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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

RELIGIOSITY, SEX ROLES AND ATTITUDES
TOWARD WOMEN: THEIR RELATION TO
THE ROLES OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past, women were thought to be inferior to males in many ways: biologically (Forbes, 1966; Kramer & Sprenger, 1971; Mencken, 1922; Schmidt, 1989), intellectually (Kramer & Sprenger, 1971; Mencken, 1922; Schmidt, 1989), socially (Schmidt, 1989; Wright, 1982) and morally (Kramer & Sprenger, 1971; Schmidt, 1989). In fact, the author of the Malleus Maleficarum (originally written approximately 500 years ago) wrote:

All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman . . . what else is woman but a foe to friendship, an unescapable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic danger, a delectable detriment, an evil of nature, painted with fair colors! (Kramer & Sprenger, 1971, p. 43)

People in more recent times have also retained these views. The Earl of Chesterfield, a notable writer on the social graces in the 1700's, wrote letters to his son instructing him in politeness and the use of reason to guide his life, yet he retained a negative attitude toward women. The Earl often told his son to use reason, to appeal to everyone whatever their background, race, or religion and to show contempt to no one, so that he would gain friends and not enemies. Despite these rational and egalitarian views, he nevertheless had this to say of women:

Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid reasoning, good sense, I never knew in my life one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four-and-twenty hours together. Some little passion or humor always breaks upon their best resolutions. . . . A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humors and flatters them, as he does with a sprightly, forward child; but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with serious matters; though he often makes them believe that he does both; which is the thing in the world that they are most proud of. (The Earl of Chesterfield, 1925, p. 107)

Historically, because of their supposed inferiority to men, women were given less freedom and were subjugated to the will of men (Bullough, 1974; Menefee, 1981; Pomeroy, 1976; Schmidt, 1989). This was felt to be the proper state for women and was not thought to be prejudicial. In America, it has only been since the mid-1900s that women have attained status and gained many privileges that previously had been lacking. Statements such as the above would now find few proponents. In the United States, women are no longer as segregated from men in the work force, and integration is in process for the military and for sports. However, despite the sense of equality women have seemingly achieved, some formal roles still seem reserved for males only.

Some of these roles are church office positions. In many Christian denominations, the same types of prejudice expressed toward women in the secular world have also been expressed toward women in the church (e.g., see Shrock,

1984). Ruether (1970) says,

The basic prejudice is expressed in the ambiguous treatment of women which, while accepting elements of humanity and capacity for salvation in her, nevertheless treats her as dangerous, tempting man toward his lower self, more given to carnal desires and less capable of rational restraint than man. (p. 29)

Also, Proctor-Smith (1985) says that "the language of liturgy has assumed that the male is the norm, the fully human; the female, the exception, the sub-human" (pp. 51-52). This prejudice is possibly caused by the previously mentioned view of women, as well as thoughts that women are spiritually inferior (Kramer & Sprenger, 1971; Schmidt, 1989) and unclean (Lederer, 1968; Schmidt, 1989). If thoughts such as these are indeed prevalent, then it is not surprising that women are denied access to various roles in the church.

Currently, some Christian denominations are struggling with the issue of whether women should or should not be allowed to hold church office positions (e.g., see Ostling, 1992). Since there is no explicit reference on this topic in the Bible (Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1992, p. 377; Crabtree, 1970, p. 21), those on both sides of the issue tend to find implicit meanings behind what was said and done within Scripture itself. This allows different views on this issue based on different biblical interpretations.

Some people feel strongly that women should be allowed to take church office positions because they see no biblical

reason forbidding it. Thus, they feel that women are being unnecessarily denied access to those positions, to the detriment of the church. Crabtree stated, "It is not possible for the church to act with all its strength if more than half its membership is suppressed" (1970, p. 24) or alternatively, as Bilezikian stated, "We're not talking about equal rights, equal power or equal authority. We're talking about equal access to servanthood" (Rabey, 1994, p. 12).

Others do not agree and do not want to open church office positions to women because they see no biblical reason supporting it. They feel that women are rightfully being denied access to these positions. Shephard stated, "Women are given dignity, honor and responsibility in both the Old and New Covenant, but women do not have office-bearing responsibility" (Golder, 1994a, p. 3).

People on both sides of the issue are trying to influence their church leaders. One church in which this struggle is taking place is the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

At this point, I would like to review the history of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (from now on called the CRC). Understanding the CRC's history is vital to understanding the context of the phenomena being studied in this research. The doctrine, setting and participants of the CRC will be explained so that the hypotheses and results can be understood in the proper context.

The CRC is a conservative protestant denomination which, at its inception in 1857, consisted of recent Dutch immigrants dissatisfied with the state Reformed church of the Netherlands (Bratt, 1984). The CRC is based on the teachings of John Calvin, an influential reformer of the 17th century.

The topic of allowing women to vote in congregational meetings was first raised before the Synod (the ruling body of the CRC that generally chooses to advise rather than dictate policy) in 1947 (Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1992, p. 360). Ten years later, churches in the CRC were given the option to allow women members to vote in the meetings and, by 1992, about 85 percent of all CRCs had extended the right to vote to female members (Van Leeuwen, 1992, p. 4).

In 1970, the subject of women in church office positions was brought before the Synod (see Appendix A for more information of the church office positions). Fourteen years later, the Synod concluded that Scripture did not prohibit women from serving as deacons, and declared that office open to women in churches that desired to utilize women in their congregations (Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1984). By 1990, about 30 percent of all the churches in the CRC had installed female deacons (Van Leeuwen, 1992).

In 1990, the Synod selected a proposal that could be ratified in 1992. This proposal did *"not require* churches

to utilize the gifts of women members in any or all the offices of the church; this decision [did] *permit* churches to use their discretion in utilizing the gifts of women members in any or all the offices of the church" (Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1992, p. 379; italics in original).

In the past, an *ad hoc* committee had been formed to find information regarding the issue of women in office to bring to the Synod. In 1992, when the possibility of the ratification of the 1990 decision (which would allow churches to decide whether to allow women to take office positions) was brought before the Synod, the *ad hoc* committee's conclusion was that "no clear, unquestioned biblical testimony . . . has been produced to force the church universally to prohibit women from serving in church offices" (Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1992, p. 377). Saying that the biblical grounds offered by the committee were insufficient to warrant ratification of the 1990 decision, the Synod declared that women are allowed and encouraged "to teach, expound the Word of God and provide pastoral care, under the supervision of the elders" ("CRC to Women: Ordination, No", 1992, p. 1). In 1994, when this subject again came before the Synod, they again did not ratify it (Smit, 1994).

Many individual CRCs, because of this situation, are facing dissatisfied factions within their membership. Some

members plan to leave their own church and join other CRCs or churches of other denominations. These churches may be ones in which women are free to fill any church position, or ones in which women cannot take any church office positions. Others are determined to work within the CRC to promote change or to maintain the current policy regarding women taking church office positions.

Because of the religious basis of this issue, the decision of whether women should or should not be allowed to serve as pastors and elders should be based on Scripture, not public opinion. Thus, the following study is not meant to promote either side of the debate, but to see if a relationship exists between religiosity, sex roles, attitudes toward women and the desire to allow or not allow women to hold church office positions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Having reviewed the history of the issue of women taking church office positions in the CRC, it is now important to review the psychological constructs that may relate to this issue. Religiosity, sex role orientations and people's attitudes toward women may all relate to how people feel about women taking church office positions. In this section, the possible relationships between these variables and attitudes toward women in the church will be discussed.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religiosity

Some early studies of the relationship between religiosity and prejudice showed that church-goers and religious people generally displayed more racial prejudice than non-believers and non-church-goers (Allport, 1959; Brannon, 1970; Friedrichs, 1959; Hough, 1976; See Allport & Ross, 1967, or Gorsuch & Aleshire, 1974, for a discussion). Since this finding seemed contrary to Biblical teachings of acceptance of others, people studied the relationship between religiosity and prejudice to determine why it was found.

Allport (1959; 1964) theorized that there were two main religious orientations: extrinsic and intrinsic. According to Allport, a person with an extrinsic religious orientation

uses their religion for utilitarian means to fulfil immature selfish needs of security, status and sociability. To them, religion is a dull habit used as a defense mechanism to justify their beliefs. In other words, their religious beliefs are lightly held. Often, people with extrinsic religious orientations attend church services irregularly and remain relatively uninvolved in church affairs.

In contrast, people with intrinsic religious orientations show a mature, devotional commitment to their religious beliefs (evident through empathy and tolerance for others); they live their religion because it unifies their individual lives. All of life is understood through the framework of their religion, and their other needs are of less significance than their religious needs. The internalized faith of people with intrinsic religious orientations allows them to face difficult issues without regard for their self-interest. Usually, people with intrinsic religious orientations attend church regularly and are involved in church affairs.

Many investigators have studied the relationship between religiosity and prejudice. Some of these studies will be presented here. First, studies involving prejudice against racial groups will be presented because there are so few studies involving prejudice against women. Afterward, a few studies involving prejudice against women will be presented.

Regarding racial prejudice, Tumin (1958) found that those people who attended church less than once a week (i.e., those who were likely to have extrinsic religious orientations) were more prejudiced against blacks than those who attended once a week or more (i.e., those who were likely to have intrinsic religious orientations).

Similarly, Friedrichs (1959) found that church-goers who were active in other church activities in addition to Sunday morning services (i.e., those who were likely to have intrinsic religious orientations) were less prejudiced against blacks than those who solely attended Sunday services (i.e., those who were likely to have extrinsic religious orientations).

Other researchers directly studied the relationship between religiosity and racial prejudice. Several investigators have found that those with extrinsic religious orientations were more prejudiced against blacks than those with intrinsic religious orientations (Brannon, 1970; Feagin, 1964; Herek, 1987; Morris, Hood & Watson, 1989). Similarly, Allport and Ross (1967) found that people with extrinsic religious orientations were more prejudiced against blacks, Jews, Asians, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans than were those with intrinsic religious orientations.

The relationship between extrinsic religiosity and racial prejudice is consistent. Donahue (1985) did a meta-analysis of the relationship between religious orientation

and prejudice. He included ten studies involving a total of 1,891 subjects. The studies involved prejudices against blacks, Jews, Asians, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and the mentally ill. He states that,

I[ntrinsic religiosity] is uncorrelated, rather than negatively correlated, with prejudice across most available measures. *E*[xtrinsic religiosity] is positively correlated with prejudice, but not nearly so strongly as Allport's writings might have predicted. (p. 405; italics in original)

Few studies regarding discrimination against women have been conducted. They will be presented here. McFarland (1989) found that extrinsic religiosity correlated significantly with prejudice against blacks (regarding church and school integration) but not with prejudice against women. In addition, he found that intrinsic religiosity did not correlate significantly with prejudice against women or blacks.

McClain (1979) conducted a study involving college feminists and non-feminists. He states that when a person is intrinsically religious, "Commitment to those values [of religion] functions as a more powerful motivation than does the need for freedom to pursue private goals" (p. 41). As the previous statement suggests, he found that intrinsically religious women were not college feminists. This seems to indicate that those who are intrinsically religious would be more prejudiced against women than those who are extrinsically religious.

Finally, Kirkpatrick (1993) found that intrinsic

religiosity correlated negatively with prejudice against blacks, but that there was no relationship between religiosity and prejudice against women for a Christian sample.

From the previously reported studies, it is unclear what relationship will be found between religiosity and attitudes toward women in the church in this study. One possibility is that people with extrinsic religious orientations will more likely be intolerant of allowing women to take church office positions than those with intrinsic religious orientations. This would be similar to the relationship found between religiosity and racial prejudice.

A second possibility is that there will be no relationship between religiosity and prejudicial attitudes toward women taking church office positions. A similar lack of a relationship was found in two of the previously mentioned studies (Kirkpatrick, 1993; McFarland, 1989). One reason there may be no relationship is because people with intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations may have the same attitudes (whether conservative or liberal) when making decisions concerning women in church office positions regardless of the reasons they attend church.

The final possibility is that those with intrinsic religious orientations will be more intolerant of allowing women to hold church office positions than those with ex-

trinsic religious orientations. A similar relationship was found in one of the previously mentioned studies (McClain, 1979). One reason this relationship may be found is that people with intrinsic religious orientations may allow their personal goals to be superseded by their religious values.

Hypothesis 1: Since research has shown that intrinsically religious people are less prejudiced toward racial groups than extrinsically religious people, and since the research involving the relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward women is limited and unclear, it is unknown what relationship will be found in this study. It is therefore hypothesized that a significant relationship will be found, but it is unknown what the direction of the relationship will be.

Sex Roles and Attitudes Toward Women in Society

A person's sex role identity refers to the selection and internalization of goals, values and beliefs that are perceived as appropriate for a person of a particular sex within a particular context (such as a society). In traditional sex roles, men are interested in vocations and are breadwinners, while women show interest in social functions and family obligations. In other words, men are instrumental and women are expressive. A person has a masculine sex role if they embrace the traditional role of a male. Similarly, a person has a feminine sex role if they embrace the traditional role of a female. A person who is androgynous

possesses both instrumental and expressive characteristics.

Sex role orientations may be important when one is concerned with people's attitudes toward women taking church office positions because sex role orientations have been shown to relate to egalitarian attitudes. Research has repeatedly shown that those who are opposite sex-typed or androgynous are more egalitarian than those who are same sex-typed (as discussed below). Thus, it seems that sex role orientations will predict people's attitudes toward women participating in church roles.

Many studies have found a relationship between egalitarianism and sex role orientations. Valentine, Ellinger, and Williams (1975) found that people choosing an opposite sex-typed profession were more egalitarian toward women than those choosing a same sex-typed profession. Also, Chatterjee and McCarrey (1989) proposed that those who desire opposite sex-stereotyped occupations would also allow others to do the same. In support of this, they found that women who were in training programs for traditionally male occupations had more positive attitudes toward the roles women should be allowed in society than those who were in training programs for traditionally female occupations.

The previous studies relate to sex roles. In further research, Bem and Lenny (1976) found that same sex-typed subjects prefer same sex stereotyped tasks more, and opposite sex stereotyped tasks less than did those who were

androgynous or opposite sex-typed. Similarly, Lavellee and Pelletier (1992) found that masculine sex-typed women were more likely to have non-traditional jobs than feminine sex-typed women. Thus, the people in previous studies by Valentine, Ellinger and Williams (1975) and Chatterjee and McCarrey (1989) who were more egalitarian were likely to be opposite sex-typed, while those who were less egalitarian were likely to be same sex-typed.

Other studies directly examined the relationship between sex roles and attitudes toward women's roles in society. Ward (1980) found that those subjects who were androgynous responded more positively to statements regarding the rights, roles and privileges that women should have in society than did masculine or feminine subjects. Masculine subjects were less egalitarian than the androgynous subjects, but more egalitarian than the feminine subjects.

In comparison, Bem (1977) found that feminine sex-typed males had the most liberal views on attitudes toward women and that masculine sex-typed males had the most conservative views. The views of androgynous males fell between those of the masculine and feminine sex-typed males. Similarly, Andersen (1978) found that masculine sex-typed males were significantly more prejudicial toward women than feminine sex-typed males and all females.

Analogous results were found for women in Jones,

Chernovetz and Hansson's (1978) study. They found that masculine sex-typed females held the most favorable attitudes toward allowing women privileges in society, androgynous females held less favorable attitudes, and feminine sex-typed females held the least favorable attitudes.

Finally, Collins, Waters and Waters (1979) found that people who were same sex-typed were less favorable toward allowing women to have rights, roles and privileges in society than those who were androgynous or opposite sex-typed.

Hypothesis 2: Given these findings, it seems that subjects who are opposite sex-typed should be more likely to have egalitarian views toward the rights of women than subjects who are same sex-typed. Thus, it is hypothesized that opposite sex-typed people will be more favorable toward allowing women to fill church office positions than those who are same sex-typed.

Hypothesis 3: It is also hypothesized that having an egalitarian attitude regarding the rights of women in society should be positively related to having an egalitarian attitude regarding their rights in the religious community as well.

Although separate groups of literature (as previously discussed) have influenced the formation of these three hypotheses, it is thought that all three psychological constructs can be used together to predict attitudes toward

women in the church. It would otherwise be unknown how the effects of each construct would be affected by controlling the others.

Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized that after simultaneously controlling for the person's religiosity, the extent to which they are opposite sex-typed, and their attitudes toward women, each will have a significant independent relationship to whether the person would allow women to hold church office positions.

Perceived Power

It is thought that people may want to limit the amount of power that women may have in the church even if they do allow women to take some church office positions. Since the perceived power and visibility of the position of pastor is greater than that of elder or deacon, it would follow that people would be less prejudiced against having a female deacon or elder than a female pastor. Also, the Synod has allowed women to take the office of deacon, so people may feel it is acceptable to allow women to have the power perceived to be associated with that role. Thus, it is thought that people will have differing amounts of prejudice against allowing women to take the different church office positions.

Hypothesis 5: It is thought that the subjects' prejudice will be greatest when dealing with the issue of allowing women to take the position of pastor (because of the

visibility and perceived power of the position) and will be least for the position of deacon (because the office of deacon is already open to women in any churches wanting them). It is hypothesized that the level of prejudice against allowing women to be elders will fall between those of pastor and deacon.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

Of the 181 questionnaires distributed directly to people who attend CRCs, 129 (71%) were returned.¹ In addition to the CRC sample, another 38 questionnaires were placed in the mailboxes of students of Calvin Seminary (the denominational training school for all CRC ministers). Of these, only 4 (10%) were returned. This low response rate is probably due to the fact that the questionnaires were distributed the day before Calvin Seminary's summer break began. Six questionnaires were returned too late to be used, so a total of 127 questionnaires was used in the data analysis.

All of the subjects said they were white (three respondents did not answer the question); the CRC's membership as a whole is 92 percent white and of Dutch heritage (Golder, 1994b, p. 1).

The sample consisted of 46 (36.8%) males and 79 (63.2%) females (two respondents did not provide their gender). A 1992 sample of the CRC by Calvin College's Social Research

¹This relatively high response rate is most likely due to at least two factors: the simplicity of the questionnaire, and a high amount of interest among participants in the subject of the study.

Center contained 42% males and 58% females (Rice & Annis, 1992, p. 3). The current sample's distribution is not significantly different from the Research Center's sample, $\chi^2(1,125)=1.39$, n.s.

The age distribution of the respondents was quite wide, from 16 to 83, with a mean of 40.57. The Social Research Center found the mean age of their survey respondents to be 49 (Rice & Annis, 1992, p. 18). The current sample's distribution is significantly different from the Research Center's sample, $t(739)=6.31$, $p<.01$.

Although members of the CRC are spread throughout the United States, the subjects in this study primarily resided in two states: Michigan (58 subjects; 46%) and New Jersey (56 subjects; 44%). The remaining 13 subjects resided in other states or did not answer the question.

The average length of time that subjects had attended CRC services was 34.15 years (s.d.=16.85). The range was 2 to 83 years. Only two people were not members of the CRC. The average length of membership (for those who were members of the CRC) was 29.37 years (s.d.=18.22). The range was from less than one year to 83 years.² Of the Social Research Center's respondents, 71% had been members since birth, 22% had been members for more than 10 years (but not since birth), and 8% had been members for less than 10 years

²This question was problematic: some people considered themselves members at baptism in infancy, while others only considered themselves members after profession of faith.

(Rice & Annis, 1992, p. 23).

The average subject attended CRC services 6.44 times a month (s.d.=1.94). The range was from 0 to 9 times a month (CRCs traditionally have a morning and evening worship service each Sunday). The average subject attended other CRC functions 4.46 times a month. Of the Social Research Center's respondents, 90% said they attended every Sunday morning service, and 56% said they attended every evening service (Rice & Annis, 1992, p. 43).

Only 3 respondents said they did not give money to the CRC church, and 18 said they did not give time. Thirty-one people said they gave something besides money or time to the CRC. The respondents mentioned things such as prayer (by 10 subjects), counseling (by 3), teaching (by 4), various musical/dramatic/dance services (by 5) and other services (by 11). Two people did not specify what they did.

Materials

The questionnaire completed by the respondents included demographic questions, a sex role inventory, a religiosity scale, questions about attitudes toward women, and questions regarding women's roles in the church.

Demographics. With respect to demographics, subjects gave their age, sex, state of residence, and race. They were asked whether they were members of the CRC (and if so, for how long), and the number of years they had attended CRC services. Subjects were also requested to indicate how oft-

en they attended church services or other church activities, and how often they contributed money or time (or something else they could indicate) to the church (see Appendix B for the wording of all the demographic questions).

Intrinsic/extrinsic religiosity. Religiosity was measured using the Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (Allport & Ross, 1967) which consists of twenty items: eleven that measure extrinsic religiosity, and nine that measure intrinsic religiosity (for item wording, see Robinson & Shaver, 1973). The items are scored from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating a more extrinsic orientation and lower scores indicating a more intrinsic orientation. The range of scores for the extrinsic scale is 11 to 55, with a higher score indicating a more extrinsic orientation. The range of scores for the intrinsic scale is 9 to 45, with a lower score indicating a more intrinsic orientation.

A score is calculated for the two orientations by summing the responses to the items. This scoring procedure is thought to enhance reliability and augment the length of the continuum. The range of total scores is between 20 and 100. A higher score indicates an extrinsic orientation, and a lower score indicates an intrinsic orientation.

Sex roles. Sex role orientations were measured using the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1974) which consists of 60 questions that measure the person's willingness to ascribe to themselves many characteristics that are

generally seen as masculine, feminine or neutral (the items are presented in Bem, 1974, and Pines & Maslach, 1979). There are 20 characteristics for each feminine, masculine, and neutral category. The subjects are asked to indicate how well each characteristic describes themselves on a seven-point scale. For example, people are asked to assess their levels of aggression, dominance and ambition for the masculine category, and their levels of compassion, loyalty and shyness for the feminine category.

The subjects were given a score indicating the extent to which they were sex-typed in the masculine and feminine directions using the scoring procedure described in Pines and Maslach (1979). To test the hypotheses, these scores were adapted so that if the person was same sex-typed or leaned in the same sex-typed direction (even if they were androgynous), their score is positive, and if they were opposite sex-typed or leaned in an opposite sex-typed direction (even if they were androgynous), their score is negative. This was accomplished by multiplying the scores of males by -1. The resulting value indicates the extent to which the person is sex-typed; a positive score indicates that the person is same sex-typed, and a negative score indicates that the person is opposite sex-typed.

Attitudes toward women. Subjects' prejudicial attitudes toward women in society were measured with the fifteen-item version of the Attitude Toward Women Scale (ATWS;

Spence & Helmreich, 1978). This scale includes items that require respondents to indicate their feelings on the rights, privileges and roles women ought to have in society (the items are presented in Spence & Helmreich, 1978). The respondents indicate their responses using a four-point scale ranging from "agree strongly" (0) to "disagree strongly" (3). The scores on the items are summed, with possible scores ranging from 0 to 45 and with high scores indicating a more egalitarian view. Researchers have reported that the scale is valid, internally consistent and stable over time in both the long and short versions (Smith & Bradley, 1980; Yoder, Rice, Adams, Priest & Prince II, 1982; Daugherty & Dambrot, 1986).

Prejudice against women. The dependent measures were the subjects' answers to questions regarding whether they would be comfortable attending a church with a woman in the three different church office positions, and whether they would allow a woman to hold those different positions. These questions (which were written by the researcher) were placed with nine other questions about other church-related topics that served as distractors (see Appendix C for exact wording of all questions).

The subjects' responses to the questions regarding women in church office positions were combined into four variables. The person's attitude toward women as deacons is the average of their responses to the questions about allow-

ing a woman to be a deacon and attending a church that had a female deacon. The person's attitude toward women as elders is the average of their responses to the questions about allowing a woman to be an elder and attending a church that had a female elder. The person's attitude toward women as pastors is the average of their responses to the questions about allowing a woman to be a pastor and attending a church that had a female pastor. Finally, the person's attitude toward women taking church offices in general is the average of all six questions combined and therefore is an overall evaluation of subjects' feelings toward allowing women to hold church office positions.

For each attitude, a score of 1 indicates the person does not have a prejudicial view toward allowing women to take church office positions, and a score of 7 indicates that the person has a prejudicial view toward allowing women to take church office positions.

Procedure

The subjects each received a packet containing: a cover letter, a questionnaire and a stamped addressed return envelope. The cover letter (see Appendix D) told the subjects of the volunteer nature of the study and why it was being conducted, and assured them of their anonymity. They were also given the researcher's phone number so that they could reach the experimenter if any problems or questions arose. (No calls were received.)

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Independent variables. The subjects' scores on the religiosity scale ranged from 21 to 64 (mean=35.0; s.d.=8.10) with higher scores indicating a more extrinsic orientation and lower scores indicating a more intrinsic orientation. The range of the scale was 20 to 100. The middle of the scale is 60, so more people were intrinsic than extrinsic (in fact, only one person scored higher than 60). Reliability coefficients (i.e., Cronbach's alphas) were computed for the intrinsic and extrinsic subscales and the full scale; the coefficients were .63, .68 and .72, respectively.

The subjects' scores regarding the extent to which they were opposite sex-typed ranged from -3.6 to 7.2 with a mean score of 1.39 (s.d.=2.14). A positive score indicates that the person has a same sex-typed sex role, and a negative score indicates that the person has an opposite sex-typed sex role. Sixteen subjects (13%) were opposite sex-typed (8 males and 8 females), 69 (56%) were same sex-typed (19 males and 50 females), and 38 (31%) were androgynous (18 males and 20 females).

Reliability coefficients (i.e., Cronbach's alphas) were computed for the masculine and feminine subscales and the full scale; the coefficients were .91, .88 and .90, respectively.

The subjects' scores on the attitudes toward women measure ranged from 6.43 to 45 with a mean of 33.2 (s.d.=7.09). High scores indicate egalitarian attitudes. The middle of the scale is 23.5 (the range is 0 to 45), so people were more egalitarian than prejudicial toward women. The reliability of this scale was good, with Cronbach's alpha being .90.

Dependent variables. All the means of the dependent variables fell on the non-prejudicial side of the scale,³ since all are less than 4 (i.e., the mid-point of the seven point scale). Each of these variables ranged over the full scale of 1 (non-prejudicial) to 7 (prejudicial) points.

The means and standard deviations of each scale of measure are shown in Table 1.

³One might be concerned that the subjects gave non-prejudicial responses because they knew the researcher was female. To evaluate this possibility, Field (1973) mailed the ATWS to two different groups of people. For one group, the researcher was purported to be male; for the other, the researcher was purported to be female. Field found no significant difference between the groups in either the response rates or the responses themselves.

TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE
INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	n
Attitudes toward women	33.20	7.09	126
Opposite sex-typed	1.39	2.14	123
Religiosity	34.98	8.10	127
Attitudes toward women as deacons	2.05	1.55	126
Attitudes toward women as elders	2.96	2.13	127
Attitudes toward women as pastors	3.43	2.25	127
Attitudes toward women in church offices	2.83	1.88	127

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: It was impossible to predict what relationship would exist between religiosity and prejudice against women since no clear relationship was found in the previously reviewed literature. Correlational analyses indicated that scores on the intrinsic subscale negatively correlated with each dependent variable. The correlations (and two-tailed p-values) are shown in Table 2. In contrast, scores on the extrinsic subscale did not correlate significantly with any dependent variable. However, scores on the complete religiosity scale did correlate negatively with most of the dependent variables (see Table 3).

TABLE 2
CORRELATIONS OF INTRINSIC SUBSCALE WITH ATTITUDES
TOWARD WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Variable	Correlation with Intrinsic Subscale	p-value
Attitudes toward women as deacons	-.26	<.004
Attitudes toward women as elders	-.30	<.0007
Attitudes toward women as pastors	-.28	<.002
Attitudes toward women in church offices	-.30	<.0007

TABLE 3
CORRELATIONS OF RELIGIOSITY SCALE WITH ATTITUDES
TOWARD WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Variable	Correlation with Religiosity Scale	p-value
Attitudes toward women as deacons	-.16	n.s.
Attitudes toward women as elders	-.25	<.005
Attitudes toward women as pastors	-.25	<.005
Attitudes toward women in church offices	-.25	<.005

The findings in Tables 2 and 3 show that those who were less intrinsically religious were more likely to be non-prejudicial toward women taking church office positions than those who were more intrinsically religious.

Hypothesis 2: It was hypothesized that those who were opposite sex-typed would be less biased toward women than those who were same sex-typed. Contrary to the hypothesis, the extent to which a person was opposite (or same) sex-typed did not correlate significantly with any of the dependent variables (see Table 4). All p-values were greater than .22.

TABLE 4

CORRELATIONS OF THE EXTENT OF SEX-TYPING WITH
ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Variable	Correlation with Extent of Sex-Typing
Attitudes toward women as deacons	0.11
Attitudes toward women as elders	0.01
Attitudes toward women as pastors	0.07
Attitudes toward women in church office positions	0.06

Hypothesis 3: It was hypothesized that those who had egalitarian attitudes toward women's roles in society would be less prejudicial against women taking church offices than those who were less egalitarian. As expected, people's

attitudes toward women in society correlated significantly with each of the dependent variables. The correlations are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN IN SOCIETY WITH
ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Variable	Correlation with Attitudes Toward Women Scale	p-value
Attitudes toward women as deacons	.65	<.001
Attitudes toward women as elders	.63	<.001
Attitudes toward women as pastors	.62	<.001
Attitudes toward women in church offices	.65	<.001

These findings indicate that those who were more egalitarian concerning women's roles in society were more egalitarian concerning women's roles in the church than those who were less egalitarian concerning women's roles in society.

Hypothesis 4: It was hypothesized that religiosity, sex roles and attitudes toward women would each have a significant and independent relationship with attitudes toward women in office after all the predictors were simultaneously controlled for in the model. A multiple regression was

conducted with the person's attitudes toward women, the extent to which the person was opposite sex-typed, and the person's religiosity scores entered into the equation. The dependent variable was the person's attitude toward women in church office in general. The respondents' ages and the length of time they had been attending CRC services were controlled for by entering them into the equation first.⁴

The model accounted for 42.7% of the variance (adjusted $R^2=.427$) concerning attitudes toward women taking any church office. The overall regression equation was significant, $F(5,121)=19.81$, $p<.0001$. Contrary to predictions, the extent to which a person was opposite sex-typed did not significantly contribute to the equation, standardized $\beta=.58$, n.s. As predicted, both the person's religiosity score, standardized $\beta=-.04$, $p<.0195$, and the person's attitudes toward women, standardized $\beta=-.17$, $p<.0001$, contributed significantly. Thus, religiosity and attitudes toward women (but not sex roles) are closely related to a person's attitudes toward women taking church offices in general.⁵

In order to be certain that peculiarities in the pro-

⁴The respondent's sex was not entered into the equation because it was used to create the values for the extent to which the person was opposite sex-typed (which was entered into the equation).

⁵Identical regressions were run with attitudes toward women as deacons, elders and pastors as the dependent variables. The pattern of results was identical; the only difference was that the effects were somewhat weaker for attitudes toward women as deacons.

cedure for scoring subjects as same versus opposite sex-typed did not produce an artifactual lack of effects, the regressions were also run with the subjects' scores on the masculine and feminine subscales of the Bem Sex Role Inventory entered individually. There were still no significant values for any of the BSRI related scales. The regressions were also run for males and females separately. This also did not produce any significant effects from any of the BSRI related scales. These findings suggest that there was no relationship between sex role orientations and attitudes toward women in the church.

Hypothesis 5: It was hypothesized that people would be most prejudiced against having a woman as a pastor and least prejudiced against having a woman as a deacon. A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted using the attitude ratings for women as deacons, elders and pastors as within subjects variables. A significant main effect of the repeated measures was found, $F(1,125)=285, p<.0005$. Individual pairwise t-tests were then conducted to determine if the differences were those that were hypothesized.

As expected, people's attitudes were least positive toward having a woman as a pastor, and most positive to having a woman as a deacon, with attitudes toward allowing women to be elders falling in-between. Prejudice against women taking the church office of pastor (mean=3.45) was significantly more than that of elder (mean=2.96), $t(126)=$

-6.11, $p < .001$ (one-tailed). Prejudice against women taking the church office of elder (mean=2.93) was also significantly greater than that of deacon (mean=2.05), $t(125)=8.07$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed). These findings demonstrate that the church members in this study were most prejudiced against having a female pastor and least prejudiced against having a female deacon.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The most important finding in this research is that those individuals with more intrinsic religious orientations were less supportive of women taking church office positions than were those who had less intrinsic religious orientations. In other words, church members for whom religion forms a strong unifying force in their lives were less supportive of women holding church office positions than those for whom religion forms a weaker unifying force in their lives.

One potential explanation for this finding is that it represents an age effect. Specifically, older people were more likely to be intrinsically religious than younger people ($r = -.37$, $p < .001$) and might also have been more likely to be conservative concerning the issue of women in church office positions. However, the possible effect of age on attitudes toward women in the church was controlled for in the data analysis by partialling it out in the regression equation, so this relationship did not affect the results. Thus, age effects cannot explain the present findings.

Another possibility is that those who attended CRC church services for a longer time might be more intrinsic-

ally religious than those attending for a shorter time. Also, those who have attended for a long period of time may be more likely to agree with Synod's decisions than those who attended for a shorter period of time. Intrinsic religiosity did correlate with length of attending CRC services ($r=-.24$, $p<.01$), so those who were more intrinsically religious were likely to have attended services longer than those who were less intrinsically religious. Since they have attended for a longer period of time, it is logical that they should, generally, agree with church policy. However, once again, the effect of the length the person had attended CRC services was partialled out in the regression equation, so this relationship cannot explain the results.

A final possible alternative explanation for this finding is that men may be more prejudicial (because they are already allowed to take church office positions) and may also have been more intrinsically religious than women. However, in this sample, women's and men's scores did not differ significantly on the religiosity scale, $t(123)=.83$, n.s., and there was actually a trend for women (mean=13.62) to be more intrinsic than males (mean=15.35), $t(123)=2.26$, $p<.03$. Therefore, gender effects cannot explain this pattern of results.

Not only did the intrinsic-extrinsic nature of people's religious beliefs influence their attitudes toward the role of women in the church, but personal sex role orientations

had absolutely no relationship with these attitudes. Thus, the preferred explanation for these findings is that church members who are intrinsically religious allow their individual opinions to be superseded by what their religious values tell them is more important. This would be consistent with McClain's (1979) findings (that intrinsically religious women were non-feminists). It may be, as he argued, that,

"When the values of religion are perceived as sacred, commitment to those values functions as a more powerful motivation than does the need for freedom to pursue private goals. It means seeing autonomy as less important than mutual interdependence and mutual responsibility, both of which are divinely sanctioned" (p. 41).

Also, people with intrinsic religious orientations have been found to be more fundamentalistic (believing in the perfect infallible authority of the Bible) than people with extrinsic religious orientations (Kirkpatrick, 1993; McFarland, 1987). Thus, they should be more likely to adhere to a literal interpretation of Scripture in which women are subservient to men. Together, this reasoning suggests that more intrinsically religious church members would hold more biased attitudes against women taking church office than would less intrinsically religious members because they believe it more important to conform to existing church policy or to a more literal interpretation of Scripture.

Besides this interpretation, there are at least two potential statistical explanations for the failure to find a relationship between sex roles and attitudes toward women

holding church office positions. First, if the present measures of sex role attitudes were unreliable, then they would not be expected to show a relationship with attitudes toward women in the church. However, the reliability of the sex role scale was tested and was found to be good (Cronbach's $\alpha=.90$). Thus, unreliability in measurement is not an explanation. A second possible explanation concerns restricted range in the subjects' responses, which would be expected to attenuate observed relationships. The current distribution is similar to distributions others have found⁶ so range restriction appears to provide an inadequate explanation. Thus, it seems that the previous explanation of religious goals superseding personal goals is correct.

Another important finding of this study is that attitudes toward women's roles in society were closely related to attitudes toward women's positions in the church. Thus, those people who favored greater rights, roles and privileges for women in society were more likely to favor women holding church office positions than were those who favored less freedom for women in society.

One possible explanation for this finding involves the

⁶Jones, Chernovetz and Hansson (1978) found that 51.3% of their subjects were same sex-typed, 34.1% were androgynous, and 14.6% were opposite sex-typed (p. 302). This does not differ significantly from the distribution observed in the present study, $\chi^2(2,122)=1.17$, n.s. Also, Bem's (1984) distribution of Stanford students was 55% same sex-typed, 31% androgynous, and 15% opposite sex-typed (p. 161). This does not differ significantly from the distribution observed in the present study, $\chi^2(2,122)=.40$, n.s.

nature of those who are intrinsically religious. Since those who are intrinsically religious allow religion to permeate their entire life, it is likely that their attitudes toward women in the church as well as women in society will be influenced by the interpretation of Scripture they accept. Thus, the two would be related because they are both dependent on the person's religiosity. This finding confirms the connection between general and specific attitudes often observed in the literature, such as those presented previously (i.e., where extrinsic religiosity correlated with prejudice against blacks and Asians). Interestingly, here, general attitudes were not swamped by intrinsicity and adherence to church doctrine, as were sex role traits.

Finally, it was found that the rates of acceptance of women in church office positions varied depending on the particular church office position considered. As predicted, people were generally accepting of women as deacons, a little less accepting of women as elders, and even less accepting of women as pastors. This relationship reflects the greater visibility and perceived power of a pastor relative to an elder or a deacon. Furthermore, the CRC has permitted women to be deacons since 1984.

One vital issue, particularly in survey research, is the generalizability or external validity of the results. Generalizability to other groups beyond the CRC was not the

purpose of this study. Instead, the aim was to generalize to the population of the CRC. The sample in this study seems to be an accurate representation of the general CRC membership, with the exception of age. Those who returned the questionnaires in the present study were younger (on average by 9 years) than respondents in previous studies of the CRC membership (i.e., Rice & Annis, 1992).

One possible reason for this age difference is that older people may have been more likely than younger people to have physical problems that prevented them from either receiving or completing the questionnaire (e.g., perhaps they do not come to church as often and did not receive the questionnaire, or they received one but could not complete it because of poor eyesight or lack of energy). In other studies, it has been found that older people are less likely to complete or return questionnaires although little is known about why (Barton et al., 1980; Kaplan & Cole, 1970).

Another possible reason is that the questionnaires were not as likely to be distributed to older people because they were not known by the distributors. It is also worth noting that of the six questionnaires received too late to be used in the analyses, three were completed by people over the age of 65. The mean age was 58. It may have taken older people longer to complete the questionnaire and some may have thought it was too late to return it.

Had more older people been involved in the study,

perhaps the sample would have had a greater tendency to be intrinsically religious (since there was a significant correlation between intrinsic religiosity and age). Since there is a significant correlation between intrinsic religiosity and prejudice, having more older respondents in the sample might be expected to result in greater prejudice against women holding church office positions.

Another potential problem with the sample used in this research is that most respondents were intrinsically religious. It is unknown whether there are few extrinsically religious people in the CRC or whether only those who were intrinsically religious came to church often enough to receive the questionnaire and took the time to answer the survey. Thus, these findings might not hold for a more extrinsically religious group of people.

The present study's value lies in its empirical test of theory in a real-world situation. It reveals serious limitations in the concept of sex role orientation, in that one's sex role orientation may be superseded by religious concerns. There may be other powerful variables that would similarly overpower sex role orientations in determining attitudes. Others may involve political preference or affiliation with a group or team. In these cases, again it seems that commitment to these roles may supersede commitment to other individual values.

This study is an important addition to the current

literature on prejudice for two reasons. First, a literature search failed to uncover any studies relating religiosity to prejudice against women taking church offices. Thus, this may be the first study to look at the issue, so its importance lies in indicating that religiosity is related to people's beliefs about the role of women in the church. Secondly, this study is important because it is a counter-example of the general rule that extrinsic religiosity correlates with prejudice. Much previous research has found that extrinsic religiosity is a correlate of prejudice (e.g., Allport & Ross, 1967; Brannon, 1970; Donahue, 1985; Herek, 1987). Therefore, one implication of the present study is that intrinsic religiosity may result in prejudiced individual attitudes when the doctrine of one's church or one's interpretation of Scripture is itself biased.

Another implication of this study is that one's feelings toward women in church office positions may not be an issue of prejudice but one of church policy and biblical interpretation. Thus, those who had less positive attitudes toward allowing women to take church office positions may not have been intentionally prejudicial, but may have been conscientiously following the dictates of their own biblical interpretation (or the biblical interpretation currently accepted by the Synod). In conclusion, this reasoning suggests that the issue may be more a case of institutional

sexism (supported by the higher powers of the Synod and literal biblical interpretations) than individual prejudice.

Future studies should attempt to determine the validity of this conclusion by asking respondents to explain the basis of their beliefs. Other measures, such as biblical interpretation, fundamentalism and dogmatism, should also be investigated in additional research. This would enable a better understanding of the specific mechanisms underlying the present results.

APPENDIX A
REQUIREMENTS FOR CHURCH OFFICES

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According to Porik and DeRidder (1980), all office-bearers in the CRC must meet the following requirements: have taken profession of faith, be male (except deacons, as allowed by the Synod's decision of 1984; Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1984), possess necessary gifts for their function, possess the gift of leadership, and live an exemplary life.

The following are descriptions of the positions

Ministers are to proclaim, explain and apply Scripture in order to fill an ecclesiastical function. They must reach out to unbelievers and try to win them to Christ, and also must build up, supervise and discipline the church.

Elders help supervise the congregation. They are in charge of admonition and discipline for the congregation and other office-bearers. They must help maintain order and decency in the congregation.

Deacons are to help those who are in need, whether or not members of the congregation. They are in charge of the distribution of the collected money. They are to coordinate with other churches and are encouraged to work with community agencies to facilitate aid to needy people.

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES

DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES

Please answer the following:

Sex: male female

Race: _____

Age: _____

Are you a member of a CRC church? yes no

If so, how long have you been a member? _____ years

How long have you attended CRC church services? _____ years

In the average month, how many times do you engage in the following activities:

attend a CRC church service? _____

attend other CRC church activities? _____

contribute money to the CRC church? _____

contribute time to the CRC church? _____

contribute something other than time or money to the CRC church? _____

please explain _____

APPENDIX C

DEPENDENT MEASURES REGARDING PREJUDICE AGAINST WOMEN

DEPENDENT MEASURES REGARDING PREJUDICE AGAINST WOMEN

Questions relevant to the current research:

To what extent do you feel that women should be allowed to be:

	strongly agree					strongly disagree	
Elders?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deacons?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pastors?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Would you be comfortable attending a church that had:

	I definitely would be comfortable				I definitely would not be comfortable		
A female elder?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A female deacon?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A female pastor?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Distractor questions:

Calvin Seminary is:

liberal					conservative	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Calvin College is:

liberal					conservative	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Quotas should be decided by: (pick one)

member unit family unit

Please indicate your opinions on the following statements using this scale:

strongly agree					strongly disagree	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

___ The Calvin Seminary should be the only recognized denomination seminary.

___ Practicing homosexuals should be allowed to be members of CRC.

___ Practicing homosexuals should be allowed to take church offices.

___ Non-practicing homosexuals should be allowed to be members of the CRC.

___ Non-practicing homosexuals should be allowed to take church offices.

___ God created the universe and everything in it in seven literal days (including the day of rest).

APPENDIX D
COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello.

I am a graduate student at Loyola University in Chicago and a graduate of Calvin College. I would appreciate your help. I have decided to do a study of religiosity and opinions about church policy and I need people to answer this questionnaire. Any person who is a member (or a regular attender) of a Christian Reformed Church can complete this survey. If you can not complete this survey for any reason, please pass it on to another Christian Reformed Church member (or attender) if possible. Many people are needed to complete this survey so that the intended analyses can be completed.

This questionnaire has been designed to that it can be completed very quickly and easily. It takes only a few minutes and you need only check off your answers or jot down a number. A postpaid return envelope has been included for your convenience. Feel free to call me if you have any problems.

You can be absolutely sure that all of the information you provide is strictly confidential, and no individuals will be identified. Your answers will be combined with those of many other church attenders and used only for statistical analysis.

I greatly appreciate your assistance. Please complete and return the questionnaire right away. Thank you for your help.

Kristen Petzinger

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The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

11/22/94
Date


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