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/FACTORS RELATED TO SIMILARITY, REJECTION
AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION/

By

(Joann Stiles Maryo.)

An Abstract

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan State
University of Agriculture and Applied Science in
partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Psychology

1958

Approved by: Milton Pollock

ABSTRACT

Three hundred fifty-three beginning psychology students filled out a questionnaire composed of the forty-item Dogmatism Scale, thirty rejection questions and similarity rankings. The subjects were members of six religious groups: Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian.

In general, the findings of this study bear out the original hypotheses. With the exception of two reversals of Continua I, Continua II duplicate the previously-determined similarity continua for the six religious denominations. This indicates that there is a relatively consistent manner in which religious denominations view each other; that is, in terms of similarity or dissimilarity.

Five of the six groups demonstrate a relationship between rejection and perceived similarity by rejecting most those denominations which are seen to be either most similar or least similar to their own denomination.

In reference to the rejection pattern of the Methodist group, the present findings reproduce the modified J-shaped curve found by Jensen and Rokeach.

High dogmatists in five groups consistently reject other denominations more than low dogmatists reject other denominations, pointing to a relationship between dogmatism and acceptance or rejection.

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DEDICATION

To my mother

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FACTORS RELATED TO SIMILARITY, REJECTION AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

INTRODUCTION

Social scientists have long demonstrated their interest in the study of "prejudice", that phenomenon whereby one person or group of persons rejects another person or group of persons. The objective need for an understanding of this phenomenon has grown more acute as mounting technological advances have induced increased interaction between peoples of diverse national, racial and religious backgrounds. The present study deals with the relationships between one's religious affiliation, his perceptions of how similar or dissimilar are other religious denominations to his own, and his concomitant acceptance or rejection of those religious denominations and their adherents. In order to place this research in its broader context, we shall briefly examine the theoretical orientation upon which it is based.

Theoretical Orientation.

Having as a goal the investigation of the structural organization of thought and belief, Rokeach introduced the construct of the belief-disbelief system. Although this study limits itself to the probing of religious beliefs, it should be emphasized that this "belief-disbelief system" construct is equally applicable to other categories of belief. "The belief system is conceived to represent all the sets, or expectancies, or hypotheses a person may have at any given time which he accepts as true, to one degree or another. The disbelief system is conceived to be composed of a series of disbelief subsystems, rather than just a single one,

within which are represented all the sets, or expectancies, or hypotheses which a person at any given time accepts as false, to one degree or another." (1) These disbelief subsystems are seen as falling on a continuum, their places on that continuum being determined by their degree of similarity to the belief system. For example, a Presbyterian would view other religious groups, such as Methodists, Catholics, Baptists, etc., in terms of how similar or dissimilar their teachings appeared to him to be to the teachings of his Presbyterian church.

"Furthermore, the extent of a person's rejection of each disbelief subsystem, and the adherents thereof, is assumed to bear some systematic relation to this similarity-dissimilarity continuum." (1) That is, a Presbyterian would be influenced to accept or reject Methodists, Catholics, Baptists, etc., as some function of how similar or dissimilar he perceived them to be to his own religious group.

"The total structure of a belief-disbelief system can be described as varying along a continuum from open to closed." (3) "A belief-disbelief system will now be defined as closed to the extent that:

1. The magnitude of rejection at each point along the disbelief gradient is relatively high;
2. There is isolation of parts within and between belief and disbelief systems;
3. There is a discrepancy in degree of differentiation between belief and disbelief systems;
4. There is a dedifferentiation within the disbelief system."(1)

Dogmatism is "(a) a relatively closed cognitive organization of beliefs and disbeliefs about reality, (b) organized around a central set of beliefs about absolute authority which, in turn, (c) provides a framework

for patterns of intolerance and qualified tolerance toward others."(3)

It might be helpful at this point to characterize, in terms of his religious beliefs, an individual with a more-or-less closed system. Such a person's knowledge of the tenets of his own church might be comprised of relatively disconnected facts. If he were aware of some principles of other churches, he would find it difficult to distinguish between these denominations and to compare his denomination with those other denominations. His inability to examine objectively his own and different denominations would lead him to the belief that other denominations differed rather markedly from the one to which he subscribed. In addition to viewing other denominations as being extremely dissimilar to his own, he might strongly reject those denominations.

Hypotheses

This research is an expansion of an earlier study by Rokeach and Jensen and investigates the belief-disbelief system by dealing with it in relation to three aspects of religious affiliation.

1. Similarity-Dissimilarity.

For any given religious denomination, there is a standard continuum on which other religious denominations fall as a function of their perceived similarity or dissimilarity to that given religious denomination. This standard is referred to as the similarity continuum.

2. Acceptance and Rejection.

The acceptance or rejection of one religious denomination by a person of another religious denomination is some function of its position on the similarity continuum.

3. Dogmatism.

There is a relationship between dogmatism, as it is measured by the Dogmatism Scale, and the extent to which one accepts or rejects other religious denominations. That is, high dogmatists will be more rejecting of other denominations than will low dogmatists.

Earlier Research

Briefly, we shall review other studies which attempted empirically to validate the conceptual model of the belief-disbelief system.

In the study from which the present research grew, Rokeach and Jensen demonstrated "...the existence of the several disbelief subsystems along a continuum of similarity-dissimilarity to the belief system." (4) Twenty-eight Catholic and twenty-seven Methodist students were requested to judge the similarity of the Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Catholic and Methodist denominations to their own. The mean similarity scores received from these students correlated 1.00 and .90 with the similarity judgments of one expert in comparative religion. A Likert-type scale measured the rejection of the Catholic and Methodist subjects for the religious denominations mentioned above. When magnitude of rejection was plotted against rank order of similarity, the obtained curves were either U-shaped or J-shaped and indicated a tendency to reject most those denominations or disbelief subsystems perceived to be least similar to the subjects' own denominations or belief systems. The Catholic and Methodist subjects were further divided into high and low dogmatists and, in both cases, the high dogmatists showed greater rejection of disbelief subsystems than did the low dogmatists.

A study then followed in which six hundred beginning psychology students were asked to note their religious denominations and rank the following denominations as to degree of similarity to their own. (4) Denominations to be ranked were: Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian. From this data, similarity continua for the above six religious groups were gotten.

Levy interviewed thirty clergymen in an attempt to assess the validity of the similarity continua of college students. (4) These clergymen were requested to rank their own denominations in relation to the Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations. The average Rho correlation for all six denominations was .85, further pointing to the objective validity of the similarity continua obtained from college students.

Several studies have examined the relation between the religious similarity continua and behavior.

A. Cheek and Geierhaas examined the conversion and defection records for the years 1953-1955 of five Protestant denominations (Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian) in Lansing, Michigan. These conversion and defection figures were weighted by a correction term determined by the estimated size of membership in each denomination. Utilizing the previously-collected data on the similarity continua, they found that "...when conversion data for all denominations are combined, a rank order correlation of .94 is obtained, the greatest frequency of converts coming from the group perceived as most similar. When the defection data for all denominations are combined, a rank order correlation of 1.00 is obtained, with the greatest frequency of defectors going to the denomination seen

as next to the most similar." (4) These findings indicate that individuals moving from one religious denomination or belief system to another follow a predictable pattern, tending to select for new membership those denominations which fall on the similarity continuum in positions relatively adjacent to their initial denominations.

B. Matheson contacted seventeen religiously-supported schools (Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian) in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio, to learn the number of students enrolled in each institution in 1951 and 1956 and the religious denominations of these students. These enrollment figures were "corrected" by using the data on size of denominational membership secured by Cheek and Geierhaas, since no more precise statistics were available for the individual state populations. The weighted denominational enrollment figures were examined in relation to the similarity continua established in an earlier study. Rank order correlations between perceived similarity and the weighted enrollment figures ranged from .63 to 1.00, indicating that "differential rates of attendance by persons of varying denominations at a particular denominational college is at least, in part, a function of degree of similarity of disbelief subsystems to belief systems." (4) In addition, it was also shown that the geographical location of students' homes was not significantly related to their attendance at a particular denominational school.

C. Zlotowski and Zlotowski obtained the raw frequencies of inter-faith marriages among students at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. Weighting these frequencies on the basis of the numbers of Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians represented in the campus communities, they obtained Rho correlations

ranging from .54 to .94 between frequency of inter-faith marriage and the previously-established similarity continua for 641 couples. By combining the data of the six religious denominations, a rank order correlation of 1.00 between similarity and frequency of intermarriage was obtained. These findings indicate a clearcut relationship between inter-faith marriage and religious similarity.

Forty-three couples, one member of each pair being Methodist with the other member being Baptist, Episcopalian, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist or Presbyterian, responded to a questionnaire designed to measure premarital and marital conflict. It was found that as the religious similarity between the partners decreased, the total amount of conflict between them increased.

In order to observe the possible effect of the religious denomination of one's marriage partner on one's perception of other religious groups, these forty-three couples were asked to rank the five religious denominations, according to their degree of similarity to their own denominations. Rho correlations of .83 to 1.00 were obtained between the similarity continuum of the six Methodist groups and the original similarity continua. "Marriage of Methodists to people of different religious denominations does not distort their perception of the similarity continuum regardless of the extent of religious similarity between themselves and their mates."(4)

We have summarized six studies investigating religious affiliation as it relates to beliefs and the behavioral manifestations of those beliefs; more specifically, perceived similarity or dissimilarity and its consequences. The collective results of these studies point out that this perceived

or phenomenological similarity has a basis in actual fact, while highlighting the interrelatedness of a variety of religious behaviors.

SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURE

During a two-week period in January of 1957, five hundred beginning psychology students at Michigan State University filled out a questionnaire* composed of the Dogmatism Scale, similarity rankings and rejection questions. Since this study deals with six specific religious denominations, only the three hundred fifty-three questionnaires completed by Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian students were used in the final data analysis. Class time was used for completing the questionnaires which took each student about one half hour to finish.

* A copy of the complete questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANALYSIS

The instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire were:

The following is a study of what the general public thinks and feels about a number of important social and personal questions. The best answer to each statement below is your personal opinion. We have tried to cover many different and opposing points of view; you may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others; whether you agree or disagree with any statement, you can be sure that many other people feel the same as you do.

Mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one.

/ 1: I agree a little / 2: I agree on the whole / 3: I agree very much	-1: I disagree a little -2: I disagree on the whole -3: I disagree very much
---	--

The questionnaire was comprised of the Dogmatism Scale, rejection questions and similarity rankings.

1. Dogmatism Scale.

This is a forty-item scale designed to measure dogmatism. The dogmatism score for a given individual was secured by computing the algebraic total of his plus and minus responses to the scale questions. In order to avoid negative numbers, a constant of 160 was added to the obtained algebraic total. Groups were divided into high and low dogmatists at the median.

2. Rejection Questions.

Interspersed among the dogmatism questions, were thirty questions devised to measure the extent to which members of one religious denomination reject other religious denominations. Five of these thirty rejection questions applied to each of the six religious groups under investigation. The five basic rejection questions were:

1. I do not hesitate to make friends with _____.
2. I am willing to have a _____ marry into my family.
3. _____ are more public spirited than most other groups.
4. Most _____ live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
5. I would like to have _____ in my fraternity or social club.

As in the case of responses to the dogmatism questions, the range of response was from $+3$ to -3 with no zero point. For each individual, an algebraic total of his responses to the rejection questions concerning each of the six religious denominations was computed. The individual's score for each of the five religious denominations was subtracted from his score for his own religious denomination and a constant of 10 was added to eliminate negative numbers. That is, $REJECTION = (\text{score for one's own religion}) - (\text{one's score for each of the other five religions}) + (\text{a constant of } 10)$. So, for each individual, we obtained five rejection scores, one score for each of the five religious denominations not his own. The higher the rejection score, the greater the rejection.

In order to calculate the total rejection of one religious group by any other religious group, we simply found the Mean of the individual rejection scores.

3. Similarity Rankings.

By way of determining the similarity continua for the six religious groups, the subjects were requested to follow these instructions. Here are six religions arranged in alphabetical order:

1. Baptist
2. Catholic
3. Episcopalian

4. Lutheran
5. Methodist
6. Presbyterian

If Your Religion Is One of These:

On blank line number one below write the name of your religion. Now arrange the other five religions on the five remaining blank lines, so that the religion which is most similar to yours will be on line two and the next most similar to yours will be on line three. Continue in this way until you have finally put the name of the least similar religion in space six.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

If Your Religion Is Not One Of These:

On blank line number one below write the name of your religion. Now arrange the six religions listed above on the remaining blank lines, so that the religion which is most similar to yours will be on line two and the next most similar will be on line three. Continue in this way until you have finally put the name of the least similar religion in space seven.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

The similarity continuum for each denomination was arrived at by computing the mean similarity rank assigned to each of the other five religious denominations.

RESULTS

Dogmatism

Each religious denomination was subdivided at the median into high and low dogmatists. Table I lists the mean dogmatism scores for each total group and for the high and low dogmatists in each group. In every case the dogmatism means of high and low dogmatists of the same religious denomination differ significantly at better than the .01 level of confidence. The differences between the total mean dogmatism scores for the six groups were not significant.

Similarity Continua

The obtained similarity continua (Continua II) for Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians can be found in Table II. In Table III are the previously-determined similarity continua (Continua I) for these six religious denominations.(4)

1. Total Group. Comparison of the present similarity continua (Continua II) obtained from the six total groups with Continua I discloses only two reversals of the previously-determined continua. For the Episcopalian group, ranks two(Methodist) and four (Lutheran) are interchanged. On the Lutheran Continuum II, ranks four (Catholic) and five (Baptist) are reversed.
2. High and Low Dogmatists. An examination of the separate similarity continua of high and low dogmatic subjects reveals that these continua do not always coincide with total group Continua II. In the Lutheran and Presbyterian groups, high dogmatists reverse ranks four (Baptist) and five (Catholic) and ranks two (Lutheran) and three (Baptist), respectively.

TABLE I

Mean Dogmatism Scores

Group	Total	σ	N	High Dog.	σ	N	Low Dog.	σ	N
Baptist	151.48	21.1	29	166.73	13.1	15	135.14	14.7	14
Catholic	155.48	24.7	104	174.87	12.7	52	136.09	17.3	52
Episcopalian	145.74	24.7	31	166.47	11.6	15	126.31	16.1	16
Lutheran	149.90	22.1	49	167.90	11.6	25	131.20	12.6	24
Methodist	145.48	22.1	84	161.93	18.7	42	129.04	14.9	42
Presbyterian	147.23	22.9	56	165.56	12.7	27	130.17	16.0	29
Total			353			176			177

TABLE II

Similarity Continua and Mean Ranks for Total Groups and High
and Low Dogmatists. (Continua II)

GROUP		N	RANK				
			1	2	3	4	5
Baptist	total	29	Meth. 2.48	Pres. 2.93	Luth. 4.28	Epis. 4.41	Cath. 5.90
	high	15	Meth. 2.40	Pres. 2.87	Luth. 4.05	Epis. 4.80	Cath. 5.95
	low	14	Meth. 2.57	Pres. 3.00	Epis. 4.00	Luth. 4.57	Cath. 5.86
Catholic	total	101	Epis. 2.77	Luth. 3.51	Pres. 4.14	Meth. 4.37	Bapt. 5.22
	high	51	Epis. 2.55	Luth. 3.59	Pres. 4.20	Meth. 4.90	Bapt. 5.18
	low	50	Epis. 3.00	Luth. 3.42	Pres. 4.08	Meth. 4.24	Bapt. 5.26
Episcopalian	total	31	Cath. 2.61	Meth.* 3.94	Pres. 4.16	Luth.* 4.32	Bapt. 4.97
	high	16	Cath. 2.81	Meth. 3.88	Pres.--- 4.31	Luth.**	Bapt. 4.69
	low	15	Cath. 2.40	Meth.--- 4.00	Pres.**	Luth.	Bapt. 5.27
Lutheran	total	47	Pres. 3.32	Meth. 3.51	Epis. 3.94	Cath.* 4.60	Bapt.* 4.64
	high	24	Pres. 3.15	Meth. 3.42	Epis. 3.85	BAPT. 4.58	CATH. 5.04
	low	23	Pres. 3.52	Meth. 3.61	Epis. 4.04	Cath. 4.13	Bapt. 4.70
Methodist	total	84	Pres. 2.38	Bapt. 3.95	Luth. 3.77	Epis. 4.45	Cath. 5.94
	high	42	Pres. 2.43	Bapt. 3.29	Luth. 4.05	Epis. 4.33	Cath. 5.91
	low	42	Pres. 2.33	Bapt. 3.38	Luth. 3.81	Epis. 4.50	Cath. 5.98
Presbyterian	total	56	Meth. 2.23	Bapt. 3.68	Luth. 3.77	Epis. 4.45	Cath. 5.89
	high	27	Meth. 2.30	LUTH. 3.63	BAPT. 3.82	Epis. 4.37	Cath. 5.89
	low	29	Meth. 2.17	Bapt. 3.55	Luth. 3.90	Epis. 4.48	Cath. 5.90

* Reversal of previously-determined similarity continua.

** Tied ranks.

CAPITAL letters refer to reversals within the high and low dogmatic groups.

TABLE III

Previously-Determined Similarity Continua. (Continua I).

GROUP	RANK				
	1	2	3	4	5
Baptist	Meth.	Pres.	Luth.	Epis.	Cath.
Catholic	Epis.	Luth.	Pres.	Meth.	Bapt.
Episcopalian	Cath.	Luth.	Pres.	Meth.	Bapt.
Lutheran	Pres.	Meth.	Epis.	Bapt.	Cath.
Methodist	Pres.	Bapt.	Luth.	Epis.	Cath.
Presbyterian	Meth.	Bapt.	Luth.	Epis.	Cath.

It was mentioned earlier that, on Continuum II, the total Lutheran group indicated one reversal of Continuum I. Note that, while the continuum of the high dogmatic Lutherans makes one reversal of total Continuum II, it duplicates Lutheran Continuum I.

Ties between similarity continua ranks are present in the case of one group. High dogmatic Episcopalians give Presbyterians and Lutherans a rank of 3.5. Low dogmatic Episcopalians rank Methodists and Presbyterians 2.5 on their similarity continuum.

Rejection

Table IV contains the mean rejection scores of each religious denomination. With the exception of the Baptist group, the rejection scores of the high dogmatists are larger than the rejection scores of the low dogmatists, indicating a tendency for high dogmatists to be more rejecting of other denominations than are low dogmatists. As Table V shows, seven of the thirty t-Tests run between the mean rejection scores of high and low dogmatists of the same religious denomination were significant at the .05 or .01 levels of confidence.

In Graph I, magnitude of rejection is plotted against rank order of similarity for each of the six groups. For the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian groups, that denomination which is perceived as being least similar (rank five) to one's own is rejected more than any other denomination. The Catholic and Episcopalian groups reject most that denomination which is seen as being most similar (rank one) to their own. Interestingly enough, the Catholic and Episcopalian groups give each other a rank of one on the similarity continuum and, in addition, reject each other more than they reject any other group. Lutheran subjects reject most that denomination which they see as being next to the least similar to their own.

TABLE IV

REJECTION

Mean Rejection Scores (plus a constant of 10).

GROUP REJECTING	GROUP BEING REJECTED	TOTAL GROUP REJECTION	HIGH DOGMATISTS	LOW DOGMATISTS
Baptist	Cath.	13.10	12.40	13.86
	Epis.	11.55	11.07	12.07
	Luth.	10.79	10.53	11.07
	Meth.	10.17	10.00	10.36
	Pres.	10.10	9.27	11.00
Catholic	Bapt.	15.14	16.29	13.98
	Epis.	15.21	16.31	14.12
	Luth.	14.75	15.89	13.62
	Meth.	14.69	15.48	13.90
	Pres.	14.93	15.94	13.92
Episcopalian	Bapt.	11.03	11.47	10.63
	Cath.	13.05	14.27	11.88
	Luth.	10.55	10.47	10.63
	Meth.	11.26	11.40	11.13
	Pres.	10.77	10.93	10.63
Lutheran	Bapt.	12.33	13.36	11.25
	Cath.	14.35	15.80	12.83
	Epis.	12.74	13.56	11.88
	Meth.	11.51	12.44	10.54
	Pres.	11.00	11.64	10.33
Methodist	Bapt.	10.82	10.50	11.14
	Cath.	12.65	12.88	12.43
	Epis.	11.16	11.24	11.07
	Luth.	10.25	10.19	10.31
	Pres.	10.11	10.19	10.31
Presbyterian	Bapt.	11.32	11.82	10.86
	Cath.	14.15	14.96	13.35
	Epis.	11.61	12.05	11.24
	Luth.	10.96	10.89	11.05
	Meth.	11.05	11.04	11.05

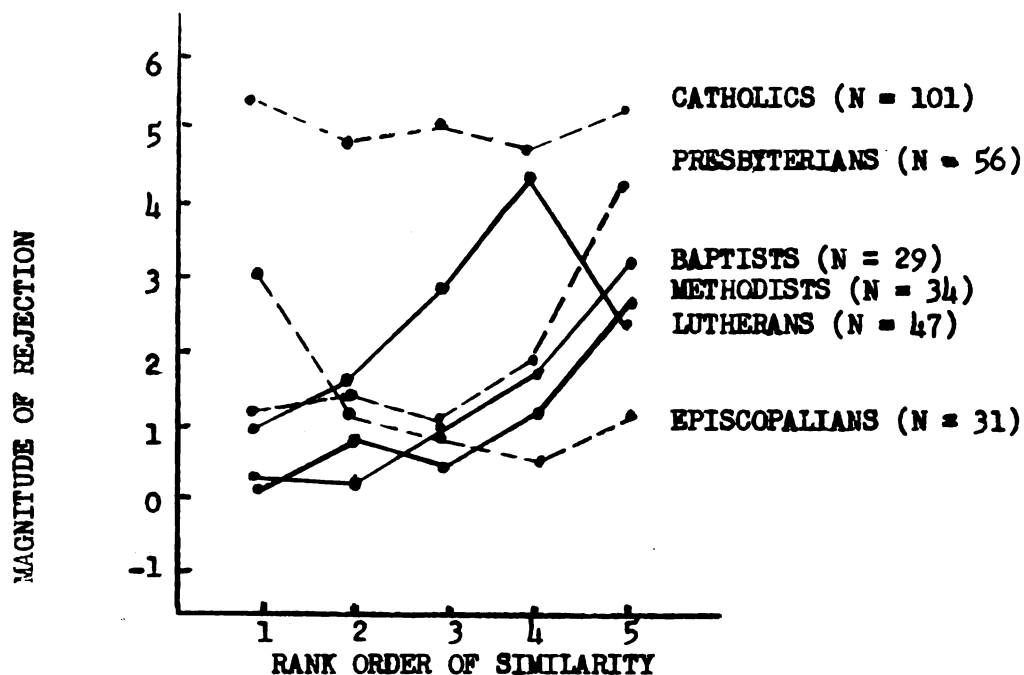
TABLE V

REJECTION

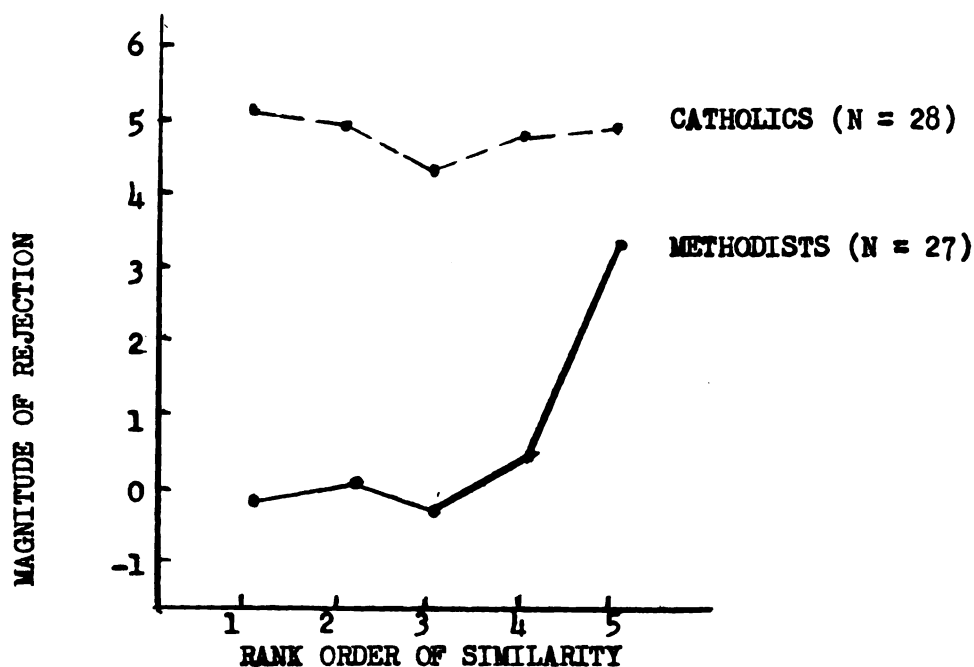
t-Tests Between Mean Rejection Scores of High and Low Dogmatists
of the Same Religious Denominations.

GROUP REJECTING	GROUP BEING REJECTED	t	DF	P
Baptist	Cath.	.58	27	>.5 NS
	Epis.	.80		>.4 "
	Luth.	.37		>.6 "
	Meth.	.34		>.6 "
	Pres.	1.70		>.1 "
Catholic	Bapt.	2.51	102	.05 *
	Epis.	2.75		.01 *
	Luth.	2.67		.01 *
	Meth.	1.92		>.05 NS
	Pres.	2.43		.05 *
Episcopalian	Bapt.	.80	29	>.4 NS
	Cath.	1.34		>.1 "
	Luth.	.15		>.8 "
	Meth.	.24		>.8 "
	Pres.	.33		>.7 "
Lutheran	Bapt.	2.18	47	.05 *
	Cath.	2.38		.05 *
	Epis.	1.68		>.05 NS
	Meth.	3.07		.01 *
	Pres.	1.73		>.05 NS
Methodist	Bapt.	1.33	82	>.1 NS
	Cath.	.54		>.5 "
	Epis.	.13		>.8 "
	Luth.	.13		>.8 "
	Pres.	.54		>.5 "
Presbyterian	Bapt.	1.33	54	>.1 NS
	Cath.	1.55		>.1 "
	Epis.	1.47		>.1 "
	Luth.	.28		>.7 "
	Meth.	.02		>.9 "

GRAPH I: Magnitude of Rejection and Similarity for Six Groups.



GRAPH II: Magnitude of Rejection and Similarity for Two Groups.*



* Rokeach and Jensen's data.

Upon reference to Table IV, it is clear that, independent of its position on the similarity continua, the Catholic group is most rejected by all other groups. That is, each of the five additional denominations currently being studied rejects the Catholic denomination more than it rejects any of the other four denominations. In turn, the Catholic group has the highest mean rejection scores of any group in this sample. The Catholic group is both the most rejected and the most rejecting denomination under investigation.

Further examination of Table IV indicates that, in general, the Presbyterian group is least rejected by the other five denominations. Baptists, Lutherans and Methodists reject Presbyterians less than they reject any other group. In fact, high dogmatic Baptists find Presbyterians more acceptable than their own Baptist group. Catholics and Episcopalians, too, have relatively low mean rejection scores for the Presbyterian group. The mean rejection scores of the Presbyterian group itself are neither remarkably low nor remarkably high.

Graph II illustrates data drawn from two Catholic and Methodist groups in the research carried out by Rokeach and Jensen, which served as a model for the present study. As in Graph I, magnitude of rejection is plotted against rank order of similarity. The Rokeach and Jensen study used twenty-eight Catholic and twenty-seven Methodist students, while the present sample includes one hundred and one Catholics and eighty-four Methodists. Let us compare the four curves. While the findings of the present study do not duplicate the U-shaped Catholic curve found by Rokeach and Jensen, the height of the curve is about the same. Both studies have produced modified J-shaped curves which are strikingly similar for the two Methodist groups.

DISCUSSION

In general, the positions on the similarity continua defined by Continua II are consistent with the findings of Continua I. The reversals of the earlier similarity continua are found in the Episcopalian group ($N = 31$) and the Lutheran group ($N = 47$). It should be noted that the reversed Lutheran ranks are separated by only .04 points, which is hardly a statistically significant difference. Other studies, which have drawn their information from beginning psychology students, an expert in the field of comparative religion, clergymen and married students, have largely supported Continua I. Considering the wide range and large number of subjects who contributed to the determination of Continua I, we suspect that the two reversals found in Continua II can be in part attributed to the limited size of our sample.

When we examine the similarity continua of the dogmatic subgroups separately, it is interesting that both of the reversals of Continua II found in the dogmatic subgroups of Lutherans and Presbyterians are made by the high dogmatists. In addition, one of the two ties between continua ranks is found in the continuum of high dogmatic Episcopalians. This is not surprising in light of the definition of dogmatism as "(a) a relatively closed cognitive organization of beliefs and disbeliefs about reality, (b) organized around a central set of beliefs about absolute authority which, in turn, (c) provides a framework for patterns of intolerance and qualified tolerance toward others." (3) Recall that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the "closed" belief-disbelief system (and, hence, of the beliefs of the high dogmatist) is "...a discrepancy in degree of differentiation between belief and disbelief systems." (1) That is, the lines

of demarcation between disbelief subsystems grow fainter as the belief-disbelief system grows more closed. The reversals and the tied rank in the similarity continua of the high dogmatists appear to illustrate a decreased differentiation between disbelief subsystems. While the high dogmatist is certainly aware of other groups, he can often only vaguely define the nature of these groups.

Keeping in mind that a belief-disbelief system can be defined as "...closed to the extent that the magnitude of rejection at each point along the disbelief gradient is relatively high," (1) we shall again look at the mean rejection scores of the high and low dogmatic groups. In the case of five out of the six groups, there is a distinct tendency for high dogmatists to reject other denominations to a greater extent than low dogmatists reject them. One could hypothesize that the individual with a relatively closed system cannot afford to have the security of his circumscribed beliefs endangered by admitting the possible veracity of his disbeliefs. This individual attempts to deny the meaningfulness of his disbeliefs by partially invalidating them through rejection.

Rokeach and Jensen found that "for both Catholic and Methodist groups, there is relatively greater rejection of disbelief subsystems most similar and least similar to their own." (4) In the present study, three groups reject most that denomination seen as least similar to their own, while two groups reject most that denomination seen as most similar to their own. In additional support of the relationship between rejection and similarity hinted at in the original two-group study, this data reproduces the modified J-shaped curve for Methodists obtained by Rokeach and Jensen when they plotted magnitude of rejection against rank order of similarity.

Why groups reject disbelief subsystems seen to be least similar or most similar to their own belief system is a question which falls beyond the scope of this study. Rokeach has said that the least similar groups are, by definition, "different" and are regarded with suspicion for that reason. The most similar groups represent a danger of another kind in that, by virtue of their similarity, they are equipped to compete successfully for the loyalties of the members of one's own group.

The Catholic denomination is most rejected by each of the other five groups in the study. Several factors might account for this. (a) This could be a function of the rather circumscribed nature of the groups to which the subjects were asked to respond. That is, five Protestant and only one non-Protestant (Catholic) groups were studied. It is conceivable that, in spite of differences between Protestant denominations, the five groups in our sample reacted as a unified body of PROTESTANTS in reference to their extensive rejection of the single, non-Protestant group.

Perhaps the Protestant denominations would indicate less rejection of Catholics if they were also required to make judgments of non-Christian and/or fictitious religious denominations. In such a case, both the Catholic and Protestant denominations might identify themselves as, primarily, CHRISTIANS and so reject the non-Christian and completely unfamiliar groups more than the Catholics and Protestants reject each other.

(b) It is possible that Protestant groups, which could function independently only after severing their ties with Catholicism, still feel the need to assert their independence. This assertion of independence is manifested by a rejection of the group in which their origins lie.

(c) Catholics are, in fact, a "minority group". This situation in itself might be enough to draw criticism and induce rejection. Minority groups are, by definition, composed of a limited number of individuals and so are, theoretically, less prepared to retaliate.

The Catholic denomination has the highest mean rejection scores in our sample and is both the most rejecting and the most rejected of the six denominations. Why is this so?

(a) Here again the nature of the questionnaire enters the picture with its five Protestant groups and single non-Protestant group. The magnitude of the rejection by Catholics of other groups may be a result of the highly disproportionate loading of the questionnaire with references to Protestant denominations. A Catholic examining these questions sees that he is to make judgments about five other groups, all of which are not only non-Catholic but also Protestant. It is possible that the inclusion of other groups, such as Greek Orthodox and non-Christian denominations, would alter the Catholic pattern of extensive rejection.

(b) Catholics have the highest mean dogmatism score (155.48) of all six denominations. "...dogmatic thinking and believing make it possible to ward off threatening aspects of reality and at the same time give one the satisfaction of feeling that one understands it." (2) If we can assume that dogmatic thinking is often a defense against this threat from the external world, we are then faced with attempting to explain why the Catholic group is more threatened than are the other five groups. We can also explore the possible relationship between defense against threat and the marked Catholic rejection of other denominations.

As was mentioned earlier, Catholics are members of a minority group and are, of course, aware of this fact. Incidents such as the speculation about what candidate would get "the Catholic vote" in the 1956 Presidential election, make Catholics even more conscious of their religious affiliation as it influences a variety of their life interests. The days of intense persecution of religious minorities are only as far in the past as one's memories and/or knowledge of World War II. As is true of many religious groups, the religious teachings of the Catholic group warn of a world in which "evil" abounds and temptation lurks everywhere. For these reasons, it is not surprising that Catholics feel threatened.

But why should the Catholic group reject the five Protestant groups so intensely? In historical terms, "protesting" groups initiated unrest within the structure of the Catholic church, broke away from Catholicism, endangered the power of that church by making Catholic converts and threatened the fundamental beliefs of devout Catholics by agitating against certain Catholic dogma. Today, Protestant groups still attract Catholic converts and descry Catholic dogma.

In the present study, the Catholic group was one of six groups under investigation, with the other five groups fitting roughly into one general category. This situation not only re-impressed upon the Catholics their status as a minority group, but also pitted them against five Protestant groups. It is possible that Catholic feelings of being a minority group and a history of Catholic-Protestant conflict accounted, in part, for the high mean rejection scores obtained from Catholic students in this sample.

The Presbyterian denomination tends to be the least rejected of the six groups. By way of providing an explanation of this finding, we quote Rokeach: "...there is least rejection of disbelief subsystems occupying intermediate positions along the similarity continuum." (1) On the Baptist, Catholic and Episcopalian similarity continua, the Presbyterian group occupy either ranks two or three, which can be classified as intermediate positions on the similarity continuum. However, on the Lutheran and Methodist similarity continua, the Presbyterians fall at rank one, indicating that this group is seen by the Lutherans and Methodists as being most similar to them. It is thought-provoking to observe that the high dogmatic Baptists find the Presbyterian denomination even more acceptable than their own Baptist group.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Three hundred fifty-three beginning psychology students filled out a questionnaire composed of the forty-item Dogmatism Scale, thirty rejection questions and similarity rankings. The subjects were members of six religious groups: Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian.

In general, the findings of this study bear out the original hypotheses. With the exception of two reversals of Continua I, Continua II duplicate the previously-determined similarity continua for the six religious denominations. This indicates that there is a relatively consistent manner in which religious denominations view each other; that is, in terms of similarity or dissimilarity.

Five of the six groups demonstrate a relationship between rejection and perceived similarity by rejecting most those denominations which are seen to be either most similar or least similar to their own denomination.

In reference to the rejection pattern of the Methodist group, the present findings reproduce the modified J-shaped curve found by Jensen and Rokeach.

High dogmatists in five groups consistently reject other denominations more than low dogmatists reject other denominations, pointing to a relationship between dogmatism and acceptance or rejection.

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APPENDIX

Date _____ Sex _____ Date of Birth _____
Race or national extraction _____ Religion _____
City and State of Birth _____ Section _____

DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME

The following is a study of what the general public thinks and feels about a number of important social and personal questions. The best answer to each statement below is your personal opinion. We have tried to cover many different and opposing points of view; you may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others; whether you agree or disagree with any statement, you can be sure that many other people feel the same as you do.

Mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Write /1, /2, /3, or -1, -2, -3, depending on how you feel in each case.

/1: I AGREE A LITTLE
/2: I AGREE ON THE WHOLE
/3: I AGREE VERY MUCH

-1: I DISAGREE A LITTLE
-2: I DISAGREE ON THE WHOLE
-3: I DISAGREE VERY MUCH

- ___ 1. A person who thinks primarily of his own happiness is beneath contempt.
- ___ 2. I do not hesitate to make friends with Baptists.
- ___ 3. The main thing in life is for a person to want to do something important.
- ___ 4. I am willing to have a Catholic marry into my family.
- ___ 5. In a discussion I often find it necessary to repeat myself several times to make sure I am being understood.
- ___ 6. Episcopalians are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___ 7. Most people just don't know what's good for them.
- ___ 8. In times like these, a person must be pretty selfish if he considers his own happiness primarily.
- ___ 9. Most Lutherans live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___ 10. A man who does not believe in some great cause has not really lived.
- ___ 11. I would like to have Methodists in my fraternity or social club.
- ___ 12. I'd like it if I should find someone who would tell me how to solve my personal problems.
- ___ 13. I do not hesitate to make friends with Presbyterians.
- ___ 14. Of all the different philosophies which have existed in this world there is probably only one which is correct.

- ___15. It is when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause that his life becomes meaningful.
- ___16. I am willing to have a Baptist marry into my family.
- ___17. In this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what is going on is to rely upon leaders or experts who can be trusted.
- ___18. Catholics are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___19. There are a number of persons I have come to hate because of the things they stand for.
- ___20. Most Episcopalians live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___21. There is so much to be done and so little time to do it in.
- ___22. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward.
- ___23. I would like to have Lutherans in my fraternity or social club.
- ___24. A group which tolerates too much difference of opinion among its own members cannot exist for long.
- ___25. I do not hesitate to make friends with Methodists.
- ___26. It is only natural that a person should have a much better acquaintance with ideas he believes in than with ideas he opposes.
- ___27. I am willing to have a Presbyterian marry into my family.
- ___28. While I don't like to admit this even to myself, I sometimes have the ambition to become a great man, like Einstein, or Beethoven, or Shakespeare.
- ___29. Even though freedom of speech for all groups is a worthwhile goal, it is unfortunately necessary at times to restrict the freedom of certain political groups.
- ___30. Baptists are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___31. If a man is to accomplish his mission in life it is sometimes necessary to gamble "all or nothing at all".
- ___32. Most Catholics live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___33. Most people just don't give a "damn" about others.
- ___34. I would like to have Episcopalians in my fraternity or social club.
- ___35. A person who gets enthusiastic about a number of causes is likely to be a pretty "wishy-washy" sort of person.
- ___36. To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.

- ___ 37. I do not hesitate to make friends with Lutherans.
- ___ 38. If given the chance I would do something that would be of great benefit to the world.
- ___ 39. I am willing to have a Methodist marry into my family.
- ___ 40. In times like these it is often necessary to be more on guard against ideas put out by certain people or groups in one's own camp than by those in the opposing camp.
- ___ 41. Presbyterians are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___ 42. In a heated discussion I generally become so absorbed in what I am going to say that I forget to listen to what the others are saying.
- ___ 43. Once I get wound up in a heated discussion I just can't stop.
- ___ 44. Most Baptists live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___ 45. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who are on the side of truth and those who are against it.
- ___ 46. I would like to have Catholics in my fraternity or social club.
- ___ 47. Man on his own is a helpless and miserable creature.
- ___ 48. I do not hesitate to make friends with Episcopalians.
- ___ 49. The United States and Russia have just about nothing in common.
- ___ 50. In the history of mankind there have probably been just a handful of really great thinkers.
- ___ 51. I am willing to have a Lutheran marry into my family.
- ___ 52. The highest form of government is a democracy and the highest form of democracy is a government run by those who are most intelligent.
- ___ 53. Methodists are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___ 54. The present is all too often full of unhappiness. It is the future that counts.
- ___ 55. Most Presbyterians live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___ 56. Unfortunately, a good many people with whom I have discussed important social and moral problems don't really understand what is going on.
- ___ 57. Fundamentally, the world we live in is a pretty lonely place.
- ___ 58. I would like to have Baptists in my fraternity or social club.

- ___ 59. It is often desirable to reserve judgment about what's going on until one has had a chance to hear the opinions of those one respects.
- ___ 60. I do not hesitate to make friends with Catholics.
- ___ 61. The worst crime a person can commit is to attack publicly the people who believe in the same thing he does.
- ___ 62. I am willing to have an Episcopalian marry into my family.
- ___ 63. In the long run the best way to live is to pick friends and associates whose tastes and beliefs are the same as one's own.
- ___ 64. Most of the ideas which get published nowadays aren't worth the paper they are printed on.
- ___ 65. Lutherans are more public spirited than most other groups.
- ___ 66. It is only natural for a person to be rather fearful of the future.
- ___ 67. Most Methodists live exceptionally moral and virtuous lives.
- ___ 68. My blood boils whenever a person stubbornly refuses to admit he's wrong.
- ___ 69. I would like to have Presbyterians in my fraternity or social club.
- ___ 70. When it comes to differences of opinion in religion we must be careful not to compromise with those who believe differently from the way we do.

71. Here are six religions arranged in alphabetical order:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Baptist | 4. Lutheran |
| 2. Catholic | 5. Methodist |
| 3. Episcopalian | 6. Presbyterian |

IF YOUR RELIGION IS ONE OF THESE:

IF YOUR RELIGION IS NOT ONE OF THESE:

On blank line number one below write the name of your religion. Now arrange the other five religions on the five remaining blank lines, so that the religion which is most similar to yours will be on line two and the next most similar will be on line three. Continue in this way until you have finally put the name of the least similar religion in space six.

On blank line number one below write the name of your religion. Now arrange the six religions listed above on the six remaining blank lines, so that the religion which is most similar to yours will be on line two and the next most similar will be on line three. Continue in this way until you have finally put the name of the least similar religion in space seven.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Note: (At the heading of each new page the code of 71 to -3 (I Agree a little to I Disagree very much) was repeated so it was always fresh in the subjects' attention.)

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