of the 1980's (Blumstein, 2007). Blumstein (2007) stated that the 'baby boom'

generation reached the peak of the age-crime curve (age 17) in 1964; therefore, causing crime rates to grow in the years to follow because of the changing age composition of the nation.

Punitive mentalities emerge in cultures that forbid certain acts. Society then controls the punishments so that the cultural beliefs and structural relations of the society are reaffirmed (Cook & Powell, 2003). During the height of the Civil Rights Movement (1966), the support for the death penalty was at a historical low of 42 percent (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). In 1972, the United States Supreme Court case *Furman v. Georgia* suspended capital punishment. The moratorium lasted four years until *Gregg v. Georgia* in 1976 which not only allowed states to carry out the death penalty, but also ruled that public opinion was a legitimate basis for formulating justice policy (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004; Grasmick et al., 1993).

Prior to The Sentencing Reform Act of 1982, federal judges and parole officers had more discretion when it came to sentencing offenders (Stith, 1993). Judicial discretion and the indeterminate length of prison sentences stemmed from the concept of offender rehabilitation (Stith, 1993). There were prison-based programs that focused on rehabilitation that were designed to assist offenders when they were released from prison and helping them reenter society. According to Stith (1993), discretion from judges was needed in order to provide offenders with individualized sentencing so they had a chance for rehabilitation. Judges were able to assign prison terms that matched the rehabilitation needs of the offender. In the 1970's, studies began to question the effectiveness of the rehabilitation sentencing model. The 'just desserts' approach emerged which authorized punishments in proportion to the seriousness of their crimes and moved away from rehabilitation (Stith, 1993). Stith (1993) stated that Congress enacted the Sentencing Reform Act in order to prevent the use of discretion in sentencing and promote 'honesty' while reducing sentencing disparity. States then started to enact penal policies that moved away from the rehabilitative model. Congress has not changed the policies outlined in the act even though many oppose it because they believe it is excessively harsh (Stith, 1993).

The growth period of incarceration can be attributed to political issues of the time. Political figures attempted to gain the public's support by using a 'get tough on crime' mentality and labeling opponents 'soft on crime', and used it as a political advantage at a time when the nation was becoming concerned with crime (Blumstein, 2007). Blumstein (2007) offers an example by mentioning that 1964 Republican candidate Barry Goldwater blamed then-incumbent President Johnson for the growing crime rate in an attempt to increase his campaign popularity of 'crime in the streets.'

Political figures responded to the public's crime concern by taking a more punitive stance towards offenders in order to gain more political popularity. Over the past few decades, at a time when crime has remained stable or has been declining; politicians, the public, and the media have all increased their attention towards crime control (Yates & Fording, 2005). This punitive stance called for a greater use of imprisonment which took the form of opposing probation instead of incarceration, demanding longer prison sentences for offenders (especially repeat offenders), and attacking the 'leniency' of parole (Blumstein, 2007). This caused a change in legislations such as mandatory-minimum sentencing laws, 'three strikes' laws, and a Truth in Sentencing Act (Blumstein, 2007). All of these contributed to punitive attitudes and increased the nation's prison population. The United States imprisons at a higher rate than any other nation in the world (Austin & Irwin, 2001).

Yates and Fording (2005) suggest that the increase in imprisonment is tied to the political environment and electoral incentives. They believe that states' use of imprisonment is a result of the crime rate but can also be attributed to political influences. Imprisonment has escalated in environments where conservative political figures are prevalent (Yates & Fording, 2005). However, Mauer (2001) believes that both liberals and conservatives attributed to the imprisonment growth. Liberals believed judicial discretion had too much potential for discrimination based on race, gender, and socioeconomic status; while conservatives felt that punishments were not harsh enough (Mauer, 2001).

2.1.2 The War on Drugs

In the 1970's, the public was becoming increasingly worried about drugs and the violence associated with the drug trade. Initially, mandatory-minimum sentences were created to send drug offenders to prison instead of probation in an attempt to lower drug use and violence (Blumstein, 2007). At first the sentences were modest, usually about two years. It then became clear they had no impact on drug markets so sentences increased to five years, and then to ten (Blumstein, 2007). Blumstein (2007) mentions that the drug market was resilient and new individuals quickly replaced those who had been sent to prison; therefore mandatory-minimum sentences made no dent in the drug industry but still served the interests of politicians.

Federal funding for the drug war increased from $1.5 billion in 1981 to $6.6 billion in 1989, and continued to rise to 17 billion by 1999 (Mauer, 2001). Federal drug policies were enacted in the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 and the Anti- Drug Abuse Act of 1988 imposed mandatory prison terms for as little as five grams of crack cocaine (Mauer, 2001). Harsh penalties for drug offenders were then imposed at the state levels as well. In some states, a sale of 650 grams of cocaine or heroin for a first time offender was punished with a mandatory prison sentence of life without parole, the same penalty for first degree murder (Mauer, 2001). According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance in 1996, every state had adopted some form of mandatory sentencing (as cited in Mauer, 2001).

The 'three strikes' laws were aimed at repeat offenders. They ordered a long sentence of life imprisonment after a third felony conviction. Blumstein (2007) believes it was designed to appeal to the public (hence the baseball metaphor), rather than creating an effective sentencing policy. The Truth in Sentencing Act was passed by Congress in 1994 mandating all states to require offenders to serve at least 85% of their sentences. Before that, the average parole eligibility of all states was at about 50% of the prescribed sentence of offenders (Blumstein,

2007). By 1995, 23 states and the federal government had adopted some type of 'three strikes' law (Mauer & Coyle, 2004).

Toughening prison sentences seems to generate strong public support but has shown little effect when it comes to the reduction of crime. Blumstein (2007) examines the drug abuse problems in the 1970's and 1980's and the legislative efforts that were taken, especially during the response to the growth of the crack markets. Because of the resiliency of the drug market, there was a rapid growth of the arrests of black juveniles during the mid-1980's that were recruited as the replacements for the adults who were sent to prison in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Younger individuals were more likely to carry guns for protection and this, in turn, caused other young individuals to carry guns, whether they were in the drug market or not (Blumstein, 2007). Between 1985 and 1993, there was a 25% increase in homicides that was a direct result of young people with handguns (Blumstein, 2007). Mauer and Coyle (2004) describe this period as a time when the drug epidemic began to turn dramatically into an outbreak of violence and homicide.

In the late 1980's and 1990's, increased street sweeps, undercover operations, and other aggressive policing efforts targeted poor black neighborhoods and areas where drug networks were easily penetrated by narcotic officers (Pettit & Western, 2004). This not only caused first time offenders to serve long prison terms, but also returned parolees to prison. Pettit and Western (2004) describe this period as a time when race, class, and drugs became severely intertwined. The changes in criminal sentencing and supervision reflect the philosophy of crime prevention through the incapacitation of troublesome populations (Pettit & Western, 2004).

2.1.3 Demographic and Cognitive Factors

When researching the support or opposition individuals have towards punitive attitudes, most researchers have focused on demographic and background influences. Punitive attitudes can be very difficult to change because they often have a social psychological basis and are

linked to feelings and emotions (Johnson, 2009). Of the emotions that have been studied to determine punitiveness, fear of crime has received the most attention. Some studies have found that fear of crime is highly associated with punitive attitudes; others however, have found that fear had little affect for harsher punishments (Johnson, 2009). When examining the attitudes of whites and blacks separately, blacks were found to show more punitive attitudes when fear of crime was present (Johnson, 2009).

There has also been research conducted on anger and empathy as possible predictors of punitive attitudes. Haddock and Zanna (1998) studied the emotions which may influence opposition or support for the death penalty. They found that supporters of the death penalty commonly showed safety and happiness; while opponents showed anger, fear, and disgust (Johnson, 2009).

Empathy has been shown to be a predictor of punitive attitudes (Johnson, 2009). Graham, Weiner, and Zucker (1997) found that individuals who expressed sympathetic feelings toward offenders tend to favor less severe punishments than those with unsympathetic feelings, and feelings of anger had no effect (as cited in Johnson, 2009). Feather, Boeckmann, and McKee (2001) found that feelings of sympathy predicted more support for rehabilitation, while feelings of anger showed no effect on attitudes of neither rehabilitation nor punishment (as cited in Johnson, 2009).

Public opinion has shown to play a large role in the shift towards harsher criminal punishment and Johnson (2009) attempted to link public opinion to emotions. He conducted research on emotional factors that may play a role in determining punitive attitudes and found that anger of crime was a significant predictor.

Interdependent self-construal has found to be connected to stronger emotional reactions, social and moral concerns, and to retribution-oriented goals of punitive sanctions (Gollwitzer & Bücklein, 2007). Markus and Kitayama state that the interdependent self-construal style is usually found in individuals who define themselves through social relations and

dependence on other people; and are usually found in individuals who are greatly involved in religious organizations (as cited in Gollwitzer & Bücklein, 2007).

Throughout history, religion has played a major role in shaping the views of this country. Polling data suggests that religion and politics are intertwined (Unnever et al., 2006). Religion traditionally has had a considerable influence on the political life of the United States, shaping political culture and political coalitions (Layman & Carmines, 1997). According to research, 60 percent of highly committed evangelicals reported their religious beliefs frequently affect their electoral choices (Unnever et al., 2006). Half of Americans believe that churches should express more political and social issues (Unnever et al., 2006). According to Garland (1990), religion has contributed to our views on offenders and how we deal with them.

Justice Thurgood Marshall stated in 1972 that capital punishment had its origins in religious prohibitions mandated by the Old Testament in colonial America (McBride, 1995). Even though as time has passed and the number of capital crimes has been reduced, Marshall believed there was a striking barbaric resemblance between electrocution and former religiously-identified methods of capital punishment. He compares the methods of the electric chair "frying in a chair" to "burning at the stake" (McBride, 1995). Rene Girard describes the death penalty as an establishment of religion. He believes capital punishment is a ritual that is intended to "sanctify and reinscribe the law-making and law-preserving violence of the state and to counter the spiral of violence which plagues contemporary America" (as cited in McBride, 1995, Cruel and unusual punishment para. 4). Girard considers capital punishment a type of ritual sacrifice intended to rid society from the infection of violence, even though this is often denied by the government (McBride, 1995).

Frost (2008) researched the punitive shift and incarceration rates in the US. She found that our society continues to use incarceration as the most popular method of punishment and that it has become more vindictive, cruel, and degrading over the years. She also found that

imprisonment serves a larger sociological purpose and resonates with a cultural or religious ideology (Frost, 2008).

Ulmer, Bader, and Gault (2008) believe the criminal justice system and religion are connected. They believe both revolve around the concepts of social control. The criminal justice system attempts to force social control through law and punishment, while religion imposes sanctions through its believers (Ulmer et al., 2008).

2.2 Religion

Religion can directly influence behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Researchers believe there are two types of religious influences; direct and indirect (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). Direct religious effects provide individuals with moral teachings about what is real and how they should live while providing rational and material resources to back up those teachings. Individuals with greater religious commitment are the ones who will more likely let these effects affect their attitudes and daily behaviors (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). Indirect religious influences consist of actions performed by individuals unintentionally because of religious purpose, and allows for the facilitation of distinctive outcomes. Possible indirect influences come from religious education, exposure to sermons, interactions with family members, and interacting with members of your religion (Regnerus & Smith, 2005).

An overwhelming number of Americans consider themselves religious. Religion is an important aspect in many people's lives. Research shows that 96 percent of Americans believe in God and more than two thirds of them report membership of a church or synagogue, while over half report attending a religious service at least monthly (Unnever, Cullen, & Applegate, 2005). Those figures have been fairly consistent during the last 50 years (Unnever et al., 2005). According to the American National Election Studies of 2000, 76 percent of respondents surveyed considered religion to be an important part of their lives and approximately 60 percent said religion provided them with "a great deal of guidance" in their everyday lives (Geer, Berman, Varan, Bobrycki, & Watson, 2005). Durkheim believed moral values, religious beliefs,

and political opinions were generated through social and symbolic representations (as cited in Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). He also argued that the shared rituals and symbols can be found in any social group, but the clearest manifestation is found in organized religion (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004).

It is difficult to pinpoint why individuals choose to become involved in religion. There can be many reasons why individuals choose to be more or less religious, why they choose to become part of a particular denomination, and how often they choose to attend religious ceremonies. Certain religions and denominations have different requirements and attendance policies, so it may not be accurate for researchers to base religiosity on that alone. One's religiosity is usually a choice (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). Individuals typically choose whether they will be more or less religious for a variety of reasons, most of which have nothing to do with the type of religion itself (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). Examples of these reasons include age, personality type, race, ethnicity, and cultural surroundings.

The cultural settings of religious individuals can play a large role when it comes to understanding their religious involvement. Stark believes that individuals living in the South are subjected to more intensive religious attendance patterns that create a 'moral community' that comes with subtle sanctions for those who choose not to participate (as cited in Regnerus & Smith, 2005). In other settings regular worship is non-normative. In the northern United States evangelical Protestants would be considered countercultural, when compared to other religious denominations (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). It has been reported that parents also have more of a motivation to attend religious services as a way of reinforcing their values for their children.

According to Regnerus and Smith (2005), individuals choose to heighten or strengthen their religiousness or religious participation if they believe it will assist them in achieving their ideal goals. These goals may include, getting married, staying healthy and active, and following the law. Brenda and Corwyn conducted a study on adolescents and found that religion predicted less delinquency, while a variety of delinquent behaviors predicted a decline in

religiosity (as cited in Regnerus & Smith, 2005). At the same time there are instances in which individuals develop attitudes and behaviors that go against their religion that may cause them to reduce their religious involvement (Regnerus & Smith, 2005).

Evidence suggests religiosity varies significantly by personality and demographic factors (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). They found religious salience influences adolescents' family relations, general health, and delinquent activity, even when controlling for demographics and personality variables. They came to the conclusion that religion plays a large role in helping to produce positive or inhibiting negative outcomes in the lives of adolescents and adults.

Regnerus & Smith (2005) believe there are four possible explanations as to why studies find religious influences very significant: (1) religion has an important influence on individuals' well-being; (2) the selection process of respondents seems to make religion influence outcomes; (3) religious practices and orientation affects individuals' goals and avoid undesirable situations; and (4) the relationship between religion and well-being is the product of reverse causation.

<center>2.3 Religion and Punitiveness</center>

There are two main approaches researchers have considered when examining the relationship between religion and punitive attitudes. The first approach focuses on the harsher attitudes of religious individuals which positively predict punitiveness and the second approach considers the more forgiving aspects of religion in which individuals may favor rehabilitation as opposed to retribution (Applegate, Cullen, Fisher, & Vander Ven, 2000). Because religion offers contradictory messages of both harshness and forgiveness, it may affect individuals differently when it comes to supporting punitive attitudes depending on which component of religion they embrace (Unnever et al., 2005). This creates a moral dilemma; the issues of justice, punishment, and retribution are weighed against redemption, rehabilitation, and the protection of human life.

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Religion has its harsh, judgmental, and moralistic side; however, the other side of religion which deals with a more generous and forgiving side, sometimes prompts individuals to "turn the other cheek" when offended (Unnever et al., 2005). This side of religion is what can persuade individuals to be less punitive. According to Unnever et al. (2005), forgiveness, compassion, and having a gracious image of God are three religious beliefs that may influence individuals to be less punitive. "The Bible repeatedly states that the path to salvation is forgiving others who have sinned" (Unnever et al., 2005, p. 313). Researchers have found that religious individuals are more likely to believe in forgiveness and compassionate at a general abstract level and not practice forgiveness in specific real life circumstances (Unnever et al., 2005). They believed this was related to whether individuals blame crime on individual dispositional factors, whether offenders accept responsibility for their offense, and the harm caused by the offense. Applegate et al. (2000) found that those who believed in forgiveness were less likely to support harsher courts, capital punishment, and were less punitive in general. Grasmick, Davenport, Chamlin, and Bursik (1992) found the same for; offenders are more likely to be denied parole if their crimes are attributed to dispositional factors.

Because religion has different focuses, Unnever et al. (2005) believe an individual's focus on religion is what affects their punitive attitudes. They believe religion can be a source of punitive or progressive attitudes in individuals. This can be an explanation as to why there are religious individuals who favor harsher laws and capital punishment, and also religious individuals who advocate for prison reform and rehabilitation.

Research found by Unnever et al. (2006), claims individuals have 'symbolic predispositions' that are responsible for many of their preferences on social issues. They state that individuals acquire these preferences without the calculation of the costs and benefits that go into them. The predispositions are a set of their deeply held beliefs. They are what determine a person's level for support for policy issues; including the death penalty and harsher sentencing (Unnever et al., 2006). Few individuals reverse their opinions on these types of

policies even if they are presented with empirical information inconsistent with their beliefs; and most that do end up reversing their opinion again at a later time to their original stance (Unnever et al., 2006).

Greeley (1993) believes an important aspect of an individual's religiosity is their image of God. He believes the image of God can be thought of as loving, intimate, and nurturing; or as distant, harsh, and judgmental. He argues that an individual's image of God should determine their opinion on punitive practices. Greeley (1993) used the General Social Survey and found those who had a gracious image of God were more likely to support civil liberties, advocate more support for African Americans, advocate environmental protection, and oppose the death penalty (1993). Unnever et al. (2005) also found those who had a gracious image of God were less likely to support capital punishment.

The major types of religion in this country include Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Das, 2006). Das (2006) outlined these religions and found that all had some aspect of capital punishment in countries around the world. In Hindu and Islamic cultures, capital punishment is allowed for both violent and nonviolent crimes. Jainism is opposed to the killing of all creatures with a focus on nonviolence, the search for truth, forgiveness, and reform. Buddhism clearly advocates forgiveness and the rehabilitation of criminals. It promotes compassion and considers it to be the antidote to cruelty (Unnever et al., 2005). However, there are four countries that state Buddhism as their official religion and two of them still execute prisoners today (Das, 2006). Judaism and Christianity are both divided. Liberal Christian groups as well as the Roman Catholic Church are both opposed to capital punishment, while conservative groups support it. According to the National Catholic Reporter (2005), the Pope has consistently spoken out against capital punishment and on several occasions has personally intervened on behalf of convicted killers in the United States. Reform Jews are extremely opposed to the death penalty but The State of Israel imposes the death sentence for war crimes and treason (Das, 2006).

Most studies have focused on Christianity when investigating the possible relationship between religion and punitive attitudes in this country. According to the American religious Identification Survey of 2008 (2009), the majority of individuals (76%) consider themselves part of a Christian denomination, with Catholics making up 25.1% and other Christians 50.9%.

According to Unnever et al. (2005), the United States is both more religious and more punitive when compared to other advanced industrial nations. Research on religious denominations was usually divided into Catholics and Protestants, with a focus on Christian fundamentalists. There was also research conducted on the effect gender, race, and geographical locations had on punitive correctional practices.

2.3.1 Demographic Factors

Males, African Americans, and unmarried individuals are significantly less likely to support capital punishment when compared to females, whites, and married respondents (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). Research has also found that individuals who live in the southern United States are more likely to support the death penalty than those who lived in other areas of the country; especially if they belonged to a Christian fundamentalist group (Borg, 1997). Support for capital punishment also decreases with age and with higher levels of education (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004).

Young also stated that African Americans were less supportive of capital punishment because they attributed the cause of crime to situational characteristics which decreases their desires to fully punish criminals (1992). However, Bjarnason and Welch (2004) found that African American Catholics were significantly more supportive of capital punishment than African American non-Catholics. Unnever et al. (2005) came to the conclusion that African Americans as well as males were more likely to oppose capital punishment and harsher local courts, when compared to women.

Research was also conducted on the relationship between fundamentalism and the southern culture of the United States. Borg (1997) found a relationship between native

southerners and punitive correctional practices. He stated that white southern fundamentalists were three times more likely to support capital punishment than are white non-southerners (1997). Moore and Ovadia (2006) found that native southerners as well as those from rural areas were more likely to support punitive correctional practices, even when controlling for individual characteristics. Moore and Ovadia (2006) use religious composition to explain the Southern effect. They believe the specific cultural characteristics of the South are a direct result of religion in that area. They found that greater areas of Protestants and fundamentalist Protestants show less of a tolerance for civil liberties, while Jewish individuals show more (Moore & Ovadia, 2006). Beatty and Walter found that religious attendance had a direct effect of tolerance for civil liberties (as cited in Moore & Ovadia, 2006).

Ulmer et al. (2008) conducted research on communities and how they affect criminal sentencing in their area. They found that Christian counties in Pennsylvania were tougher on offenders, especially those with extensive criminal histories (Ulmer et al., 2008).

2.3.2 Protestants and Fundamentalists

Curry (1996) found that Protestants started to shift away from rehabilitative correctional efforts and judicial discretion in the 1980's and began to support increased punitive practices such as mandatory sentences and reductions in appeals. At a time when the nation was concentrating on crime control, Curry (1996) described Protestants as playing a large role in criminal justice policies of that time. The shift allowed the lengthy incapacitation of criminals to take the place of rehabilitation, deterrence, and crime prevention through social programs. He found that Protestants tend to view all criminal behavior as morally wrong and deserving of punishment. Ellison and Sherkat found that Protestants in general believed in punishment as retribution rather than for rehabilitation or deterrence (as cited in Curry, 1996).

There is no standard set of beliefs that definitely defines someone as a fundamentalist. It is a complex concept because there is no exact meaning. Researchers have come to the conclusion that most fundamentalists are Protestants that believe the Bible should be

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interpreted literally, have an emphasis on personal salvation, and have a passion for evangelism (Grasmick et al., 1993; Unnever et al., 2005). They also believe fundamentalists are more inclined to blame crime on the offender's disposition, which leads to the desire for more severe punishments. Kelstedt and Smidt believe fundamentalists have a strong commitment to spreading their faith and defend their beliefs very strongly (as cited in Laythe, Finkel, & Kirkpatrick, 2001).

There have been various studies conducted on punitive attitudes with a focus on Christian fundamentalists. Researchers believe that fundamentalists should be more likely to support criminal justice policies such as capital punishment and longer sentences for offenders when compared to more moderate religious denominations due to their unique set of beliefs and practices that justify punitive correctional policies (Unnever & Cullen, 2006).

Because fundamentalists believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible, they believe it contains the necessary and sufficient information that is needed to guide the conduct of all human affairs (Unnever & Cullen, 2006). They are willing to accept the authority of their religious leaders, which is a reason Ellison and Sherkat believe fundamentalists show such acceptance of authority in human institutions such as the state and the criminal justice system (as cited in Unnever & Cullen, 2006).

Christian fundamentalists also believe in the doctrine of original sin, therefore believing that criminal behavior is tied to sinful behavior and that crime results directly from the offender's mentality and not from unjust or unfortunate conditions (Unnever & Cullen, 2006). According to Unnever and Cullen (2006), fundamentalists believe God has mandated that sinful behavior should be swiftly and decisively punished; which is what provides them with the religious justifications for believing that murderers should be put to death.

Research that has been conducted on religion and punitive attitudes has found positive relationships between those who where classified as Christian Fundamentalists as well as Biblical literalists (Evans & Adams, 2003; Grasmick, et al., 1992; Greer et al., 2005; Unnever &

Cullen, 2006). Grasmick, Bursik, and Blackwell (1993) found that those who belonged to an evangelical or fundamentalist denomination had more support for the death penalty, harsher courts, and harsher laws. A great deal of research has been done on Christian Fundamentalists. Young (1992) found that white fundamentalists were more likely to support the death penalty because they attributed the cause of crime to sinful behavior and the choice of free will. However, Unnever et al. (2005) found that Christian fundamentalists were less likely to have punitive attitudes towards criminal offenders. Their research states that Christian fundamentalists were less likely, while Biblical literalists were more likely to support harsher local courts.

Research on Biblical literalists is closely related to those of fundamentalist denominations. Biblical literalists were found to be more punitive when compared to other individuals (Evans & Adams, 2003; Unnever et al., 2005). They had more punitive attitudes towards juvenile corrections than those without such literal beliefs (Evans & Adams, 2003).

Research conducted on Christian fundamentalists has shown mixed results. Some research did not find fundamentalists were more punitive than other Protestant denominations. Sandys and McGarrell as well as Young and Thompson found that some fundamentalists' support for the death penalty and harsher punishments varied across specific populations (as cited in Unnever & Cullen, 2006).

2.3.3 Catholics

The Catholic Church strongly opposes capital punishment and argues that we are capable of defending human lives by means that are more consistent with the common good and dignity of individuals, and that we should not deprive offenders of the possibility of redemption (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). According to Bjarnason and Welch (2004), The Catholic Church is unique when compared to other major contemporary religions. The Catholic Church takes on an authoritative role when it comes to providing and interpreting scriptural meaning and other important aspects of religion to individuals throughout the world. It attempts to provide

pastors and individuals with direction on moral issues and moral conduct. In the 1990's, bishops in approximately eight states across the United States pleaded for the clemency of death row inmates (Perl & McClintock, 2001).

The Catholic Church promotes a 'consistent life ethic' which includes both conservative and liberal positions on policy areas (Perl & McClintock, 2001). In the early 1980's, Cardinal Bernardin developed the consistent life ethic philosophy by taking a strong stand on moral and political issues (Perl & McClintock, 2001). He took strong opposition to abortion, capital punishment, and euthanasia because they were considered to be immediate threats to life. Other views were related to the quality and dignity of human life, which includes support for welfare and health benefits for the poor and elderly, and support for the rights of minorities (Perl & McClintock, 2001). "Because we believe in the sacredness and dignity of all human life, we must speak out strongly against the violence and death which now permeates all aspects of our society" was a statement given by the Bishops of Indiana in a clemency plea for a convicted murderer (quoted in Albert, as cited in Pearl & McClintock, 2001, p. 280).

Perl and McClintock (2001) go on to say that many individuals reject the Catholic political culture because it is a combination of both right and left politics. They found that support of the consistent life advocacy from lay Catholics is very small because of the combination of principles that are preached. Although The Catholic Church aims at influencing individuals of all denominations on various social issues, research has found that it is most likely to influence lay Catholics (Perl & McClintock, 2001).

Perl and McClintock (2001) found that Catholics who attended church services frequently were more likely to oppose capital punishment. However, Catholics are more likely to demand retributive justice if they tend to lean towards the pre-Vatican II theology and the Old Testament (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). Perl and McClintock (2001) used data from the National Election Studies and found that Catholics and mainline Protestants both showed an opposition to abortion as well as an opposition to capital punishment.

According to Bjarnason and Welch (2004), individuals who attend church services are likely to be influenced by their parish priest, especially on issues where The Catholic Church openly opposes mainstream political and social issues. Priests' personal opinions about such social issues such as the death penalty may affect the extent to which they address these issues in their parishes and in communication with their parishioners (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). Catholic priests are unlikely to openly disagree with and contradict The Catholic Church when it comes to important matters of teaching; however they may not provide the same emphasis on the teachings they personally disagree with as opposed to another priest who agrees with the particular practice (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). Some of the research indicates that the teachings of religious leaders do not impact the political opinions of lay Catholics; instead they are more easily influenced by the individuals they associate with socially (Perl and McClintock, 2001). It may also be a possibility that individuals join certain denominations or congregations because they already share the moral and political ideologies of that group.

Bjarnason and Welch (2004) conducted research using the General Social Survey and examined the relationship between Catholics and support for capital punishment. Even though The Catholic Church has a very strong stance against the taking of a life, they found there was no significant relationship indicting Catholics were less supportive of the death penalty. They did find that Catholic individuals who attended church regularly, were more involved with the social aspect of the parish, and had more frequent contact with the priest were less supportive of capital punishment.

Catholics were significantly less supportive of capital punishment in 1974 when compared to non-Catholics, up until 1994 when Catholics became more punitive (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004). It was also found that priests who were strongly opposed to capital punishment had parishioners who were opposed to the death penalty as well. The priest influences those in his parish when it comes to supporting capital punishment. They came to the conclusion that only those who were involved in their parishes were the ones who were influenced when it

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came to social policies. Bjarnason and Welch (2004) believe it is difficult for involved parishioners not to be influenced because of the strong stance of The Catholic Church and how it relays its beliefs to its members.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample

The data was gathered using a self-administered survey that was given to undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Arlington. The survey was distributed over a three week period in September of 2008 when undergraduate enrollment was just over 19,000. The survey was administered to students in attendance during courses in criminology and criminal justice, history, sociology, communications, marketing, and management. Involvement in the study was both voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were asked to only complete the survey once. Permission for the study was obtained by the university's institutional review board.

The sample consists of a total of 1,215 individuals. As shown in Table 3.1, 42.8% of the sample is male and 57.2% is female. Over half of the sample (60%) is between the ages of 21 and 30. The race and ethnicity most common in the sample was white (46.5%), followed by Hispanic (21.7%), black (17.3%), and Asian and Pacific Islander (10.6%). Upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) represented over half of the sample at 76.1% and most were not criminology/criminal justice majors (75.4%).

Table 3.1 Demographic Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	509	42.8
Female	679	57.2
Age		
20 & under	362	30.6
21-30	709	60.0
31 & up	111	9.4
Race/Ethnicity		
White	542	46.5
Black	202	17.3
Hispanic	253	21.7
Asian / Pacific Islander	124	10.6
Other	44	3.8
School Classification		
Freshman	138	11.7
Sophomore	161	13.7
Junior	454	38.6
Senior	417	35.5
Other	6	0.5
CRCJ Major		
No	886	75.4
Yes	289	24.6

3.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study was punitiveness. It was measured using eleven questions. Respondents were asked to rate on a scale between zero (no support) and ten (strongly support) how much they supported the following proposals; making sentences more severe for all crimes, using the death penalty for juveniles who murder, sending repeat juvenile offenders to adult court, putting more police on the streets, taking away recreational privileges from prisoners, locking up more juveniles offenders, making prisoners work on chain gangs, limiting appeals on death sentences, using chemical castration for sex offenders, executing more murderers, and using mandatory minimum sentencing statutes such as three strikes laws

for repeat offenders. The items were combined into an addictive index to make a scale of 0 to 110. The alpha for the scale was .874. Almost half of the respondents (46.2%) scored between 56 and 85 on the punitive scale (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Dependent Variable

	Frequency	Percent
Punitiveness		
0-35	130	11.8
36-55	272	24.7
56-85	509	46.2
86-110	191	17.3

3.3 Independent Variables

The following variables were used to measure religion (shown in Table 3.3). The 'Bible' variable was used to measure fundamentalist beliefs by asking respondents if they believed the Bible was the actual word of God and is to be taken literally. More respondents disagreed with the statement (56.8%) while 43.2% agreed.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their religious preference by denomination. The responses were then put into categories which included; Baptist, Catholic, non-Baptist Protestants, none, and other. The non-Baptist Protestants consisted of all Protestant denominations other than Baptist, and the 'none' category included those who identified as being atheist or agnostic. The non-Baptist Protestants made up the largest denomination category (33.6%) followed by Catholics (23.1%), Baptists (23%), none (13.2%), and other (7%).

Another variable (None) was then created grouping those who identified with a religion into one category and those who were atheist or agnostic into another. Most of the sample (86.8%) identified with a religion while 13.2% did not.

Table 3.3 Independent Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Bible		
No	641	56.8
Yes	487	43.2
Religious denomination		
Baptist	252	23.0
Catholic	253	23.1
Non-Baptist Protestants	368	33.6
None	144	13.2
Other	77	7.0
Identify with a religion		
Yes	950	86.8
No	144	13.2

The independent variable race/ethnicity will serve as a control variable. Researchers have found race to be a significant predictor for punitive attitudes and could therefore influence the results. African Americans have been found to be less supportive of capital punishment and harsher sentences, as well as other punitive correctional practices (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004; Unnever et al., 2005; Young, 1992).

There are four hypothesis examined in this study. H1: Past research has indicated that blacks were less punitive when compared to other races and ethnicities and it is believed the same results will be found in this study. H2: It is also expected that those who identify as belonging to a religion will be more punitive than those who identify as atheist or agnostic. H3: It is predicted that either Baptists or non-Baptist Protestants will be more punitive than Catholics and other religious denominations. H4: It is believed those who agree with the literal interpretation of the Bible will be more punitive.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

A difference in means test was conducted in order to examine the relationship between religious denominations and punitive attitudes. Table 4.1 displays the means and standard deviations of punitive attitudes when separated by religious denominations. Individuals who indicated they did not belong to a religious denomination were found to be less punitive and had a punitive mean of 59.24. The other denominations were similar when comparing their punitive means; with Catholics scoring a 64.86 on the punitive scale therefore being the most punitive, although it was not statistically significant.

Table 4.1 Punitive Attitudes by
Religious Denomination

Religion	
Baptist	63.32
	(21.06)
Catholic	64.86
	(21.12)
Non-Baptist Protestants	63.95
	(22.22)
None	59.24
	(23.25)
Other	63.22
	(26.62)
f= 1.49	

Independent sample t- tests were conducted to understand the relationship between punitiveness and the 'None' variable, as well as punitiveness and the 'Bible' variable. Table 4.2

displays the punitive means from each of the tests. Individuals who identified as belonging to a religious denomination were found to be significantly more punitive, having a mean punitive score of 63.97. Those who claimed to be atheist or agnostic were less punitive and had a punitive mean of 59.24. Although the test for biblical literalism was not statistically significant, individuals who did not believe the word of the Bible should be taken literally were less punitive than those who did.

Table 4.2 Punitive Attitudes if Religion and Biblical Literalism is Present

			Biblical literalism
Religion	63.97*	No	61.84
	(21.89)		(22.51)
No religion	59.24*	Yes	64.52
	(23.25)		(21.81)
*p<.05	f=1.52		f= .408

A difference of means was conducted to show the punitive means according to race and ethnicity and is shown in Table 4.3. The difference by race and ethnicity is statistically significant. Blacks were less punitive with a mean of 54.97. Hispanics were found to be the most punitive group with a punitive mean of 68.55 followed by Asians and Pacific Islanders with 64.50 and whites with a punitive mean of 63.26.

Table 4.3 Punitive Attitudes by Race and Ethnicity

Race	
White	63.26*
	(22.96)
Black	54.97*
	(20.96)
Hispanic	68.55*
	(20.82)
Asian/	64.5*
Pacific Islander	(20.27)
Other	63.32*
	(21.63)

*p<.001   f= 9.99

Table 4.4 displays the biblical literalism variable when broken down by race and ethnicity. Hispanics were shown to be more punitive than any other category, having significantly higher punitive means in both agreeing and disagreeing that the Bible should be taken literally; and blacks were the less punitive group in both categories. Those who identified as Asian and Pacific Islander were the next most punitive group.

The statistically significant interaction indicated that all race and ethnicity groups were found to be more punitive if they believed the Bible was the actual word of God, except for blacks. Individuals who identified as black were less punitive in general than other races and were shown to be less punitive if they believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible.

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Table 4.4 Punitive Attitudes by Race and Biblical Literalism

Do you agree that "The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally."?		
	No	Yes
Race/Ethnicity		
White	59.82*	67.84*
	(23.72)	(21.09)
Black	58.4*	53.84*
	(20.80)	(20.89)
Hispanic	67.58*	70.61*
	(20.09)	(21.84)
Asian /	62.81*	68.44*
Pacific Islander	(21.29)	(18.26)
Other	63.25*	60.17*
	(20.30)	(22.69)

*p<.001   f= 9.17

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Past research has found that African Americans were less punitive than any other race and ethnicity. It was found in this study that African Americans were significantly less punitive than other groups, which was predicted in H1 at the start of the research. Hispanics were found to be the most punitive, followed by Asians and Pacific Islanders, and whites. Young (1992) found that blacks were less likely to want to fully support the harsh punishment of criminals because of situational characteristics that may be present when looking at the cause of crime.

Present research found that individuals who claimed atheism and agnosticism were less punitive than those who were part of a religious denomination, which was predicted in H2. Although it was predicted in H3 that Baptists and non- Baptist Protestants were more punitive, it was found that those who identified as being Catholic were more punitive than any other religious denomination, though the results were not significant. Past research indicates that Catholics are more likely to be less punitive than Protestant denominations; however this study found no significant differences in religious denominations.

Even though the Catholic Church strongly opposes capital punishment and attempts to promote a consistent life ethic, past research has found that the Catholic denomination has mixed results when supporting harsher punishments for offenders. Some Catholic individuals who lean more towards the pre-Vatican II theology are found to be more punitive than those who do not (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004l; Perl and McClintock, 2001). Past research concluded that Catholic individuals at a time were more opposed to capital punishment, but more have come to support it as the years have passed (Bjarnason & Welch, 2004).

Bjarnason and Welch (2004) found that because the Catholic Church was very opposed to the death penalty, Catholics who attended church services were more inclined to oppose

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capital punishment and harsher punishments. Also, religious commitment has been known to influence the attitudes individuals have towards correctional practices (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). It is also possible that individuals already have their own opinions on correctional practices because of other factors and life experiences, and may join religious organizations in which members already share the same views. Getting a better understanding of the sample's religious involvement is something that can be measured in the future in order to further understand the attitudes towards punitive policies.

Individuals who believed the Bible is the actual word of God and should be taken literally where found to be more punitive than those who did not; which is consistent with previous research as well as H4. Biblical literalism is a common belief of Christian fundamentalists and has found to indicate punitive attitudes in the criminal justice system (Borg, 1997; Evans & Adams, 2003; Grasmick, Bursik, & Blackwell, 1993; Grasmick et al., 1992; Greer et al., 2005; Unnever & Cullen, 2006). Some studies have failed to find a relationship between Biblical literalism and punitive attitudes, but no study thus far has found fundamentalists were less punitive than other religious groups.

Young and Thompson discovered that blacks were less likely to support capital punishment when compared to whites if they belonged to a fundamentalist denomination and when biblical literalism was present (as cited in Unnever et al., 2005). In this study, when the biblical literalism question was broken down by race and ethnicity, whites, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific Islanders were found to be significantly less punitive when they did not believe in the literal interpretation on the Bible. Blacks were found to be more punitive when they did not believe the Bible should be taken literally. It is unclear why blacks were the only group that was less punitive when believing in biblical literalism.

Unnever et al. (2005) stated that religion does offer contradictory messages of both harshness and forgiveness. According to Greeley (1993), some religious individuals may view God as compassionate and gracious; while some may view God as harsh and judgmental. This

affects how one can believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible to either be more punitive and believe in retribution, or less punitive because they believe that forgiveness, rehabilitation, and the protection of human life is far more important than punishment. Those who believe in forgiveness as opposed to retribution have been found to be less punitive and less likely to support harsher courts and capital punishment (Applegate et al., 2000). Unnever et al. (2005) believe that an individual's focus on religion is what predicts their punitive attitudes. That may serve as an explanation as to why there are some religious individuals who are less punitive, and why some are supporting harsher correctional practices.

Because the study was conducted in a small area in the southern United States, results may differ across state lines, and regions of the country. The location of the sample was taken in a conservative state with high religious involvement and was limited to mostly young adults attaining higher education. This could be a possible reason why religious denomination was not a significant predictor of punitiveness in this study.

Research on Christian fundamentalists and biblical literalists should be further explored to understand the relationship that exists with punitive attitudes. In the future perhaps more questions on the literal interpretation of the Bible and religious involvement are needed to completely understand the effect it may have on correctional practices and attitudes.

The dependent variable in this study was composed of an additive index of support for eleven criminal justice proposals ranging from a variety of topics. In the future, removing capital punishment from the index and making it a separate variable may better explain the relationship between punitiveness and religion. Because capital punishment is often related to political preferences, individuals usually have a firm opinion on capital punishment and treating it as a separate variable may increase accuracy when focusing on punitive attitudes. Catholics have been found to oppose capital punishment but perhaps prefer life imprisonment and other punitive correctional practices in its place, therefore embracing punitive attitudes.

Future research should further explore the religious involvement of those who consider themselves a follower of religion. More information should be gathered on church attendance and participation in religious activities. This will help to provide a better understanding of the role religion plays in individuals' lives. If religious involvement is not present, perhaps questions on spiritual beliefs and faith should be included. Individuals may not necessarily belong to a religious denomination or attend religious functions, but may still consider themselves to be spiritual.

APPENDIX A

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME SURVEY

Perceptions of Crime Survey

To be read aloud prior to passing out the survey:

This study is being conducted through the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department at UTA. It is aimed at measuring perceptions of crime and other related matters and comparing the opinions of criminology and criminal justice majors to non-criminology majors. This survey is strictly voluntary and anonymous. You are not required to participate in this project and you have the right to terminate this survey at any point before its completion. There are no risks associated with participation in the survey. You will personally receive no direct benefit as a result of completing the survey. The potential benefit of the research is increased understanding of the perceptions of students regarding crime and crime-related issues. The findings of this study will be used as supporting data for several research articles that will be submitted for publication in academic journals.

If you have any questions or research-related problems at any time, you may call Dr. Rhonda R. Dobbs at 817/272-3499 or Dr. Robert Sarver III at 817/272-3320. You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 817/272-1235 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject.

Perceptions of Crime Survey

1. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *not at all concerned* and 10 being *very concerned*, how concerned are you about crime?

⓪   ①   ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩

2. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *no support* and 10 being *strongly support*, how much do you support the following proposals?

a. Making sentences more severe for
   all crimes   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
b. Using the death penalty for juveniles
   who murder   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
c. Sending repeat juvenile offenders
   to adult court   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
d. Putting more police on the streets,
   even if it means paying
   higher taxes   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
e. Taking away television &
   recreational privileges
   from prisoners   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
f. Locking up more juvenile
   offenders   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
g. Making prisoners work on chain
   gangs   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
h. Limit appeals to death sentences ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤   ⑥ ⑦ ⑧⑨   ⑩
i. Use chemical castration for sex
   offenders   ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
j. Executing more murderers ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧ ⑨   ⑩
k. Using mandatory minimum
   sentencing statutes such as   3 strikes laws for repeat offenders
          ⓪ ① ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧ ⑨   ⑩

3. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *too lenient* and 10 being *too harsh*, how would you characterize the criminal justice system when dealing with the following types of criminal offenders?

a. Murderers   ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
b. Rapists   ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
c. Pedophiles   ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
d. Violent offenders ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
e. Property offenders ⓪   ①   ②   ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩

f. White collar offenders ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
g. Juvenile offenders ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
h. Female offenders ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

i. Male offenders ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
j. Racial minorities ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

4. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *not at all fearful* and 10 being *very fearful*, how fearful are you of the following?

a. Being murdered ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
b. Being raped/sexually assaulted
⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
c. Being attacked by someone with a
⠀weapon ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
d. Having someone break into your
⠀home
⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
e. Having your car stolen
⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
f. Being robbed or mugged on the
⠀street ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
g. Having your property vandalized/
⠀damaged ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
h. Being cheated, conned, or swindled
⠀out of your money ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
i. Being approached on the street
⠀by a beggar or panhandler
⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⠀⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩
j. Being beaten up or assaulted by
⠀strangers ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

5. Have you ever been the victim of crime?
❑ No
❑ Yes

6. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *not at all likely* and 10 being *very likely*, how likely is it that you will experience the following crimes in the next year?

a. Violent crime   ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩

b. Property crime   ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨   ⑩

7. Approximately _____% of all crimes are murders.

8. Approximately what percentage of criminal cases do you believe result in a criminal trial? _____%

9. Approximately what percentage of crimes result in an arrest? _____%

10. Approximately _____% of all crime is violent crime (includes murder, aggravated assault, kidnapping, & robbery).

11. Indicate how frequently you watch each of the following programs.

	Regularly	Never	Almost Never	On Occasion	Often
a. 60 Minutes	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
b. Dateline	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
c. Catherine Crier	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
d. Nancy Grace	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
e. The Abrams Report	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
f. Body of Evidence	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
g. Bones	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
h. Cold Case	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
i. Criminal Minds	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
j. CSI	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
k. CSI: Miami	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
l. CSI: New York	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
m. NCIS	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
n. Numb3rs	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
o. Cold Case Files	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
p. Forensic Files	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
q. The First 48	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
r. The New Detectives	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
s. Trace Evidence	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
t. 48 Hours Mystery	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
u. American Justice	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
v. America's Most Wanted	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
w. COPS	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
x. Dallas SWAT	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
y. Jail	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
z. The FBI Files	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
aa. The Investigators	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
bb. Law & Order	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
cc. Law & Order: Criminal Intent	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
dd. Law & Order: SVU	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
ee. Medium	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
ff. New Amsterdam	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
gg. Prison Break	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
hh. The Closer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
ii. Without a Trace	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
jj. Women's Murder Club	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
kk. Boston Legal	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

12. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *not at all accurate* and 10 being *very accurate*, how accurate do you believe each of the following shows is in its portrayal of crime and the criminal justice system? *Please only assess the accuracy of the programs that you have watched at least once. Choose N/A for those programs that you have never watched.*

                                                                    N/A

a. 60 Minutes ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
b. Dateline ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
c. Catherine Crier ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
d. Nancy Grace ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
e. The Abrams Report ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
f. Body of Evidence ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
g. Bones ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
h. Cold Case ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
i. Criminal Minds ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
j. CSI ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
k. CSI: Miami ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
l. CSI: New York ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
m. NCIS ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
n. Numb3rs ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
o. Cold Case Files ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
p. Forensic Files ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
q. The First 48 ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
r. The New Detectives ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
s. Trace Evidence ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
t. 48 Hours Mystery ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
u. American Justice ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
v. America's Most Wanted ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
w. COPS ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
x. Dallas SWAT ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
y. Jail ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
z. The FBI Files ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
aa. The Investigators ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
bb. Law & Order ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
cc. Law & Order: Criminal
    Intent ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
dd. Law & Order: SVU ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
ee. Medium ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
ff. New Amsterdam ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
gg. Prison Break ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
hh. The Closer ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
ii. Without a Trace ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
jj. Women's Murder Club ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○
kk. Boston Legal ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ○

13. Please indicate how frequently you watch each of the following news programs or access the following news websites.

	Never Regularly	Almost Never	On Occasion	Often
National News:				
a. CNN/Headline News ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
b. MSNBC ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
c. Fox News ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
d. ABC World News ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
e. CBS Evening News ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
f. NBC Nightly News ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Local News:				
g. Channel 4 (Fox) ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
h. Channel 5 (NBC) ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
i. Channel 8 (ABC) ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
j. Channel 11 (CBS) ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Websites:				
k. CNN.com ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
l. MSNBC.com ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
m. Foxnews.com ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
n. Yahoo news ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
o. ABCnews.com ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
p. CBSnews.com ❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

14. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *not at all credible* and 10 being *very credible*, how credible/believable do you perceive each of the following news sources to be? Please answer even if you do not use/watch that news source.

National News:
a. CNN/Headline News	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
b. MSNBC	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
c. Fox News	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
d. ABC World News	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
e. CBS Evening News	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
f. NBC Nightly News	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩

Local News:
g. Channel 4 (Fox)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
h. Channel 5 (NBC)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
i. Channel 8 (ABC)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
j. Channel 11 (CBS)	⓪	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩

Websites:
k. CNN.com   ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
l. MSNBC.com   ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
m. Foxnews.com ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
n. Yahoo news   ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
o. ABCnews.com ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩
p. CBSnews.com ⓪   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦ ⑧   ⑨   ⑩

15. What is your most commonly used source for news?

_____

16. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being *strongly disagree* and 5 being *strongly agree*, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. I always pay close attention to news about crime. ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

b. The criminal justice system is fair when dealing with criminal offenders.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

c. Criminal offenders have too many rights in the criminal justice system.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

d. Violent crime rates in the U.S. have increased in the last 5 years.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

e. There is more violent crime than property crime in the U.S.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

f. Men have higher rates of violent victimization than women.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

g. Sex offenders are *less* likely than non-sex offenders to be re-arrested
   for committing any new offense after release from prison.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

h. Most offenders convicted of murder receive the death penalty.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

i.Most criminals are African American.
                                          ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

j. Most police work involves crime-fighting activities (e.g. investigating
   crime, capturing criminals, & questioning criminals).   ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤

17. The media portrayals of crime and criminal justice that I have been exposed to have:
   ❑   made me view the criminal justice system in a much more negative way
   ❑   made me view the criminal justice system in a slightly more negative
           way
   ❑   not changed my opinion of the criminal justice system
   ❑   made me view the criminal justice system in a slightly more positive way
   ❑   made me view the criminal justice system in a much more positive way

18. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being *very conservative* and 7 being *very liberal*, how
would you rate your political beliefs?

                    ①   ②   ③   ④   ⑤   ⑥   ⑦

19. Are you male or female?
   ❑   Male
   ❑   Female

20. What is your current age? _____

21. Which of the following best describes your racial/ethnic background?
   ❑   White
   ❑   Black
   ❑   Hispanic
   ❑   Asian or Pacific Islander
   ❑   Other, please specify _____
22. Do you agree with the following statement: "The Bible is the actual word of God
and is to be taken literally."?
   ❑   No
   ❑   Yes

23. Please identify your religious preference by denomination. (For example, Baptist,
Jewish, Catholic, Muslim, agnostic, atheist, etc.)

   _____

24. What is your current classification in school?
- ❑ Freshman
- ❑ Sophomore
- ❑ Junior
- ❑ Senior
- ❑ Other, please specify _____

25. Have you ever taken or are you currently taking a course in criminology or criminal justice?
- ❑ No
- ❑ Yes

26. Is criminology/criminal justice currently your major or minor?
- ❑ No – if no, please specify your major and end the survey

  _____
- ❑ Yes - if yes, please answer questions 26a and 26b

26a. What influenced your decision to be a CRCJ major? (Please choose all that apply)
- ❑ Parent or other family member
- ❑ Academic advisor
- ❑ Criminology or criminal justice class
- ❑ Media portrayals of crime and/or criminal justice system
- ❑ Other, please specify

  _____

26b. Of those options you chose in 26a, which **one** of those would you say was the most important in your decision to be a CRCJ major? (*Please only choose one option*)
- ❑ Parent of other family member
- ❑ Academic advisor
- ❑ Criminology or criminal justice class
- ❑ Media portrayals of crime and/or criminal justice system
- ❑ Other, please specify

  _____

Thank you for completing the survey and participating in this research project!

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Jessica Marie Millares received her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Florida International University in 2007. She then pursued her master's degree at the University of Texas at Arlington in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Her research interests include public policy, race relations, capital punishment, drug laws, and criminological theory.