

## Regional Religions?: Extending the “Semi-Involuntary” Thesis of African-American Religious Participation<sup>1</sup>

Matthew O. Hunt<sup>2,3</sup> and Larry L. Hunt<sup>4</sup>

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*This research examines religious affiliation and church attendance among African-Americans in three different regions of the United States to evaluate the thesis that the Black church represents a semi-involuntary institution shaped by historical dynamics of segregation in the rural South. We extend the analyses of others who have found the rural South to have distinctive church participation patterns by examining two nationally representative data sets (the 1972–1996 General Social Surveys and the 1984 National Alcohol Study). We explore both level and type of church attendance of African-Americans, and how patterns differ by region. Further, we refine prior analyses by (1) differentiating between members of historically “White” and “conservative” churches from those in the black “mainline,” (2) examining racial segregation, and (3) focusing on the “type” of church attendance (rather than just overall level). Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and logistic regression models support the thesis that the rural South exhibits some distinctive patterns that make the “semi-involuntary institution” notion a useful concept, although patterns not predicted by the thesis are also found. The semi-involuntary thesis is also used to illuminate some church attendance patterns observed outside the rural South.*

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**KEY WORDS:** African-American; religion; semi-involuntary thesis; church attendance; region; rural/urban residence.

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<sup>2</sup>Department of Sociology, Northeastern University, 500 Holmes Hall, Boston, Massachusetts 02115.

<sup>3</sup>To whom correspondence should be addressed.

<sup>4</sup>Department of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742.

## INTRODUCTION

The proposition that the culture and institutions of the African-American community in the United States have been heavily shaped by the legacy of slavery and related dynamics of segregation is a starting point for much sociological research. A central interest of sociologists has been how features of the Black community have been transformed by changing conditions of residence along regional lines. Originally concentrated in the agrarian economy of the rural South, significant segments of the black population have, in the 20th century, migrated to northern, industrial cities and to urban centers within the South (Franklin 1967). Despite these demographic shifts, and irrespective of region, African-Americans have faced the reality of segregation (Massey and Denton 1993) and, in response, have developed distinctive institutional practices in various arenas, including politics (Button 1989; Peterson 1995), economics (Marable 1983; Wilson 1997), family (Billingsley 1968; Frazier 1966; Taylor et al. 1990), and religion (Frazier 1964; Nelsen and Nelsen 1975).

Numerous studies have documented the legacy of race stratification in political and economic institutions, where the effects of segregation are perhaps most obvious and most easily identified. And, the Black family has also been subject to detailed scrutiny, with countless studies documenting distinctive household and family structures. Nonetheless, one of the most important institutions in the black community—the Black church—has not received the detailed empirical attention as has institutional life in other arenas (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). No doubt some of this neglect has been the comparative absence of the kinds of empirical data readily available to sociologists studying other institutions, where census materials and statistics collected by other governmental agencies provide the raw material for documenting political, economic, and family patterns. However, over the past several decades, several important data bases have been created that facilitate inquiry into religious institutions, and a number of recent efforts have attempted to expand our knowledge of race and religious institutions. How the Black church has been transformed by changing conditions in the black community—specifically, how the role of the church varies by regional and residential contexts—is a question receiving recent theoretical and empirical attention (Chaves and Higgins 1992; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990).

A major image of the black church in the African-American community suggests that it represents a “semi-involuntary” institution—a thesis that represents a classic interpretation of the distinctive place of religion in the segregated African-American community (Frazier 1964; Johnson 1941). This thesis suggests that the Black church was a semi-involuntary institution in the rural South capturing the loyalty of most members of the Southern rural community, while its role in the urban black community has been

transformed by migration and consequent changing economic and political opportunities. Despite the acknowledged importance of the Black church, surprisingly little empirical work has focused on the semi-involuntary thesis, with the recent exceptions of Ellison and Sherkat (1995) and Hunt and Hunt (1999). Despite some differences between these studies, they both document several lines of evidence suggestive of distinctive religious patterns among African-Americans and the applicability of the “semi-involuntary thesis” to regional variations in black church dynamics. Unfortunately, neither of these studies focused directly on the “mainline” Black church, nor assessed the impact of segregation on Black religious involvement.

The present study moves beyond past empirical research on the semi-involuntary thesis by: (1) providing a clearer differentiation between alternatives to the mainline Black church (both denominationally and by extent of church segregation by race), (2) examining the factor of church segregation—a feature of Black religious involvement that the semi-involuntary thesis clearly predicts should directly shape church attendance, and, (3) explicitly examining patterns or “types” of church attendance deemed important by the semi-involuntary institution thesis.

### THE SEMI-INVOLUNTARY THESIS

The “semi-involuntary” institution thesis focuses on the structural, cultural, and interpersonal consequences of racial segregation on the place of the church in the African-American community. The thesis suggests that segregation has shaped two major forces that traditionally mobilized involvement in the Black church, especially in the segregated churches of the historic, mainline denominations: (1) the *structural absence* of secular outlets for achievement that indirectly made the Black church the community context in which status, leadership, and respectability could be achieved, and (2) the *cultural presence* of powerful community moral pressures to support the institution that provided material and spiritual nourishment to the African-American community.

Historically, the segregated Black church—largely Baptist and Methodist congregations—was the central institution of the African-American community in the rural South.<sup>5</sup> The image of *semi-involuntary* rests upon

<sup>5</sup>The Black church has been historically linked to two major Protestant denominations: the Baptists and the Methodists. In the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth century, major efforts of evangelical outreach by proselytizing Methodists and Baptists led to a dramatic increase of both forms of Protestant faith among blacks (this legacy continues today; approximately six of every ten African Americans identify themselves as Baptist or Methodist). The growth of the Black church took the form of segregated denominations characterized by parallel organizational structures that kept “Methodists” or “Baptists” of different races in different congregations.

the fact that church attendance was strategic in the status system of the black community where broadly based norms and sanctions acted as external constraints on behavior and generated attendance even where subjective commitment or intrinsic motivation was lacking. In short, the image is that church attendance was based more on communal and institutional pressures than on personal choice under “semi-involuntary” conditions. By contrast, in the urban North, the role of the Black church has been altered as it has been forced to compete for peoples’ involvements with (1) “alternative” religious traditions and, (2) a larger number of urban-based secular institutions. As a consequence, Blacks’ church attendance in urban settings is seen as more voluntaristic than was possible under the institutional and communal constraints of “semi-involuntary” conditions.

In the religious sphere, greater diversity of denominational affiliations in the urban North posed challenges to the mainline black churches’ ability to maintain its membership and identity. For example, the rise of Evangelical and Pentecostal churches outside the mainline tradition—often described as “storefront churches”—offered competition, especially among recent migrants from the South (Williams 1974). In addition, historically “white” affiliations such as Roman Catholicism were successful in winning upwardly mobile African-American converts (Ellison and Sherkat 1990; L. Hunt 1996, 1998), while a variety of separatist sects also emerged on the urban scene, representing still another set of “alternatives” to the mainline Black church (Fauset 1971; Washington 1972). This growing variety of religious opportunities created *choices* around the issue of church attendance where formerly (i.e., in the rural South) there were few or none to be made.

The urban North also offered more options for institutional involvement in secular spheres, which further contributed to the problems of the mainline Black church. For instance, the presence of specialized media geared to the Black community (e.g., newspapers, radio, television, theaters, etc.) meant that the Black church was no longer the primary (or only) place where blacks experienced news and other images connecting them to the broader world. And, urban areas’ greater offering of voluntary associations organized around political and economic issues affecting African-Americans provided increased opportunities to participate in public life in ways not formally linked to the church.

Thus, the more diverse options for institutional participation available in the urban world meant that the Black church lost the position of a comparative monopoly that it held in the rural South. Although scholars disagree whether this differentiation of institutional spheres has been complete—that is, whether the urban Black church is comparatively isolated from broader political and economic struggles (Frazier 1964; Nelsen 1988),

or whether it has continuing relevance in secular arenas and is only partially differentiated from broader community life (Chaves and Higgins 1992; Lincoln and Mayima 1990; Harris 1995)—there is a clear consensus that there are important differences in the role of the Black church in the urban North compared to the rural South. If so, then there should be discernable differences in the level and type of church involvement found in different regional and residential contexts.

### **Past Research: Central Empirical Findings**

Examining the 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA) sample, Ellison and Sherkat (1995) studied three regions: the rural South, the urban South, and the non-South; and found distinctive patterns of religious participation specific to the rural South suggesting that the semi-involuntary thesis identifies a longstanding pattern central to the African-American religious experience. Specifically, the rural South compared to other regions, evidenced: (1) higher mean levels of church participation; (2) a stronger positive relationship between social class (as indexed by education) and church participation; (3) a weaker positive relationship between subjective religious factors (e.g., perceived rewards) and church participation, and, (4) less denominational variation in church participation (i.e., few differences in participation rates for different denominations).

The semi-involuntary thesis interprets these data patterns as follows: (1) the higher levels of participation reflect the greater institutional importance of the Black church in the rural South; (2) the stronger relationship between social class and participation reflects the relative absence of alternative status outlets and the consequent greater centrality of the Black church as a context in which status, leadership, and respectability may be achieved; (3) the weaker relationship between subjective perceptions and participation reflects the impact of community norms and pressures to attend even when subjective commitment is low; (4) the absence of denominational variation in attendance reflects the general “semi-involuntary” nature of church participation in the rural South.

Hunt and Hunt’s (1999) efforts to replicate the findings of Ellison and Sherkat examined two additional nationally representative data sets—the 1972-1994 General Social Surveys (GSS) and the 1984 National Alcohol Study (NAS). They examined regional variations in church attendance employing OLS models comparable to those developed by Ellison and Sherkat, and were able to successfully replicate many of the NSBA findings. However,

on the question of *level* of church attendance, Hunt and Hunt did not find the rural South to be distinctive in either the GSS or NAS data; rather, the rural South and urban South showed similar levels of attendance and both had higher attendance levels than did the urban North. A more successful part of the replication effort did document region-specific effects of both education and subjective religious factors on church attendance that are consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis. Specifically, like Ellison and Sherkat, Hunt and Hunt found that education was more predictive of higher attendance in the rural South, while a kind of subjective religious identification was more predictive of higher attendance outside the rural South.

Because the findings across three different data sets yield a mixed pattern of support for the semi-involuntary thesis when level of church attendance is examined, it is important to refine analyses to focus directly on *type of church attendance*. A key issue identified in past work concerns the type of church participation—i.e., is attendance regular, intermittent, or infrequent? Ellison and Sherkat (1995) observe that it is likely that *intermittent* attendance speaks most directly to the power of the black community to enforce behavioral standards—i.e., those who are neither core leaders of a church nor have abandoned religion entirely, are pushed to maintain at least intermittent levels of involvement.

Along these lines, Lincoln and Mayima (1990) suggest that the Black church in the rural South has distinctive organizational patterns and distinctive norms regarding the meaning of regular attendance. For instance, they observe that many Black churches in the rural South do not have the resources to support a full-time minister—resulting in a pattern whereby several churches may share a single religious leader—a phenomenon they term the “absentee pastorate” pattern.<sup>6</sup> Further, Lincoln and Mamiya suggest that there are distinctive cultural nuances and assumptions regarding church attendance in the Black church in the rural South. Specifically, they argue that, “although the majority go every Sunday, some Black church members attend only on the ‘first’ and ‘third’ Sundays, while others go on the ‘second’ and ‘fourth.’ Still others attend once a month. Yet, all of them consider themselves to be ‘regular churchgoers’ ” (p. 423). These considerations make it important to examine the precise type of attendance (above nonattendance) among those who attend the Black church. If the Black church constitutes a semi-involuntary institution, with structural and cultural factors shaping attendance varying by region, we may find that some regional/residential contexts reinforce highly regular attendance,

<sup>6</sup>Interestingly, Lincoln and Mayima suggest this pattern does not itself mean lesser levels of involvement in those churches; indeed, the “absentee pastorate” may actually increase lay participation and involvement in church activities.

while, under other circumstances, intermittent attendance may constitute the operative norm.

### **Unexamined Issues: Refining and Extending Past Research**

The central question of this study is whether the patterns of church attendance found in two different social surveys are linked to sociodemographic factors, religious affiliation, subjective religious factors, and extent of church segregation, in ways that reinforce the thesis that the Black church represents a semi-involuntary institution—particularly in the rural South. Additionally, the issue of whether earlier empirical findings can be refined and extended using multiple data sets and alternative methodological approaches is an important one, especially in studies of populations such as African-Americans whom social surveys often fail to adequately represent due to sampling limitations.

To move beyond past research, we explore three main issues. First, compared with past research, we use a more nuanced denominational breakdown that isolates historically “White” affiliations from the mainline Black and conservative Black Protestant denominational affiliations. This step explores whether isolating the mainline churches, rather than merging “white” church members with the Black “mainline,” illuminates distinctive attendance patterns (i.e., are the effects predicted by the semi-involuntary thesis specific to the mainline Black churches?). Second, following the “semi-involuntary thesis” reasoning that church attendance that is motivated by institutional constraints should be greatest in racially homogenous social worlds, we explore whether racially segregated church contexts are the locus of distinctive patterns of church attendance. Finally, we examine whether a strategy focusing on the *type* of attendance (weekly, intermittent, rare) specifies the dynamics associated with semi-involuntary thesis. Because the semi-involuntary thesis suggests the importance of intermittent (e.g., “monthly”) attendance, research should examine whether this type of attendance is more prevalent in the rural South, within mainline Black churches, or in segregated church contexts.

### **DATA AND MEASURES**

Two separate surveys provide the empirical base for this investigation. We use an aggregated set of surveys from the General Social Surveys (GSS)

and the 1984 National Alcohol Survey (NAS).<sup>7</sup> Many of the variables drawn from the two data sets have similar operational definitions; the important differences of measurement between the surveys are discussed next.

### **GSS**

The GSS surveys from 1972 to 1996 provide a sample of 4,783 African-American respondents. For purposes of this study, this sample was reduced to those reporting a Christian religious affiliation that could be classified into denominational categories described below or no religious affiliation preference. This reduction results in a sample of 4,750 for the GSS data base. It should be noted that a control for year of survey was used in all analyses of the GSS data set, and the mean year of interview was 1984 for the aggregated data set.

### **NAS**

The 1984 National Alcohol Survey provides a sample of 1,947 African-American respondents. This survey had a sampling frame covering the forty eight contiguous states, and used a multi stage probability design to ensure a nationally representative sample of African-Americans. For this study, the sample was reduced to those reporting a Christian religious affiliation that could be classified into denominational categories described below or no religious affiliation preference. The reduction resulted in a working sample size of 1,926 respondents for the NAS data set.<sup>8</sup>

### **Church Attendance**

Our dependent variables measure frequency and type of attendance at religious services. For both surveys, the original coded responses to a question about frequency of church attendance are used for the OLS analyses. For the logistic analyses, three dichotomous measures were constructed by recoding the original attendance variables in a manner described next.

The GSS surveys contained the question, “How often do you attend

<sup>7</sup>See Davis and Smith (1996) for more details on the GSS surveys. See L. Hunt (1996) for more information on the NAS sample.

<sup>8</sup>See Appendix B for detailed comparisons of these samples with (a) the 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans (Jackson and Gurin 1987) used in the Ellison and Sherkat study and (b) 1980 census data on the Black population in general.

religious services?" We use the GSS variable ATTEND which has the following intervals: 0 = never, 1 = less than once a year, 2 = once or twice a year, 3 = several times a year, 4 = once a month, 5 = two or three times a month, 6 = nearly every week, 7 = every week, 8 = several times a week. For the logistic analyses we initially partition responses into three dichotomous measures identifying different patterns of attendance: "Weekly" identifies attendance of nearly every week or more, "Intermittent" identifies attendance of once a month to two or three times a month, and "Rare" identifies nonattendance through attendance of several times a year.

The NAS survey contained the question, "About how often do you attend religious services?" The NAS measure of church attendance has the following intervals: 1 = never, 2 = only rarely, 3 = a few times a year, 4 = about once or twice a month, 5 = once a week or more. For this data set, the dichotomous dependent variables for attendance are: "Weekly," for attendance of once a week or more, "Intermittent," for attendance of "about once or twice a month," and "Rare," which identifies nonattendance through attendance of a few times a year. Each of these dichotomous variables is coded 1 for the type of attendance identified and 0 otherwise.

### Religious Affiliation

We examine denominational patterns by identifying four different affiliation categories—a refinement of Ellison and Sherkat's (1995) strategy (and Hunt and Hunt's (1999) replication efforts) which merged Roman Catholics and some high-status, historically white Protestant denominations in the same category as the black "mainline" (Baptists and Methodists) due to the small number of members with these "alternative" affiliations in the NSBA sample. In contrast, the two samples used in the current study are sufficiently large to permit the use of a different set of affiliation categories, allowing for a clear focus on the mainline Black churches as the locus of semi-involuntary effects.<sup>9</sup>

Respondents were classified into affiliation categories reflecting their expressed denominational preference (or nonpreference). The GSS asked respondents to describe themselves as Protestant, Catholic, Jew, Other, or None. If Protestant was the reported preference, a request for additional information concerning specific denominational affiliation was

<sup>9</sup>The smallest subset of respondents ( $N = 26$ ) when region and religious affiliation are cross tabulated is found in the rural South for the historically white churches in the NAS sample. In all other cells in the NAS and GSS data sets, the  $N$ 's are appreciably larger.

made. A similar procedure was used in the NAS study. For both data sets, the four affiliations we use are: (1) "Black Mainline Protestant," which identifies the two major black denominations, the Baptists and Methodists; (2) "White Church," which identifies a composite of affiliations that have historically been largely White in membership, including Roman Catholic and higher-status Protestant denominations such as Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Congregational; (3) "Conservative Protestant," which identifies a composite category that includes various evangelical and Pentecostal groupings not clearly linked with Baptists or Methodists including Pentecostal, Holiness, Church of God, Seventh-Day Adventist, and other smaller groupings; and, (4) "Non-affiliates," which identifies those answering "none" to the question about their religious preference. Each "affiliation" category is measured with a dummy variable in which a 1 is assigned to members of a category and a 0 is assigned to all other respondents.

### **Subjective Religious Factors**

We also include measures of subjective religious factors as predictors of attendance, and attempt to isolate their effects by region. GSS surveys measure the intensity of respondents' connection to their preferred affiliation (i.e., salience of denominational identity). Respondents were asked, using their preference as part of the question, "Would you call yourself a strong (denomination named) or a not very strong (denomination named)?" Responses recorded by GSS were coded: Strong = 3, Somewhat Strong (when volunteered as a response) = 2, and Not Very Strong = 1. In the NAS survey, respondents were asked the more global religiosity question: "How important is religion in your life?" Responses were coded: 1 = not at all important, 2 = not very important, 3 = somewhat important, 4 = very important. We recognize the differences in these two measures; for purposes of interpretation across the two data sets, we refer to these religious factors as "subjective religious identification."

### **Sociodemographic Factors**

We examine, as did the two prior empirical studies, variation in church attendance in three "regions": the rural South, the urban South and the non-South. For both data sets: "Rural South" is coded 1 if a resident of a non urban area in a Southern state, "Urban South" is coded 1 if a resident

of an urban area in a Southern state, and “non-South” is coded 1 if a resident of a Northern or Western state.<sup>10</sup>

We also control for the effects of a number of other variables. In both surveys, “Female” is coded 1 if female, “Married” is coded 1 if currently married, and “Age” is the numerical age of the respondent in years at time of interview. For the GSS models, “Education” is measured as the number of years of formal education reported by respondents, while “Income” is measured with a twenty-category recoding of total family income, adjusted to 1984 dollars. For the NAS models, “Education” is measured by an 8-interval index ranging from “no formal schooling” to “graduate study,” while “Income” of the respondent’s household is measured using a 10-interval index ranging from “under \$4,000” with varying width intervals up to a category of “\$60,000 or more.”

### **Additional Controls**

In the GSS aggregated data file, “Year” is a variable that records the calendar year in which an annual survey was conducted, and is entered in all regression analyses of GSS data as a control. Additionally, in the NAS data set, “Church Segregation” is a dummy variable coded 1 if the church the respondent attends is reported to be all or mostly black, 0 otherwise.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Table I presents: (1) the distributions of religious affiliations found in the two samples and their breakdown by region, (2) the mean level of church attendance by region, and (3) the extent of church segregation in the NAS data set.<sup>11</sup> The distribution of religious affiliations is quite consistent for the two samples, with most African-Americans members of the Black mainline churches. Further, the Black mainline is characterized by a clear decline in proportions comparing the rural South to the non-South. Next, the overall level of attendance by region is consistent

<sup>10</sup>Both data sets are in close accord with the NSBA survey and 1980 Census data in estimating the non-Southern, rural population at about 3% of the total Black population. Given the small proportion of non-Southern, rural blacks, following both prior studies, we treat all non-Southern respondents as one category, regardless of rural-urban residence.

<sup>11</sup>Additional descriptive information on both samples is found in Appendix A which presents the zero-order correlations for all study variables for each data set.

**Table I.** Religious Affiliation, Level of Church Attendance, and Church Segregation (NAS only) for Total Sample and by Region

	GSS (1972-96)			NAS (1984)				
	Total sample	Rural south	Urban south	Non-south	Total sample	Rural south	Urban south	Non-south
Affiliation (%):								
Mainline prot.	68	79	74	60	68	75	71	62
White church	11	5	9	15	12	6	14	14
Conservative prot.	16	13	14	17	14	15	12	16
No affiliation	6	3	4	7	6	4	3	7
<i>N</i>	(4,745)	(797)	(1,573)	(2,375)	(1,912)	(415)	(576)	(921)
Level of church attendance (mean)	4.48	4.97	4.98	4.36 <sup>c</sup>	3.77	3.97	4.00	3.53 <sup>a</sup>
Mainline prot.						% in segregated churches		
White church					83	94	89	72
Conservative prot.					50 <sup>b</sup>	87	61 <sup>b</sup>	36 <sup>b</sup>
No affiliation					67 <sup>b</sup>	94	63 <sup>b</sup>	58 <sup>b</sup>
					—	—	—	—

<sup>a</sup>Mean in non-South different from both rural and urban South ( $p < .05$ ).

<sup>b</sup>Difference from Mainline Protestant significant ( $p < .05$ ).

across data sets: both the rural South and urban South have similar levels of attendance, while the non-South shows markedly lower attendance compared to both types of Southern residence. Finally, the data on church segregation for the NAS data set point to higher levels of segregation in the rural South for all religious affiliations, and greatest segregation in the black mainline for both types of urban residence. This means that both “alternatives” to the black mainline church are more likely to have racially integrated church contexts under urban conditions in the South and non-South. All of these differences are consistent with patterns implied by the semi-involuntary thesis: a declining prominence of the mainline Black church as a kind of religious affiliation in the non-South, less frequent church attendance outside the South, and the highest level of church segregation in the rural South.

Next, we briefly examine several OLS regression models examining the impact of region, sociodemographic variables, religious affiliation, segregation, and subjective factors on overall level (or frequency) of church attendance. Table II presents the results of these analyses for the total sample and by region.<sup>12</sup> First, the previously observed pattern of both the rural and urban South differing from the non-South in attendance level is replicated in Table II for both data sets, even after controlling for all of the other independent variables in this study. Further, the analyses using the total sample in Table II reveal that attendance is highest among the older, female, married, and those with higher SES (education and income) and higher subjective identification. And, as predicted by the semi-involuntary thesis, the rural South is distinctive with regard to several of these effects (differing from either one or both other regions).

The findings of primary interest in Table II involve the effects of religious affiliation and church segregation on attendance. Results suggest that both “alternatives” differ from the Black “mainline” (the omitted category in these models) in at least one data set. Across both data sets, “conservative” Protestants attend more than the Black “mainline”—a pattern that holds for the urban and non-South, but interestingly, not for the rural South—a finding supporting the semi-involuntary thesis’ prediction of greater homogeneity in attendance across affiliations in the rural South. Further, members of historically “White” churches do not differ from the Black mainline in the GSS data, but do show higher

<sup>12</sup>To estimate how particular factors predict attendance by region, we used a *t*-test to compare the difference of slopes of each independent variable. [See Wright (1978) for more information on computational details.]

**Table II.** OLS Estimates of Church Attendance Among African-Americans for the Total Sample and by Region, GSS Surveys (1972–96) and 1984 NAS Survey

	GSS Surveys				NAS Survey			
	Total Sample	Rural South	Urban South	Non South	Total Sample	Rural South	Urban South	Non South
Rural South	.598***	—	—	—	.271***	—	—	—
Urban South	.619***	—	—	—	.230***	—	—	—
Age	.016***	.013*	.016**	.019**	.004*	-.001 (a,b)	.006*	.005*
Female	.695***	.411* (b)	.649***	.833***	.342***	.304**	.443***	.305***
Married	.253**	.514** (a)	.098	.253*	.210***	.455*** (a,b)	.261*** (c)	.036
Education	.052***	.111*** (a,b)	.047*	.033	.039	-.006 (a)	.069*	.030
Income	.026**	.023	.013	.034**	.022	.013	.016	.037*
“White” church	-.046	.301	-.218	.022	.343***	-.068	.398**	.417***
“Conservative” church	.881*	.156 (a,b)	.943***	1.057***	.461***	-.197 (a,b)	.755***	.693***
Segregated church	—	—	—	—	.390***	.247	.425***	.444***
Subjective relig. iden.	1.105***	.915*** (a,b)	1.195***	1.104***	.816*	1.149*** (a,b)	.795***	.674***
Year of interview	-.019	-.013	-.011	-.025*	—	—	—	—
Constant	.272	.687	.194	.688	-.430	-.810	-.474	.008
N	2766	484	909	1376	1757	385	542	831
r-squared	.57	.51	.60	.55	.51	.56	.55	.47

Note: Unstandardized coefficients reported. \* =  $p < .05$ . \*\* =  $p < .01$ . \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ .

a = rural South vs. urban South significantly different ( $p < .05$ ).

b = rural South vs. non-South significantly different ( $p < .05$ ).

c = urban South vs. non-South significantly different ( $p < .05$ ).

attendance in the NAS surveys. This pattern holds for all regions except the rural South where greater homogeneity in attendance patterns across affiliations is again observed. Finally, analyses not shown here demonstrate, not surprisingly, that “non-affiliates” attend much less frequently than members of black mainline churches.

Table II also documents that segregation positively predicts attendance—with this pattern holding only outside the rural South. Thus, while the extent of church segregation is greatest in the rural South (see Table I and/or Appendix A), this factor is only predictive of greater attendance outside the rural South—another piece of evidence suggesting greater homogeneity in attendance rates in the rural South across various social contexts. Next, we turn to an examination of a series of models predicting various patterns of church attendance and how they vary by region.

Tables III (GSS) and IV (NAS) report the results of logistic regression models examining several dichotomous breakdowns of the continuous attendance variable, presenting a series of contrasts for four patterns of church attendance: (1) weekly *and* intermittent versus rare (isolating the “greater than rare” pattern), (2) weekly versus intermittent *and* rare (isolating the “weekly” pattern), (3) intermittent versus rare, and (4) weekly versus intermittent. Because the intermittent category has two distinct comparison points—i.e., some attend more than intermittent (“weekly”) and others less (the “rare” attenders)—two sets of comparisons are necessary to identify any distinctive predictors associated with this level of involvement. In all four cases, models predict the category that represents a *higher* level of attendance.

Because we attempt to isolate the mainline Black church, all models enter a dummy variable for “mainline” affiliations and use the “alternative” affiliations as the reference category, rather than merging “White” church affiliations with the Black mainline as was done in prior empirical studies. Additionally, we examine regional differences in the effects of key secular variables by entering interaction terms that focus directly on the conditional effects predicted by the semi-involuntary thesis. In these analyses an initial model (Model A) identifies the main effects of the independent variables, and a second model (Model B) includes interaction terms for both the rural South and urban South by education and by subjective identification. Additionally, for the NAS data, another set of interaction terms for the two Southern “regions” by church segregation were added after the education and subjective identification interactions were computed.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Only the final models containing all six interaction terms are reported for the NAS data. The prior interaction effects for education and subjective identification are highly similar before and after the church segregation interactions are included.

**Table III. Logistic Regression Models of Patterns of Church Attendance Among African-Americans, 1972–1996 GSS Surveys**

	Weekly and Intermittent (1)				Weekly (1)				Intermittent (1)				Weekly (1)			
	Rare (0)		vs.		Intermittent and Rare (0)		vs.		Rare (0)		vs.		Intermittent (0)		vs.	
	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B	Model A	Model B
	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)
Rural South	.992***	2.70	-.065	.94	.256*	1.29	.079	1.08	.785***	2.19	.685	1.98	-.155	.86	-.460	.63
Urban South	.613***	1.85	.088	1.09	.481***	1.62	.230	1.26	.345***	1.41	.502	1.65	.244*	1.28	-.157	.85
Age	.013***	1.01	.014***	1.01	.020***	1.02	.022***	1.02	.001	1.00	.001	1.00	.019***	1.02	.020***	1.02
Female	.907	2.45	.905***	2.47	.628***	1.87	.618***	1.86	.588***	1.80	.584***	1.79	.279**	1.32	.253*	1.29
Married	.201*	1.22	.201*	1.22	.439***	1.55	.446***	1.56	-.079	.92	-.079	.93	.402***	1.49	.416***	1.52
Education	.051**	1.05	.025	1.03	.033*	1.05	.002	1.00	.032	1.03	.037	1.04	.016	1.02	-.020	.98
Income	.023*	1.02	.023*	1.02	.019	1.02	.019	1.02	.014	1.01	.014	1.01	.011	1.01	.011	1.01
Mainline church	-.263**	.77	-.268**	.76	-.756***	.47	-.774***	.46	.191+	1.21	.197*	1.22	-.813***	.44	-.829**	.44
Subjective relig. iden.	.967***	2.63	.935***	2.54	1.153***	3.17	1.240***	3.46	.355***	1.43	.358***	1.43	.885***	2.42	.955***	2.60
Year of interview	-.009	.99	-.009	.99	-.012	.99	-.013+	.99	-.000	1.00	-.000	1.00	-.012	.99	-.012	.99
RS × education			.093**	1.10			.130***	1.14			-.020	.98			.132***	1.14
US × education			.031	1.03			.023	1.02			.002	1.00			.022	1.02
RS × subj. iden.			.048	1.05			-.479***	.62			.151	1.16			-.449**	.64
US × subj. iden.			.080	1.08			-.009	.99			-.091	.91			.056	1.06
Constant	-3.587		-3.229		-4.400		-4.264		-2.934		-2.951		-2.027		-1.759	
-2 Log likelihood	3.723		3.611		3.757		3.723		3.176		3.172		2.798		2.769	
d.f.	10		14		10		14		10		14		10		14	
N	3,608		3,608		3,608		3,608		2,491		2,491		2,402		2,402	

Note: + =  $p < .10$ ; \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ .

**Table IV.** Logistic Regression Models of Patterns of Church Attendance Among African-Americans, 1984 NAS Survey

	Weekly and Intermittent (1) vs. Rare (0)				Weekly (1) vs. Intermittent and Rare (0)				Intermittent (1) vs. Rare (0)				Weekly (1) vs. Intermittent (0)			
	Model A		Model B		Model A		Model B		Model A		Model B		Model A		Model B	
	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)	b	ex (b)
Rural South	.892***	2.44	-3.996**	.02	.415**	1.51	1.067	2.91	1.004***	2.73	-5.748**	.00	-.133	.88	4.899*	132.82
Urban South	.770***	2.16	-1.998	.14	.338**	1.40	2.638	13.99	.785***	2.19	-3.721**	.02	-.126	.88	3.738+	42.03
Age	.015***	1.01	.015***	1.02	.020***	1.02	.020***	1.02	.005	1.01	.006	1.01	.014***	1.01	.015***	1.01
Female	.902***	2.46	.903***	2.47	.804***	2.32	.805***	2.42	.771***	2.16	.804***	2.23	.273*	1.31	.280*	1.34
Married	.532***	1.70	.530***	1.70	.410***	1.51	.421***	1.52	.499***	1.65	-.016	.98	.113	1.12	.127	1.14
Education	.134**	1.14	.062	1.06	.182***	1.20	.137*	1.15	.056	1.06	-.016	.98	.149**	1.16	.138	1.15
Income	.052	1.05	.045	1.05	.028	1.03	.031	1.03	.067*	1.07	.065*	1.07	-.004	.99	.007	1.01
Mainline church	-.321**	.73	-.361**	.70	-.803***	.45	-.822***	.44	.212	1.23	.210	1.23	-.764***	.47	-.791***	.45
Subjective	1.402***	4.06	1.134***	3.11	2.394***	10.96	2.504***	12.24	.748***	2.11	.351*	1.42	1.928***	6.88	2.186***	8.90
Relig. iden.																
Segregated church	.576***	1.79	.384*	1.47	.441***	1.55	.720***	2.05	.434**	1.54	-.036	.97	.112	1.12	.646*	1.91
RS × education			.211+	1.24			.164+	1.18			.175	1.19			.106	1.01
US × education			.130	1.13			.025	1.03			.162	1.18			-.019	.98
RS × subj. iden.			.976**	2.65			-.050	.95			1.158**	3.18			-.815	.44
US × subj. iden.			.444	1.56			-.502	.61			.692*	2.00			-.712	.49
RS × seg. church			.379	1.46			-1.315*	.27			1.975*	7.20			-2.492**	.08
US × seg. church			.673*	1.96			-.593+	.55			1.585***	4.87			-1.224**	.29
Constant	-7.373		-5.865		-12.064		-6.646		-5.293		-3.274		-7.993		-9.385	
-2 Log likelihood	1,985		1,968		2,016		2,549		1,369		1,331		1,427		1,404	
d.f.	10		16		10		16		10		16		10		16	
N	1,773		1,773		1,773		1,773		1,031		1,031		1,264		1,264	

Note: + =  $p < .10$ ; \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ .

The question of whether the rural South is the locus of any pattern of attendance net of secular controls is explored first through an examination of whether the rural South's main effects (Model A) register distinctly on a particular pattern of attendance. Then, we examine the interactions (Model B) for evidence of any dynamics specific to the rural South in the effect of selected covariates.

Results for "greater than rare" and "weekly" attendance (Model A) in Tables III and IV show that, in both data sets, it is the South *generally* (rather than only the rural South) that is different from the non-South—i.e., people in both the rural and urban South are more likely to attend "more often than rarely." Likewise, patterns suggest that higher attendance for both of these attendance patterns is characteristic of the older, female, married, more educated, and those whose subjective religious identification is high. The main negative effect in both sets is for the "mainline" category whose members are less likely to attend at higher levels. In the NAS data set, those in segregated churches are more likely to attend at higher levels. Finally, the main consequence of isolating the effects on the "weekly" pattern is a somewhat weaker effect for the rural South (i.e., rural Southerners appear more likely to attend "greater than rarely" than "weekly").

The two ways of isolating the "intermittent" pattern suggest the rural South is somewhat distinctive in having more intermittent attendance. The rural South shows the highest level of intermittent attendance compared with "rare" (and somewhat more intermittent compared to "weekly," though not significantly so). Further, for the urban South, the predicted pattern is greater *weekly* than intermittent attendance in the GSS data set. A final pattern worthy of note is the higher level of intermittent attendance on the part of those affiliated with a mainline church, especially for the "weekly vs. intermittent" comparison in each data set.

Thus, Model A results suggest that intermittent attendance is linked to the rural South and to the mainline affiliations. Subjective religious identification appears more likely to generate weekly than intermittent attendance, although it is clearly a factor in generating higher levels of attendance across the board. Finally, there are no differentiating effects of segregation on weekly or intermittent attendance in the "main effects" models, since segregated contexts appear to generate both patterns.

Turning to the models with interaction effects (Model B), we focus first on the four interactions common to both data sets, and then summarize the effects of the two segregation interactions in the NAS data set. These models suggest that (1) the rural South is the locus of several effects implied by the semi-involuntary thesis, and (2) that some

patterns consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis may be present *outside* the rural South.

On “greater than rare” and “weekly” attendance, there is one significant interaction that appears in both data sets: rural South by education. Specifically, higher education appears to increase attendance to a greater degree in the rural South. No comparable interactions are found for the urban South. This result, based on identifying type of church attendance, provides clearer support for the OLS pattern of a distinctive rural South effect when the level of church attendance is examined. Regarding subjective religious factors, the interactions suggest that in the NAS data, the rural South is the locus for high subjective identification being more predictive of higher attendance (e.g., “greater than rare” and “intermittent vs. rare”). These patterns reinforce the general OLS finding from Table II, and support Hunt and Hunt’s (1999) argument that *general* subjective religiosity (as opposed to the salience of specific denominational identities) is more consequential in generating higher attendance in the rural South than in other “regions.” Along these same lines, in the GSS models, the “rural South by subjective identification” interaction suggests that this subjective factor is *less* likely to generate “weekly” attendance in rural South. This finding also reinforces the general OLS pattern from Table II, as well as Hunt and Hunt’s (1999) reasoning that specific denominational identity salience should be *most* consequential for generating higher attendance *outside* the rural South, where a more complex marketplace of identities and institutional involvements competes for persons’ commitments. Thus, these effects based upon “type” of attendance support the semi-involuntary thesis even more than OLS analyses of level of church attendance by pointing to some distinctive dynamics in the rural South.

When the two segregation interactions are examined in the NAS data, it is clear that segregated church contexts have distinctive effects by region mainly in the difference between the South *generally* and the non-South. Specifically, it is clear that segregation leads to intermittent attendance in the South. The positive effects of segregation for the “intermittent vs. rare” pattern, and the negative effects for the “weekly vs. intermittent” and “weekly vs. intermittent and rare” patterns demonstrate that church segregation increases *intermittent* attendance in both the rural South and urban South. Viewed another way, these results show that the effect of church segregation varies by region, and is more critical in motivating generally higher regular church attendance *outside* the South.

In sum, the logistic models of various types of church attendance illuminate several patterns consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis—

patterns that are largely specific to the rural South. This “region” is distinctive in having more intermittent attendance, as well as in demonstrating effects of key covariates (i.e., education and subjective religious identification) consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis. Finally, while church segregation’s effect of increasing intermittent attendance throughout the South does not isolate a pattern unique to the rural South, it does point to the importance of segregation in understanding regional differences in attendance patterns. Specifically, church segregation is a more critical factor in sustaining weekly attendance in the North.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The semi-involuntary thesis was developed to illuminate historical patterns found in the rural South and to provide a comparative point of reference for charting the way the Black church was being transformed by the movement of African-Americans out of the rural South to more institutionally differentiated forms of regional and urban life. Historically, racial segregation was a key factor shaping the role of the Black church; it both created the relative structural absence of institutional participatory alternatives, and molded the cultural presence of an overarching moral community. The fact that segregation was an all-pervasive fact of life in the agrarian economy of the South made the rural South the primary locus of “semi-involuntary” effects.

This research supports Ellison and Sherkat’s (1995) call for closer examination of region as an important factor in studies of religion among African-Americans. The idea that rural South is a “region” where the Black church has been a semi-involuntary institution has substantial, if not conclusive, empirical support. Most of this support stems from our focus on the mainline Black church, church segregation, and “type” of church attendance. The logistic analyses add consistent support to arguments for the distinctive quality of rural South church attendance and also point to intriguing patterns outside the rural South. That other “regions” also contain patterns of church attendance suggested by the logic of the semi-involuntary thesis, points to its possible applicability to a variety of institutional settings—both inside and outside the rural South. In drawing the implications of this research for the semi-involuntary thesis, we focus on the ways our extension of previous work suggests factors to be considered in future research.

The semi-involuntary thesis represents an attempt to account for distinctive patterns of church involvement among African-Americans.

Church attendance is generally higher in the rural South than the non-South, yet this subregion is not consistently different from the urban South unless *type* of attendance is examined. The fact that the rural South (1) has some distinctive effects on intermittent attendance across both data sets, and (2) is the locus of some distinctive effects of key covariates on weekly attendance, represent two general findings consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis. First, the pattern of intermittent attendance appears to be produced by conditions that have defined much of the African-American experience: worship in segregated settings of the historic mainline denominations. Thus, the Black church in the South, especially the rural South, continues to have clear success in motivating “at least intermittent” levels of attendance—a pattern consistent with the findings of Lincoln and Mamiya (1990).

The other major effects unique to the rural South are the way status (education) and subjective religious factors affect weekly church attendance. These effects are consistent with the semi-involuntary thesis concerning the connection between personal characteristics and attendance in light of certain structural and cultural features of that “region.” The structural isolation of the Black church in the rural South means that the church is the central context for achieving status; thus the education-attendance connection. And, the cultural presence of an overarching moral community renders a generalized subjective importance of religion (NAS data) more important than the salience of specific denominational identities (GSS data) for motivating higher levels of attendance.

Moving beyond these dynamics of the rural South, the more institutionally differentiated world of the urban North—which includes a larger variety of both segregated and integrated forms of community—represents a different overall social environment. The structural existence of an increased number of participatory options, and the cultural absence of an overarching moral community may reduce the level of overall church attendance, but at the same time may make segregation even more important in shaping particular types of church attendance. It may also alter the connection between attendance and both status (education) and subjective religious factors compared to what has been typical of the South as a region. In short, the fact that the urban Black church cannot sustain a “monopoly” over peoples’ involvements may polarize patterns of church attendance, moving some to disengagement from organized religion altogether, but also escalating the level of commitment on the part of others seeking to maintain a connection to church life. Some admittedly speculative elaborations of these possibilities follow.

Change in the structural and cultural place of the Black church has accompanied the movement of African-Americans to the urban North. While the fabric of community life has changed for some, segregation in both community and church life remains a fact of life for many. Consequently, although the Black church has lost its hold on some who have adopted other lifestyles, it remains a smaller-scale moral center for many, and its importance may be accentuated by the unique conditions of urban life, along with newer challenges faced by the African-American community as an outgrowth of deindustrialization and the transformation of American cities (Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Wilson 1997).

What do such changes mean for the Black church as a semi-involuntary institution? One useful component of the semi-involuntary thesis is its explanation of the way church attendance has figured historically into the pursuit of status and "respectability." Under prevailing urban conditions, the segregated Black church may continue to provide an institutional context in which the pursuit of respectability occurs. To invoke Anderson's (1990) imagery, the Black church is a key institution in modern, urban America that aids in differentiating those with "decent" from those with "street" value-orientations and behaviors. While "intermittent" attendance was likely the minimal operative standard for the pursuit of respectability in the rural South historically, the contemporary urban scene may produce conditions under which only occasional involvement is insufficient for maintaining a connection to the religious or moral community, and thus where respectability is effectively dramatized only through regular (i.e., weekly or greater) church attendance. Phrased differently, under the structural and cultural conditions prevailing historically in the rural South, one could likely maintain connections to the religious or moral community by attending intermittently, while in the current urban scene with its greater array of alternative lifestyles, one may have to exhibit a greater level of commitment to the church in order to maintain one's status among the "respectable." While such patterns are not identical with the core elements of the classic semi-involuntary thesis, they are nonetheless illuminated by its concern with the way a segregated world shapes church attendance in the pursuit of status and respectability.

In addition to increasing the importance of segregated church contexts for a minority of believers, the more structurally differentiated urban North may alter the connections between personal characteristics and church attendance. Expanded participatory options mean that more highly educated African-Americans have a greater variety of institutional channels for achieving status—making education less important in shaping involvement in the segregated Black church; hence, the absence of a strong positive

effect of education on attendance. And, the absence of an overarching moral community outside the rural South means that endorsement of *general* religious values is not as predictive of church attendance as is subjective identification based upon specific church-linked identities (i.e., strength of denominational connection), especially in the case of more regular church attendance.

Given this, it is not surprising that the Black church in today's urban setting retains some of the features of the historical rural Black church, although in ways that reflect changed social and demographic conditions. The urban Black church cannot be a semi-involuntary institution in the classic sense, but mainline segregated churches nonetheless likely provide an important context for the highly committed (e.g., those "keepers of the faith" with salient church-based identities) striving to maintain their status among the "respectable." In the process, elements of traditional "semi-involuntary" communal worlds may be created and re-created in segregated urban enclaves through the religious involvements of committed churchgoers pursuing a need for community and order amidst rapid social change and perceived moral disintegration.<sup>14</sup> The possibility that "new" urban conditions may require even more regular church attendance from those in pursuit of respectability, is an important question for future research.

In order to move beyond our empirical findings and theoretical speculations, more work is needed on the regional, structural, and cultural forces shaping involvement in the Black church and its alternatives. Moving beyond questions of church attendance, it will be important for future research to focus on how the Black church is connected to other political, economic, and familial institutions. Our analyses suggest that the semi-involuntary thesis, as applied to the historical and current African-American experience, contains a number of powerful ideas worthy of future comparative research and conceptual refinement. This thesis may apply to a variety of institutional settings, and will likely continue to provide a critical lens focusing on a variety of conditions and contexts within which African-Americans and others answer the call to worship.

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<sup>14</sup>This image of African-Americans creating and re-creating aspects of traditional social worlds in more modern, urban settings, shares some similarities with Nagel's (1995: 948) discussion of processes of "ethnic group renewal" and "retraditionalization" among an increasingly modern and urbanized American Indian population.

**Appendix A. Correlation Matrix for Variables in Regression Analyses: NAS Above Diagonal, GSS Below Diagonal<sup>a</sup>**

	X1 Attend	X2 Weekly	X3 Monthly	X4 Rarely	X5 Age	X6 Female	X7 Married	X8 Educ	X9 Inc	X10 Main	X11 White	X12 Fund	X13 None	X14 Subj-ID	X15 Rsouth	X16 Usouth	X17 SEGCH	Mean	SD
X1	—																		
X2	.76**	—																	
X3	.14**	-.46**	—																
X4	-.85**	-.50**	-.54**	—															
X5	.19**	.20**	-.03*	-.16**	—														
X6	.21**	.14**	.08**	-.21**	-.01	—													
X7	.11**	.10**	-.02	-.07**	.07**	-.16**	—												
X8	-.01	-.02	-.00	.02	-.45**	.04**	.01	—											
X9	.02	.02	-.02	-.01	-.11**	-.16**	.16**	.44**	—										
X10	.05**	-.07**	.15**	-.08**	.13**	.04**	-.01	-.14**	-.10**	—									
X11	-.06**	-.04**	-.03	.07**	-.06**	-.04**	-.00	.13**	.09**	-.52**	—								
X12	.20**	.22**	-.09**	-.10**	-.04**	.04**	.06**	.04**	.04	.62**	-.15**	—							
X13	-.33**	-.14**	-.14**	.27**	-.13**	-.12**	-.07**	.03*	.02	.35**	-.09**	-.10**	—						
X14	.56**	.45**	.06**	-.48**	.14**	.08**	-.08**	-.08**	-.05**	.18**	-.05**	.12**	-.49**	—					
X15	.08**	.01	.10**	-.10**	.07**	.01	.06**	-.21**	-.16**	.11**	-.09**	-.03	.06**	.07**	—				
X16	.10**	.07**	.02	-.08**	-.01	.02	.01	.02	.09**	-.06**	-.03	-.04**	.06**	-.32**	-.35**	—			
Year	-.01	-.01	.01	-.00	-.01	.07**	-.17**	.23**	.39**	-.07**	.01	.05**	.02	.01	-.03*	.02	—		
Mean	4.48	.29	.33	.37	43.2	.61	.39	11.3	10.07	.68	.11	.15	.05	2.03	.17	.33	84.6		
SD	2.42	.46	.47	.48	17.1	.49	.49	3.44	5.64	.47	.32	.36	.23	1.03	.37	.47	7.31		

<sup>a</sup>X17 = SEGCH (segregated church) in NAS sample and YEAR (year of interview) in GSS sample. \* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ .

**Appendix B.** Comparison of the Aggregated 1972–1996 GSS Sample, 1984 National Alcohol Sample, 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans, and 1980 Census Data on the Black Population on Selected Demographic Factors (Percents)<sup>a</sup>

	1972–1996 GSS	1984 NAS	1980 NSBA	1980 Census
Age				
18–25	16	25	19	22
26–34	23	23	22	24
35–54	34	29	31	31
55–64	13	10	11	11
65 and over	15	10	16	13
Gender				
Male	39	44	38	44
Female	61	56	62	56
Marital status				
Married/common law	42	42	42	42
Divorced	12	9	12	9
Separated	11	9	10	10
Widowed	11	9	15	10
Never married	25	32	22	30
Education				
0–11 years	41	38	44	46
High school graduate	29	34	31	34
Some college	21	20	16	14
College graduate	8	8	9	7
Residence				
Urban	82	78	80	78
Rural	18	22	20	22
Region				
Northeast	19	19	19	19
North Central	22	21	22	21
South	51	51	53	51
West	8	9	6	9

<sup>a</sup>Census data and NSBA percents are from Taylor (1986: 69). Affiliation percents for NSBA are estimated from Ellison and Sherkat (1995: 1427, 1443).

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