



INSTITUTE FOR
Studies of Religion
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Religion and Delinquency: A Meta Analysis

Byron R. Johnson
Elizabeth Kelly,
Sung Joon Jang

American Scientific Affiliation
Baylor University
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Religion & Health Outcomes

- Hypertension
- Mortality
- Depression
- Suicide
- Promiscuous sexual behavior
- Drug & alcohol use
- Crime & Delinquency

Figure 1. Research Examining the Relationship between Religion and Health Outcomes (2002)

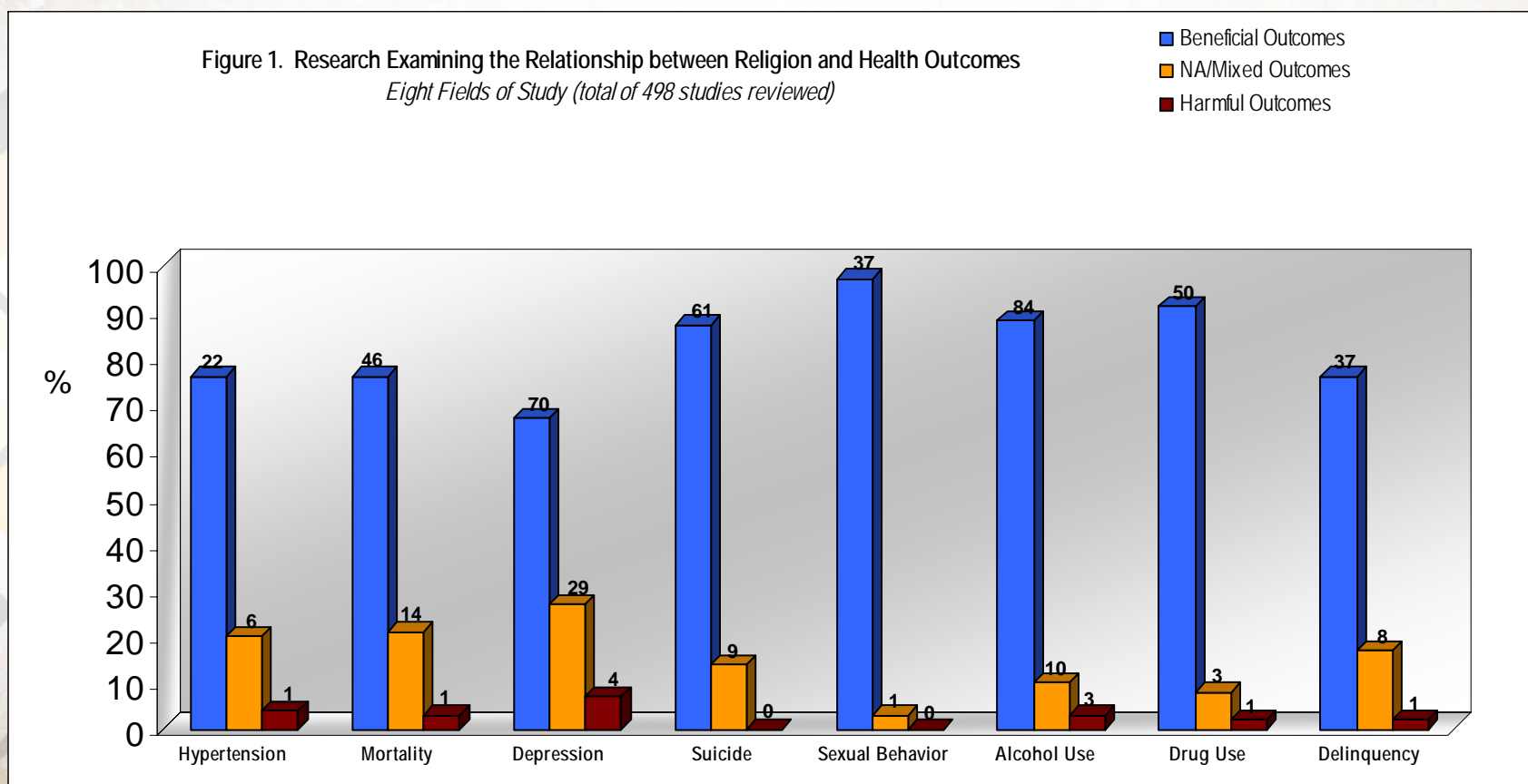
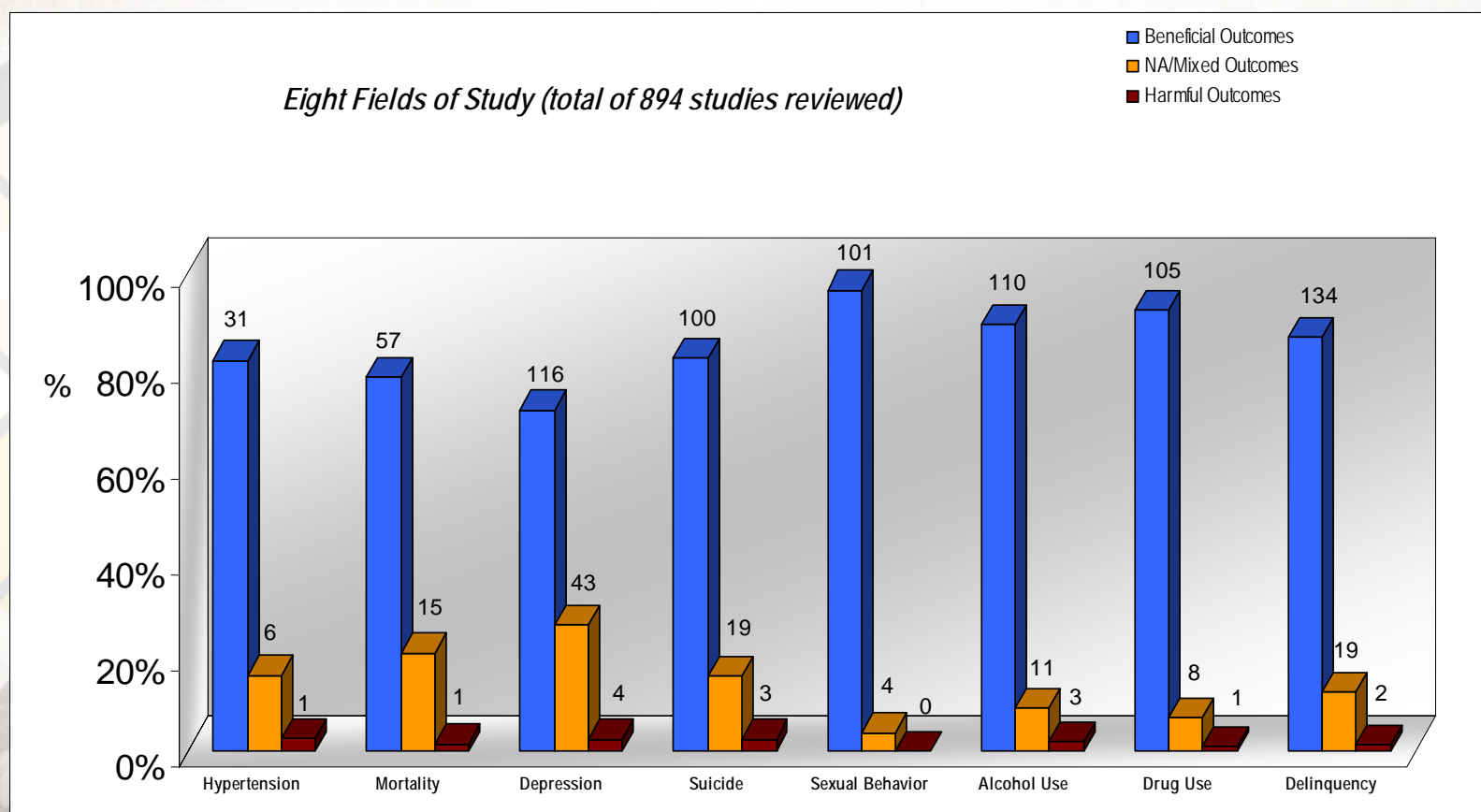


Figure 2. Research Examining the Relationship between Religion & Health Outcomes (2002-2008)





Religion & Prosocial Outcomes

- Well-Being
- Hope/Purpose/Meaning in Life
- Self-Esteem
- Educational Attainment

Figure 3. Research Examining the Relationship between Religion Prosocial Outcomes (2002)

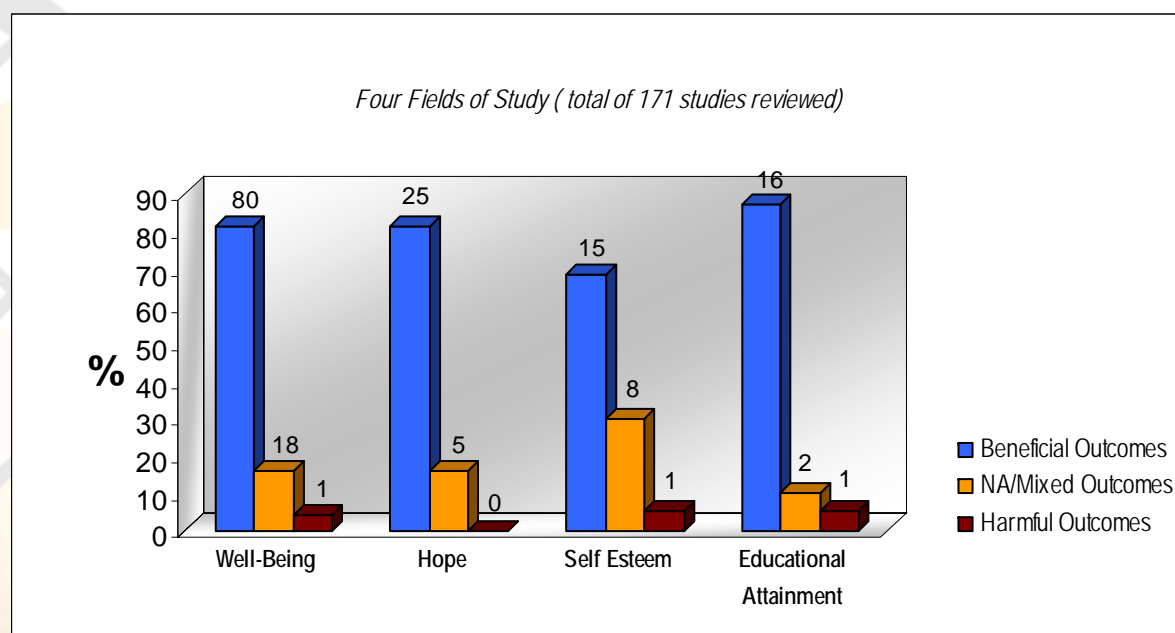
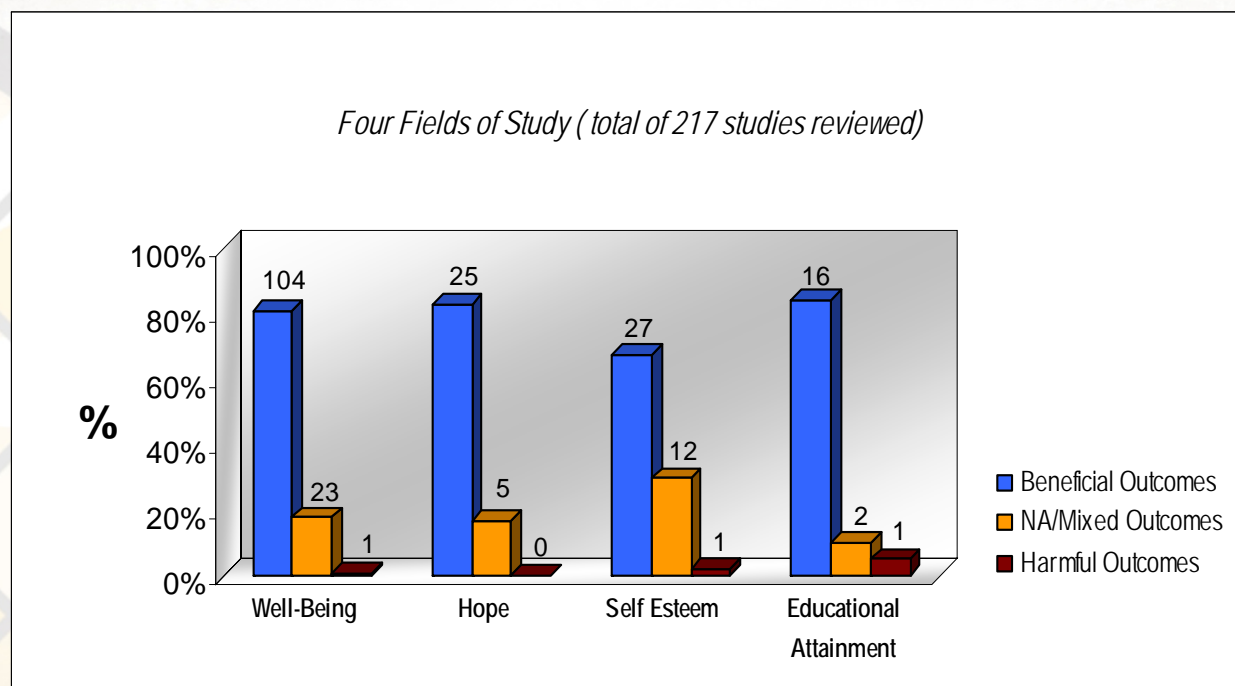


Figure 4. Research Examining the Relationship between Religion & Prosocial Outcomes (2002-08)





ISR's Program on Prosocial Behavior

In 2006 we received a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Department of Justice, to conduct a series of studies examining the role of religion in promoting prosocial behavior among youth.



Disadvantage v. Advantage

- Cumulative disadvantage in criminology
 - Delinquency → Negative structural consequences (e.g., labeling, negative life events, etc.) → Crime
 - A negative causal loop
- Cumulative advantage of prosocial behavior
 - Religious involvement → Positive consequences (e.g., “social capital”) → Prosocial behaviors



1. The Cumulative Advantage of Religiosity in Preventing Drug Use

- *Journal of Drug Issues*, 38:771-798 (2008).
- Within a developmental context the present study empirically demonstrates how the cumulative advantage of religiosity, which we conceptualized as originating from religious upbringing, helps adolescents and young adults avoid getting trapped in the addictive habit of using drugs, whether smoking, drinking, or getting high on marijuana and/or other illicit drugs.



Why Might Religiosity Inhibit Delinquency?

- *Social Learning*: Religious observance and taking religious teaching seriously involves learning prosocial norms and values.
- *Self Control*: Religious observance may build self control.



2. Religion, Self Control & Delinquency

- Revised and resubmitted to *Criminology*
- The results suggest that religious youth exhibit higher levels of self control. Also, self control partially mediates the effect of adolescents' religiosity on marijuana use and drinking.



3. Religiosity & Dynamics of Delinquency: Initiation, Persistence & Desistance

- Revised and resubmitted to *Criminology*.
- Religiosity discourages persistent marijuana use, and may discourage initiation of marijuana use.
- Religiosity does so partly because of its indirect influence on friendships, prosocial attachments, self control, and coping with strain/negative emotionality.
- A strong part of religiosity's effects are unique, and not due to non-religious factors.



4. Adolescent Use of Drugs and At-Risk Drinking/ Smoking in Young Adulthood

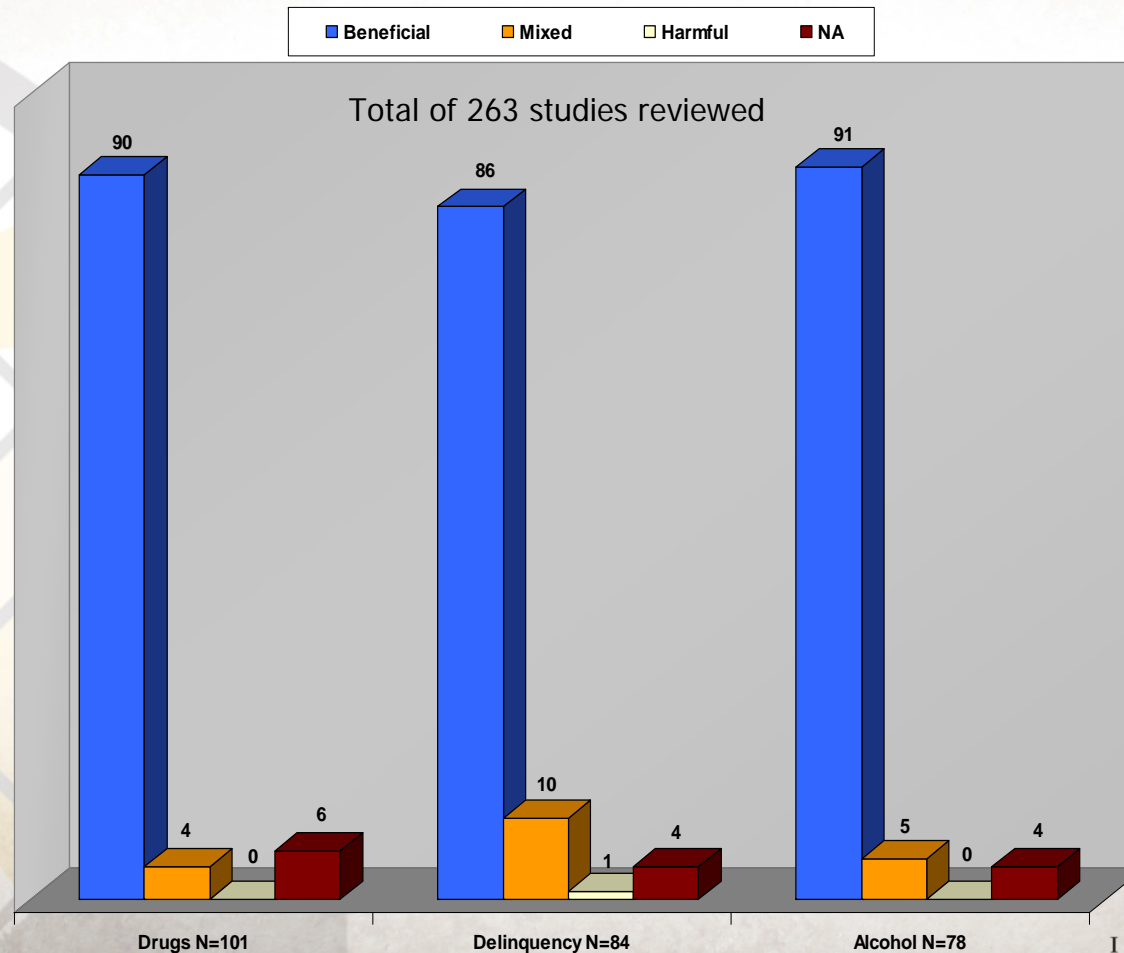
- To be submitted to *J. of Quantitative Criminology*.
- Results show that youth who participated in religious group activities between first and eighth grade were:
 - More likely to be religiously involved during adolescence and young adulthood.
 - less likely to use licit and illicit drugs during adolescence and to engage in at-risk behaviors of drinking and smoking in young adulthood.

5. Why Do Black Youth Use Drugs Less Than White Youth?



- Under review at *Criminology*

6. Meta-Analysis of Research on the Impact of Religion on Delinquency



Research on Religion & Delinquency: Review Summary



- This review provides overwhelming evidence that higher levels of religious involvement and practices make for an important protective factor that buffers or insulates individuals from deleterious outcomes.
- This review of studies on organic religion documents that religious commitment or practices make for an important factor promoting an array of pro-social behaviors and thus enhancing various beneficial outcomes.



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