Religiousness, Spirituality, and Psychosocial Functioning in Late Adulthood: Findings From a Longitudinal Study

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This study used longitudinal data to examine the relations among religiousness, spirituality, and 3 key domains of psychosocial functioning in late adulthood: (a) sources of well-being, (b) involvement in tasks of everyday life, and (c) generativity and wisdom. Religiousness and spirituality were operationalized as distinct but overlapping dimensions of individual difference. In late adulthood, religiousness was positively related to well-being from positive relations with others, involvement in social and community life tasks, and generativity. Spirituality was positively related to well-being from personal growth, involvement in creative and knowledge-building life tasks, and wisdom. Neither religiousness nor spirituality was associated with narcissism. The relations between religiousness, spirituality, and outcomes in late adulthood were also observed using religiousness scored in early and spirituality scored in late middle adulthood. All analyses were controlled for gender, cohort, social class, and the overlap between religiousness and spirituality.

Recent years have witnessed a growth of interest in the distinction between religiousness and spirituality (Marty, 1993), but there is uncertainty about the constructs' interrelation and little is known about their association with psychosocial functioning. This study used longitudinal life course data from the Institute of Human Development (IHD) at the University of California, Berkeley, to investigate the concurrent and long-term relations among religiousness, spirituality, and psychosocial functioning. Because religion provides purpose and meaning in life, both religiousness and spirituality should be related to positive functioning in older age, but we hypothesized that they do so in different ways.

Relation Between Religiousness and Spirituality

Since the cultural upheavals of the 1960s, there has been a growing tendency to conceive of religiousness and spirituality as two distinct ways of relating to the sacred (e.g., Emblem, 1992). Yet, there is no consensus about their definition or interrelation (Zinnbauer, Pargament, & Scott, 1999). This ambiguity is due

primarily to the multiple meanings of the term *spirituality* (Farina, 1989; Wulff, 1997), which can be applied equally aptly to a pious individual who expresses devotion within the context of a traditional religious institution (Pargament, 1999), a New Age seeker (Roof, 1999), a person who has mystical experiences (Atchley, 1997), and a nonreligious individual who seeks answers to life's existential dilemmas (Stifoss-Hanssen, 1999). Depending on the definition used, spirituality has been conceptualized as being narrower (Pargament, 1999), broader (Stifoss-Hanssen, 1999), or largely independent (Roof, 1999) in meaning from religiousness.

In this study, we operationalized religiousness and spirituality using Wuthnow's (1998) distinction between dwelling and seeking. According to Wuthnow, religious dwellers tend to accept traditional forms of religious authority; they inhabit a space created for them by established religious institutions and relate to the sacred through prayer and public communal worship. By contrast, for spiritual seekers, individual autonomy takes precedence over external authority and the hold of tradition-centered religious doctrines (Wuthnow, 1998). Spiritual seekers are explorers who create their own space by typically borrowing elements from various religious and mythical traditions, and they frequently blend participation in institutionalized Western religion with Eastern practices. Unlike religious dwellers, spiritual seekers place a greater emphasis on self-growth, emotional self-fulfillment, and the sacredness of ordinary objects and experiences, and spiritual seekers typically construe religious belief as connectedness with a sacred "other" (e.g., God, a higher power, nature, other individuals; Underwood, 1999). What differentiates dwellers and seekers is not the seriousness of effort to incorporate the sacred in their lives but their relation to religious authority and tradition. Wuthnow's (1998) model captures an important aspect of the distinction between religiousness and spirituality as it is used in public culture (e.g., Farina, 1989; Marty, 1993) and at the same time avoids Pargament's (1999) concern about an undue polarization between a "good" dynamic spirituality that is oriented toward a quest for

meaning and a "bad" static religiousness that is ritualistically confined to church attendance.

Background and Hypotheses

We used discrete segments on religion from face-to-face interviews with the IHD study participants to code independently for religiousness and spirituality, defined as two separate but overlapping dimensions of individual difference. We expected the study's measures of religiousness and spirituality to be moderately intercorrelated because some spiritual individuals use techniques derived from established religions, and their journey may take place within the confines of religious institutions (e.g., Farina, 1989; Roof, 1999). Conversely, dwellers can take a personally autonomous view of religious authority (Dillon, 1999). Other than an expected moderate correlation between the two constructs, we hypothesized that both religiousness and spirituality would be differentially related in late adulthood to three key domains of psychosocial functioning: (a) sources of well-being; (b) involvement in daily life tasks; and (c) generativity and wisdom, two developmental tasks of aging emphasized by Erikson (1963). We also tested competing theoretical views of the relation between spirituality and narcissism. Finally, we hypothesized that the relations among religiousness, spirituality, and psychosocial functioning in late adulthood would be positively related to religiousness and spirituality scored from earlier interview points.

Religiousness, Spirituality, and Psychosocial Functioning in Late Adulthood

There is a large body of research documenting a positive association between religiousness and social (interpersonal) and communal involvement. Religiousness is, for example, positively related to frequency and quality of intergenerational family interactions (King & Elder, 1999; Pearce & Axinn, 1998), and frequent church attendees are more likely than others to have large and supportive social networks (Ellison & George, 1994) and to engage in voluntary and community caregiving activities (e.g., Putnam, 2000; Rossi, 2001). We therefore hypothesized that in late adulthood religiousness should be positively related to (a) deriving a sense of well-being from positive relations with others and (b) engagement in social and community service activities or life tasks.

Very little is known about the association between spirituality and psychosocial functioning. Because the emergence of spirituality in post-1960s America has been linked to a growing interest in cultivation of the inner self and personal growth (Roof, 1999; Wuthnow, 1998), we hypothesized that spirituality should be positively related to (a) deriving a sense of well-being from an emphasis on personal growth and (b) engagement in life tasks designed to increase knowledge. We also hypothesized a positive relation between spirituality and creativity because both involve breaking away from existing ways of thinking and delving into the uncertainties of life (Benack, Basseches, & Swan, 1989; Helson & Srivastava, 2002).

According to Erikson (1963), successful functioning in the second half of adulthood is presaged on the development (a) of a generative concern for the welfare of future generations and (b) of wisdom. In view of the association of religiousness with altruism

and caring for others (Rossi, 2001), we hypothesized a positive relation between religiousness and generativity. Although highly spiritual individuals may possess the breadth of social perspective that characterizes generativity (Peterson & Klohnen, 1995), they may be less likely than highly religious individuals to care for the welfare of future generations. In contrast, we hypothesized that spirituality would be more strongly related to wisdom because both are linked to an appreciation of the paradoxical, contextual, and contingent natures of knowledge and of life (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000; Sinnott, 1994). Although individuals who score high on religiousness may exhibit the good social judgment that is characteristic of wisdom (Sternberg, 1990), they may be less likely to possess the tendencies toward introspectiveness and insight that underlie the questing dimension of wisdom.

The self-referential emphasis of spirituality has led some sociologists (e.g., Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985) to see its emergence as evidence of an excessively narcissistic self-absorption that undermines the communal obligations fostered by institutionalized religion. In contrast, many psychologists regard spirituality's emphasis on personal growth as evidence of self-realization (Fromm, 1950) or self-actualization (Maslow, 1970). There are, however, no quantitative studies testing these competing views. Because we used a practice-oriented definition of spirituality that requires commitment and personal discipline (Wuthnow, 1998), we did not expect spirituality and narcissism to be positively related.

Religiousness and Spirituality as Long-Term Correlates of Psychosocial Functioning in Late Adulthood

Empirical studies show that religiousness is relatively stable throughout adulthood with the patterns established in early adulthood setting the norm for later stages (e.g., Hout & Greeley, 1987; Rossi, 2001). These trends support a religious capital perspective whereby the more individuals invest in religious activities in early adulthood, the more likely they are to participate subsequently (e.g., Iannaccone, 1990). Drawing on the religious capital hypothesis, we expected that the relations between religiousness and psychosocial variables in late adulthood would be observed for religiousness scored from early and late middle adulthood. In other words, because of its high-rank-order stability (Wink & Dillon, 2001), religiousness should have a stable long-term association with psychosocial functioning in late adulthood.

Unlike religiousness, spirituality appears to be a postmidlife phenomenon. Both Jungian (Jung, 1964) and postformal (e.g., Sinnott, 1994) theories of development see spirituality as being intertwined with the maturational processes and experiences (McFadden, 1996; Stokes, 1990) associated with the second half of adulthood. This is because the development of spirituality requires the kind of personal autonomy and awareness of contextual relativism that typically develops only around midlife once the individual has established a niche in society and has begun to experience physical signs of aging (Jung, 1964). Consequently, we expected that the hypothesized positive relation between spirituality and measures of psychosocial functioning in late adulthood would also be observed for spirituality scored in late middle but not early adulthood (when spiritual concerns are relatively marginal).

Demographic Background Variables

Because women tend to be more religious than men (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997) and also show higher rates of social and community participation (Putnam, 2000; Rossi, 2001), we controlled for gender to test whether religiousness would continue to be positively related to well-being from positive relations with others, involvement in social and community service life tasks, and generativity. Because (a) self-interest and personal autonomy are values characteristic of professional and executive classes (Kohn, 1977; Lamont, 1993) and (b) some scholars suggest that spirituality is more characteristic of middle- and upper-class individuals (Patrick, 1999; Wuthnow, 1998), we tested whether spirituality continues to be significantly related to well-being from personal growth, involvement in creative and knowledge-building activities, and wisdom, after controlling for social class. Finally, because the IHD study consisted of two different age cohorts (one third born in the early 1920s and two thirds born in the late 1920s), we included cohort as an independent variable.

Method

Sample

The data came from the intergenerational studies established by the IHD at the University of California, Berkeley, in the 1920s. The original sample was a representative sample of newborn babies in Berkeley (California) in 1928–1929 and of preadolescents (ages 10–12 years) selected from elementary schools in Oakland (California) in 1931 (and who were born in 1920–1921). Both cohorts were combined into a single IHD study in the 1960s (Eichorn, Hunt, & Honzik, 1981). The participants were studied intensively in childhood and adolescence and interviewed in-depth four times in adulthood: in early adulthood (age 30s; interview conducted in 1958–1959), middle adulthood (age 40s; 1970), late middle adulthood (age 50s or early 60s; 1982), and late adulthood (age late 60s or mid to late 70s; 1997–2000). At each interview phase, the participants also completed self-administered questionnaires. This article uses data collected in early, late middle, and late adulthood only.

Three hundred three individuals took part in at least one of the three assessments conducted between early and late middle adulthood. By late adulthood, 26% of these individuals had died. Of the remainder, 1% had become seriously cognitively impaired, 7% could not be contacted, and 5% declined to participate. Because the late adulthood assessment involved an intensive interview, individuals with serious cognitive impairment were excluded. Of the available participants (those not dead, lost, or severely cognitively impaired), 90% ($N = 181$) were interviewed in late adulthood. Prior analyses indicated very little bias was due to sample attrition other than a slight tendency for lower participation rates among individuals with lower levels of education (Clausen, 1993). Analyses comparing religiousness and spirituality in late middle adulthood for individuals who participated in late adulthood and for those who declined to participate or who were lost to follow-up showed that the two groups did not differ in religiousness, $t(17, 174) = 1.34$, ns. Individuals who participated in late adulthood were, however, more spiritual in late middle adulthood than those who did not participate in late adulthood, $t(17, 174) = 3.51, p < .01$.

In the current sample, 53% were women and 47% were men; 36% were born in the early 1920s and 64% were born in the late 1920s. In late middle adulthood, 59% of the participants (or their spouses) were upper middle class professionals or executives, 19% were lower middle class, and 22% were working class. All but 6 of the participants were White. The majority of the sample (73%) grew up in Protestant families, 16% grew up Catholic, 5% grew up in mixed religious (Protestant/Jewish) households, and 6% came from nonreligious families. In late adulthood, 58% of the study participants were Protestant (and of these, 78% were members of mainline denominations, primarily Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Methodist), 16% were Catholic, 2% were Jewish, and 24% were not church members. Forty-eight percent said that religion was important or very important currently in their lives, 83% were still living in California, 71% were living with their spouse or partner, 89% reported their general health as good, and the median household income was $55,000. The participants showed a high level of cognitive functioning, with 88% scoring at or above the age-corrected mean on the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale's (Wechsler, 1981) Digit Symbol subtest, a measure of visual–motor coordination and speed in learning visual material (Groth-Marnat, 1997). The remaining 12% scored within one standard deviation below the mean.

Measures

Religiousness and spirituality. Religiousness and spirituality were coded on 5-point scales independently by two raters using discrete segments on religion from transcripts of interviews conducted with the participants at three times in adulthood. Before being rated, the interview segments were photocopied and assigned a discrete, randomly generated number. The same raters, who were blind to the study's hypotheses, coded the interview segments from all three assessments after the late adulthood data were collected. The interview segments included answers to open-ended questions on the individual's beliefs about God and the afterlife, their religious practices, and the importance of religion in everyday life. In answering these questions, the participants had no, or very little, opportunity to comment on matters relating to this study's dependent variables. Questions pertinent to these constructs were asked in earlier and separate segments of the interview. The data on religiousness and spirituality, therefore, are unlikely to have been confounded by the interview material on other matters.

Religiousness was defined in terms of the importance of institutionalized or tradition-centered religious beliefs and practices in the life of the individual (Roof, 1999; Wuthnow, 1998). Specifically, a score of 5 indicated that institutionalized religion or tradition-centered religious beliefs and practices played a central role in the respondent's life, as indicated by belief in God, heaven, and prayer and/or by frequent (once a week or more) attendance at a traditional place of worship. A score of 4 indicated that institutionalized religion played an important role in the individual's life. The person believed in God and the afterlife and/or attended a place of worship on an almost weekly basis. A score of 3 indicated that institutionalized religion had some importance in the individual's life, that there was some uncertainty about belief in God and the afterlife, and that attendance at a place of worship tended to be infrequent (e.g., monthly). A score of 2 indicated that institutionalized religion played a peripheral role in the individual's life, as reflected in uncertainty about the existence of God or the afterlife, infrequent prayer, and sporadic attendance at a place of worship. A score of 1 indicated that institutionalized religion played no part in the life of the individual, as reflected in an explicitly stated lack of belief in God, the afterlife, or prayer and in the absence of attendance at a place of worship.

The Kappa index of reliability for the two sets of ratings ranged from a low of .65 for late middle adulthood to a high of .70 in late adulthood ($p < .01$). The average rank order stability (correlation) between the ratings of religiousness (combined across the two raters) for the three time points in adulthood was .71.

Spirituality was defined in terms of the importance of noninstitutionalized religion or non-tradition-centered beliefs and practices in the life of the individual (Roof, 1999; Wuthnow, 1998). A score of 5 indicated that noninstitutionalized religion or non-tradition-centered religious beliefs and practices played a central role in the individual's life. The person typically reported an awareness of a sense of connectedness with a sacred other (e.g., God, a higher power, nature, other individuals) and systematically engaged in intentional spiritual practices on a regular basis (e.g., participation in a theosophical discussion group, involvement in Eastern meditation prac-

tices, undertaking a shamanistic journey, engagement in centering or contemplative prayer). A score of 4 indicated that spirituality was important in the daily life of the individual; the individual reported a sense of sacred connectedness and regularly engaged in spiritual practices (but they were not as central as for someone who received a score of 5). A score of 3 indicated that spirituality had some importance in the life of the individual; the individual reported having spiritual experiences and engaged in occasional spiritual practices. A score of 2 indicated that the individual expressed a peripheral interest in spiritual issues (e.g., reported a vague sense of continuity between self and nature) or reported some spiritual experiences (e.g., oceanic feeling when contemplating nature) but did not engage in any spiritual practices. A score of 1 indicated that the individual reported no interest in spiritual matters. (For case studies illustrating the difference between high scorers on religiousness and spirituality, see Wink, 2003.)

The Kappa index of reliability for the two sets of ratings ranged from a low of .60 for late middle and late adulthood to .74 for early adulthood ($p < .01$). The average rank order stability between the ratings of spirituality (combined across the two raters) for the three time points in adulthood was .42. There was a significant moderate relation between religiousness and spirituality at each adult interview: $rs = .26$ in early adulthood, .28 in late middle adulthood, and .31 in late adulthood ($p < .01$).

We validated the ratings of religiousness and spirituality against Koenig, Parkerson, and Meador's (1997) Religion Index for Psychiatric Research. This five-item measure assesses three dimensions of religion: intrinsic religiosity (i.e., importance of religion to everyday life), involvement in organized religious activities (i.e., church attendance), and involvement in nonorganized religious activities (i.e., private prayer or meditation). Because the phrasing of the religious index items is skewed toward traditional forms of religious belief, we expected religiousness to be more strongly related than spirituality to each of the three dimensions of the index. However, whereas we expected religiousness to show a stronger relation to involvement in organized than in nonorganized religious activities, a reverse pattern was expected for spirituality. This hypothesis was supported, with religiousness correlating .86 with organized religious activities and .67 with nonorganized religious activities. In contrast, spirituality correlated .29 with organized and .34 with nonorganized religious activities. Both religiousness and spirituality correlated significantly with intrinsic religiosity, $rs = .74$ and .40, respectively, $p < .01$ (in all analyses, $N = 157$). The measures of religiousness and spirituality did not correlate significantly with the California Psychological Inventory (CPI; Gough & Bradley, 1996) scales assessing social desirability and acquiescence.

Sources of well-being. Well-being was assessed with two of six subscales from Ryff's (1989) Scale of Psychological Well-Being. Each of the scales consists of nine items assessing well-being on a 6-point Likert scale. The Well-Being From Positive Relations With Others scale assesses the degree to which an individual derives a sense of well-being from having warm, satisfying, and trusting relationships with others and has the capacity to maintain a strong sense of affection and intimacy (as contrasted with feelings of isolation and mistrust). The Well-Being From Personal Growth scale assesses the extent to which an individual derives a sense of well-being from experiences of the self as growing, expanding, and continuing to develop (as contrasted with a sense of personal stagnation).

Life tasks. Level of involvement in tasks of everyday life was assessed with four of eight 4-point Likert scales from a measure developed by Harlow and Cantor (1996). The Social Life Tasks scale consists of four items assessing how much an individual was involved in visiting and communicating with relatives, friends, and neighbors (two items); involved in entertaining; and involved in going to concerts, plays, lectures, or museums (two items). The Community Service Life Tasks scale consists of three items measuring the extent of an individual's involvement in community service done with a group or performed at home and helping friends or neighbors. The Creative Life Tasks scale consists of three items assess-

ing how much an individual was involved in playing an instrument, in creative writing, in painting, in sculpture, in dramatics, and in singing with a group. The Knowledge Building Life Tasks scale consists of a single item measuring the frequency of participation in tasks aimed at increasing knowledge or skills.

Generativity and wisdom. Both generativity and wisdom were assessed with scales developed for the California Adult Q-Set (CAQ; Block, 1978), an observer-based, ipsative measure of personality and social behavior that requires raters to sort a deck of 100 items into nine forced-choice categories ranging from extremely characteristic to extremely uncharacteristic. Independent panels of three raters used the interview material for each of the three adulthood assessments to provide composite CAQ-sort ratings of personality and social functioning for each participant at each of the assessment points. The Generativity scale (Peterson & Klohnen, 1995) and the Wisdom scale (Hartman, 2000) each consist of 13 items that are placed as most characteristic of the respective construct by independent panels of experts asked to devise a prototype of a generative individual and of a wise individual using the 100 CAQ items. The expert raters described high scorers on the Generativity scale as giving, protective, sympathetic, warm, socially perceptive, and having broad interests. High scorers on the Wisdom scale were described as straightforward, clear thinking, introspective, insightful, philosophically concerned, and unconventional in thinking.

Narcissism. Narcissism was measured with the CPI's Narcissism scale (Wink & Gough, 1990), a self-report scale that assesses the degree to which an individual shows a need for power and attention, disesteem for others, willfulness, and a risk-seeking propensity.

Demographic background variables. Gender was measured with a 1/0 dummy variable (1 = woman, 0 = man). Cohort was measured with a 1/0 dummy variable (1 = belonging to the older age group, born 1920–1921; 0 = belonging to the younger age group, born 1928–1929). Social class was measured with the 5-point Hollingshead Social Class Index (Hollingshead & Redlich, 1958) for the participants at early, late middle, and late adulthood.

The intercorrelations between all the variables used in the study are presented in Table 1. The drop in the number of participants in the correlational and all subsequent analyses from 181 to 157 is because not everyone who was interviewed completed a self-report questionnaire. A t-test comparison of the participants who completed the questionnaire and those who did not revealed no differences among the two groups in either religiousness or spirituality, $t(22, 159) = -1.18$ and -1.87, respectively.

Plan of Analysis

Because we were interested in investigating the independent relations of religiousness and spirituality to psychosocial functioning, we used linear multiple regressions to test the hypotheses, and we statistically controlled for the overlap in variance among religiousness, spirituality, and the three background variables (gender, cohort, and social class). All of the independent variables were included in the regressions in a single step. Separate regressions were conducted to test (a) the concurrent relations between psychosocial functioning in late adulthood and religiousness and spirituality in late adulthood and (b) the longitudinal relations between psychosocial functioning in late adulthood and religiousness in early adulthood and spirituality in late middle adulthood, respectively.

Results

Concurrent Relations of Religiousness and Spirituality to Psychosocial Variables in Late Adulthood

As hypothesized, in late adulthood, religiousness but not spirituality was significantly related to well-being from positive relations with others, involvement in social and community service life

Table 1
Intercorrelations of Religiousness, Spirituality, Psychosocial Variables, and Background Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Religiousness	—													
2. Spirituality	.31***	—												
3. Well-being from positive relations	.33***	.15	—											
4. Well-being from personal growth	.15	.33***	.38***	—										
5. Social life tasks	.27**	.17*	.55***	.30***	—									
6. Community service life tasks	.34***	.17*	.16*	.23**	.37***	—								
7. Creative life tasks	.24**	.41***	.14	.38***	.27***	.31***	—							
8. Knowledge-building life tasks	.06	.26**	.09	.42***	.20*	.22**	.28***	—						
9. Generativity	.33***	.22**	.31***	.28*	.17*	.22**	.12	.08	—					
10. Wisdom	.14	.38***	.11	.34***	.10	.08	.19*	.27**	.65***	—				
11. Narcissism	-.25**	-.12	-.29**	.06	-.11	-.03	-.04	.09	-.19*	-.06	—			
12. Gender	.28**	.28***	.27**	.12	.25**	.13	.30***	.04	.14	.02	-.44***	—		
13. Cohort	-.01	-.09	.03	-.13	.07	.03	-.10	-.05	-.03	-.08	-.03	-.02	—	
14. Social class	.05	.08	.13	.11	.14	.02	-.04	.26**	.00	.20*	-.03	-.04	.04	—

Note. Sample numbers ranged from 154 to 157 for variables except for narcissism, where sample numbers ranged from 122 to 123. Well-being was measured with subscales of Ryff's (1989) Scale of Psychological Well-Being. Activities were assessed with subscales of Harlow and Cantor's (1996) Daily Life Tasks Scale. Generativity (Peterson & Klohnen, 1995) and wisdom (Hartman, 2000) were measured with scales scored from the California Adult Q-Set. Narcissism was assessed with the California Psychological Inventory Narcissism scale (Wink & Gough, 1990).
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

tasks, and generativity (see Table 2). Only spirituality was significantly related to well-being from personal growth, involvement in creative and knowledge-building life tasks, and wisdom. Neither religiousness nor spirituality was significantly related to narcissism. Among the three background variables, gender (being female) was positively related to well-being from positive relations with others and involvement in social and creative life tasks and was negatively related to narcissism. Social class was positively related to involvement in knowledge-building life tasks and wisdom.

We next recomputed the regressions, adding to each of the equations an interaction term assessing the joint effect of religiousness and spirituality on the nine psychosocial variables in late adulthood. In computing the interaction term, we first centered and then multiplied the scores on religiousness and spirituality. There were no significant interaction effects in any of the nine regression analyses (data not shown).

Longitudinal Stability of the Relations of Religiousness and Spirituality to Psychosocial Functioning in Late Adulthood

To test the hypothesis that religiousness would be positively related to psychosocial functioning in late adulthood from early adulthood onward, we regressed the four psychosocial variables hypothesized to be associated with religiousness in late adulthood (age late 60s or 70s) on religiousness, spirituality, and background variables scored from interview data in early (age 30s) and late middle (age mid 50s or early 60s) adulthood. As shown in Table 3, religiousness in early and late middle adulthood was significantly related to well-being from positive relations with others, involvement in social and community service life tasks, and generativity in late adulthood. Spirituality (scored from early and late middle adulthood) was not related to any of these four psychosocial variables. Among the background variables, gender (being female) was positively related at each assessment to well-being from positive relations with others and involvement in social life tasks. Social class in late middle, but not early, adulthood was significantly related to involvement in social life tasks in late adulthood.

To test the hypothesis that the positive relations between spirituality and psychosocial variables in late adulthood would also hold for spirituality scored in late middle but not early adulthood, we regressed the four psychosocial variables hypothesized to be associated with spirituality in late adulthood (age late 60s or 70s) and narcissism on religiousness, spirituality, and background variables scored from interview data taken in early (age 30s) and late middle (age mid 50s or early 60s) adulthood. As shown in Table 4, the hypothesis was supported. Spirituality in late middle, but not early, adulthood was significantly related to well-being from personal growth, involvement in creative and knowledge-building life tasks, and wisdom in late adulthood. Spirituality in early and late middle adulthood, just as in late adulthood, was not significantly related to narcissism.

Unexpectedly, religiousness in early adulthood was significantly related to involvement in creative life tasks and wisdom in late adulthood, characteristics that starting with late middle adulthood were related to spirituality but not religiousness. Because these results were inconsistent with the results of regressions using

Table 2

Beta Coefficients for Regressions of Psychosocial Variables on Religiousness, Spirituality, and Background Variables Scored in Late Adulthood

Characteristic	Independent variables					R^2	df
	Religiousness	Spirituality	Social class	Gender	Cohort		
Well-being							
Positive relations	.27*	.00	.12	.21*	.03	.16**	5, 149
Personal growth	.05	.28**	.08	.04	−.12	.13**	5, 146
Life tasks							
Social	.20*	.05	.12	.19*	.07	.13**	5, 150
Community service	.32**	.07	.01	.03	.03	.13**	5, 146
Creative	.10	.33**	−.07	.18*	−.07	.22**	5, 150
Knowledge building	−.02	.25**	.24**	−.01	−.05	.13**	5, 150
Generativity	.29**	.12	−.02	.03	−.02	.13**	5, 149
Wisdom	.05	.38**	.18*	−.09	−.05	.19**	5, 146
Narcissism	−.11	.02	−.05	−.41**	−.05	.21**	5, 117

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.   ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

religiousness in late adulthood (as shown in Table 2), we repeated the analyses, restricting the sample only to those individuals who participated in each of the three assessments. In the restricted sample, religiousness in early, but not late, adulthood continued to be significantly related to creativity and wisdom in late adulthood. In both early and late middle adulthood, gender (being female) was significantly related to involvement in creative activities (data not shown).

Discussion

This study used the metaphors of dwelling and seeking (Wuthnow, 1998) to operationalize religiousness and spirituality and to investigate their relations to psychosocial functioning in late adulthood. Our definitions build on previous studies (e.g., Roof, 1999; Wuthnow, 1998), incorporate rigorous criteria that distinguish spirituality from religiousness while recognizing their overlap, and emphasize an explicit intentional engagement in practices. We

have additional confidence in our ratings of religiousness and spirituality for two reasons. First, both constructs were rated for each interview point using verbatim transcripts of the study participants talking in detail about their religious views and behavior. This allowed raters to get a comprehensive picture of the participants' religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. Second, the ratings of religiousness and spirituality showed evidence of convergent and discriminant validity against self-report scales (Koenig et al., 1997) assessing involvement in communal and private religious activities. Our measures are clearly just one way of operationalizing religiousness and spirituality and do not capture all of the meanings associated with the constructs because, as emphasized by Moberg (2002), no single dichotomy can achieve this. Nonetheless, we found the distinction between religious dwelling and spiritual seeking useful in mapping two successful, yet quite distinct, patterns of psychosocial functioning in late adulthood.

Table 3

Standardized Beta Coefficients for Regressions of Psychosocial Variables Associated With Religiousness in Late Adulthood on Variables Scored in Early and Late Middle Adulthood

Characteristic	Religiousness	Spirituality	Social class	Gender	Cohort	R^2	df
Early adulthood							
Well-being from positive relations	.22*	−.05	−.02	.36**	−.02	.22**	5, 116
Life tasks							
Social	.23*	−.06	.14	.23*	−.02	.16**	5, 118
Community service	.38**	−.06	.02	.00	−.04	.13**	5, 118
Generativity	.39**	−.09	−.08	.06	−.04	.15**	5, 117
Late middle adulthood							
Well-being from positive relations	.22*	.03	.13	.22**	.02	.15**	5, 144
Life tasks							
Social	.23**	.03	.17*	.20**	.05	.14**	5, 145
Community service	.30**	.12	.08	.05	.05	.15**	5, 145
Generativity	.32**	.02	.05	.06	−.03	.12**	5, 143

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.   ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Table 4

Standardized Beta Coefficients for Regressions of Psychosocial Variables Associated With Spirituality in Late Adulthood on Variables Scored in Early and Late Middle Adulthood

Characteristic	Religiousness	Spirituality	Social class	Gender	Cohort	R^2	df
			Early adulthood				
Well-being from personal growth	.15	.06	.03	.14	−.18	.08	5, 117
Life tasks							
Creative	.33**	.00	.01	.20*	.17	.21**	5, 118
Knowledge building	.01	−.02	.24**	.10	−.08	.07	5, 118
Wisdom	.21**	.06	.18*	−.05	−.07	.09*	5, 117
Narcissism	.16	.03	.08	−.50**	−.09	−.21**	5, 106
			Late middle adulthood				
Well-being from personal growth	.11	.25**	.12	.07	−.09	.13**	5, 144
Life tasks							
Creative	.13	.35**	−.02	.21**	−.06	.27**	5, 145
Knowledge building	−.04	.23**	.34**	.06	−.06	.18**	5, 145
Wisdom	.16	.25**	.23**	−.04	−.04	.16**	5, 143
Narcissism	−.09	.08	.06	.43**	−.05	.22**	5, 115

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.   ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Religiousness, Spirituality, and Psychosocial Functioning

The positive association in late adulthood between religiousness and deriving well-being from positive relations with others, involvement in social and community service life tasks, and generativity reflects the fact that highly religious individuals are expected to attend church, be active members of the congregation, and follow the golden rule. The importance of our study lies, in part, in showing that highly religious participants act on these principles in their daily lives outside of the religious domain. According to Erikson (1963), generativity implies a selfless concern for others that has its origins in an unconditional valuing of the human species. The ability to maintain this trust in the meaningfulness of life helps older adults confront mortality and enhances the confidence and social trust of younger generations. Consequently, highly religious individuals provide valuable role models for the younger people around them.

The positive association in late adulthood between spirituality and well-being from personal growth and engagement in creative and knowledge-building life tasks befits individuals who have developed relatively novel and nontraditional ways of embracing the sacred. The association between spirituality and wisdom means that highly spiritual individuals display a complex way of thinking and possess insight into the human condition. According to Erikson (1963), wisdom is the hallmark of ego integrity in old age. It is characterized by acceptance of the inevitability of one's life cycle and helps, similar to generativity, to instill social trust and meaning in younger generations. Because of their interest in personal growth, creative and knowledge-building activities, and wisdom, highly spiritual older adults may be seen as providing equally valuable role models for the people around them as do highly religious individuals.

In summary, to use Bakan's (1966) distinction, our findings suggest that religiousness is more closely related to a communal mode of functioning characterized by a focus on participation in a mutual, interpersonal reality, whereas spirituality is more closely associated with an agentic mode of functioning characterized by an emphasis on asserting, protecting, and expanding the self (see also Kotre, 1996). It is important to note, however, that because of partial overlap between religiousness and spirituality, both constructs correlated significantly with such communal characteristics as involvement in social and community service life tasks and generativity and with the agentic characteristic of creativity (see Table 1). Our findings suggest that perhaps a balanced pattern of psychosocial functioning in late adulthood, one that involves a blending of communal and agential interests, might be found among individuals who manage to combine elements of religiousness and spirituality. A further investigation of this hypothesis falls, however, outside the scope of this study.

We found no evidence of a connection between spirituality and narcissism, even though narcissism was positively related to several agentic characteristics. The findings, moreover, that spirituality was associated with wisdom and involvement in several everyday life tasks suggest the presence of a firm sense of purpose and a broad social perspective, characteristics that are antithetical to narcissism (Wink, 1991). Additionally, spirituality was not related positively or negatively to well-being from positive relations with others, thus suggesting that although spiritual individuals may not prize involvement with family and friends as much as religious individuals do, they do not devalue it. These results, therefore, dispel concerns about the excessive self-absorption of spiritual seekers and augur well for the aging Baby Boomers' ability to deal successfully with the aging process (see also Dillon, Wink, & Fay, 2003).

Stability of Relations Over Time

This study provides the first long-term longitudinal evidence supporting a religious capital hypothesis (Iannaccone, 1990) that an investment in religious activities in early adulthood is likely to remain stable over time in its association with psychosocial functioning in later adulthood. As our results indicated, the association

between early adulthood religiousness and select psychosocial variables in late adulthood remained stable over a period of 40 years. As also expected, the long-term pattern of relations for spirituality differed markedly from that of religiousness. The positive association between spirituality and select measures of psychosocial functioning in late adulthood also held for spirituality scored in late middle adulthood, a time interval of 15 years, but not for ratings in early adulthood. Although our findings reinforce the view that spirituality stabilizes and gains in prominence in the second half of adulthood (Wink & Dillon, 2002), we are unable to tell whether this is due to maturational processes (e.g., Jung, 1964; McFadden, 1996) or the result of post-1960s changes in American culture making spiritual resources more accessible. Given that most of the sample continued to live in California, the greater public visibility of new spiritual groups in that region may have enhanced the motivation and opportunity for some individuals in the study—who were, after all, negotiating midlife identity in the 1970s—to experiment with alternative ways of connecting to the sacred. Most likely, their spirituality trajectory reflects a combination of maturational, cultural, and geographic factors.

We also found that religiousness in early adulthood was significantly related to both creativity and wisdom in late adulthood, although religiousness in late adulthood was not significantly related to either of these two characteristics. This means that individuals who were highly religious in their 30s tended to become creative and wise older adults even though in late adulthood creativity and wisdom were significantly associated with spirituality and not religiousness. Perhaps religious individuals with creative and introspective interests turn toward spirituality in later life. Although we did not test this hypothesis directly, this explanation gains support from a previous finding that religiousness in early adulthood is positively related to spirituality in later adulthood (Wink & Dillon, 2002).

Gender and Social Class Differences

Controlling for gender, social class, and cohort did not alter the respective relations among religiousness, spirituality, and psychosocial functioning. Nonetheless, in late adulthood, gender on its own was significantly related to having warm relations with others, as well as to creativity and narcissism, with women showing greater engagement in social relations and creative activities and men being more narcissistic. It is not surprising that women who were born in the 1920s and who were by and large deprived of opportunities to establish fulfilling careers tended to engage in artistic endeavors more than men. Surprisingly little is known, however, about gender differences in everyday creativity, which, according to our study, show a very different pattern to that found in "high art" in which men artists tend to outnumber women (Rodeheaver, Emmons, & Powers, 1998). The fact that older men scored higher than older women on narcissism suggests that they may be more sensitive to the physical and social role restrictions on the self imposed by the aging process. Social class was also independently significant in that individuals in upper class households showed a greater interest in gaining new knowledge and wisdom, thus supporting other research indicating that self-directed values are a marker of high social class (Kohn, 1977; Lamont, 1993).

Limitations and Future Directions

This study investigated religiousness and spirituality in a sample of mostly White, predominantly Protestant men and women who were born in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1920s. The findings demonstrate a positive but distinct pattern of relations among religiousness, spirituality, and psychosocial functioning in late adulthood. It would be interesting to investigate whether similar results would emerge in studies using more ethnically, religiously, and geographically diverse samples. It is also important to examine whether different cohorts would show a broadly similar pattern of functioning or whether the positive links between religiousness, spirituality, and psychosocial functioning that we observed might be modified by some of the generation- and age-specific sociocultural experiences of, for example, the Baby Boomers and their children.

As indicated, we operationalized religiousness and spirituality in terms of Wuthnow's (1998) distinction between dwelling and seeking. Although our findings show the empirical usefulness of this distinction, other definitions of religiousness and spirituality also need to be investigated empirically. For example, do individuals whose spirituality manifests itself in a quest for meaning (irrespective of whether it is related to religious or secular sources), individuals whose religiousness subsumes spirituality, or individuals who have mystical or extrasensory experiences show differentiated patterns of psychosocial functioning? Once we have mapped the empirical web of associations between diverse understandings of religiousness and spirituality across diverse sectors of the population, we may, perhaps, be better poised to develop a more unified theory of how Americans relate to the sacred and find meaning in life.

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