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THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Religiosity and Hope: A Study of Riverton Teenagers

by

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ABSTRACT

Does religion affect the hopefulness of teenagers? The Bible teaches that Christians can find their hope in Jesus Christ. Would Christian teenagers be more hopeful than non-believers? Does religiosity correlate with hope? These questions are researched in this study among the teenagers of Riverton, Alberta. Riverton (pseudonym) is predominantly Christian and similar in demographics to one hundred other Canadian towns. Data were collected among the population of 273 teenagers through: participant observation, interviews, and by survey questionnaire.

This descriptive correlational study includes a literature review and instruments to measure both hope and religiosity. The instruments developed have acceptable reliability and validity, however, the study discusses the difficulty in adequately capturing the complexity of abstract qualities such as hope and religiosity.

A significant relationship between religiosity and hope is not demonstrated. The study does suggest a relationship between family cohesiveness and hope among teenagers, making recommendations for future research.

DEDICATION

To the late *Dr. Rosemarie Brew* who:
saw potential and claimed it;
saw hope and sought after it;
saw truth and spoke it.

To *Dr. Irving Hexham*:
You have had a part to play in making me think I am better than I think I am.
You have forced me at times. You have let me know that you believe in me.
You have made me get more out of myself.
Now that you have shown me what can be accomplished,
I cannot settle for anything less.

To *Dr. Merlin Brinkerhoff* who is:
to be commended for his tireless effort and integrity.
For ten years he has believed in me, encouraged me, and committed himself
to seeing that this research was completed

To family and friends along the path:
Mom and Dad
Mr. Barry Hawes; Dr. Karla Poeve; Rev. Paul Pearce; and Dr. Roy D. Bell

To a Religious Studies Department
that both stimulated my thinking
and provided fellowship.

Most importantly:
To *Brenda and the boys*;
Thank you, your love has sustained me

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Chapter One

Setting the Scene:

Hope, Despair and the Teenagers of Riverton

Introduction

For seventeen years I have had the privilege of working among adolescents in Western Canada. My work took place within the context of a Christian church based youth ministry. I supervised teen peer groups and youth programs for youth from both church families, and teenagers who had no contact with the church. There were those who professed Christian faith and others who showed little interest in matters of faith.

My work with, and interest in teenagers expanded as I began working for the Baptist Union of Western Canada to serve as the Youth Leadership Coordinator. In this position I acted as a youth ministry consultant for 150 churches across Western Canada.

The framework for this research in the subject area of teenagers, religion and hope is therefore grounded in years of personal observation of and experience with Western Canadian teenagers. It has been augmented today as a father to Jason, my live-at-home representative of the teenage population, with whom I have the privilege of watching as he lives life in search of hope, faith and his future.

As the Youth Leadership Coordinator my exposure to youth culture broadened through my travels. I observed church youth groups in a variety of settings -- large churches, small churches, cities and towns in Canada's four western provinces. The majority of the churches associated with the Baptist Union of Western Canada are located in what we would refer to as rural settings. Over the time, I visited youth in these small towns I noticed a characteristic among the teenagers I came to describe as a "lack of hope."

Finding this lack of hope was ironic given my personal background and perspective. Most of the youth in which I noted this lack of hope were involved with evangelical churches in the community. If anyone should be “hopeful” I thought it would be the ‘Christian’ youth in these church youth groups. It surprised me to find this “lack of hope” as a characteristic of these ‘Christian’ young people.

I had been raised in an evangelical Christian home and was aware that hope is emphasized in Christian teaching as an integral theme. Christians, I was taught, were to be people filled with hope. For several years I had accepted that Christians were people with great hope in life and my personal reading of the Bible supported this view.

The Bible on Hope

The Bible includes 156 verses that refer to hope in the Old and New Testaments. One example from the Old Testament is in the book of Job. Apart from the Psalms, Job has the largest number of verses referring to hope. Most know of Job as a book about the suffering endured by a man when everything dear to him was removed: his wealth, family, friends, and health. Although it is a book filled with “woe is me,” it also points the reader to finding hope in God.¹

In the poetry of the Psalms, many verses compel the reader or listener to put hope in God. This hope, when placed in God, was to enable believers to live a life that stands

¹ Bible verses have been gathered in Appendix A. Verses relating to Job are found in Section A.1.

apart from other people who lack this hope. Their lives would be set apart by character traits such as truth, integrity and strength or positive self-concept.²

The psalmist reveals God as watching carefully over those who put their hope in him.³ The poet of Psalms also reveals the source of hope for his life. Consistently the psalmist finds hope in God and God alone.⁴ The Bible also states that the breadth of hope found in God can endure throughout one's lifetime on earth.⁵ The written scriptures themselves are ascribed as an essential ingredient next to hope. The teachings and promises found in these scriptures give the psalmist a foundation for his hope.⁶ The Psalms suggest that one who finds their hope in God is considered "blessed." Finding hope in God is not just a trait that provides for a rewarding life on this earth. It implies a special relationship with God that would have eternal dimensions.⁷

Continuing through the Bible we find the wisdom literature of the book of Proverbs alludes to hope as something necessary in life. People without hope are called 'sick.'⁸

² Appendix A.2

³ Appendix A.3

⁴ Appendix A.4

⁵ Appendix A.5

⁶ Appendix A.6

⁷ Appendix A.7

⁸ Appendix A.8

The major and minor prophets also speak of positive results from finding hope in belief in God. Followers are told that hope will overcome their fatigue in life and they will not be disappointed. The prophets emphasize that this hope is found in God (Yahweh) alone, and not in the many other gods that abound in society.⁹

The New Testament also emphasizes the effect of hope in this life. The early church, as described in Acts of the Apostles, shows the disciples living with this hope as an integral part of their life.¹⁰

Most readers of the Bible regard the book of Romans as one of the more theological books in the New Testament. In his letter written to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul writes from the context of his hope in God through the Lord (Jesus). Hope here is described as an observable characteristic of Christian believers. Through Jesus, Christians were to receive hope that would allow them to be joyful despite their circumstances. They were to cling to this hope as found in scripture.¹¹

In the epistles, which were letters to the churches of early Christianity, the 'hope' of Christians is again positively referred to as a source of encouragement. Christ, throughout the epistles, is the source providing the hope.¹²

In the letters written to Timothy as a leader in the early church, Jesus is again identified as the hope of Christians. He alone is identified as worthy of our hope.¹³

⁹ Appendix A.9

¹⁰ Appendix A.10

¹¹ Appendix A.11

¹² Appendix A.12

The book of Hebrews similarly contains four references to hope. The last of these proclaims that Christians must hold tight to the hope they profess.¹⁴

Summary of Biblical Review

From the evangelical Christian tradition, and the church teaching I have received concerning the Bible, I came to believe that Christians should be hopeful in life. I thought that if anyone believed in Christ, they should be more “hopeful” than a non-believer. This hope is to be a “living hope” within the life of Christians.¹⁵

I was therefore very surprised to find that the teenagers I met in evangelical churches seemed to lack “hope”. Yet these youths were participants at Christian churches that claim to be preaching a message of hope. There appeared a clear gap between what ministers think they are preaching or communicating, and what teenagers appear to believe. This case of dissonance deserved investigation and prompted this study.

Academic Inspiration

I was also encouraged in my pursuit of this subject area through my reading of academic studies and articles. Two books confirmed my general impression of a need to study teenage beliefs and values in the context of religion. The first was The Emerging

¹³ Appendix A.13

¹⁴ Appendix A.14

¹⁵ Appendix A.15

Generation by Reginald Bibby and Don Posterski.¹⁶ This book highlighted the importance of hearing from teenagers themselves. This was an attempt to get “inside” the lives of Canada’s teenagers. Bibby and Posterski’s book challenged the church in Canada to recognize the emergence of the next generation by becoming more effective in retaining and attracting teenagers.

The second was Gerhard Lenski’s The Religious Factor.¹⁷ Although Lenski did not address hope in his study, he did raise the possibility of measuring a religious factor affecting the level of hope in teenagers. In the reading of Bible verses previously cited Christian hope is described as being observable. This meant that there should be some way of measuring it.

Riverton

As a result of these thoughts I decided to undertake an empirical study of a group of teenagers in a small Canadian town that we will call Riverton.¹⁸ Here I would inquire into a possible relationship between religion and hope.

The results of this research are presented in the remainder of this thesis.

¹⁶ Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski. The Emerging Generation: An Inside Look at Canada’s Teenagers. (Toronto: Irwin, 1985).

¹⁷ Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor: A Sociological Study of Religion’s Impact on Politics, Economics, and Family Life, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, NY, 1961.

¹⁸ The small town of “Riverton” [pseudonym] Alberta was selected as the location for such a study because of: 1. The ability to capture the teenage population; 2. Convenience and ability to undertake field observations; 3. Similarity of demographics.

History and Geography

The site of Riverton was well known to the Plains Indians long before it was discovered by white traders. Bands of Stoney Indians camped on the clear-running mountain river and would often winter at the site. As Western Canada opened up to the white man's development, a small settlement began at this convenient location. It became a popular stop for the cattle ranchers who arrived in Southern Alberta in the late 1870's. By 1884, the community of Riverton consisted of several buildings placed on the horizon. These included a stopping house, post office, store, several houses and some nearby ranches and farms. These settlers planted additional trees contributing to the natural setting of this Western town.

The town is located alongside the river and the railroad, akin to hundreds of prairie towns. A person could easily walk to the center of town from any location in ten minutes.

Given its prairie location, the weather is pleasant in Riverton. This was an element to its popularity with settlers. Riverton is just over 1000 meters in altitude and has an average summer temperature of +16 Celsius. The winter average temperature is minus 4 degrees Celsius.

The town is formed in a grid pattern along the river as the following map shows: (See Figure 1)

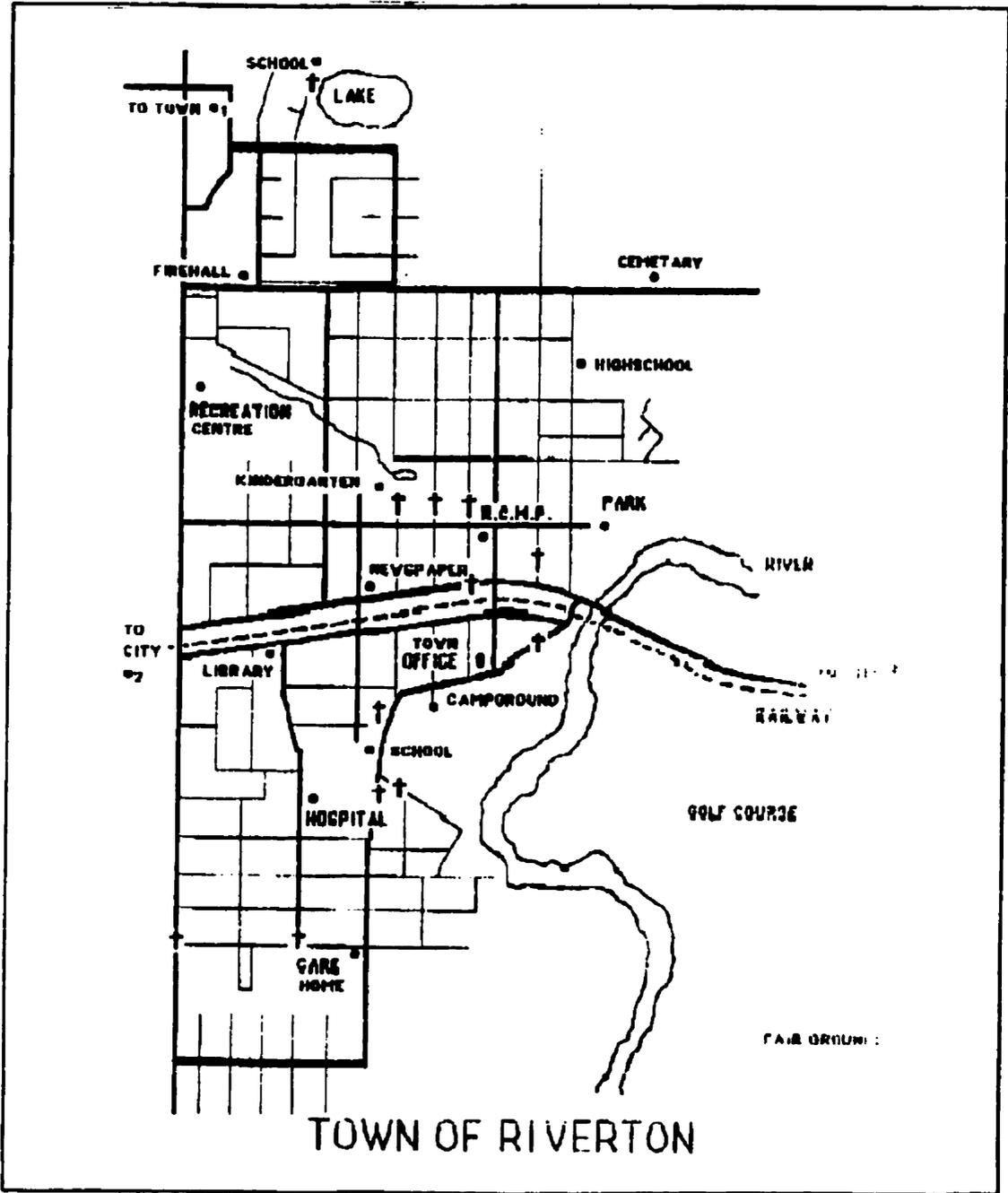


FIGURE 1

MAP OF RIVERTON

To maintain anonymity of the town, dimensions have been maintained while creating a new map for "Riverton."

Town Demographics

Riverton's population in 1990 was 5,754, consisting of 2,820 Males and 2,927 Females.¹⁹ The population of the region, within 40 kilometers of the town, is 19,148. Approximately one hour by car will take a Riverton resident to a choice of two larger urban centers. Additional goods and services are available in these cities.

The community offers citizens the following amenities:

- 4 schools;
- 6 parks;
- 1 golf course;
- 5 banks;
- a recreation complex for swimming and skating;
- a hospital;
- nursing home with paramedic ambulance service;
- a daycare centre and nursery;
- a full service library;
- museum;
- cultural centre;
- 11 service clubs;
- 12 churches;
- and an agricultural exhibition ground.

The economy of Riverton is centered on agriculture and natural resources

However the variety of employment in the town is diverse.

¹⁹ Calgary Regional Planning Commission, Census Results 1990.p.1. Seven people counted in the census are listed as gender "unknown". This accounts for the numbers of male and female not adding up to the population total.

TABLE 1.1
NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT among Riverton Residents*
 Number of Riverton residents employed in various occupational categories. Listed in descending order.

Retail Trade	303
Construction	246
Manufacturing	239
Business	160
Personal Services	158
Education, Health, Social Services.	158
Transportation, Communication	153
Government	147
Accommodation & Food	121
Finance, Insurance, Realtors	119
Agriculture & Forestry	110
Unknown	100
Mining & Oil	94
Other	25

*Based on the Regional Planning Commission, Census Results 1990.p. 1.

Retailers in Riverton find that they have to compete less with the larger urban centers than some might expect. Only 18.2 percent of the labour force commutes daily to a nearby urban center.²⁰ The townspeople who live and work in Riverton demonstrate attitudes of loyalty toward their town by trying to shop locally. Those who have retired in Riverton seem particularly loyal in their shopping and they comprise 26.4% of the adults.²¹

The manufacturing base of Riverton has the potential to expand and diversify. Several industrial companies have examined the feasibility of locating in Riverton, finding the availability of labour; low overhead costs; and transportation links appealing. Their

²⁰ Ibid. P.7.

employees enjoy lower housing costs and the rural lifestyle. Riverton has the opportunity to see new industry emerge in the region. This will also increase the employment in construction and other service industries.

The lifestyle of those dwelling in Riverton is very stable. The majority own their own homes and many have lived in the town for more than 10 years.

TABLE 1.2
TENANCY IN RIVERTON 1990*

Riverton residents were asked to indicate the category that applied to their permanent place of residence.

<u>Tenancy Category</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Own	67.0%
Rent	22.9%
Vacant	4.5%
Under Construction	3.3%
Non-permanent	0.1%
Unknown	<u>2.2%</u>
TOTAL	100.%

*Based on Regional Planning Commission, Census Results 1990.

²¹ Ibid. p.6.

**TABLE 1.3
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE
AT PRESENT ADDRESS***

Riverton residents were asked how long they have lived in their present home.

<u>Length at location</u>	<u>% Riverton Residents</u>
Up to 1 year	27.4%
1 to 2 years	18.2%
3 to 5 years	13.8%
6 to 10 years	12.6%
More than 10 years	24.4%
Unknown	<u>3.6%</u>
TOTAL	100.0%

*Based on Regional Planning Commission, Census Results 1990, p.12.

In 1987 the population projections showed an expected increase of 11.93% by 1991. The natural growth rate for this period would be 4.4%.²² The Census shows an increase of 8% between 1989 and 1990 alone.²³ Riverton is growing. This increased population will over time change the profile and life of the community.

Riverton is predominantly a White, Anglo Saxon community. This is outwardly observable in that the visitor sees very few non-Caucasians. As part of this research a survey was administered to the teenagers of the local high school in Riverton.²⁴ When asked about the ethnic background of their parents, almost one half indicated they were

²² Department of Municipal Affairs Impact Model for Alberta Communities. File 8707.imp. Edmonton: 1987.

²³ Calgary Regional Planning Commission, Census Results 1990, p. 1.

recent arrivals from Great Britain within one generation. Of the remainder, 31% were North American and 15% were Western European (See Table 1.4).

TABLE 1.4
ETHNIC HERITAGE GROUPINGS OF RIVERTON FAMILIES

The Riverton survey asked teenagers: "With which ethnic group would you identify your father/mother?" (e.g. English, German, Japanese)" For clarity, the responses were then collapsed geographically into the following five groupings from the 32 different ethnic groups identified by respondents.

	<u>(% Selecting)</u>
Great Britain	49%
Canadian/American	31%
Western European	15%
Eastern European	4%
Asian	1%

Based on the Riverton Survey, (n=266).

With such ethnic backgrounds it is natural to anticipate a religious profile that reflects Western religions.

Religious Profile and History of Riverton

In keeping with the data on ethnicity the religious make-up of the town is predominantly Protestant in orientation. Church buildings dot the townscape giving both an expression of the present and the past. The Anglican Church (ca. 1904), Nazarene

²⁴ Details of the Riverton survey are discussed further in later chapters.

Church (ca. 1902),²⁵ and the old United Church Manse (ca. 1913),²⁶ bear witness of religious life in the history of Riverton.²⁷

Among the Whites early inhabiting Riverton were Methodists and Anglicans. In 1875 a Methodist Mission was established in a settlement 30 kilometers from Riverton. During the first nine years of this mission's founding there is record of an itinerant Methodist missionary visiting Riverton and holding religious services in the hotel bar.

Moving to a local residence in 1884, Methodist services were held every alternate Friday in Riverton. An official congregation formed in 1886 although a church building was not built until 1902. After the 1925 union of the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, and the Methodists, the church building was used only for Sunday school classes.²⁸

The first Anglican clergy in the area established a mission among the Blackfoot Indians nearby Riverton in 1883. His replacement held the first Anglican services in a mud-roofed cabin on a farm near the present Riverton site. This first service took place July 26, 1885.

²⁵ Originally the Methodist Church.

²⁶ It served originally as the Manse for the local Presbyterian Church, then, after union with the Methodists, it became the residence for the United Church ministers. These three buildings are all listed as Priority Historic Sites for the Province of Alberta, [Alberta Culture Documents](#).

²⁷ Native Indian religious belief was traditional in the area around Riverton until the introduction of Whites and their religion. The first White person to visit the site of Riverton wintered there in 1793-4. From that winter, until 1858, it was used as a camping site for early explorers. Fur traders are reported being in the area after 1858. The Hudson Bay Company traders frequented the area causing the site of Riverton to develop.

²⁸ As a note of interest, following the Second World War the building was purchased by yet another denomination. The Nazarenes moved the building to the present location.

An Anglican parish was established for the district in 1902 and the services held in the Methodist church for the first two years. In 1904 the Anglican's consecrated their church building and today Riverton's Anglicans still worship in this historic landmark.²⁹ The Anglican and United Church are but two of the many other denominations and faiths represented in Riverton. Census Canada describes the religious distribution among adults in Canada as follows:

TABLE 1.5
RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION OF CANADIAN ADULTS 1990**

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Percentage of Population</u>
Roman Catholic	45.2%
United Church	12.3%
Anglican	9.2%
Other Protestant	8.5%
No Religion*	12.1%
Other religions	9.0%
Not Stated	1.7%
TOTAL	100.0%

*Respondents who claim no religious affiliation or preference.

**Based on Statistics Canada: Canadian Social Trends -- Autumn 1991,

p.22.

The youth of Riverton surveyed for this project signified religious preferences for 18 various religious groups although 59.4% were Protestant. The majority chose the United Church (26.8%) and the remainder claimed to be either non-religious

²⁹ Historical anecdotes. Alberta Culture: Document files.

“Nones”(19.2%), Roman Catholic (15.1%), or other Protestant or other religions.³⁰ The following table gives the complete breakdown of religious preference among the teenagers of Riverton.³¹ (See Table 1.6).

³⁰ The term “None” was used by Brinkerhoff in 1986, “The Applicability of Social Distance for Religious Research: An Exploration” , *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 28, No. 2.

³¹ In his Canada-wide research Bibby claimed that teenagers reported their religious preference accurately. For example, when asked what religion they were affiliated with, teenagers did not automatically respond with their parents’ religious preference. Adults, on the other hand, might respond saying, “I’m United” but then never actually attend, or “I am not religious.” Riverton teenagers responded to the survey and interviews with the same degree of candor concerning their religious beliefs and practice. Further descriptions of teenagers’ religious life in Riverton will follow in Chapter Three.

TABLE 1.6
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE OF
RIVERTON TEENAGERS

Teenagers were asked to identify the religious group they identified with from a list of all the visible religious groups in Riverton. A category "Other" was left open ended for students to add any missing from the list provided in the survey. Their responses are listed in percentages by descending order.

(n=269)	% Self Identified
United Church of Canada	26.8
Nones*	19.2
Catholic (Roman)	15.1
Full Gospel	14.2
Anglican	10.6
Baptist	5.3
Lutheran	3.8
Christian Reformed	3.4
Alliance	3.0
Mormon (Latter Day Saints)	3.0
Jehovah Witness	1.5
Other (Independent Protestant)	1.1
Presbyterian	0.8
Ba'hai	0.4
Buddhist	0.4
Hare Krishna	0.4
Hutterite	0.4
Nazarene	0.4
Salvation Army	0.4

*Those who claim no religious preference

Research Procedures

Three research tools have been employed in this study. Data was gathered through:

1. Participant observation,
2. Interviews, and
3. Survey research

A triangulation methodology was employed in the Riverton project. It was selected as a distinct approach in that it yields information that the three research tools may not provide alone. Triangulation is concerned with the interaction of participant observations, interviews and the survey findings, not simply the accumulation of their information.³² It is therefore helpful to examine how each tool was utilized in Riverton.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was undertaken by actually moving into the community for six weeks. A participant observer is one who “gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he studies.”³³ During my time in Riverton I was able to observe social events in the town as they took place naturally. Along with observing I was also able to talk to the people of Riverton and:

³² For more information on triangulation methodology see: Norman K. Dezin, The Research Act, Aldine: Chicago Ill.,1970

- attend various church services,
- meet with clergy,
- visit high school administration,
- meet local government officials,
- shop and visit with local merchants,
- observe teenagers at work and play,
- visit the police officials,
- meet neighbours,
- read the local paper and listen to local radio
- meet a local Realtor and doctor, and,
- generally enjoy life in Riverton.

The value of the participant observation in the Riverton project was that it yielded rich and in-depth insights of teenage life. It did not however provide data that was suitable for statistical analysis. The field notes are qualitative in nature and difficult to quantify. Another disadvantage of this method is the informality with which the observations are selected. They are not selected through probability sampling. For these reasons, the participant observation time spent in Riverton yielded tentative and exploratory findings. These findings were used however to guide interviews with teenagers.

³³ Becker, Howard S., "Problems of Inference and Proof in Participant Observation". *American Sociological Review* 23: 1958. P. 652.

Sampling for Interviews

The second level of the Riverton research was to interview a sample of teenagers. The process began by listing the names of all students registered at the Riverton Secondary School. Each name was sequentially assigned a three-digit number. Employing the simple random sampling method, a table of random numbers was then used to select 70 names for the interview sample.³⁴ Seventy were selected as it was anticipated some would not consent to be interviewed, or that parental authorization might not be obtained. To my surprise all seventy students eagerly accepted the invitation to be interviewed. Of these, the first 50 students were interviewed either one-on-one, or by phone. The content of the interviews was recorded by tape, or detailed notes.³⁵

The interview format was an unstructured, life history type of interview where the teenagers were asked to talk about life in Riverton from their perspectives.³⁶ Although the interviews appeared to be without structure there was a framework to the conducting of the interview. After the first ten interviews, a grouping of topics emerged as predominant interests for teenagers in Riverton. This was very helpful in that I was able to keep the teenagers relating material that was relevant to the research while encouraging

³⁴ Use of the Random Numbers Table was directed by the careful instructions found in Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research (4th Edition)*, Wadsworth Inc.: Belmont California. 1986 pp. 157-160.

³⁵ These interviews followed a basic outline similar to Appendix B.

³⁶ Although appearing to be unstructured to the respondent, in actuality there is a form or structures that is both flexible and controlled. The informant is encouraged by the researcher to relate experiences and attitudes that are relevant to the research problem. These conversations took place naturally and freely among the teenagers of Riverton selected in this sample. For further information on unstructured interviews see Babbie, 1986.

them to discuss experiences, thoughts and feelings naturally and freely. This was accomplished through comments, remarks, questions, gestures and facial expressions.

These interviews yielded 3780 minutes of taped data. Listening and noting the accounts of these tapes was the second aspect of triangulation applied in Riverton. The interviews provide context and setting and were used to illustrate versus being representative statistically.

Survey Questionnaire

The third approach to the Riverton research was a survey questionnaire that was distributed and administered to the entire student population at the Secondary School³⁷.

The stages involved with the survey aspect of the triangulation were:

1. Gaining permission in principal of the School Board based on the permission of the local school and a written confirmation of the survey passing the ethics committee at the university.
2. Gaining permission of the High School.
3. Designing and pre-testing a questionnaire, then revising it.
4. Ethics approval from the Educational Research Ethics Committee at University of Calgary.
5. Establishing a date with the school and its teachers for administering the survey to all the students one day.
6. Duplication of the survey and preparation for gathering the data.
7. Recruiting and training research assistants from University of Calgary in a

³⁷ In that we were able to capture the entire population of students in Riverton Secondary School the project is not weakened by sampling defects.

standardized administration approach. This would allow us to cover the entire school in two of their school periods.

8. Returning the forms to the university for coding and data entry into the computer.

The survey data is the third dimension of triangulation used in the Riverton research which goes beyond mere description. It allows the hypothesis regarding hope and religion to be tested.

The survey data will be intertwined with the data yielded through participant observation and the interviews to illuminate teenage religious life in Riverton. The significant themes identified in the interviews are categorized under the following headings.

1. Family Life

2. Social life

- Leisure activities
- Social Groupings
- Religious Groupings

3. Church life

4. School life

5. Troubles

- Sex

6. Other Struggles:

- Parents
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Suicide
- Dating
- Vandals

Chapter Two will detail interview comments representing each of these headings.

Chapter Two

Interview Results: the Qualitative Documentation Teenage Responses to Riverton

During the course of this research fifty Riverton teenagers were interviewed in addition to administering a survey among the teenagers at the Riverton high school. In this chapter, comments made by the Riverton teens during interviews will be intertwined with data from the survey. In that the interviews were undertaken before the survey was administered, it provided an opportunity to design survey questions specifically to augment or elaborate the interview comments. The interaction of data provides an interesting description of life in Riverton from a teenager's perspective. This will provide a descriptive framework within which to place our examination of religiosity and hope.

Small Town Life

The interviews were conducted by asking the teens to talk about their life history growing up in Riverton. The teenagers were both interesting and articulate in commenting on Riverton. Affection and appreciation were frequently expressed concerning the virtues of small town life.

What I like about living in a small town is that you can walk down the street and it is really pretty. There are lots of trees and in the city you can walk down the street and there might not be any trees.

Grade Twelve female.

I like it that you walk down the street and you know the people. It is not like living in a big city where no one knows you. That is why I like going to [nearby city] sometimes, because no one knows me there..³⁸

Grade Eleven female

The mixed blessing of Riverton's size is expressed in the phrase, "because no one knows me there..." used to describe something that they liked about the big city. Teenagers, it seems, do feel a need for some time and some place to have anonymity. The occasional trip to a larger centre seems to provide this outlet for them. Their positive expressions about "small town" life however, far outnumbered their need to escape to a city.

The size of the town of Riverton was described by one teenager as a reason for the presumed "hopefulness" among the youth of the town.

I think that teens have hope if there are people that care about them. If they have a good job, or if they can get a good job. Just knowing that they are loved will provide hope for them. Knowing that there are other people out there that love them.

Grade Eleven female.

Riverton teenagers generally like their town. They like being known and enjoy the size of the town for this reason.

Family Life

The adolescents of Riverton were reluctant to discuss their family life

³⁸ City name deleted to preserve anonymity.

directly during the interviews. They were more revealing in this area through the survey.³⁹

During the interviews, details concerning their family were limited to information about the number of children in the family; vocations of parents; and how long they had lived in the Riverton area. Often insight was gained regarding Riverton family life through comments made by teenagers on other issues. This was especially true in discussions about discipline or teenage troubles. For example:

I'm not allowed to do much around here because I am not allowed to stay out too late. The latest I have ever stayed out is eleven.. Because my friend got permission to stay out till eleven and my parents are really good friends with her parents and they talked about it together. Therefore I don't go to parties very much . . . and I think that is good, but there really isn't that much to do from Grade Nine on. . . My girlfriends wouldn't probably drink at the parties, but it would be nice to just show up and that sort of thing - go and talk to people. Like, I'm not saying my parents are mean or anything - they are not really strict - but they're just concerned and a lot of my friends parents don't really care about them. I'm glad my parents are actually [concerned]. I'm still only 14 years old and I can't expect too much.

Grade Eight female.

Of the teenagers interviewed, 15% were in single parent homes, and 25% were in homes where one of their parents had remarried. This breakdown of marriage was identified by the teenagers as being hard on some young people.

³⁹ Teens seemed to be unreserved when answering the survey. The anonymity of the survey positively aided their willingness to respond.

School life, troubles at school - that's what kids worry about. If they don't think they've got any friends or something..I know a lot of kids around here have got divorced parents and so they might have troubles at home or something that might set a spark or something.

Grade Twelve female.

Although seemingly hesitant to speak forthrightly about family life, teenagers were very straightforward in talking about their social life, or lack of it.

Social life

There are three sub-themes examined in researching Riverton's teenage social life: leisure activities; social groupings and religious teenagers. The first to be examined is that of leisure activities.

Leisure activities

For the teenagers in Riverton, their social life is somewhat limited due to a lack of facilities.⁴⁰

There is nothing to do here. There is no shopping here! You have to go into the city.

Grade Ten female.

Riverton is a small town and the teenagers perceive a lack of things to do. Ironically, they also spoke warmly of one day raising their own family in this small town. This gives some

⁴⁰ This lack of facilities is perhaps more a perception than a reality. Riverton is quite well equipped with recreational centres for a smaller town. The facilities that exist however, do not seem to be what teenagers are seeking, as they describe their lack of things to do.

indication of a positive attitude towards their small town life along with other comments related to the positive aspects of Riverton on their upbringing.

You know everybody here.. They make you feel like the town is your home and the adults are really quite kind to you here.

Grade Eleven female.

You can make friends easier in Riverton because you see them all the time. You get to know everyone.

Grade Ten female.

While all of this appears positive it is perhaps more accurate to think of their being a love-hate relationship between teenagers and their town. They love their relationships with people, and being known by everyone yet they also feel there is little for them to do within these relationships. What are teenagers to do when there is "nothing to do?"

A series of questions were asked in the survey to determine the answer to this question. Teenagers were asked about their level of participation in leisure activities. They were given four possible responses: Very often; Sometimes; Seldom; and Never. Table 2.1 represents the frequency of choice for "Very Often" over a variety of leisure activities. For comparison, Bibby's national survey data for the same questions is included. This shows how Riverton teenagers differ from, and are similar to, the Canada wide data. (See Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1
PARTICIPATION IN LEISURE ACTIVITIES
BY TEENAGERS:
RIVERTON AND CANADIAN DATA

Teenagers were asked, "How often do you . . .?" for the activities that follow. This Table compares those who responded "Very Often" in both the Riverton data and the National survey administered by Bibby and Posterski in Project Teen Canada.

<u>How often do you...?</u>	<u>Riverton%</u>	<u>National %</u>	<u>(n)*</u>
Listen to music.....	89	90	273
Watch television.....	47	57	272
Sit and think.....	47	44	273
Participate-sports.....	44	39	272
Spend time on a hobby.....	43	34	271
Attend parties.....	36	40	273
Follow sports.....	36	43	273
Read magazines.....	36	32	273
Read books.....	31	29	273
Watch a video.....	31	n/a	272
Dance.....	30	40	273
Work out.....	26	37	273
Read the paper.....	23	37	273
Go to a movie.....	22	17	273
Follow the news.....	21	35	272
Attend a sports event.....	20	27	273
Go to arcade.....	12	13	271

*The "n" column pertains to Riverton data for individual questions.
 National data, n=3530

The teenagers of Riverton demonstrate the same passion for their music as teenagers across the country. Listening to music dominates for teenage leisure time almost doubling the percentage watching television. Based on my experience working with youth, and their families, most adults feel completely out of touch with popular music today. Parents are often very uncomfortable with the music of their teenagers unable to accommodate a style different from their own personal preference.

Adults often feel that teenage music is a trivial idiom - not to be taken seriously. Yet young people in Riverton take this idiom very seriously. Some 89% saying that they listen to music "Very Often," and no teenager appeared exempt from music's influence.⁴¹

Teenagers gather to spend hours listening to music. They listen, talk and have fun - all around music. All teenagers interviewed stated that listening to music, usually on a city pop music radio station, was an activity they engaged in. Music is never very far away from the teenagers of Riverton. When asked who his favourite music group was, one respondent lamented,

Oh there are so many it is really hard to pin down one..Bruce Springsteen I guess is a very big one, Tom Cochrane and Red Rider, Bon Jovi, and I like a whole bunch of others.

Seventeen year old male

Time spent reflecting - sitting alone and thinking - is another activity showing similarity between the Canadian National and Riverton data. Almost five in ten Riverton teenagers spend considerable time sitting and thinking. Some teenagers sarcastically expressed that there is not much else to do in Riverton. Apparently this is not an activity that stems from the 'negative

effect' of living in a small town. The national sample shows similar results for youth from all sizes of communities. The Riverton and national data shows teenagers enjoy being alone chasing their ideas, dreams and thoughts.

Teenagers also enjoy being together, and parties are a favourite gathering place. Over one third of Riverton teenagers attend parties "Very often." Here they enjoy their friendships and their music. Though there would be more parties to choose from in a larger centre, this does not seem to affect the general 'party' attitude. Riverton teenagers join their Canadian counterparts as being party goers and for those who want them, parties are plentiful in Riverton. We must note that most of these parties do involve the serving and consuming of alcohol.

Riverton teenagers like being together - to "hang out." There are some popular hangouts that were known by all the youth interviewed. One hangout was identified as the "Arcade." It is a local games/pool hall. This was the only indoor setting where youth are welcome to come to play games, visit, and smoke.

Teenagers in Riverton party and go to movies, stuff like..just basically that, hang out together..go to the Arcade.

Grade Twelve female.

We have the Arcade here. A lot of kids go there but there are different groups of kids. Like there are the kids that are really, you know, high class - rich and they go to [nearby city] or where-ever. But if you don't have a driver's license it is hard to go there, and you would sit and probably watch a movie at someone's house. That's about it. There is not much to do.

Grade Twelve female.

⁴¹ There were no teenagers that responded with "Never", 9.6% Sometimes, and only 1.1% "Seldom". (n=272)

When this research began in Riverton, there was a Youth Drop In Centre at the nucleus of town. This Centre was eventually closed due to lack of continued government funding. Its demise was marred by rumours concerning those teenagers who frequented the facility. Many teenagers felt that the teenagers who hung out at the drop in center actually kept other teens from going there. The majority of teenagers did not view the Centre as a socially desirable place to be. The local Arcade was actually valued as having a higher sense importance and desirability as a hangout.

There used to be a teen drop in centre where they had a pool table and stuff, but more people go to the Arcade than ever went to the teen centre.
Grade Eleven female

The other two hangouts frequently referred to by teenagers are outdoor party venues. These spots are somewhat isolated, private areas close to the river that flows through town. Here, teenagers hold "bush parties" where drinking alcohol and occasional drug use take place. The local police are well aware of the locations and frequently monitor the happenings there. Although these hangouts were well known, no teenager interviewed would readily admit hanging out at them. Most hangouts are identified by youth as the domain of undesirable social groups.

To have fun many teenagers go to [an outdoor party location] but as far as staying here - there are lots of parties. I haven't been to any parties but I know that lots of people have them out at [an outdoor party location]. I've

been there but it wasn't during a party.. For shopping I go to [a nearby city] and that is about it. I go to the malls there. Around here I just buy records and go to the drugstore for stuff.

Grade Eleven female.

Shopping in an urban centre is perhaps the most popular activity mentioned during interviews. The survey shows that 82.2% of these teenagers visit a nearby city more than once a month. Of these, 56.9% make the journey 2-3 times per month or greater.⁴² Almost weekly, teenagers travel out of town to shop.

The lack of stores providing teenage selections in Riverton drives them to want to shop elsewhere. A day shopping in one of the nearby cities with your friends - and your parents money - is spoken of as the "ultimate" in social events by one Grade Eleven male:

Everyone shops in [a nearby city]. That is what you do. There is nothing to buy here if you are a teenager. Besides it's fun to get away and get lost in the city. Sometimes we will catch a movie while we're there. Around here [Riverton] there is no real place to go. There are no real restaurants..no real shopping.

Grade Ten female.

Another popular after school and evening social function for teenagers was the gathering of small friendship clusters in private homes. This means a group of four, and possibly up to eight, would congregate in one of their homes to watch a rented video movie. This was an

⁴² The question asked, "How often do you travel to a nearby city?" Although there was not a question on the survey to indicate their frequency of shopping the teenagers spoke of shopping in every reference to their travelling.(n=273)

important focus for teenage social life in Riverton with 86% of survey respondents "sometimes" or "very often" participating.⁴³ This was articulated by one Grade Eleven male:

The most common thing that we do is get together for videos at somebody's house. Sometimes their parents will go out and we'll rent a movie and invite our friends over. This is really common. You always hear about video parties taking place, but they aren't for everybody. Like only a few people usually get together at one house, but I mean there may be a whole bunch of those going on all at once.

Note also that there are very few expenses involved with gathering in homes and therefore such gatherings can be undertaken more frequently. These gatherings were very significant for the adolescents. To be able to say that you were going over to "so and so's" house to watch a movie was a status symbol of sorts. The importance of "who's" house must be emphasized as it relates directly to the particular social group one belongs to. The young people who gathered for these video nights were stratified by a somewhat complex system of social groups or cliques.

Social Groupings

The youth of Riverton defined themselves in terms of social groupings. The most popular and frequently mentioned were: Skaters; Preppies; 'The Family'; Jocks; Cowboys/Farmers; Bible Thumpers and so forth. These labels are used frequently to describe teenagers in Riverton.

"Skaters" are those who ride skateboards around town and tend to have a particular style of haircut where it is very long at the front and swept across one's face.

⁴³ The Survey asked, "Thinking now of your life outside of school, how often would you estimate that you watch videos?"

"Preppies" is a nickname originally used for preparatory school students. These are stereotyped in Riverton as the somewhat snobbish, well dressed, arrogant students.

"The Family" are middle and upper class students who were very good friends and had been for years. This was not a "tough" group yet very influential at the high school. They were all very good friends who cared for one another.

"Jocks" are mostly males who participate in sports. It includes the hockey, baseball and football players along with runners and other athletes. They exuded a tough image.

"Cowboys/Farmers" are just that. They would drive to school in their farm trucks and portrayed a roughneck, rodeo athlete persona.

"Bible Thumpers" was the term given to any youth who portrayed themselves publicly as religious.

Its like they [teenagers of Riverton] are all divided into little groups, right. That's kinda just how it is. One group parties all the time, there is one down at the Arcade, there's Workers, the religious sect . . . The Bible Thumpers to put it crudely and obviously those are all the people who have an interest in religion. I guess we don't really have any Head Bangers..Preppies we refer to them in other terms - not quite so polite..Jocks, and that kinda includes other people who think they are Jocks. There is another group that can't really get their name pinned down..they are just kinda average.

Grade Ten male.

There are Skaters, and Cowboys, and what else..Grubs..That is about it. The Preps dominate the school.

Grade Ten female.

There are the Skaters, the skateboarders, and then there are the Preppies and the other all-round Normal people..I hang around with the normal crowd..just whatever.

Grade Twelve female.

I guess there are the Preppie kids who hung around together. We have a few Head Bangers but most of them just fit in with the Preppies. There are many of them.

Grade Ten female.

The Skaters, they don't get along with anybody. The Cowboys, they fight with the rich Kids..That's about how it is.

Grade Twelve female.

There are a couple of guys who are Skaters. And there is one guy in our town who is kinda an outcast - shaved head and all that stuff, coloured hair. There really aren't that many kinds of kids.

Grade Eleven female.

All the students at the school are seemingly identified with one group or another, although the "normal" group is a catch all. It is used for those who do not stand out in any way.

There are a lot of cliques and stuff like that in Riverton. People get into a group of kids and once you are in one group and you want to switch over to a different group of kids, they think, well, you were that - you were with a group that had a bad reputation and you can't come in with our group.

Grade Nine male.

Although these were the observations of a 14-year-old the thoughts were echoed almost exactly by an older student:

There are a lot of cliques and stuff here in Riverton. If you are in one group and you want to be with another group, they, a lot of times, think "Well you were with this other group and they had a bad reputation and so you can't come in with our group." This town is quite cliquey actually.
Grade Twelve female.

Of particular interest to this study is the reference to "Bible Thumpers," those youth who were labeled as religious in Riverton.

Religious Teenagers

The religious youth labeled "Bible thumpers" are almost exclusively Christian.

There is one group that is the church goers, the Bible Thumpers as everyone calls them. They go to their church all the time. Every night, you know. They don't believe in..well, some of them did not even believe in going to the Grad [party] when they were graduating.
Grade Twelve female.

Apart from Christianity, no other religion was brought up or discussed during the interviews. Even when asked directly, teenagers seemed unable to identify other religions.

Am I aware of other religious groups in Riverton apart from Christian?..I don't know any.

Grade Twelve female.

Most of the comments about religious youth at the school tended to be negative.

Religious people were perceived and described as being less popular.

There is sort of a religious clique but, well, people don't really recognize them because they are not really popular. They are just sort of there, they go to church..and we just kinda ignore them so I guess they are kinda labeled like that.
Grade Twelve Male

Religious life does not really affect me.. There are some at the school, well one group at this one church and there is one girl in one of my classes who is really religious..She's not really popular.

Grade Eleven female.

Religious youth groups from three of the town's churches were mentioned by most Riverton youth as an option for activity. Few of those interviewed however, ever attended these groups. ⁴⁴They were simply aware of their existence, but not socially involved with them.

I would have to say that the United Church is the most influential. Maybe it is just because I have gone there, well it has always been the "church" to go to sort of thing.

Grade Eleven female

For those teenagers who admitted being a part of these church youth groups, some benefits were identified. They commented that having many churches in the town, created a larger number of Christian youth. This special group of Christians created a friendship base for some as described by this grade ten student:

⁴⁴ The three church youth groups mentioned were associated with the Baptist, Full Gospel, and United Churches.

Mostly, in class we just talk amongst each other. Out of class, at lunch or whenever, okay there is the ISCF [Inter School Christian Fellowship] group which is the Christian kids they all group together. I know that one in particular. Once a week we would all get together but apart from that if you saw another one of the Christian kids in the hallway you would say "hi" whereas you might not do that with someone else . . . I would be glad to be called a Bible Thumper because I have studied the Bible, but people think of it negative because I guess a lot of people mock being a Christian because they don't know how to relate and I feel that people do it because they don't know anything about it. So they go completely negative rather than trying to understand.

Grade Ten female.

I don't hang around with the kids at school a lot, I hang around with the kids at church. We have youth group every Friday or Saturday depending. A lot of the time we go over to the church and play games. We often go on trips together, skating, swimming and to concerts and stuff like that.

Grade Ten female.

Most of the religious youth in Riverton go un-noticed by the general youth population. If they do not explicitly identify themselves as a part of the "Bible Thumpers," they seem quietly to blend into the scene and only show themselves during certain conversations. As one unchurched youth described:

I don't know many religious people, who are clearly religious. We don't go [to church] but I have one of my friends who is really religious. She goes to the United Church and I know of a number of people who go to the Baptist Church, but I don't go. A lot of people make fun of the religious kids at school. There is one boy in my class who is very religious and we will have some discussions in class, like about abortion and he gets carried away and comes on strongly. I think he is a very nice person, and he is very kind but he just disagrees a lot. He goes to the Full Gospel Church.

Grade Eleven female.

Comments from teenagers interviewed also provided insight as to their perceptions of "church life" in Riverton. This was a significant theme of the interviews due to the nature of this research.

Church Life

Does religion in Riverton have any affect on me?..Not really.
Grade Twelve female.

Riverton, although populated with many Christian churches, appears to have a teenage population uninfluenced and somewhat unimpressed by their presence.

Religion in Riverton does not really have any affect on me, not really. My best friend went to church two or three times a month. A couple of other people I know go to church..

Grade Ten male

I don't think that I would turn to the church in a time of trouble. I don't go to church, and I don't know anybody there. I wouldn't want to tell anybody that I didn't know..It's hard to say, some kids would go.

Grade Twelve female.

Although those who were unchurched knew about some Riverton churches having an active youth group, they were very obscure when asked to identify exactly which churches had such groups.

There is one church that has a youth group and they have things going on all the time for teenagers. I don't even know what the name of it is.

Grade Twelve female.

Churches in Riverton had both a perception problem and very little name recognition among teens in the town.

The Church attendees among teens interviewed naturally made more positive comments concerning religious life in their town. They expressed some benefits to having many churches in Riverton.

I guess because there are so many church people around it keeps you on your toes. You try not to do bad things because it will get back to the church. So in that way it keeps you, I guess good. A lot of Christian friends have helped because you don't have to fit in with the drinking and that with the non-Christians.

Grade Twelve female.

Concerning whether one church is better than another in Riverton, one student responds:

All churches have their problems I feel. Sure you pick a church over another because of problems in some areas but, if you go to another church you will just find problems in that church. They will just be different ones.

Grade Ten female.

Other church attendees commented on the contact, or lack of contact by churches and their groups with those youth outside the church.

I invite some of my friends to things we do at the church. I try to make it subtle - that it is going to be a church outing - that way it is not as though it's a church group yet you are having fun and you are with church kids and it shows them that Christians can be fun. I guess if we were to be sitting at the church and having a Bible Study, I wouldn't invite people from my school. It would have to be something fun.

Grade Ten female.

A lot of morals come from the Bible I feel, and a person might feel comfortable in a church in a Bible study if you were discussing morals. A lot of people have the same morals and if you discuss something like that and then related it to the Bible they might think, "Oh! That comes from the Bible," but they could still join in the discussion.

Grade Ten female.

A church youth group could do more fun things to get more teenagers out. I think that the church should show them that church is fun.

Grade Ten female.

According to the comments made about churches in Riverton, the church is not perceived at the core of teenage social life. School on the other hand is the centre of social life for teenagers in Riverton.

School Life

The Secondary School serves as the hub for social life in the town. Teenagers contact one another at school - they connect. In this setting they may choose to participate in a school sponsored activity. Sometimes they arrange to do something together after school. They may even skip school classes to take part in social happenings, big or small. The school is the main contact point for socializing and was mentioned in every interview referencing teenage social life in Riverton.

The school in Riverton is comprised of both Junior and Senior high grades in the same building. This was not seen as detrimental by the students interviewed. In fact, many expressed liking the mixture of ages and grades in the same location.

I would include the 8's and 9's in a lot more activities if I could change one thing.

Grade Eleven female

If I could change something about our school it would be to have the Junior and the Senior Highs do more things together. I have some good friends who are in Junior High and although our school is together (both Junior and Senior High in the same building), we never really do that much together.

Grade Eleven female

There is a very high level of satisfaction with the school's administration among the students. Few changes are sought or desired other than their desires to do more

Things as an entire student body. They like both Junior and Senior High together. The general attitude of the students interviewed was positive towards school.⁴⁴

My school is great! The teachers really do teach you..I've learned a lot.
Grade Ten female.

The school is really run well. Like they are interested in everybody and they are even interested in our ideas in areas.
Grade Eleven female.

I think that the school is run really well. If you have a problem there, you go to your teacher and if that doesn't work you can go to the principal and usually it was settled there.
Grade Ten male.

Achieving high grades was very important to the teenagers interviewed, although not all were able to attain the grade level they would desire.⁴⁵

The only thing I would change at the school would be to try to make the students be more attentive at times. Sometimes the teacher is trying to teach you something and you get distracted by other kids talking. I wouldn't change anything about how the school is set up.

Grade Twelve female

⁴⁴ As reported in The Emerging Generation (p.32), the national average for students who receive a great deal of enjoyment from school is only 15%. In the Prairie region it is only 11%. From the field observation and interviews I would assume the percentage in Riverton to be much higher.

⁴⁵ This was confirmed by the survey in that the distribution of final grades anticipated by the students formed a normal bell curve.

A lot of my friends and I are sort of labeled as snobs. We really aren't, we just used to hang around together a lot. Not as much now as we used to..now we are just trying to get our school work done. We aren't really a group anymore.

Grade Eleven female.

The size of school in a town like Riverton allows everyone to know one another. The teachers are well known by the teenagers and their strengths and weaknesses were identified with ease.

There are a couple of teachers I don't really care for, but that is about it. I don't know why I don't like them. They are really all very nice. The principal and I have never run into each other very much, but you know - no one is supposed to like the principal sort of thing..But he's all-right you know.

Grade Eleven female.

I liked most of the teachers at the school. There is one teacher I didn't like, but I don't think anyone did. Other than that I got along really well with the teachers..It has mostly been the same teachers all the time I have attended the school.

Grade Ten female.

In summary, there is a high level of respect for school and a recognition of it as an important part of the social life in Riverton.

Teen Troubles

Riverton teenagers prefer to keep out of trouble yet “trouble” is a reality for some Riverton teenagers. When asked what they meant by trouble; pregnancy, stealing and drugs were identified as some of the worst things that can happen to a teenager in Riverton.

What causes trouble? Lots of things like drugs and alcohol, and stuff like that. There aren't many things, like I don't do any, but there are lots of things - I think. Like especially things like lying, and running around, drinking.. There are only a couple of kids in our whole school that use drugs. Alcohol - that is what the average kid in high school does.. Kids just know someone who is older who will get it for them and they usually go to [a nearby town].. There is a group of guys there who will buy it for them. Then they really think they are cool..

Grade Eleven female.

Drinking is, I guess you would call it, 'quite in.' Drugs are not so much with us teenagers. They are used more by older people. I know a lot of people in the older generation, like 25 to 35 whatever..

Grade Twelve female.

A girl being pregnant in a small town is really bizarre. Recently one of my friends just was. It wasn't that hard the first month. When everybody found out, everyone was talking about it behind her back, and whispering and everything. But then they just started treating her like she was a normal kid.

Grade Twelve female.

The fear expressed most frequently when discussing trouble is that of being ostracized by friends and the community. Becoming the brunt of rumors at school is a haunting fear that teenagers identified. Being a compact environment, stories circulate very fast and rumors spread quickly.

If you do have a problem or something, everybody finds out about it, in a small town..Lots of gossip I guess.

Grade Twelve female.

Sex

Sexual activity among teenagers in Riverton was spoken of in interviews as a concern.

I think that sex is a legitimate problem in Riverton, like there are quite a few kids who have that problem, but I am not sure that it is really a big problem.

Grade Nine male.

Teenagers are sexually active especially, well not so much with the Grade 9's that I know of, but the Grade 10's - especially the Grade 10's I know of many girls who are and they have a real reputation but for the guys - well it seems okay for them. It's okay for guys to do it but it is not okay for girls to do it. But there are some girls who present themselves that way I guess. They are the few girls that everyone knows and everyone gawks at. I'm not judging them or anything like that.

Grade Ten female.

Some student's remarks concerning sexual activity showed that they viewed this as normal teenage behaviour and not an enormous concern in Riverton.

Sexual activity...I guess everybody looks to it as a cool thing to do, if you have... Well, you know... You don't talk a lot about it. If it happens, it happens.

Grade Nine female.

Other Struggles: Parents, Booze and Drugs

More frequently mentioned were the pressures of parental and family struggles. These pressures consume much teenage thinking time. The Riverton teenagers expressed a need for stability, support, and love within their family and home.

A lot of teenagers have feuds with their parents, like coming home drunk too many times. I don't think that there is a lot of trouble among youth in Riverton. All through my High School I did not hear very much about drugs being in our school. You usually heard about them being in (another school in a nearby town). Drinking, I have heard people brag about it. Personally I don't drink but I think that there is more to drink around here.
Grade Twelve female

Another concern is substance abuse. The local R.C.M.P. Detachment view alcohol as the number one substance abused by teenagers in Riverton. Alcohol seemed readily available to underage youth.

Alcohol is obtained by getting older kids to get it for them.
Grade Eleven female.

I know that a lot of teenagers get into the liquor store with false ID.
Grade Ten female.

There was very little substance abuse noticed or referenced except for alcohol. Alcohol was the "abuse" of preference among those interviewed. The survey affirmed this observation revealing how often teenagers drink alcohol in Riverton. (See Table 2.2).

TABLE 2.2
FREQUENCY OF ALCOHOL USE
AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

How often would you estimate that you drink alcohol?

"Very Often"	11.7%
"Sometimes"	37.4%
"Seldom"	28.2%
"Never."	22.7%

(n= 273)

While over 3/4 of the teenagers surveyed used alcohol to some degree, other drugs and substances were seemingly looked down upon by the teenagers. Other substances were viewed as unacceptable within their social network. They suspected some youth at the school were using drugs, but they were identified as "the Loners."

Getting Help

If a teenager was struggling and sought help, the smallness of Riverton was viewed as a hindrance in trying to get help with a personal problem.

Us kids are quite close with all our teachers. We know them. I guess it's not like a great big school or anything you know . . . That's a plus and a minus. You know them too well and it is hard to reveal..well it depends on the nature of the problem.

Grade Twelve female.

You know a lot of people and you know your teachers better so if you have a problem either with school or whatever you have more confidence about talking to them because you know them better.

Grade Twelve female.

Being unaware of where they would go for help becomes, in itself, a pressure for teens. When asked about the role of the church in Riverton for teens in 'trouble', only those students who associated with the Christian group at the school expressed a willingness to have their minister counsel them in times of trouble.

If I were in trouble I would probably turn to a pastor, but apart from that, I guess a friend. I don't know where others would go.

Grade Ten female.

There was one minister, from the Christian Reformed Church, who was mentioned by a few teenagers who did not attend his church. He was known to have been of assistance to one girl. She had been "in trouble" and sought out his help. Through quietly helping her, the word spread throughout the school that he was "an okay guy."

The nature of an individual's "trouble" might be the determinate of where a teenager

would turn for help. This is especially so when one considers the close relationships within the community. The two obvious barriers facing anyone desiring to assist a teenager with help are:

- 1) The closeness of the community, and
- 2) The fear that everyone will know of his or her problem.

Students are generally motivated to avoid trouble by the fear of the latter. They would prefer to "hang out" with a circle of friends who did not get into trouble. One respondent admitted that her circle of acquaintances do not get into much trouble:

If someone told me that somebody was in trouble then I would probably think that they have been arrested. If it was one of my friends then I would panic and think, Oh no what has happened? I don't think of my friends as getting in trouble by being bad, I picture them more as having something bad happen to them.

Grade Ten female.

Suicide

Teen suicide, a symptom of high stress levels among teenagers today, is infrequent among the youth of Riverton. Only one or two incidents of suicide among teenagers were suspected by the teenagers themselves.⁴⁶ There were however other rumors about attempted suicides in the town.

I know of two attempts and they aren't rumors.. they were my friends.
Grade Twelve female.

⁴⁶ The suspicion exists because cause of death is often listed as accidental and it is impossible to know with certainty that the teens actually took their own lives. One incident was that of a car accident where a teenage male was

Suicide is socially not an acceptable option for a teenager with a troubled life in Riverton. Teenagers were asked what it would take to compel one of their friends to consider taking their life. They responded with these well-articulated reasons.

I think severe depression. There may be some chance of feeling like no one really cares about me.

Grade Ten male.

It would probably be a whole combination of things; lose your boyfriend, parents kick you out, a whole bunch of things piling up.

Grade Ten female.

Pressure from their friends to be "just like them" or problem with a boyfriend.

Grade Eleven female.

Although it perhaps seems logical to associate suicide with lack of hope, the teenagers did not make this connection in the interview data.

Dating

In the previous quotations it is interesting to notice the emphasis of females concerning the importance of boyfriends. Dating relationships in Riverton are important and intense. "Going steady" is the only definition for dating in Riverton.

killed instantly when the car he was driving hit a concrete bridge support. He had high levels of alcohol in his body and it may have been an accident. The teens suspect that he might have aimed for the pillar.

Mostly you find a guy or a girl, whatever, and you date that person for quite a while. They are mostly long-term relationships. You aren't looked upon very well if you date a different person every weekend or whatever. So usually its for at least a month or depends how well you get along.. You don't "date" first. You classify it as "going out together" before you ever consider dating..If you get to the point of going out on a date there is the implication that it [the relationship] is going to be for a long time.

Grade Ten female

If you ask someone out here [in Riverton] you are going out with them until you break up. It's not like you are just dating for the night, and I wish it were more like that. I think that is good, you could get to know a larger number of people.. Like there is this one girl who has gone out with a whole bunch of guys, and she has a really bad reputation. Then I have another girlfriend who has gone out with this guy for like a year and a half - and that's good because they are really close but I think she should meet other guys as well.. I wish we could go out with just a whole bunch of different guys.

Grade Eleven female.

The casual date, where one goes out to a single event with someone, does not really exist for Riverton teenagers. Those who try to date in this manner develop a negative reputation quickly.

There are a lot of kids who are going out [steady] and they have been going out for a long time. But there are some who..they will go out with a person for one week and then they will break up with him and go on to the next person. There are some [relationships] that are good, like really meaningful and there are others that are just physical..If they can't get it [intercourse] they will just move on to the next girl or guy.

Grade Twelve female.

Dating relationships also start early, and continue for long time periods in Riverton.

There are quite a number of kids in our school who have been going out for a couple of years now.

Grade Ten male.

In the following description given by one Grade Eleven student, a sense of the dating pressure in Riverton is revealed.

Dating first of all starts in Elementary School, like in Grade Seven, but usually you are too shy to talk to each other, and that would go on for a long time. Then once you hit Grade Eight..lots of girls have their first date. Some girls start going out with guys in High School..It is a problem. Some guys are just out to prove something, but it is not really a problem, like my boyfriend he is not like that..and I have to be home by ten o'clock and stuff like that. I am not allowed to stay out late or anything like that but I know a lot of people who on an evening - their parents don't really know what they are doing and don't really care.. At our School, if a guy asks you to go out, it is not just to go out for one night, like it is for a while..

I have gone out with my boyfriend for three months, and that's a long time - well we aren't actually going out anymore - but there are a couple of friends of mine who will probably stay together.. It's hard to have just a boyfriend if you know what I mean.

Grade Eleven female.

Some teenagers who have dated for several years, actively discuss plans to marry.

Next spring I am going to get married..I would like to live in a small town but it is more likely that I will live in a city because there is more [work] there.

Grade Twelve female.

Vandalism

There are not many incidents of conspicuous vandalism carried out by teenagers in Riverton. Only once was evidence of vandalism observed during field work in Riverton. On that occasion painted graffiti appeared overnight on a wall of a downtown building.

The explanation for the lack of vandalism appears to be social pressure. The social pressures applied by Riverton teenagers on one another, reduce the amount of vandalism and destructive behaviour. This social pressure comes from the perception among the teenagers of Riverton that nothing is hidden. If a teenager was to try to vandalize property, someone would know who it was. This fear of 'being caught' and subsequently identified applies great social pressure on teenagers with problems. They fear gossip.

If you do have a problem or do something, everybody finds out about it in a small town. Lots of gossip, I guess.

Grade Eleven male

Synopsis: The Process and Direction

Although the interview data did not reveal information specifically on the subject of hope it was the interview process that focussed this research on seeking an understanding of hope among teenagers.⁴⁷ The information gathered does provide

⁴⁷ During the latter part of the interview schedule teenagers were asked about hope and this is described in Chapter Four

an introduction to the social scenery of Riverton teens. The demographic description of Riverton when placed alongside comments from the town's teenagers, establishes a background against which to examine religiosity and hope among Riverton youth.

This process affirmed that Christianity is prevalent in Riverton and led to the question, "Does the predominant Christian religion influence hope among the teenagers of Riverton?" To examine the possibility of relationship, a means of measuring both hope and religiosity must be employed. This became the next stage of researching teenage life in Riverton. Chapter Three considers the measurement of religiosity.

Chapter Three

Measuring Religiosity:

Literature and Scales

Measurement of Religiosity: Literature Review

Sociological measurements of religiosity have developed over years of research and various methods are well documented in the literature. In order to understand the steps involved in establishing the scale for measurement of religiosity to be used among Riverton teenagers we begin by reviewing how other scales have been and are used throughout the literature.

Charles Y. Glock published an essay in 1954 expressing dissatisfaction with the prevailing trend of examining the impact of religion on people's attitudes, values and behaviour. He felt the findings from this type of research often proved to be insignificant. The variables used, Glock speculated, may be unable to discriminate finely enough between the different attitudes of people towards religion. After the conducting and analyzing of 50 interviews, Glock suggests that one can distinguish between four different types of religious orientation: the salient, the incipient, the derivative, and the insignificant type.⁴⁹ Later, in 1959, Glock suggests that religiosity should be regarded as a concept consisting of 4 dimensions: "the experiential, the ritualistic, the ideological and the consequential"⁵⁰ He argued that these dimensions were not completely independent of each other but are most often connected or overlap.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Charles Glock, "Towards a Typology of Religious Orientation" (Essay, New York, 1954).

⁵⁰ Charles Glock, "The religious revival in America?," Religion and the Face of America, ed. Jane Zahn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 26

⁵¹ Glock (1959)

In 1961, Yoshio Fukuyama published a summary of his dissertation, "The Four Dimensions of Church Membership," in which he also works with four dimensions. These were: the cognitive, the cultic, the creedal, and the devotional.⁵² The cultic dimension corresponds to Glock's ritualistic, the creedal to the ideological, and the devotional to the experiential dimension. But instead of using Glock's consequential dimension, Fukuyama uses the cognitive dimension because he argued Glock's consequential dimension is not "a basic component of religious orientation per se"⁵³ Rather, Fukuyama viewed the cognitive decision making process by individuals concerning religious belief to be a more basic component to religious orientation.

Glock responded in 1962 when he gave a much more detailed description of his four dimensions.⁵⁴ In doing so Glock accepted Fukuyama's criticisms and added Fukuyama's cognitive dimension which he renamed the intellectual dimension. The definitions of the five dimensions used by Glock in 1962 are:

1. Ideological Dimension - constituted by expectations that the religious person will hold certain beliefs.
2. Ritualistic Dimension - encompasses the specifically religious practices that are expected of religious adherents.

⁵² Yoshio Fukuyama, "The Major Dimensions of Church Membership," Review of Religious Research 2, (1961): 155.

⁵³ Fukuyama (1961), 156.

⁵⁴ Charles Glock, "On the study of religious commitment," Religious Education, Research Supplement 57 (1962) 99-104. The descriptions of each dimension that follows are also taken from this source.

3. Intellectual Dimension - pertaining to the expectation that the religious person will be informed and knowledgeable about the basic tenets of his or her faith and its sacred scriptures.⁵⁵
4. Experiential Dimension - giving recognition to the fact that all religions have certain expectations . . . that the religious person will, at one time or another, achieve direct knowledge of ultimate reality or will experience religious emotion.
5. Consequential Dimension - This dimension includes all the secular effects of religious belief, practice, experience and knowledge of the individual.

Glock argued that these dimensions could be used for measuring religiosity irrespective of which denomination is examined.⁵⁶ During the following decade, Glock, with Rodney Stark, carried out several studies in which they tried to operationalize the first four dimensions. During this period, Glock abandoned the idea of considering the consequential dimension as he viewed it a consequent of behaviour.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The ideological and the intellectual dimensions are related to such an extent that a belief in something implies knowledge of the same thing. This however cannot be stated the other way around.

⁵⁶ Glock, "On the study of religious commitment," *Religious Education, Research Supplement* (1962): 99.

⁵⁷ Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, eds. "American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment," *Patterns of Religious Commitment*, Vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 16.

Another refinement was added through these studies in that additional scales were added to individual dimensions. This was undertaken without increasing the total number of dimensions. For example, Glock and Stark measured the ideological dimension using 3 separate scales. These were labeled: orthodoxy, particularism, and ethicalism. The ritualistic dimension also was measured by 2 separate scales labeled: ritual involvement and devotionism.⁵⁸

Two conclusions may be drawn from the studies of Glock and Stark. These are:

- A) That the different dimensions are so highly independent of each other that it is constructive to consider religiosity a multidimensional phenomenon.
- B) That the ideological dimension is the best single predictor of the other dimensions.⁵⁹

Since then, other researchers have continued to develop Glock's work. For example, Faulkner and DeJong published the results of a survey conducted among students in 1966. In this study they tried to operationalize the five dimensions by forming an ordinal scale consisting of 4 or 5 items for each dimension. An ordinal scale has a cumulative aspect to it. It may have variable items arrange from least to most extreme so that the exact response of an individual can be reproduced from the total score.

⁵⁸ Glock and Stark, (1968).

⁵⁹ Generally scales have been constructed to measure those dimensions. Examples can be found in: Glock and Stark, Religion and Society in Tension (1965); Glock and Stark, Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism (1966); Stark and Glock, "American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment," Patterns of Religious Commitment, Vol. 1 (1968); and Glock et al, To Comfort and to Challenge: A Dilemma of the Contemporary Church, (1967).

An ordinal scale works like this: Five questions dealing with religious behaviour on a survey may range between attending church once a year, and reading the Bible and praying every day. It is assumed that a person who answers yes to daily reading of the Bible also will be able to affirm the previous four questions.⁶⁰ This would enable us to say that Person "A" who endorses the fifth item on the scale will have in theory endorsed exactly the same items as Person "B" with a score of four, plus one more. It would be possible in such a case to say that "A" is in some respects more religious than "B". Researchers used ordinal scales to summarize distinct and separate observations, having them represent a more general variable.⁶¹

Faulkner and De Jong also developed another scale through their research. They found that the ideological dimension was without doubt the most important dimension judging by the size of the intercorrelations.⁶² Since then Faulkner and De Jong's scales have come under strong criticism by those who challenge their validity. The critics argue that the scales do not discriminate sufficiently between their own dimensions. This is because with an ordinal scale a high degree of reproducibility does not ensure that the "scale constructed in fact measures the concept under consideration."⁶³ It does however provide confidence that all the component variables are measuring the same element.

⁶⁰ A good example of this is the Bogardus Social Distance Scale where prejudice items are arranged according to the degree of intimacy of contact with the minority.

⁶¹ Earl Babbie, The Practice of Social Research, 4th Edition, (Wadsworth Publishing: Belmont, California, 1986): 379-380.

⁶² Joseph E. Faulkner & Gordon F. De Jong, "Religiosity in 5-D: An empirical analysis," Social Forces 45, (1966): 246-254. Similar results have been obtained by Edward C. Lehman Jr. & Donald W. Shriver Jr. In "Academic discipline as predictive of faculty religiosity," Social Forces 47, (1968): 171-182.

⁶³ Earl Babbie, The Practice of Social Research 4 Edition, (Wadsworth Publishing: Belmont, California, 1986): 380.

Using the ordinal scale approach, many researchers experimented with various other measures of religiosity.⁶⁴ One general factor, ideological commitment, accounted for 80% of the variance. Because of this, Clayton and Gladden concluded “that religiosity is primarily a commitment to an ideology and the other so called dimensions are merely expressions of the strength of that core commitment”⁶⁵.

Their conclusion was supported in 1976, in as far as the centrality of the ideological dimension is concerned, by De Jong, Faulkner and Warland.⁶⁶ These authors concluded that religiosity is to be principally treated as a multidimensional phenomenon but can be measured either in a unidimensional or in a multi-dimensional manner. The method chosen would be according to the level of abstraction and degree of specificity required.

Still more researchers have operationalized Glock’s 5 dimensions of religiosity using ordinal scales.⁶⁷ Richard Hunt and Morton King, and also Dean Hoge, suggested distinctions in terms such as “consensual” and “committed” instead of “extrinsic” and “intrinsic”. They argue the consensual dimension attaches importance to concrete

⁶⁴ Examples include: Weigert and Thomas, “Religiosity in 5-D: A critical note,” Social Forces 48, (1969): 260-263; Gibbs and Crader, “A criticism of two recent attempts to scale Glock and Stark’s dimensions of religiosity: A research note .” Sociological Analysis 31, (1970): 107-114; Richard Clayton, “Religiosity in 5-D: A southern test.,” Social Forces 47, (1968): 80-83. Also “5-D or 1?” Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 10, (1971): 37-40; and Clayton and Gladden, “The five dimensions of religiosity: Toward demythologizing a sacred artifact”, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 13, (1974): 135-143.

⁶⁵ Clayton & Gladden (1974): 141.

⁶⁶ Gordon De Jong, Joseph E. Faulkner & Rex Warland, “Dimensions of religiosity reconsidered: Evidence from a cross-cultural study”, Social Forces 54, (1976): 866-889.

⁶⁷ Richard A. Hunt and Morton B. King, “The intrinsic-extrinsic concept: A review and evaluation,” Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 10, (1971): 339-356; See also, Dean R. Hoge, “A validated intrinsic religious motivation scale,” Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 11 (1972): 369-376.

characteristics of religious faith that are vague, undifferentiated, somewhat restrictive and diversity-intolerant. The committed dimension, on the other hand, emphasizes such abstract characteristics of faith that usually are non-ambiguous, well differentiated, and diversity-tolerant. In fact, however, this distinction has seldom been used in empirical research.

A different approach was taken by Gerhard E. Lenski in 1961 when he undertook an empirical study of the significance of religion in Detroit.⁶⁸ In this study, religion was considered multi-dimensional. Lenski also operated with four dimensions. He assumed a distinction between commitment to a socio-religious group and commitment to a type of religious orientation. He made a further division within each of these. Commitment to a socio-religious group Lenski called either associational or communal. "Associational" referred to ritual activities while "communal" describes the primary-group interaction among those relatives and friends who belong to the same religious group. The religious orientations were doctrinal-orthodoxy that correspond with Glock's ideological dimension, and devotionism - frequency of prayer. Lenski concluded from his study that religion ought to be regarded as multi-dimensional.

Today, after years of debate, most sociologists of religion generally agree that the conceptualization of religiosity is best treated as multi-dimensional. As in the history of its development, there has been considerable variation in the content and the number of

⁶⁸ Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor: A Sociological Study of Religion's Impact on Politics, Economics and Family Life (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961).

dimensions among the researchers.⁶⁹ They are, nevertheless, of the opinion that religiosity ought to be measured with more than one measure. Some critics still reject this argument because the inter-correlations of several dimensions is considered too high.⁷⁰ Others reject multi-dimensionality on the grounds that after doing a factor analysis only one religious factor seemed significant.⁷¹ One of the goals of factor analysis is to estimate the correlations of an index with all the underlying factors and in doing so gain insights as to what these factors may be. The critics argue that if religiosity is multidimensional several underlying factors should be evident through factor analysis.

This process is described by Earl Babbie saying:

Factor analysis is used to discover patterns among the variations in values of several variables. This is done essentially through the generation of artificial dimensions (factors) that correlate highly with several of the real variables and that are independent of one another. A computer must be used to perform this complex operation.⁷²

Factor analysis of a religiosity index may indicate that it is measuring several factors simultaneously although it could be more highly correlated with one factor than

⁶⁹ An overview of the research concerning the measurement of religiosity suggests that the importance of the problem of dimensionality is primarily a North American issue. This is most likely due to the heterogeneous religious and ecclesiastical situation found in North America.

⁷⁰ James O. Gibbs and Kelly W. Crader, "A criticism of two recent attempts to scale Glock and Stark's dimensions of religiosity: A Research note," *Sociological Analysis* 31, (1970): 107-114.; Clayton (1971): 37-40.

⁷¹ See again Clayton and Gladden (1974); also Andrew J. Wearing and L.B. Brown, "The dimensionality of religion," *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 11, (1972): 143-148

⁷² Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 4th Edition, (Wadsworth Publishing: Belmont, California, 1986), 380.

with the others. The critics of multi-dimensionality have factor analyzed religiosity scales and found them to measure only one factor or dimension.

The debate continues in the literature as researchers such as Daniel Batson and Larry Ventis suggest other possible new dimensions of religion. They propose the measurement of religiosity from within a three dimensional conception consisting of means; end; and quest orientations. They suggest that there may be different ways of being religious and that a person might be religious in one orientation yet not in another.⁷³ Further research will continually add to the search for empirical measures of religiosity.

Literature Summary

After reviewing the literature we may conclude that it is possible to distinguish at least four main dimensions of religiosity. Although the terms used to describe these dimensions may vary, it is safe to accept that they pertain to belief, practice, experience, and knowledge.

Among these common main dimensions, belief and practice are essential since both of them simultaneously measure the degree of personal engagement with religion. As such, belief and practice are the most frequent dimensions investigated in sociological studies of religion.

In the literature reviewed, I also noted that the questions or statements used have been traditionally formulated for Christian dominated samples. This applies especially to the large collection of research on church forms of religious commitment. This type of

research has often examined denominational doctrine and has thus indirectly been in danger of changing the sociology of religion into religious sociology. Researchers have commonly found it difficult to believe that any form of religiosity could exist outside the church or be more or less independent of the churches.

Measures of religiosity develop in four stages throughout the literature reviewed and the religiosity scale for Riverton's research was developed by following this process:

1. Individual items or questions are analyzed for their face validity and then compared with other items from the survey.⁷⁴
2. By using item scale analysis, or by bestowing an arbitrary weighting on response categories, religious items have been formed into Likert-type scales or arbitrary scales to give a continuum. An example would be frequency of attendance at religious services from "Never" to "More than once a week".⁷⁵

⁷³See Daniel C. Batson and Larry W. Ventis, The Religious Experience: A Social-Psychological Perspective, (Oxford University Press: Oxford) 1982 pp.149-170.

⁷⁴ Clayton and Gladden (1974). See also:

De Jong et al., "Dimensions of religiosity reconsidered: Evidence from a cross cultural study," Social Forces 54, (1976): 866-889.; Andrew J. Wearing and L. B. Brown, "The dimensionality of religion", British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 11, (1972): 143-148.; Ronald Wimberly et al., "The civil religious dimension: Is it there?" Social Forces 54, (1976): 890-900.; Wm. Alex McIntosh, Starla Fitch et al., "The Effect of Mainstream Religious Social Controls on Adolescent Drug Use in Rural Areas" Review of Religious Research, 23:1, (1981): 54-75.; Robert Witter et al., "Religion and Subjective Well-Being in Adulthood: A Quantitative Synthesis" Review of Religious Research, 26:4, (1985): 332-342.

⁷⁵ Examples are found in: Fukuyama (1961); Stark and Glock (1968); Lenski (1961); See also: Arthur E. Nudelman, "Dimensions of Religiosity: A Factor-analytic view of Protestants, Catholics and Christian Scientists," Review of Religious Research 13, (1971): 42-56.; Morton B. King and Richard A. Hunt, "Measuring the religious variable: National replication," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 14, (1975): 13-22.; Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, and Marlene M. Mackie, "The applicability of Social Distance for Religious Research: An Exploration". Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 28 (1986): 151-167.

3. In the literature others attempted going one step further by forming what are called ordinal scales or cumulative scales.⁷⁶ These scales were an attempt to determine harder indicators of religiosity among the individual items.

4. Scales thus constructed were examined by researchers against other studies and correlated one with another. Thus in this Riverton study we have included scales by Brinkerhoff and Bibby. These scales have also been factor analyzed.⁷⁷ With the use of factor analysis, each stage of examination provides the potential to obtain higher orders of measuring religiosity.

Item Selection for Religiosity

The questions for the survey were selected after participant observation and census analysis.⁷⁸ For most questions a Likert scale was provided for the teenagers' answers.

This is a type of composite measure developed by Renis Likert in an attempt to improve the levels of social research through the use of standardized response categories in survey questionnaires. Likert items are those utilizing such response categories as strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strong disagree.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ See Faulkner and De Jong (1966); Gibbs and Crader (1970); Clayton (1968; 1971); Clayton and Gladden (1974).

⁷⁷ See again Clayton and Gladden (1974); also Arthur E. Nudelman, "Dimensions of religiosity: A factor-analytic view of Protestants, Catholics and Christian Scientists", *Review of Religious Research* 13, (1971): 42-56; and

Gary M. Maranell, *Responses to Religion: Studies in the Social Psychology of Religious Belief* (Lawrence, Kansas: n.p., 1974).

⁷⁸ Accordingly the questions recognize the predominantly Christian influence in Riverton. In other sample areas that are more pluralistic, additional questions would need to be included for a variety of specific religions.

⁷⁹ Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 4th Edition, (Wadsworth Publishing: Belmont, California, 1986),

The Riverton survey questions measuring religious practice used the response options: Very Often; Sometimes; Seldom; and Never.

In total, 114 questions in the survey concerned religion. Variables pertaining to religion in the questionnaire were grouped into six categories.

1. Religious Behaviour;
2. Religious Belief;
3. Fundamentalism;
4. Religious Study;
5. Nature of Religious Self Expression and;
6. Paranormal Belief.

We will define each of these categories separately to show the breadth of religious questions included in the survey.

#1. Religious Behaviour

Some religious practice and behaviour of Riverton teenagers became evident through comments made during interviews such as:

I listen to Christian music and my favourite group is Petra.⁸⁰ I listen to other music but I don't really have other favourites.

Grade Ten female

Overtly religious comments like these occurred only a few times during interviews. For teenagers in Riverton it seems that personal religion remains a "taboo" subject. When

⁸⁰ "Petra" is an evangelistic Christian rock music group.

teenagers were asked how often they talked to their friends about religion, only 4.4% said they did this "Quite often" (See Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1
RELIGIOUS TALK AMONG FRIENDS IN RIVERTON
 Data gathered from the Riverton survey. Students were asked:
 "How often do you talk about religion with your friends or classmates?"

	%
Never	36.4
Seldom	39.7
Sometimes	19.5
Quite Often	4.4

(n=272)

Although hesitant to talk about religion during an interview and even among themselves, teenagers answered the religious questions in the survey.⁸¹

The Religious Behaviour category in the survey included questions about how often they prayed, and if they prayed privately. The students were also asked about their attendance at religious services and church meetings. (See Figure 3.1). Did their behaviour include talking to others about religion or trying to convert others to their faith? Did they say table grace before meals at home? While in a restaurant? How often did they read literature about their faith, or read the Bible?

⁸¹ Unlike the interviews, where respondents were all identifiable, the survey questions provided anonymity. This undoubtedly encouraged an excellent response.

Previous studies have demonstrated strong associations between religious participation and other dimensions of religiosity.⁸² In total, 12 variables were included in these behavioural indicators. These are found below in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2
RIVERTON RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR VARIABLES

Religious behaviour was measured using the following questions in the Riverton survey.

The response categories were:

1. Never 2. Seldom 3. Sometimes 4. Quite Often 5. Very Often

How often do you pray privately?

How often do you attend religious services?

How often do you talk about religion with your friends or classmates?

How often do you spend evenings at church meetings or doing church work?

How often do you pray privately in places other than church?

How often do you share the joys and problems of trying to live a life of faith in God?

How often do you ask God to forgive you your sins?

How often do you say table grace before or after meals at home?

How often do you say table grace before or after meals away from home?

How often do you personally try to convert someone to a faith in God?

How often do you read literature about your faith (church)?

How often do you read the Bible or other religious materials?

⁸²See again Faulkner and De Jong (1966); also Morton B. King and Richard A. Hunt, "Measuring the

Through examining the data on the question concerning how often teenagers attend religious services, I noted that the Riverton data contrasted with data from a Calgary survey carried out by the Ministry of Social Services.⁸³ One distinction pertains to the number of teenagers whom "Never" attend religious services. (See Table 3.3)

TABLE 3.3
FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION BY YOUTH AT CHURCH
A CALGARY-RIVERTON COMPARISON

The Calgary data is based on A Profile of Youth in Calgary, Social Services Department, 1985, Table 4. Calgary youth were asked the frequency of their participation at Church/Synagogue. The response categories were: 1. Never, 2. Once a Month, 3. Once a Week, 4. Few Times a Week, 5. Everyday, 6. Once a week or more. (N=705).

The Riverton data is based on the Riverton survey where students were asked the frequency of their attendance at religious services. Response categories were: 1. Never, 2. Less than once a year, 3. About once a year, 4. Several times a year, 5. About once a month, 6. 2-3 times a month, 7. Nearly every week, 8. Every week, 9. Several times per week.

Although the response categories differ, common categories can be extracted and compared. Following are two such categories, those who never attend, and those who attended weekly.

<u>Attendance at Religious Services</u>	
<u>Location</u>	<u>Never Attend</u>
Calgary, Alberta	64.4%
Riverton, Alberta	23.6%
<u>Location</u>	<u>Once per week or more</u>
Calgary, Alberta	25.9%
Riverton, Alberta	25.8%

religious variable: National replication," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 14, (1975): 13-22.

Table 3.3 shows a greater percentage of teenagers attending church in Riverton, affirming the initial field observations and interview data.

#2. Religious Belief

The Religious Belief dimension contained questions about the student's belief in God. In this dimension, variables were used concerning traditional objects and themes of the Christian faith. Teenagers were asked:

TABLE 3.4 RELIGIOUS BELIEF QUESTIONS

The following questions were added to the Riverton survey to measure religious belief recognizing that they would be analyzed for possible inclusion in the Riverton religiosity index.

Response categories were 4-part Likert scales between "Yes, definitely" and "No, I definitely do not", or "Strongly agree" and "Strongly disagree".

Do you believe God exists?
 Is there life after death?
 Is Jesus the divine Son of God?
 Do you believe that you have experienced being in the presence of God?
 Does faith in God give your life meaning?

Other variables asked how closely statements matched their belief. The statements included were:

⁸³ City of Calgary, Social Services Department, Research and Planning Unit, "Youth Leisure

TABLE 3.4 CONTINUED
RELIGIOUS BELIEF QUESTIONS

<p>I am not a spiritual person; The Bible is the literal word of God; There is no eternal life; Jesus is the divine Son of God and I have no doubts about Him; Private prayer is one of the most satisfying aspects of my religious experience; I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life; Salvation is attained through personal faith in Jesus Christ; The attempt to believe in a supernatural being is a sign of people's failure to accept responsibility for their life; I doubt that God exists; I believe miracles are stories and never really happened.</p>

#3 Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism was measured using a previously tested instrument.⁸⁴ This dimension was measured by asking four questions where the students were asked their level of agreement with the following statements:

Activities by Frequency of Participation," A Profile of Youth in Calgary, (Calgary: SS, 1985), 28 (n=705).

⁸⁴ This instrument was used in the study by Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, and Marlene M. Mackie, "The Applicability of Social Distance for Religious Research: An Exploration." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28 (1986): 151-167.

TABLE 3.5
RIVERTON FUNDAMENTALISM QUESTIONS

Response categories were 4-part Likert scales between “Strongly agree” and “Strongly disagree.”

Salvation is attained through personal faith in Jesus Christ;
 The Bible is the literal word of God;
 I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings
 in life;
 Jesus of Nazareth was the Divine Son of God.

#4. Religious Study

The Religious Study dimension asked questions concerning how much time they spent reading, hearing or watching material designed for teaching them about faith in God. Thinking of their life outside school, teenagers were asked how often they estimated they participated in these activities:

TABLE 3.6
RELIGIOUS STUDY QUESTIONS IN THE RIVERTON SURVEY

Response categories were 4-part Likert scales between “Very often” and “Never”.

How often do you . . .

Watch religious television programs?
 Listen to religious radio programs?
 Read literature about church or
 faith?
 Read the Bible or other religious
 materials?

#5. Religious Self Expression

Self-Expression was also used as a category in measuring the students' religiosity. Students were asked to describe the nature of their religious belief using an open-ended question. The expression of their religion was also measured by asking if they affiliated with a particular religion or denomination.

#6. Paranormal Beliefs

The Paranormal section was the last section of religious questions. These questions asked the students about their belief level in such things as ESP, communication with the dead, psychic activity, astrology, precognition and reincarnation.

Other Questions

In addition to gathering questions for the above categories from the variety of religiosity scales already developed, two scales were chosen and included in their entirety for the Riverton questionnaire. The first was a scale used by Bibby and Posterski, Project Teen Canada.⁸⁵ Their method requires respondents to select a statement best reflecting their religious commitment. The alternatives given in the Project Teen Canada survey were:

⁸⁵ Through my literature review it appears that Bibby and Posterski may have derived their measure of religiosity from a study by R.F. Paloutzian and C.W. Ellison, "Loneliness, spiritual well-being and the

TABLE 3.7
PROJECT TEEN CANADA VARIABLES

Response categories were 4-part Likert scales between “Yes, definitely” and “No, I definitely do not”, or “Strongly agree” and “Strongly disagree”.

I'm not a religious person.
 I regard myself as a committed Christian.
 I am deeply committed to a religion other than Christianity.
 I find myself interested in a variety of religions, but not committed to any particular one.
 I have a mild interest in Christianity and an inquisitive interest in other religions, but I hardly regard myself as a religious person.
 Other - Please Specify (Open ended question)

In the written reports of the national survey available, no details were provided concerning the dependability of this scale in measuring religiosity. In the development of a religiosity scale for Riverton, the Bibby and Posterski variables were included in the survey and later factor analyzed as previously discussed. As a result, it was decided not to include any of the variables within the actual Riverton Religiosity scale. The inclusion of their questions in the survey will however allow the future research comparing Riverton youth with the Canadian data.

The second scale added within the Riverton questionnaire was a religiosity scale used by Brinkerhoff and Mackie in their “Study of Student Attitudes Questionnaire”. This scale included additional variables for measuring religiosity that had been used in

quality of life,” in L.A. Peplau & D. Perlman (Eds.), Loneliness: A Sourcebook of Current Theory,

questioning university students.⁸⁶ The availability of one of the authors, and a demonstrated high reliability of measurement, optimized its inclusion in the survey.⁸⁷

Measuring a Common Variable: Religiosity

From the large pool of variables on religion now included in the Riverton survey, statistical relationships were sought between sets of items. This was to decide the extent to which all the items can be considered to contribute to the measurements of the single common variables - "religiosity". One means of measuring this relationship is an alpha coefficient. If a scale used in the Riverton survey perfectly measured one factor like religiosity, its alpha coefficient would be 1.0.

When an individual item was found to lower the alpha coefficient for the scale it was examined. It was possible that there was an error in the question or the coding. A further investigation was made for all possible errors.

Through this safeguard process an error was found in showing that the coding direction of two variables was inconsistent. In one variable the direction of coding was reversed due to a typographical error. This was corrected and the scale was run through the analysis again to verify the correction.

Subjecting the data from these variables to computerized factor analysis indicated that several questions were measuring factors other than religiosity. For other questions

Research and Therapy, (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1982), 224-237.

⁸⁶ Dr. Merlin Brinkerhoff and Dr. Marlene Mackie administered this questionnaire in several universities and colleges in the United States and Canada in 1985.

the analysis showed they were not strong indicators of religiosity according to an agreed upon minimum factor loading cut off of 0.40.⁸⁸ When such a question was found, it was dropped from the scale and the remaining variables were run through analysis again. This continued until a list of questions demonstrated an alpha coefficient close to 1.0.

The Riverton Religiosity Scale

Following the analysis of the factor loadings, eigen-values, and reliability measures for each item according to the above criteria, a scale was established comprised of 14 variables.⁸⁹ The Riverton Religiosity scale is shown in Table 3.8 following.

⁸⁷ The Riverton survey sections adapted from the Brinkerhoff and Mackie survey were their Section #3 Faith and Spirituality, and Section #8 Religious Experiences and Activities.

⁸⁸ The decision was made early on through the advice of Dr. Brinkerhoff to utilize only first factors with factor loadings of .40 or greater in the Riverton scales of Religiosity and Hope.

⁸⁹ Eigen values and factor loadings are statistical methods for measuring correlations between each variable and each factor. (Babbie, 1986, 435)

TABLE 3.8
Riverton Religiosity Scale

After analysis, the following 14 variables were selected to comprise the Riverton Religiosity scale. Factor loadings have been rounded to two decimal places and are shown in brackets following the variable.

Response categories were 4-part Likert scales between "Yes, definitely", and "No, I definitely do not", or "Strongly agree" and "Strongly disagree."

1. Do you personally believe in the existence of God? (.69)
2. Do you personally believe there is life after death? (.51)
3. Do you personally believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the divine Son of God? (.79)
4. Do you personally believe that you have experienced being in the presence of God? (.70)
5. Without religious faith, the rest of my life would not have much meaning. (.73)
6. I am not a spiritual person. (.67)
7. The Bible is the literal Word of God. (.67)
8. There is no eternal life. (.59)
9. Jesus is the divine Son of God and I have NO doubts about him. (.80)
10. Private prayer is one of the most important & satisfying aspects of my religious experience. (.68)
11. I try hard to carry over religion into all my other dealings in life. (.69)
12. Salvation is attained through personal faith in Jesus Christ. (.72)
13. I doubt that God exists. (.64)
14. I believe that miracles are stories and they never really happened. (.48)

The reliability coefficient of these 14 items was .91885 as a standardized item alpha. This suggests the items together form a measure of religiosity for Riverton's teenagers.

Collapsing: High, Medium and Low

In order to make it easier to visualize the religiosity of Riverton residents it was decided to collapse their scored responses to the religiosity scale into low, medium, and high categories.⁹⁰

Applying a sum to the responses given by each case over the 14 variables created a range of religiosity response for each teenager. The religiosity totals for individual teenagers spanned from 16 as the lowest, to a high of 56. The range of Riverton teenagers religiosity was 40.

Our hypothesis is interested in testing the relationship between those teenagers high in religiosity and those teenagers high in hope according to our measures. With a range of 40 among 228 cases an estimate was created to proportion the population into three categories of religiosity. These categories were labeled: High, Medium and Low Religiosity.

The distribution of scores among the 228 cases were examined and the mean identified. Parameters were then created to include 33.3% of the population centered on both sides of this mean. This one-third of the population I defined as the Medium Religiosity group.

The proportion of the population that were distributed below the Medium category were defined as Low religiosity, and those above were defined as High. The Low category

⁹⁰ Although collapsing does make it easier to look at data, it is recognized that this benefit does hinder the ability to see possible curvilinearity. This should be a consideration in future research.

captured 37.7% of the population and the remaining 28.9% were the High religiosity group.

A new variable was then created for these newly defined and collapsed groupings. This new variable was labeled as Religiosity and is used to examine possible correlations with hope in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four

Looking for Hope Among Riverton Teenagers:

Interviews, Literature, and Survey

Hope and Teenagers

As we now begin the focus on hope among teenagers I was drawn back to Bibby and Posterski and how they observed that many Canadian teenagers lacked hope and were disillusioned with life. Posterski writes:

Teenage disillusionment is part of the package of life in the 1980's. The mood of discouragement and perhaps despair is not restricted to those who attend church. Seven out of ten teens consider "what they will do after they finish school" as a critical personal problem. The likely prospect of ending up in unemployment lines turns the Canadian dream into a nagging nightmare ...Cosmic survival dwells on their consciousness. The possibility of global nuclear warfare threatens their very existence.⁹¹

The bomb is in the background of more immediate threats to their personal survival, such as rising rates of child abuse, crime, sexual assault, and alcoholism. Even those who are bypassed by these problems are growing up in a climate characterized by them.

As if the picture is not dark enough, a total of 75% of Canadian teenagers identify suicide either as a "very serious", or "fairly serious" issue for their peer group. Their perceptions are supported by a general rise in the suicide rate in Canada.⁹²

⁹¹ Donald C. Posterski, Friendship: A Window On Ministry To Youth. Toronto: Project Teen Canada, 1985. p.67

⁹² Posterski (1985)

TABLE 4.1
PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS
FACING 15-24 YEAR OLDS IN CANADA*

Canadian teenagers were asked the seriousness of the following social problems. The responses are those who indicated "Very Serious" (n=2033).

<u>Social Problem:</u>	<u>% Indicating "Very Serious"</u>
Sexual Assault	73
Aids	73
Drugs	70
Suicide	69
Prostitution	54
Alcohol Abuse	52
Family Problems	50
Unemployment	50
Poverty	47
Illiteracy	47
Lack of Educational Options	44
Career Uncertainties	36
Fear of Nuclear War	35

*Data from Government of Canada, Minister of State Youth, Canada's Youth "Ready for Today" (Ottawa, 1989). This report was authored and researched by Bibby and Posterski.

Although anxiety over these issues was found in the five areas of Canada studied: Atlantic Canada; Quebec; Ontario; the Prairies; and British Columbia my field observation of Riverton teenagers gave me the impression that they were more hopeful.

Before continuing, it is necessary to ask what we mean by hope. The dictionary defines hope as:

1. Desire accompanied by fulfillment
2. Confident expectation;
3. That which is desired; and
4. One who or that which is the cause of hopeful expectation as in "You are my hope".⁹³

Hope in terms of these definitions was found among some teenagers in Riverton during the interviews. Teenagers wondered about the future; employment; marriage, family, security, loneliness, the environment. They contemplated in whom, what, or where they can find hope. Teenagers examine religion, education, government, and friends looking for hope. They talk hopefully about their future desires for things such as a home, spouse, travel, position. On the other hand, when teenagers experienced a lack of hope they also talked about suicide.

If by definition hope is "confidence in expectation" we would anticipate less anxiety pertaining to social problems and concerns about the future among hopeful teenagers. They would by definition be confident in their outlook on life.

Informal Exploration

To explore if the teenagers in Riverton were confident in their outlook on life, 30 of the 50 teenagers interviewed were asked where they would place themselves on a

⁹³ "Hope". Funk and Wagnalls Standard Desk Dictionary.

continuum.⁹⁴ They were asked to put a mark on a line representing where they would place themselves in terms of their current outlook on life. The line was presented like this:

(Disillusionment) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Ultimate Hope)

The students implied they were high in hope with no individual score less than 5. According to this measure, the teenagers interviewed in Riverton were unusually hopeful about life.

This was affirmed during interviews where the teenagers would speak and act hopefully about life. Only two teenagers stand out as exceptions to this observation. One was a male in Grade Ten, the other a Grade Eleven female. These two students were introverted and quiet. The male would only respond to direct questions and failed to respond freely. When asked if he was finding the interview difficult, he replied that he was shy. He was an alert, intelligent boy from all observations, but seemed lonely and stated, "I only have two or three real friends. I guess I have other associates."

The Grade 11 female was interviewed in her home while her mother remained present throughout the interview time. The mother's presence curtailed a free flowing conversation during the interview, and the teenager simply refused to discuss any issues. The mother was not deliberately trying to impede the interview. She acted both cautiously

⁹⁴ The first twenty teenagers interviewed were not asked about how hopeful they saw themselves. The hopefulness of these Riverton teenagers was the genesis of the idea to pursue hope as a concept in the study. The weaknesses of this methodology are recognized due to the inherent pressure to put a mark in a positive position. The findings were used solely for giving birth to more reliable research.

and curiously about the research. The mother was curious in the sense of wanting to know more about her daughter's life, and cautious about a stranger doing an interview.

Apart from these two exceptions, the teenagers I met throughout the field work were enthusiastic. With their outgoing, generally positive outlook, the teenagers of Riverton came across as hopeful about life. It was an enjoyable experience talking to these teenagers and hearing their comments on life generally.

During the interviews, many teenagers made comments that revealed their general outlook concerning their world. Some were seemingly simplistic:

I think the world is going to be okay.

Grade Ten male

Of course there were others that expressed concern for the future of the world without this sense of teenage idealism. There was particular pessimism expressed about war.

I think that the world's just gonna end one day. We will have one big war and that is going to be it . . . with these nuclear bombs and stuff. One day (two countries) . . . will get mad at each other, and we will just die . . . Hope? Between 0 and 10 I am about a 5 or 6.

Grade Twelve female

I'm not really sure (about the world). It's like if we don't get out act together and start. Like I wish there was world peace and stuff so that there weren't wars and so much violence and stuff. I wish that countries would just get along. I don't really like war or things like that.

Grade Eleven female

Personally, I don't think that the world is going to last very long . . . a nuclear war is in our future. Between 0 and 10 on the Hope scale I would place myself at 8.5.

Grade Ten female

Thoughts of nuclear war were tangled within other pressing issues in teenage life - such as having friends. It appears that for Riverton teenagers life without friends is as devastating as a holocaust.

I think that teenagers find hope in - well to me if I answer for myself - since I was about three . . . I think I've just hoped that I would have a few friends.

Grade Eleven female

I hope for no wars. We have done some classes on what nuclear war would mean and its pretty scary. I just hope that never happens. . . If it does happen I hope that I am not around because it won't leave much of a world. On a scale of 0 to 10 I would place myself at about a seven. My life right now is okay. My family is good, I have a few friends and I have a reputation of being fairly quiet. People often think of me as sitting in the corner and not talking. But now that I am not - they think . . . talk, talk, talk. They don't know what to do with me.

Grade Ten female

Thoughts of the future were contained throughout the interviews. Some dreamed about their life plans for the coming years.

I would like to graduate. I am going to take a lot of courses, and get a job. When I graduate I would like to get a job and makes lots of money, then I would like to hitch-hike across Canada and keep a journal of my travels. I don't have any fears about getting the type of job I want in the future.

Grade Ten male

I want to find somebody I love and somebody who loves me, and get married and have kids.

Grade Twelve female

I would like to go to university after school . . . marriage and children and fun . . . just have a good life and settle down in a house of my own. I don't really have any exact plans.

Grade Eleven female

I want to be a lawyer, but that means a lot more school. I would like to live in a big city, somewhere like Vancouver. We got there for holidays a lot and I just really like it there. But when I get older

I would like to live in a small town again. I would like to, if I had children, I would like to live maybe here in Riverton.

Grade Ten female

The Riverton teenagers also demonstrated ambition and spoke of aspirations for their life and our world. They expressed some hope, in the sense of expectancy, personally and for the world. In general, their prospects looked positive to them. Indications of this are found in the comments made throughout interviews such as:

I want to go to college and university and either become a fashion designer, and art gallery director or an interior designer. One of those three.

Grade Twelve female

I want to find somebody I love and who loves me and get married and have kids.

Grade Twelve female

Literature Review on Hope and Adolescents

A search for literature published specifically on hope among adolescents found very little to base this focus of study on. There was not a single study with a prescribed scale to measure hope among teenagers from which variables might be selected. As a result it was necessary to develop a hope scale for this project.

Using the same process as in the last chapter, information and variables were gathered from literature in related studies and hope in general. In these studies hope is defined in a multidimensional perspective. Therefore, various dimensions and modes of hope were collected for possible use in developing variables for the Riverton questionnaire.

Sheila Schwartz in her article “The Adolescent and Human Values” addressed the question of where and how adolescents acquire a moral-ethical system to guide them through life.⁹⁵ Interestingly, she presupposes that religion is a peripheral interest among most teenagers and is therefore unable to provide an ethical system. Without providing any evidence to support her case she assumes that the school remained among the few institutions that could help tomorrow’s adult “become thinking individuals, able to judge and function in a world of pressures, conflicting values, and moral ambiguities”.⁹⁶ One dimension of a hopeful teenager according to Schwartz would be a demonstration of possessing a set of ethical norms by which they were guided.

Significantly, Schwartz evaluated the human condition of teenagers within the schools through researching literature written for adolescents and not by interviewing actual teenagers. In her study, the most valued adolescent literature taught hope among other concepts such as love, tolerance, kindness, compassion, sensitivity, and a “belief in the job of being part of the human parade”.⁹⁷ Schwartz gives no indication how she critically evaluated the meaning hope. Neither did she say how she defined hope to assess its absence or presence in the literature. Nevertheless, “hope” is a valued characteristic for teenagers according to Schwartz.

Psychiatric journals discussing adolescents and hope also see hope as a value. These journals often concentrate on the lack of hope as an indication of teenagers being high risk suicide candidates. They argue that hope might prevent teenage suicide.

⁹⁵ Sheila Schwartz, “The Adolescent and Human Values”, *Humanist* 37 (1977): 17-26

⁹⁶ Schwartz, (1977): 18

⁹⁷ Schwartz, (1977): 20

One such study by Celotta, Jacobs, and Keys, attempted to identify children and adolescents in need of mental health services to prevent suicide.⁹⁸ To determine identifying factors for youth who were at high suicide risk, several elements were isolated. Their findings suggested the following three factors as commonly associated with high risk teenagers.

1. They were under considerable stress.
2. They did not believe they had the resources, or were in the position of control, to deal with the stress adequately.
3. They were void of much hope in life and could not envision their situation changing.

Hope was defined by Celotta, Jacobs, and Keys, as present when an individual had some sense of power or control over their future. This definition was implicit throughout the study. If the students surveyed were feeling that the future was about to unfold around them without their having any control, they were described as lacking hope.

Ron Simons and Phyllis Murphy, in another study of indications of potential teenage suicide, developed a model that incorporated both socio-environmental and psychological factors.⁹⁹ They used factors such as emotional stability, self-esteem, delinquent behaviour, and hope concerning the future to explain adolescent suicide ideation. Hope was defined as not having many concerns about the future.

Hope, and its relation to concern for the future, was also used in another study by Eva Barton entitled "Adolescent Views of the Contemporary World: An International

⁹⁸Beverly Celotta, Golda Jacobs, Susan Keys, "Searching for Suicidal Precursors In The Elementary School Child", American Mental Health Counselors Association Journal #9, January (1982): 38-50.

Comparison”.¹⁰⁰ Barton surveyed 1100 adolescents throughout Finland and the United Kingdom. She reports that many students expressed a lack of hope concerning the future and their ability to have any control over it. The questionnaire also asked students to describe their greatest hopes and fears. Many comments in this section concerned friendship and the importance of feeling socially integrated. The connotation is that feeling socially integrated is a positive component to their feeling hopeful about life. Social integration is another aspect of defining hope among teenagers.

Michal Grygielski in his article, “Meaning in Life and Hopelessness: Interrelationships and Intergroup Differences” uses another approach to defining hope. He regarded hope as having an effect on one’s persona with respect to holding to some sense of meaning in life. High school and university students were surveyed with the hypothesis that a higher feeling of meaning in life should imply a lower feeling of hopelessness. The interrelationships between meaning in life measured by “The Purpose In Life Test”, and hopelessness as measured by “The Hopelessness Scale” were analyzed. He finds a high correlation between the two. The greater sense of purpose and meaning in life, the less likely were the students to feel hopeless.¹⁰¹

Jurich and Andrews in their study “Self-Concepts of Rural Early Adolescent Juvenile Delinquents”, asked questions of teenagers from a rural community concerning

⁹⁹ Ron Simons and Phyllis Murphy. “Sex Differences in the Causes of Adolescent Suicide Ideation.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 14-5 (1985): 423-434

¹⁰⁰ Eva Barton, “Adolescent Views of the Contemporary World: An International Comparison”. *Educational Psychology in Practice* 2 (1986): 45-48.

¹⁰¹ Michal Grygielski. “Meaning in Life and Hopelessness: Interrelationship and Intergroup Differences”. *Polish Psychological Bulletin* 15-4 (1984): 277-284.

self-image, body image, moral and ethical self concept.¹⁰² Data from supplementary questions suggested the following characteristics among delinquent teenagers in rural settings. Source: Jurich and Andrews, 1984.

TABLE 4.2
CHARACTERISTICS OF DELINQUENT TEENS

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotionally distant from their families. 2. Over-reliant on their peers 3. Little hope for their future 4. They lacked moral or ethical norms by which to make decisions. |
|---|
-

Jurich and Andrews observe that hopelessness was a common trait among the adolescent population sampled who demonstrate delinquent behaviour.

A journal article by Jody Long entitled, "Being There for Adolescents: A Parents Guide for Help and Hope" presents suggestions to help parents cope with adolescents who are experiencing stress.¹⁰² Long explored the importance of relationships and social networks in giving hope to youth. She indicated that teenagers often want the security of their parents, but wish for the parents to remain at a distance. Teenagers, both needing and fearing to become independent, may attempt to assert independence through rebellious behaviour. The article closed with suggestions for parents. It stated that they can help their adolescents by listening, and communicating, setting limits, and being together. Social

¹⁰² Anthony Jurich and Dana Andrews. "Self Concepts of Rural Early Adolescent Juvenile Delinquents." *Journal of Early Adolescence* 4-1 (1984): 41-46.

¹⁰² Jody Long. "Being There For Adolescents: Parent Guidelines for Help and Hope" *The Pointer.*, 27:3 (1983): 37-41.

isolation would be understood by this Guide to be detrimental to the establishment of hope within teenagers.

Hope and Despair

Individuals who lack hope in life often try to escape from reality. Hopelessness raises the value, among teenagers, of alcohol and drugs for the purposes of sedation and escape. If teenagers lack hope, they may cease to cope according to Brewster Smith in his article, "Hope and Despair: Keys to the Socio-Psychodynamics of Youth".¹⁰⁴ In Smith's proposing a psychology of hope, he places hope on a continuum with despair. Smith deals with despair and alienation as indications of lack of hope among teenagers. This continuum becomes an important contribution to the development of a measure for hope for the teenagers of Riverton.

Through the examination of the existing research several dimensions of hope have emerged. These dimensions were used to identify a hopeful Riverton teenager - one filled with hope. Accordingly, a hopeful teenager would be characterized as demonstrating the following:

¹⁰⁴Brewster Smith. "Hope and Despair: Keys to the Socio-Psychodynamics of Youth". *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 53-3 (1983): 388-399.

TABLE 4.3
DESCRIPTION OF A HOPEFUL TEENAGER

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not being under unreasonable negative stress.2. Believing they had some control or power over their future.3. Having an optimistic outlook of things getting better in the future, personally and globally.4. Emotionally close to parents and friends, with healthy peer relationships.5. Socially well integrated with peers, few feelings of alienation and loneliness.6. Lacking intense feelings of despair.7. Having norms and standards for making decisions and guiding their life. |
|--|

Remembering Smith's continuum between hope and despair, a search was conducted of existing instruments that measured despair or alienation. One such instrument was the Dean Alienation Scale.¹⁰⁵ Dean's instrument was designed to measure a variable that he labeled as "Alienation". He considered this variable to have three major dimensions:

1. Powerlessness
2. Normlessness
3. Social isolation

Each of these three dimensions related to the definition and characterization of a hopeful Riverton teenager.

Powerlessness measured how much control an individual felt they had over their circumstances. With some control over their environment, a teenager would feel more

¹⁰⁵ Dwight G. Dean. "Alienation: Its Meaning and Measurement". *American Sociological Review* 26 (1961): 753-758.

confident and hopeful about their future. If they felt that they were unable to exercise control over their situation, their hope level would drop.

Normlessness relates to individuals having values or norms that guides their life. Norms or guide-lines provide a framework for life that creates an ethos of hopefulness. It does this in the sense that there is a prescribed direction in life and it is possible to assess one's progress. Although there is a possibility of assessing one's progress negatively, those who have guidelines would be more hopeful than those without any guidelines.

Social isolation measures the connection people feel with others. For example, when Riverton youth were asked how often they spend time with friends, 83.9% announce "very often". The need to be integrated with friends is an important social characteristic of teenagers.

The survey reveals that many teenagers tend to find high levels of gratification from friends rather than from their mothers and fathers. They consequently place more value on friendships than they do on family life.¹⁰⁶

The Dean Alienation scale was selected for use in the Riverton survey in that the factors it was designed to measure dimensions related to hope. Dean's scale consisted of three sections: nine questions on powerlessness, six normlessness items, and nine social isolation items. These three subscales are combined to make up the alienation scale of 24 items. The 24-item scale is listed as having an alpha reliability coefficient of .78 when corrected.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski. The Emerging Generation: An Inside Look at Canada's Teenagers. (Toronto: Irwin, 1985), 112

¹⁰⁷ Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement. Selected Sociometric Scales and Indexes, p. 377.

The 24 items were then reviewed and pre-tested with 32 teenagers outside the Riverton sample area. The pretest included students spanning the grades to be tested in Riverton, and found that 4 of the questions were difficult for teenagers to answer. They were confused by the language or the concept presented. The Dean scale was designed for adults and included items like, "It is frightening to be responsible for the development of a little child". Teenagers in the pretest responded to these questions by saying "How am I supposed to know?" The problematic questions were deleted from the Riverton survey with the understanding that the new 20-item scale would be rigorously analyzed to determine factors measured and a new reliability coefficient.

According to the Riverton definition of hope the following would be characteristic of teenagers with a low score on the Hope Index:

TABLE 4.4
DESCRIPTION OF LOW HOPE CHARACTERISTICS

A teenager who scored low on the hope scale would be:

1. Powerless to cope with life and its changes.
2. Lacking norms or standards by which guidance is given for making independent decisions.
3. Being or feeling socially isolated from friends and family.

In measuring hope using the items from Dean Alienation Scale, a high score would suggest low hope. The adapted twenty question Alienation scale was placed in Section 4, #10 of the survey. Included were nine questions measuring social isolation, five measuring power and control, and six for measuring norms. Each question provided a four part

Likert scale for response categories varying from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”.

These questions comprise the adapted Dean Scale. (See Table 4.5)

TABLE 4.5
ADAPTED DEAN SCALE VARIABLES

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world. 2. I worry about the future facing today's children. 3. I don't get invited out as often as I'd like. 4. The end often justifies the means. 5. Sometimes I have the feeling that other people are just using me. 6. Everything is relative, and there just aren't any definite rules to live by. 7. I often wonder what the meaning of life really is. 8. There is little or nothing I can do towards preventing a major war. 9. There are few dependable ties between people anymore. 10. With so many religions to choose from one doesn't know which to believe. 11. Most people seldom feel lonely. 12. People's ideas change so much that I wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on. 13. Real friends are as easy as ever to find. 14. The world in which we live is basically a friendly place. 15. The only thing we can be sure of today is that we can be sure of nothing. 16. People are just naturally friendly and helpful. 17. The future looks very dismal. 18. One can always find friends if one shows oneself friendly. 19. There are so many decisions that have to be made today that sometimes I could explode. 20. I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd really like. |
|--|

Riverton Hope Scale

The data was collected from the hope items and subjected to a statistical factor analysis.¹⁰⁸ It is necessary to “clean-up” scales in any survey ensuring, statistically at least,

¹⁰⁸ The statistical computer work was made possible through the patient assistance of Elaine Grandin. Elaine, a graduate student of Sociology, University of Calgary, guided me expertly through the steps necessary to read the computers findings.

that one factor is being measured.¹⁰⁹ Through this process the sub-section of questions pertaining to social isolation were found to be measuring 3 different factors. Following this discovery the questions measuring factors other than hope were eliminated, along with statistically weak questions. This factor analysis process was repeated until seven questions were isolated. These 7 variables provided a statistically strong measure of one factor. Together, these questions demonstrated a reliability coefficient of .73067 as a standardized item alpha and together were labeled as the Riverton Hope Scale.

The Riverton Hope Scale is made up of the following seven questions.

TABLE 4.6
RIVERTON HOPE SCALE AND FACTOR LOADINGS

The factor loadings for the following hope scale variables are indicated in brackets following. Response categories were: Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Disagree = 3, and Strongly disagree = 4.

1. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world. (.67)
2. I don't get invited out as often as I'd like. (.64)
3. I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd really like. (.58)
4. I worry about the future facing today's children. (.47)
5. Sometimes I have the feeling that other people are just using me. (.55)
6. There are so many decisions that have to be made today that sometimes I could just explode.
7. I often wonder what the meaning of life really is. (.47).

The responses given by each case to these seven questions were given a numeric value and summated. The values given the Likert type scale were: Strong agree = 1, Agree = 2, Disagree = 3, and Strong disagree = 4. This created a range of hope response for each teenager. The hope response totals varied for teenagers from a low of 11, to a high of 37, a range of 26. In the same manner as the religiosity data, the range of responses were then

¹⁰⁹ In a further examination of these variables by Elaine Grandin it was determined that the measures of social isolation were actually measuring three different variables. This is contrary to the findings for the actual Dean Scale, where the reliability of the social isolation scale was stated as .84.

collapsed empirically to create 3 groupings of hope: Low (34%), Medium (36%) and High (30%).¹¹⁰

Two measures have now been defined that will be used to seek correlations between hope and religiosity among Riverton teenagers.

¹¹⁰(N=255) Three groupings emerged within the range as those who scored (11-21), (22-25), and (26-37). The population was distributed among these three sections. The Medium hope group is 3% larger than the Medium section of the religiosity measure, however, the High groupings differ by only 1% (Hope 30% - Religiosity 29%).

Chapter Five

Findings and Discussion

Findings

In our study among Riverton youth we have postulated that religiosity (the independent variable) has a positive influence on hope (the dependent variable).

The null hypothesis therefore states that there is no relationship between these variables.

Relationships such as this are tested by statistical procedures. One technique of testing the hypothesis is to set up a contingency table. This table displays the distribution of respondents in Riverton on the variables of religiosity and hope. On the following table "hope" is being treated as the dependent variable and therefore we are percentagizing across the columns. See Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1:
RELIGIOSITY AND HOPE
Frequencies and percentages of Riverton youth by Religiosity and Hope.

	Hope				
	Low	Med.	High	Missing	Total
Religiosity					
Low N=	24 28.6%	37 44.0%	23 27.4%	2	84 100%
Med N=	27 36.0%	28 37.3%	20 26.7%	1	75 100%
High N=	21 31.8%	20 30.3%	25 37.9%	0	66 100%
Missing Data	14	8	8	15	45
TOTAL:	72 32.0%	85 37.8%	68 30.2%	18 8.0%	225 100%

Statistics Chi-Square: 4.36 DF: 4 Probability: 0.677
Gamma: 0.037 $r = +0.032$

Table 5.1 shows that among those students high in religiosity, 37.9% were also high in hope. This table does show some curvilinearity as noted in the 44% in the low religiosity and medium hope section. Comparing the percentages in the columns we find the largest percentage of students scoring high on the hope scale in the high religiosity category. This appears to lend weak support to the hypothesis, however it is not statistically significant and indicates little or no relationship between the variables.

The chi-square statistic has a probability of 0.677 meaning the relationship between religiosity and hope will occur naturally 68 times in 100. The Pearson r correlation shows a slight positive relationship at +.032. At this point in the analysis, although statistically insignificant, the null hypothesis, that there is no association between religiosity and hope, cannot be totally rejected in this Riverton data. It becomes important therefore to explore the possible reasons why no significant relationship appeared between religiosity and hope.

Why No Relationship?

There are several possible explanations for the failure in supporting the hypothesis. The process of examining possibilities begins by re-examining the foundations of the study.

Possible Explanation #1: Theoretical Rationale

This project began with the assumption that Christian religion teaches its followers about hope. We assumed that followers of Christ could find hope in God and live a life filled with hope. The Bible described this as “living hope”, and this is what we tried to measure in the Riverton teenage population.

The concept of hope, as understood from a Christian perspective, was assumed, sought and measured as a positive virtue in the lives of teenagers. In contrast, hopelessness, or the lack of hope, was understood as a prominent feature of suicidal teenagers. This was supported by studies finding that suicidal wishes had a higher correlation with hopelessness than with any other symptom of depression.¹¹¹

The hope measured by the questions and scales in Riverton was a hope in the ‘day-to-day world’ of teenagers. In reflection and reexamination of the Biblical texts I notice that we have perhaps failed to capture the “other worldly” aspect of hope described and this calls for a re-examination of hope as described in the Bible, and the measurement indicators used in the Riverton survey.

¹¹¹ A.T. Beck. *Depression: Causes and Treatment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1967. p.58. See also: *Overcoming Depression* by Demitri F. Papolos, M.D and Janice Papolos, Harper and Row, New York, 1987. On page 13 he states, “The appalling feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness can lead to suicidal thoughts or actions. ‘Hopelessness’ as it relates to suicidal tendencies is also utilized in Questions and Answers about Depression and its Treatment: A Consultation with a Leading Psychiatrist, by Ivan K. Goldberg, M.D., Charles Press, Philadelphia, 1993. In Goldberg’s Depression Scale, his variable (#2) asks respondents to rate the appropriateness of the statement “My future seems hopeless”. Goldberg uses responses to this scale for assessing suicidal traits.

Biblical Hope: Another Look

Reviewing the Bible verses cited in Appendix One from the foundation of this study we notice:

1. Jesus Christ himself is described as the Christian hope.¹¹²
2. Some verses assert that, by the resurrection of Jesus, the specific Christian virtue of hope is bestowed on the believer.
3. The Christian is to abound in hope through the Holy Spirit.¹¹³
4. This Christian hope cited is essentially related to faith and love through salvation.¹¹⁴

In review it appears that whereas, faith is used in the Bible to refer to both the past and the present, hope is often used in the Bible to refer only to the future or "other world".¹¹⁵ The object of the Christian hope is a future tense experience of God's kingdom.¹¹⁶

The questions used in the Riverton hope scale do not measure hope in a future life - God's kingdom in the hereafter. The operational definition of "hope," according to the

¹¹²1 Timothy 1:1

¹¹³Romans 15:13.

¹¹⁴1 Corinthians 13:13.

¹¹⁵Romans 8:24-25.

¹¹⁶Acts 2:26; Titus 1:2

questions in the Riverton survey, is a present tense attitude a teenager would show as opposite to despair or alienation. Although the present tense living hope as measured in the Riverton sense is understood as a virtue today, it may not readily apply to the New Testament teaching cited.

Further examination affirmed the distinctiveness of “other worldly” hope in the Bible. Throughout the New Testament the most frequent terms used in Greek for hope are the noun *elpis*, and the verb *elpizo*.¹¹⁷ Both words include in their meaning the act of hoping, and the object hoped for.

The classical secular Greek word *elpis* does not correspond with “hope” as it was measured in this study. It is a general term for anticipating future events of any kind, either good or evil. It is future-oriented hope and not hope in this life.

The Greek culture in which the New Testament was written may not have viewed hope in this life, or this world, as a fundamental characteristic of religious people. Thus, it may be argued that Christianity does not teach that followers of Christ will be more hopeful in this life than the general population. Indeed, the theme of hope does not appear as significant in quotes from Jesus himself.

In the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus *elpis* and *elpizo* appear in only five verses.¹¹⁸ The main emphasis on these New Testament words for hope is found in the writings of Paul and the literature written after his writings. Whenever we find these

¹¹⁷R. Bultmann, “*elpis*”, Tyndale Dictionary of the New Testament II, pp. 518 ff.

¹¹⁸Matthew 12:21; John 5:45; Luke 6:34, 23:8, 24:21.

words in the New Testament they always indicate the expectation of something good. Rather than being a personal characteristic, hope is an objective benefit of salvation. Hope is directed toward the salvation found in Christ.¹¹⁹ In other verses where *elpis* is used without qualification it refers to eschatology and the fulfillment of God's kingdom on earth.¹²⁰ With this New Testament focus on the 'object' of the hope being in Christ as salvation, it does not necessarily follow that if a Christian directs hope towards these goals he or she would live a more "hopeful" life in this world. The implications are that Christian religious hope is other worldly and therefore would not be measured by the Riverton hope instrument.

The Riverton Hope Scale (Table 4.6) indicates hope was examined as on a continuum with despair and alienation. A hopeful teenager would: feel capable of coping with life and its changes; have a set of standards guiding the making of decisions; and would feel socially integrated with friends and family. The variables in the scale were asking questions according to this definition of hope and there was not a significant correlation to religiosity. Had the Riverton hope scale measured "other worldly" hope - afterlife, heaven, return of Christ - we might expect a stronger correlation between religiosity and hope.

¹¹⁹Galatians 5:5; Colossians 1:5; Titus 2:13.

¹²⁰Romans 8:24; 12:12; 15:13; Ephesians 2:12.

The primary explanation why anticipated results did not occur may be due to what sociologists call “problems with epistemic correlations,” meaning the Riverton indicators selected and used for “hope” did not measure actually measure the concept as understood in the Biblical teaching.

Hope was a theological idea we tried to measure with a sociological indicator. As such, the congruence between the theoretical concept of hope and the indicator used is less than perfect. Certainly a different dimension of hope was being measured by the Riverton scale yet it may not be a measure of Christian hope.

Possible Explanation #2: Measurement Difficulties

The Riverton hope and religiosity scales could be challenged as not being effective measurements. It was important therefore to compare with other surveys. When we examined the Riverton measures alongside other surveys that have used these same variables, both the Hope and Religiosity scales appear to have validity.¹²¹ The reliability coefficients for the religiosity and hope scales are acceptable. The standardized alphas were 0.91885 for the religiosity scale, and 0.73067 for the hope scale. These alpha coefficients support the use of the scales as measures, but again we must verify the concept they measure.

¹²¹ See Merlin Brinkerhoff and Marlene Mackie, "The Applicability of Social Distance for Religious Research: An Exploration." Review of Religious Research 28 (1986):253-262. Also see Dwight G. Dean, "Alienation: Its Meaning and Measurement." American Sociological Review 26 (1961): 753-758.

The Riverton religiosity scale might be critiqued on the basis of the questions being related to “church” in a Christian sense rather than more inclusive to all religions. The emphasis may cause particular difficulty for those who are religious but do not include church attendance or Christian behaviors in their lifestyle or description of religion. This criticism can be rebutted by both precedent and the context of the Riverton sample.

Precedent was set by Bibby and Posterski who used a similar scale in their Canada-wide survey. Canadians are still predominantly Christian among those professing religious affiliation.¹²²

In the Riverton context, townsfolk were assumed through field observation to be predominantly Christian among those affiliating with a religion. The Christian bias of the religiosity scale is validated by the religious preference indicated by the Riverton respondents.¹²³ Christianity was and is the dominant religion in Riverton. The questions used are therefore appropriate within this context.

The validity of the religiosity scale is also indicated by other research. A study by Elaine Grandin and Merlin Brinkerhoff, based on this Riverton data has shown, as

¹²²As of the 1990 Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, only 9% of Canadians over 15 years of age claim to affiliate with other non-Christian religions. Statistics Canada, Social Trends 11-008E #22, p.22.

¹²³Of the 265 answering with their religious preference, Ba’hai, Buddhist, Hare Krishna had only 1 each. There were no Hindu, Jewish, or Unification Church respondents. These would have been hindered by the questions on the religiosity scale and would have posed a difficulty if they were in large numbers. Those who were religious in Riverton were affiliated with Christianity.

predicted, that religiosity is related to other variables such as racial and ethnic intolerance.¹²⁴

Possible Explanation #3: Sample Difficulties

There is always the possibility that the sample in a study is not representative of the population. In Riverton the entire population of teenagers was captured with few exceptions and as such fully represents the teenagers of the town.

Possible Explanation #4: Urban vs. Rural

Bibby and Posterski have been criticized because the Teen Canada Project sample was skewed towards urban youth, and lacked sufficient representation of rural teenagers. Perhaps, as the Riverton population is rural, there may again be concerns raised over rural versus urban populations. Any such criticism within Riverton is not defensible. The rural factor could not have interfered with the outcome of the hypothesis in that the population of Riverton was being examined without comparison to other urban data.

Don Posterski also stated that the “rural small town” factor has not been found significant in any of the categories of research he and Bibby have undertaken among Canadian teenagers.¹²⁵ They found that the youth in small towns were just as irreligious as those in large cities. The Population Research Laboratory in Alberta has however

¹²⁴Elaine Grandin and Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, “Does Religiosity Encourage Racial and Ethnic Intolerance?” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XXIII, No.3, (1991): 30-47.

¹²⁵Don Posterski in personal conversation, November 6, 1991, Banff, Alberta.

challenged Posterski and Bibby's assertion.¹²⁶ Interestingly, this research also found a greater percentage of Riverton youth attended church than in Calgary as cited in Chapter Three giving some support for the assertion that rural youth may be more religious than urban youth.¹²⁷

This reintroduces our discussion from Chapter Three concerning religious attendance as a measure of religiosity. Although the religious attendance variable was removed from the Riverton Religiosity Scale through factor analysis, future research should continue to explore the relationship between belief and behaviour as measured by attendance at religious services.

Future research could also explore differences in religiosity between rural and urban youth in Canada. The religiosity scale used in Riverton could be employed among urban youth as a comparison to test Bibby and Posterski's observation.

Possible Explanation #5: The Influence of other Variables

Other variables may influence the relationship between religiosity and hope as measured among the teenagers in Riverton. These are difficult to ascertain in any study.

¹²⁶Krahn, Harvey, In Summary, Vol. 10, No. 2, Population Research Laboratory, Department of Sociology, The University of Alberta Edmonton, February 1989.

¹²⁷City of Calgary, Social Services Department, Research and Planning Unit, "Youth Leisure Activities by Frequency of Participation," A Profile of Youth In Calgary, (Calgary: SS, 1985), 28 (n=705).

With the amount of data collected in Riverton, there are additional factors that may be examined as possibly affecting the correlation between religiosity and hope.

An elaboration model was applied to the Riverton data to determine if another variable may have been suppressing the relationship between religiosity and hope. Factors for elaboration were selected according to empirical observation, theory, and past studies. Through this process, six variables were examined as possible influences on the hypothesis. These were: Gender; Age; Socioeconomic Status; Religious Preference; and Religious Attendance. We will evaluate each of these separately:

The Effect of Gender

The relationship between religiosity and hope was statistically tested and measured by the product-moment correlation. As noted in Table 5.1, $r = +.032$. When controlled for gender the subsets were:

Male ($n=98$, $r = -0.089$) and Female ($n=127$, $r = +0.080$).

These were not statistically significant and surprisingly did little to explain the variation. It is surprising in that research literature has for sometime shown women to be more religious than men. The past decade has in fact seen a renewal of research interest in the relationship between religiosity and gender.

Although there is ongoing discussion about masculine/feminine images and outlooks, these studies have traditionally shown females are more likely to be involved in

church-oriented religion than males.¹²⁸ Females are more likely to attend church functions than males. As the Riverton survey measured attendance at religious services, we would expect a higher percentage of females to be identified as frequent attendees. See Table 5.2

¹²⁸The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 30:4 (December 1991) contains several articles elaborating on the subject of gender and religiosity.

See also: Thomas Luckmann, The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 38-39. Hart M. Nelson, and Raymond H. Potvin, 1981 "Gender and Regional Differences in the Religiosity of Protestant Adolescents," Review of Religious Research 22:268-285. Michael K. Roberts, and James D. Davidson, 1984 "The Nature and Sources of Religious Involvement," Review of Religious Research 25:334-350. Candace West, and Don Zimmerman, 1987 "Doing Gender" Gender and Society 1:125-151. Mary Jo Neitz, and James V. Spickard, 1990 "Steps Towards a Sociology of Religious Experience," Sociological Analysis, 51:15-33.

TABLE 5.2
RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE ACCORDING TO GENDER
How often do you attend religious services?

Attendance	Male	Female	Missing	Total
Never (n)	(30) 25.21%	(34) 22.52%		(64) 23.7%
< 1 Year	(19) 15.97%	(14) 9.27%		(33) 12.22%
Once/Year	(11) 9.24%	(28) 18.54%	(1)	(39) 14.44%
Several/Year	(17) 14.29%	(13) 8.61%		(30) 11.11%
Once/Month	(9) 7.56%	(12) 7.95%		(21) 7.78%
2-3/Month	(7) 5.88%	(6) 3.97%		(13) 4.81%
Almost Weekly	(13) 10.92%	(14) 9.27%		(27) 10.00%
Every week	(8) 6.72%	(23) 15.23%		(31) 11.48%
<1/week*	(5) 4.20%	(7) 4.64%		(12) 4.44%
Missing	(1)	(1)		(2)
Total	120 100%	152 100%	1 100%	273 100%

Statistics: Chi-Square 13.48 DF:8
Gamma: .096 Probability=.231
 $r = +0.076$

* Not all religious institutions in Riverton offer opportunity for people to gather more frequently than once per week, hence fewer n's.

Of the teenagers surveyed in Riverton, 44% were male (120) and 56% were female (152).¹²⁹ Although Table 5.2 shows females in Riverton attending church more frequently than male counterparts, the tendency is not statistically significant.

When considering religiosity and gender, a higher percentage of females reported high religiosity but again, it was not statistically significant (See Table 5.3)

TABLE 5.3
GENDER AND RELIGIOSITY IN RIVERTON

RELIGIOSITY

GENDER	LOW	MED	HIGH	MISSING	TOTAL
Male	(40) 39.6%	(37) 36.63%	(24) 23.76%	(19)	(101) 100%
Female	(46) 36.22%	(39) 30.71%	(42) 33.07%	(25)	(127) 100%
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Total	(86) 37.72%	(76) 33.33%	(66) 28.95%	(44)	(228)

Statistics: Chi-Square 2.45, DF:2,
Gamma: .123, Probability=.243
 $r = +0.078$

The survey asked the males and females, "Do you believe in the existence of God?" They could indicate: from the range of answers: Yes; Yes I think so; No, I don't think so; and No.

¹²⁹ One survey form did not have a response for gender.

The majority of Riverton students believed in God with 89.69% indicating “Yes,” or “Yes, I think so”. According to gender we found 55.75% of the males said definitively “Yes”¹³⁰ compared to 65.77% of the females. The females in Riverton as in other research demonstrate being more religious, but does this have an influence on hope?

When subsets of male and female are examined against hope the findings are surprising. Although Riverton females are slightly more religious than their male counterparts the data shows them less hopeful. (See Table 5.4).

TABLE 5.4
GENDER AND HOPE
AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

GENDER	HOPE				Total
	Low	Med.	High	Missing	
Male	(35) 30.97%	(38) 33.63%	(40) 35.40%	(7)	(113) 100%
Female	(51) 36.17%	(55) 39.01%	(35) 24.82%	(11)	(127) 100%
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Total	(86) 33.86%	(93) 36.61%	(75) 29.53%	(18)	(228)

Statistics: Chi-Square 3.37, DF:2,
Gamma:(-.159), Probability=0.117 $r = -0.099$

¹³⁰Other response categories were, Yes, I think so (n=74); No, I don't think so (n=18); No (n=9), n=161.

Although not statistically significant, it is interesting to speculate on why there is a slight difference in the relationship to hope when we consider gender. Perhaps it is that Riverton as a town environment is generally patriarchal and therefore creates a more hopeful ethos for males? By this I mean that the town is male dominated historically, in government and in “attitude.” Males in Riverton seem socialized towards strong leadership roles while females towards more supportive and subordinate roles.

Field observation and interviews would support Riverton being male dominated. For example, males have more social options available to them in Riverton than females. The sporting activities popular in Riverton are traditional male sports such as hockey and rodeo events.

Interviews also revealed that males over 16 years were granted freer access to the family car or truck. This gave them mobility in Riverton and beyond although when surveyed on how often they traveled to a nearby city there was little difference according to gender.¹³¹

It could be that females frequently accompanied boys on these trips? Females interviewed often spoke of the importance of being associated with a male through dating.

I don't know what I would do if I didn't have a boyfriend right now. I've always had a boyfriend -- since grade nine.

Grade Twelve female.

¹³¹ Data not included but available on request.

Comments like these show the social importance males in Riverton. For teenage females, life in Riverton is probably socially repressive and seemingly less hopeful thus affecting their scores on the hope scale.

This gender observation is related to the earlier observation concerning urban and rural differences. Small towns in Canada may be more male dominated than urban centers and therefore a gender influence could affect other variables. This possibility should be examined thoroughly in future research.

Affect of Age

Another factor that can influence the relationship under study is the age of the respondents. This could be especially true when considering adolescents.

Margaret Mead has pointed out that in many cultures there is no such period as adolescence.¹³² She described children as moving to adulthood in a smooth “continuous” process. Unlike this description, parents of teenagers in Canada observe a distinct adolescent period usually considered the “teen” years - ages 13 to 19. Although chronologically continuous, it is not a smooth process for most Canadian teenagers.

Parents and other observers of Canadian teenagers note distinct differences between 13 year olds and those of 16 to 18 years. Differences can be identified in their physical growth, skin changes and the varying ages at which puberty commences. Less noticeable is the cognitive change during this period. At about age 11, the shift from the

¹³²Margaret Mead, Coming of Age in Samoa. (New York: New American Library, 1950.)

concrete operational stage to formal operational thought begins in adolescents.¹³³ Formal operational thought is characterized by an ability to use abstract concepts.¹³⁴ We would expect these, and other developmental changes, to impact most variables. To examine if age impacted the relationship of religion and hope Riverton youth were divided into age groups and the levels of hope were examined for each.¹³⁵ (See Table 5.5)

¹³³Jean Piaget, "Intellectual Development from Adolescence to Adulthood", Human Development 15, (1972):1-12

¹³⁴Piaget (1972):3.

¹³⁵ Those with insufficient n's were not included in the hope comparison excluding those 12, 19 and 20 years of age.

TABLE 5.5
AGE AND HOPE AMONG TEENAGERS IN RIVERTON

HOPE

AGE	LOW	MED	HIGH	MISSING	TOTAL
13	1 100%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0	1 100%
14	11 36.67%	12 40.0%	7 23.3%	3	30 100%
15	15 31.9%	17 36.2%	15 31.9%	3	47 100%
16	18 29.0%	25 40.3%	19 30.6%	4	62 100%
17	22 34.9%	18 28.6%	23 36.5%	4	63 100%
18	19 41.3%	18 39.1%	9 19.6%	4	46 100%
19	0 0.00	3 75%	1 25%	0	4 100%
20	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 100%	0	1 100%
Missing	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	86 33.86%	93 36.61%	75 29.53%	18	254

Statistics: Chi-Square: 13.27, DF: 14

Gamma: -0.010, Probability 0.885 $r = +0.006$

As these age groupings are compared in the table we see the percentages are curvilinear with no indication of age being a strong factor affecting hope as measured in Riverton ($r=0.006$). There is a slightly lower percentage of high hope among those 14 and 18 years old although not statistically significant. Similarly, age is not significantly related to religiosity statistically ($r = -.025$).¹³⁶

To further test statistically if age affected the relationship between religiosity and hope, age was elaborated as a control variable allowing a comparison of the “ r ” values among the age groups. To simplify the calculation and allow easy comparison, the data was collapsed into two age groupings: junior high (13-15 yrs) and senior high age (16-18 yrs).

The relationship between religiosity and hope overall was ($r = +0.025$). When controlled for age groupings there was little or no change: Junior High ($n=70$: $r = +0.020$), and Senior High ($n=154$: $r = +0.027$).

#3. Socioeconomic Status

With gender and age examined, we next turn to economics by comparing the teenagers' familial socioeconomic status (SES). The intent was to explore the question: Does the availability of money and prestige due to the family's SES affect the hope level of teenagers?

¹³⁶ Statistics for Age/Religiosity were: Chi-Square 6.34, DF:12. Gamma = .026, Probability = .736

Through the administering of a pretest we found that teenage students were not always aware of their family income by dollar amount. To overcome this barrier the SES of Riverton students was based upon the level of the father's education according to the precedent of other studies.¹³⁷ Students were asked in the survey to indicate the level of education completed by their father. The findings were that statistically SES and hope do not demonstrate a significant relationship.¹³⁸ When SES was used as the control variable to test the relationship between religiosity and hope the response categories and the corresponding product-moment correlations were:

Education	r	N's
1)Less than Grade Seven	(r =-0.677)	10
2)Junior High	(r =-0.210)	16
3)Grade 10-12	(r =+0.173)	45
4) Senior High	(r =+0.056)	34
5)Vocational/Technical College	(r =+0.096)	40
6)Some University	(r =+0.157)	20
7)University Graduate	(r =-0.192)	36
8)Postgraduate Studies	(r =+0.136)	22

¹³⁷ See Grandin and Brinkerhoff, "Does Religiosity Encourage Racial and Ethnic Intolerance?" *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XXIII, No. 3, 1991

¹³⁸ There is a curvilinear pattern to the results. This is surprising as one might expect that teenagers who have the security provided by high socio-economic status would express higher hope. These families are better able to provide the educational opportunities or equipment necessary for their children to be launched into careers, employment and a comfortable standard of living. Full data on Family SES and Hope is available on request.

Overall, the “*r*” for religiosity and hope when controlled for SES was 0.032. Only the first category was statistically significant, those whose father’s did not complete grade seven. This indicates that a father’s lack of education was negatively related to the hopefulness of their adolescent and provides an interesting observation to stimulate further research.

#4. Religious Preference

Perhaps religious preference - their denomination or religion - influence hope? Comparing the various denominations does demonstrate slight difference among denominations on hope. Yet, the relationship is not statistically significant, and no pattern emerges among individual denominations.

Religious preference was then examined further by collapsing the respondents into four categories. These were:

1. Those churches who are affiliated with the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).¹³⁹
2. Those churches affiliated with the World Council of Churches (WCC).¹⁴⁰
3. Independent religions generally unaffiliated with others (IND).¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ EFC included: Alliance, Baptist, Christian Reformed, Full Gospel, Nazarene, Salvation Army.

¹⁴⁰ WCC included: Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United. It is recognized that some individual churches held dual affiliation, however, the affiliation of the denominational office was used as a determinant factor.

4. Other religions, those whose n's were few in number (OTH).¹⁴²

These groupings were then compared to hope. (See Table 5.6.)

TABLE 5.6
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS AND HOPE
AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

HOPE

Religious		Low	Medium	High	Missing	Total
AFFILIATION						
EFC	n	(16) 37.21%	(13) 30.23%	(14) 32.56%	(1)	(43) 100%
WCC	n	(47) 33.57%	(48) 34.29%	(45) 32.14%	(11)	(140) 100%
IND	n	(2) 18.18%	(5) 45.45%	(4) 36.36%	(1)	(11) 100%
OTHER	n	(1) 16.67%	(2) 33.33%	(3) 50.00%	(1)	(6) 100%
MISS DATA		(20)	(25)	(10)	(4)	(59)
TOTAL		(66) 33.0%	(68) 34.0%	(66) 33.0%	(18)	(200)

Statistics: Chi-Square=2.67, DF:6
Gamma=0.110, Probability=0.343 $r = 0.080$

¹⁴¹ Jehovah's Witness and Mormon.

¹⁴² Included Buddhist, Hare Krishna, Hutterite, Jewish, Moonie, and other.

When the statistical table was computed while using religious affiliation groupings as the control variable, the overall $r = 0.007$ between religiosity and hope, again shows virtually no relationship.

The individual product-moment coefficients were:

EFC	n = 39	$r = + 0.141$
WCC	n = 129	$r = -0.067$
IND	n = 11	$r = -0.176$
OTH	n = 6	$r = +0.200$

No religious grouping was found to be statistically significant as related to hope.

#5 Religious Attendance

Some teenagers attend church more frequently than others. Perhaps their parents force them to attend, or they may wish to be regular in attending. Whatever the reason, for those who attend church more frequently there may be a greater opportunity for the teaching to affect their score on the hope scale.

Are those who attend church frequently more hopeful? See Table 5.7.

TABLE 5.7
RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE AND HOPE
AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

		HOPE				
RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	MISSING	TOTAL
LOW	n	(57)	(58)	(40)	(12)	(155)
		36.77%	37.42%	25.81%		100%
MED	n	(20)	(22)	(14)	(5)	(56)
			35.71%	39.29%	25.00%	100%
HIGH	n	(7)	(13)	(22)	(1)	(42)
		16.67%	30.95%	52.38%		100%
MISS DATA		(2)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(2)
TOTAL		(84)	(93)	(76)	(18)	(253)
		33.2%	36.8%	30%		

Statistics: Chi-Square=13.04, DF:4
Gamma=0.241, Probability=0.011

Religious attendance was collapsed into three groupings for easier comparison. Response categories as collapsed were:

LOW= Never, <1/year, 1/year, Several times a year.
MEDIUM=1/month, 2or3/month, more or less weekly.
HIGH= Every week, and More than once a week.

Religious attendance does influence the degree of hope among teenagers.

According to the table, frequent church attendees are more likely to score high on hope

than infrequent church attendees. The chi square statistic is significant with a probability value of 0.011.

The positive correlation between religious attendance and hope seems hard to reconcile with the lack of a relationship between religiosity and hope as attendance can certainly be argued to be a part of religiosity. Re-examining the fourteen variables of the Riverton religiosity scale as cited in Chapter Three we note that religious attendance is not included in the scale. The Riverton religiosity scale is comprised of questions that tend to measure the degree to which a teenager is intrinsically religious although it did not include a variable on attendance.¹⁴³

In other studies, frequency of attendance has been highly correlated to intrinsic religiosity.¹⁴⁴ When Riverton data on religious attendance and religiosity are compared the relationship and direction are as we would expect with those frequent service attendees also high in religiosity ($r = +0.579$).¹⁴⁵ While religiosity and hope did not demonstrate a significant correlation, religious attendance did correlate to hope. This indicates a possibility of other factors at work influencing or suppressing a relationship with hope.

¹⁴³ The coefficient of the Religiosity Scale, 14 items was .91885 as a standard item alpha. The variable concerning religious attendance as mentioned in Table 3.2 was deleted from the scale through factor analysis because the factor loading was less than the .40 minimum required for the scale. See the discussion following Table 3.2 for further information.

¹⁴⁴ R.L. Gorsuch and S. McFarland, "Single vs. Multiple-item scales for measuring religious values." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 11, 1972. Pp.53-65.

¹⁴⁵ Full data available on request. Chi-Square: 76.70, DF:4,(Prob=.000)Gamma:.728, (Prob=.000), $r = 0.579$

Religious preference would be a probable influence. A Baptist and a Catholic would experience very different styles of religious service. Yet we note that religious attendance is positively correlated with hope regardless of denominational preference. The relationship holds for all theological perspectives, denominations, and church leadership styles in Riverton. This begs the question “Is there another variable beyond religious preference that is influencing the relationship between religiosity and hope.

We recall how teenagers emphasized social life frequently during their interviews. Possibly the social aspect of going to church, being with friends and family, is the influencing factor. Within Riverton, and towns like it, attending church is a social event. The family usually travels together in one vehicle providing ‘family time’ together. Once at the church we observed that teenagers visit with friends and other extended family members both before and after the worship service. There is an observable social structure to attending religious services in Riverton. The impact of this social structure may affect the hope scores among teenagers who frequent Riverton church services.

The Impact of Social Structure

Rodney Stark and Travis Hirschi investigated the effects of church attendance on Delinquency in 1969. They found that frequent church attendees were less likely to be involved in delinquent behaviour.¹⁴⁶ They later declared that the correlation was spurious

¹⁴⁶ Travis Hirschi and Rodney Stark, “Hellfire and Delinquency,” *Social Problems* 17 (1969):202-213. Each of the following studies showed a strong negative correlation between church attendance and delinquency: Higgins and Albrecht, 1977; Albrecht, Chadwick, and Alcorn 1977; Linden and Currie, 1977; Rhodes and Reiss, 1970.

when they controlled for gender. Other sociologists tried to replicate their original study and found very different results.¹⁴⁷ They found that church attendance did inhibit delinquency. Stark, after pondering these studies remarks:

I began to realize that what had been conceived of as a micro sociological hypothesis, had to be reformulated as a macro hypothesis. That is, I began to see that religion is not primarily an individual characteristic, a set of beliefs and practices of the particular person. Instead, it gains its power and impact on the individual as an aspect of social structure. Thus it is not religiousness alone that influences a teenager's tendency...but whether the majority of a teenager's friends are also religious.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps the social aspect of attending church frequently, and the social structure present there influences hope among the teenagers in Riverton.

Teenagers, as they meet friends and relatives at church, are in a supportive atmosphere that fosters hope. As some families often attend church together, perhaps there is an environment of cohesiveness created among such families that influences hope? Some data available in the Riverton Survey may indicate such a factor does exist.

Family Cohesiveness

The survey asked teenagers how often their parents or guardians attended religious services. When the frequencies of attendance by their mother and father

¹⁴⁷ Rodney Stark, Sociology 2nd Edition, (Belmond: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1987), 91-92.

¹⁴⁸ Rodney Stark, Sociology 2nd Edition, (Belmond: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1987), 91-92.

were individually placed on a contingency table with hope, a linear pattern emerged with a significant statistical relationship (See Table 5.8).¹⁴⁹

TABLE 5.8
FREQUENCY OF FATHER'S RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE AND
HOPE AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE		HOPE				TOTAL
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	MISSING	
LOW	n	(64) 37.87%	(61) 36.09%	(44) 26.04%	(14)	(169) 100%
MED	n	(10) 26.32%	(16) 42.10%	(12) 31.58%	(2)	(38) 100%
HIGH	n	(7) 17.50%	(14) 35.00%	(19) 47.50%	(1)	(40) 100%
MISS DATA		(5)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(9)
TOTAL		(81) 32.79%	(91) 36.84%	(75) 30.36%	(18)	(247)

Statistics: Chi-Square=9.94, DF:4
Gamma=0.299, Probability=0.003

Religious attendance was collapsed into three groupings for easier comparison. Response categories as collapsed were:

LOW= Never, <1/year, 1/year, Several times a year.

¹⁴⁹ Mother's Attendance/Hope: Chi-square = 23.29, DF:16

Gamma: 0.177, Prob.=0.10

Father's Attendance/Hope: Chi-square = 18.28, DF:16

Gamma: 0.189, Prob.=0.010

MEDIUM=1/month, 2or3/month, more or less weekly.
 HIGH= Every week, and More than once a week.

Similarly, the relationship between mother's religious attendance and hope among teenagers in Riverton follows this direction and is significant statistically.

(See Table 5.9).

TABLE 5.9
FREQUENCY OF MOTHER'S RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE
AND HOPE AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

HOPE

RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	MISSING	TOTAL
LOW	N	(56) 39.72%	(51) 36.17%	(34) 24.11%	(11)	(141) 100%
MED	n	(18) 35.71%	(21) 39.29%	(16) 25.00%	(5)	(55) 100%
HIGH	n	(11) 19.30%	(20) 35.09%	(26) 45.61%	(1)	(57) 100%
MISS DATA		(1)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(3)
TOTAL		(84) 33.60%	(93) 36.36%	(76) 30.04%	(18)	(253)

Statistics: Chi-Square=11.40, DF:4,
 Gamma=0.281, Probability=0.001

Religious attendance was collapsed into three groupings for easier comparison.

Response categories as collapsed were:

LOW=Never, <1/year, 1/year, Several times a year.

MEDIUM=1/month, 2or3/month, more or less weekly.

HIGH=Every week, and More than once a week.

A positive relationship with hope can clearly be seen at this level of evaluation. This relationship between hope and family attending church together, what we might label “family cohesiveness”, was and is worthy of further investigation.

The questionnaire was scanned for other variables that might indicate family cohesiveness. Would such a family have other practices that show this trait of togetherness? Perhaps family prayer may be another indicator? The survey asked, “How often do you say table grace before or after a meal at home?” The five response categories ranged from “Never” to “Very often.” When this variable was placed on a contingency table with hope a positive relationship again is visible. (See Table 5.10).

TABLE 5.10
FAMILY TABLE GRACE AND HOPE AMONG TEENAGERS

HOPE

Frequency of table grace has been collapsed into three categories:

LOW – Includes “Never” and “Seldom”;

MEDIUM – includes “sometimes”;

HIGH – includes “Quite often” and “Very Often”.

Frequency	Low	Medium	High	Missing	Total
Seldom	40	60	69	11	169
Occasional	9	3	29	6	41
Frequent	27	4	57	11	88
Missing Data	0	0	0	0	0
Total:	76	67	155	28	298

Statistics Chi-Square: 16,86, DF:4,
Gamma: 0.375 Probability: 0.000

A relationship between family cohesiveness in the religious sphere and hope is supported once again by Table 5.10. Almost one half of the teenagers who are in families where grace is frequently prayed at home scored high in hope.¹⁵⁰ Cohesiveness, as demonstrated through the image of families praying, saying grace, and giving thanks around the dinner table does appear to bear on the hopefulness of Riverton teenagers.

Following this observation an attempt was made to gather together variables that might give further indication of cohesiveness and run them through a statistical factor analysis to determine if a "cohesiveness" scale might be produced.

¹⁵⁰ Actual total was 47.37%, n=57.

The same criterion was used in this process as for the development of the hope and religiosity scales. The variables tested and their respective factor loadings are shown in Table 5.11.¹⁵¹ This list also includes a new variable created to indicate families attending religious services together and thereby a family cohesiveness. The survey instrument unfortunately did not ask if the specific family members were attending the same religious service however, based on field observations it is assumed that those who score High in family attendance are attending the same church in Riverton.

¹⁵¹ Those variables tested whose factor loading was less than the .40 minimum have not been

TABLE 5.11
VARIABLES TESTED FOR "FAMILY COHESIVENESS"

Factor loadings have been rounded to two decimal places and are shown in brackets following the variable.

1. How often do you attend religious services? (.91)
2. How often does your mother/guardian attend religious services? (.88)
3. How often does your father/guardian attend religious services? (.85)
4. RECODE: A measure of total family attendance was established by collating the attendance of the respondent, mother and father and dividing by 3. This figure was then collapsed into Low, Medium and High categories for family attendance at religious services. (.97)
5. RECODE: How often do you say table grace before or after meals in your home?¹⁵² (.49)

Noting the high factor loading of the new variable (#4) for family attendance (cohesiveness), it was decided to tabulate hope and family cohesiveness. (See Table 5.12)

included.

¹⁵² The recode reversed the direction of the variable's scale.

TABLE 5.12
FAMILY COHESIVENESS - RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE
AND HOPE AMONG RIVERTON TEENAGERS

HOPE

FAMILY COHESIVENESS	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	MISSING	TOTAL
LOW	n(56) 38.10%	(54) 36.73%	(37) 25.17%	(12)	(147) 100%
MED	n(18) 35.71%	(23) 39.29%	(22) 25.00%	(5)	(63) 100%
HIGH	n(6) 19.30%	(13) 35.09%	(16) 45.61%	(0)	(35) 100%
MISS DATA	(6)	(3)	(1)	(1)	(11)
TOTAL	(80) 32.65%	(90) 36.73%	(75) 30.61%	(18)	(245)

Statistics: Chi-Square=8.65, DF:4,
Gamma=0.27, Probability=0.003

Religious attendance was collapsed into three groupings for easier comparison. Response categories as collapsed were:

LOW=Never, <1/year, 1/year, Several times a year.

MEDIUM=1/month, 2or3/month, more or less weekly.

HIGH=Every week, and More than once a week.

A linear relationship exists between these two variables that is statistically significant.

Summary Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between religiosity and hope among teenagers in Riverton. Considering religious belief, practice, experience, and knowledge, the results of the study do not provide support for the assumption that teenagers with high scores in religiosity will also attain high scores in hope.

Whereas religiosity according to the Riverton religiosity scale appeared to have little or no influence on hope, religious attendance remained a significant influence on hope as expressed in the Riverton scale. Furthermore, the religious attendance patterns of father and mother are also positively correlated to hope among their teenagers. This result emphasizes the importance of specific religious practices and behaviors and draws attention to the social aspect of church. Family cohesiveness is identified as having independent value that calls for further investigation.

Questions also arise from the Riverton data concerning religious practice versus religious belief. Does the practice of saying grace around the table with the family measure a different dimension of religiosity? Perhaps this behaviour measures a dimension more closely related to religious behaviour than belief? It may be that religious practice positively correlates to hope. Our findings concerning religious service attendance would support this view yet raise the greater questions concerning the relationship between religious practice and religious belief.

The divergent results to this study's original hypothesis may be due simply to the distinction between religious belief and religious practice. Further investigation of the

relationship between religiosity and hope must recognize this and consider anew the multidimensionality of religion. Amid the scholarly debating on intrinsic, extrinsic and quest dimensions, one must again define religiosity.¹⁵³

The dimensions of hope, especially “other worldly hope” must carefully be measured with new variables. Aspects of other worldly hope will focus on the afterlife, heaven, and the kingdom of God to come. The Dean scale would not be recommended for such a measure. On the other hand, the Riverton hope scale does provide a measure for hopefulness in day to day life. It would be interesting to sample another population of teenagers to examine if Riverton youth are more hopeful than those from other towns or cities. Urban - rural comparisons of hope among teenagers obviously calls for additional research. Efforts should also be made in further research to develop a scale for measuring family cohesiveness. This could become an interesting and perhaps helpful indicator in studies concerning teenage suicide or teenage depression.

Distinguishing cause and effect in this type of research is always difficult. It is still uncertain, for example, whether frequent church attendance is the result of being hopeful, or vice versa; or whether both are consequences of family cohesiveness. It may be the case that all the individual factors examined, or others unexamined, are causally interconnected in some way.

¹⁵³ For a detailed summary of this debate and descriptions of these dimensions, see Batson and Ventis, 1982, pg. 152-170

As this study began to lead towards the role of the family and the affect on hope among teenagers it points towards another area of research on the family and the differences between divorced and intact family units. This would seem an obviously salient correlate of hope. Overall there is striking consistency in studies showing that divorced families have more psychological and social difficulties than intact families.¹⁵⁴ While it would be a challenging undertaking, it would be valuable research to examine family and hope among adolescents with a sample that would allow the researcher to examine differences and correlates between these two types of families.

I close with a simple call for continued research on the questions raised concerning how religiosity interacts with hope among adolescents living in our world where hope is challenged frequently.

¹⁵⁴ Based on two large scale sociological studies in the US Midwest, an example of this area of family research can be found in Ronal L. Simons, "Understanding Differences Between Divorced and Intact Families: Stress, Interaction, and Child Outcome." (Understanding Families, Vol 5, Sage Publications, 1996.)

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Appendix A:
Biblical Passages on Hope

For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.¹

A.1 Job 6:8 "Oh, that I might have my request, that God would grant what I hope for..."

Job 8:13 Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perishes the hope of the godless.

Job 11:18 You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in safety.

Job 27:8 For what hope has the godless when he is cut off, when God takes away his life?

A.2 Ps. 25:3 No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse.

Ps. 25:5 guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Ps. 25:21 May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.

Ps. 31:24 Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

A.3 Ps. 33:18 But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,

Ps. 33:20 We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

Ps. 33:22 May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.

Ps. 37:9 For evil men (people) will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

¹Psalm 71:5. This and all following biblical quotes are from the New International Version.

- A.4 Ps. 39:7 "But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."
- Ps. 42:11 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
- Ps. 52:9 I will praise you forever for what you have done; in your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints.
- Ps. 62:5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.
- A.5 Ps. 65:5 You answer us with awesome deeds of righteousness, O God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas,
- Ps. 71:5 For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.
- Ps. 71:14 But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more.
- A.6 Ps. 119:43 Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws.
- Ps. 119:49 Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.
- Ps. 119:74 May those who fear you rejoice when they see me, for I have put my hope in your word.
- Ps. 119:114 You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.
- A.7 Ps. 146:5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,...

A.8 Prov. 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

Prov. 23:18 There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.

A.9 Isa. 40:31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isa. 49:23 Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who hope in me will not be disappointed.

Jer. 14:22 Do any of the worthless idols of the nations bring rain? Do the skies themselves send down showers? No, it is you, O LORD our God. Therefore our hope is in you, for you are the one who does all this.

Jer. 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Lam. 3:25 The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him;..

Micah 7:7 But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.

A.10 Acts 2:26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope,

Acts 23:6 Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead."

A.1 Rom. 5:1-5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our own sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and

character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Rom. 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Rom. 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Rom. 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

A.12 2Cor. 3:12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.

Eph. 1:18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Col. 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1Ths. 1:3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

2Ths. 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,...

A.13 1Tim. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

1Tim. 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

A.14 Hebr. 10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

A.15 1Peter. 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,...

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

Appendix B

Phone Interview Format

Hello, my name is Carson Pue calling for the University of Calgary. I am calling to follow-up on the research project which is underway concerning teenagers growing up in small rural communities. We are completing the interviews of those randomly selected by phone. Would this be a convenient time for you to spend 30-45 minutes responding to a few questions?

If not, when? _____

In beginning I want to remind you that both your name, and the name of "Riverton" will be removed from the data we are collecting. All of those who participate in the interviews will have the opportunity to receive a two-page summary of the research through the high school at Christmas time and we would encourage you to pick up this summary at that time.

1. Family

Tell me about your family.

- How many brothers/sisters?
- What is your placement in the family (oldest, etc.)?
- Employment? Both parents? Where?
- How long have you lived here? Where before?

2. Education

- What are your general impressions of your school?
- What are your impressions of how the school is administered? How it is run? What would you change if you could?

3. Media

- What are your favorite music groups?
- What radio stations do you listen to?
- Do you read the "Riverton" Times?
- Do you listener to the local radio station?

4. Social Life

- What do teenagers do in "Riverton" for a social life?
- In the interviews we have done previously there have been a couple of places referred to as party places. One is called the "Mattress", and the other is called "Beaverland". Are you familiar with these places? What do they mean to you personally?
- What in general do you think about the relationship between the police and teenagers in "Riverton"?
- As we have studied high schools across Western Canada, there are social groupings that appear in each school. These often have nicknames attached tot hem. What are

the social groupings you would identify at your school? (I.e. punks, cowboys, preppies, etc.)

- In which of these groups would you place yourself?
- What do you do when you want to go shopping? Where do you shop?
- There used to be a place here in “Riverton” called the “Teen Scene”. Did you ever go there? What teenagers did go there?

5. Teen Troubles

This next area has to do with troubles that teenagers get into, in whatever way you might define “trouble”.

- In “Riverton”, if a teenager gets into trouble what would that mean? What sort of trouble do teenagers get into?
- How are teenagers able to get hold of alcohol in “Riverton”?
- If a teenagers was in trouble, who is there that a teenagers can go to for help in “Riverton”?
- What about the guidance counselor at the school?
- Would you go to one of your teachers if you had a serious personal problem?

6. Suicide

This next area is related to teen troubles but is often difficult to discuss especially in small communities; it has to do with teen suicides.

- Are you familiar, or have you heard rumors about teenagers taking their own life?
- What would drive a teenagers in “Riverton” to the point of considering taking their own life?

7. Religious Life

The next section of questions has to do with religious life in “Riverton”. There are a large number of churches in the town for the population.

- Does the religious life in “Riverton” have any effect on you?
- Where do you/did you attend?
- Among your friends at school, do you have friends that go to church regularly or ones that you might classify as religious?
- Is there a grouping or a cluster of students at your school that are labeled as “the religious group”?
- In looking at the town, is there one religious group that has more of an impact, or perhaps dominates the town more than another is?
- Is there one church that is more appealing to teenagers than others are? Is there on particular church that has a large group of young people attending?
- Relating back to the section on teen troubles, is there a religious institution in “Riverton” where a teenager might turn to for help if they were in trouble?
- Are you aware of any teenagers from other religious groups such as Hindus, Buddhist, etc?

7. Positive and Negatives

I am interested in hearing from you what the positive and negatives are in growing up in a small town.

Positive?

Negative?

8. Sexuality

As you are probably aware, last year the town of Okotoks received a great deal of negative publicity due to an article in the _____ paper concerning sexual activity among teenagers there.

- I recognize that the reporting concerning the situation in _____ was way out of line, but in terms of sexual activity in “Riverton” what are your views on that?
- Tell me about dating relationships in “Riverton”.
- What do they do on dates?
- Do teenagers go steady for long periods of time in “Riverton”?
- In long dating relationships it is often very difficult to break off those relationships. How does this happen in “Riverton”?

9. Significant Happenings

The next area concerns significant experiences that you have had growing up in “Riverton”. Experiences that you wouldn’t have had if you hadn’t grown up here.

- Are there some memories that you will keep for the rest of your life?
- What is your earliest memory? How old were you?

10. The Future

The last section has to do with the future.

- What are your dreams for the future personally?
- Apart from schooling or employment what are your personal dreams?
- Do you see marriage as part of your future?

- What about children? Would you like to eventually have children?
- Do you have any concerns or fears about your ability to get the kind of job you would like in the future?
- As you watch or listen to the news you must realize that you are growing up in a world that is violent and a little unstable. What do you think of for the future of the world?
- If you had a scale in front of you from zero to ten, where zero represented no hope and ten represented a blissful hope, where would you place yourself in terms of your general life outlook?
- What do you think provides hope for teenagers in the world today?

11. Questionnaire

All of the data that we have collected is being sorted, and there may be a need to clarify some of the findings through a questionnaire. Would you be willing to participate in a written survey if it was mailed to you?

Appendix C Study of Student Attitudes

It is important to know what teenagers are thinking and feeling. We are not looking for right or wrong answers, only your opinions. Each set of questions has some brief instructions. We would like you to answer each question; however, if there are some you feel you would not care to respond to, feel free to skip them.

Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be analyzed together with the responses of the other students. **PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** All your answers together will provide important clues to the interests, beliefs, problems and hopes of young people. Upon completion of this study, a summary of the results will be made available to your school.

We hope you will find the questions interesting and important. Please answer them as honestly as you can. Please fold the completed questionnaire in half and put it into the envelope provided by the survey administrator.

Thanks for helping. Thanks for being you.

Carson N. Pue
University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities

Section 1: Questions about Yourself

Most of the questions below require a check mark or a circle, (e.g. I am a student in "Riverton" - 1. Yes 2. No.) Others require a brief written answer (e.g. in what year were you born? 1975.)

1. Where are you presently living?
 - 1 on a farm/ranch
 - 2 rurally but not on a farm (e.g. on an acreage)
 - 3 in a hamlet or village
 - 4 in a town
 - 5 in a city

2. How many years have you lived in your present community? _____

3. Are you: 1 Male 2 Female

4. In what year were you born? _____

5. With which ethnic group would you identify your father? (e.g. English, German, Japanese) _____	6. With which ethnic group would you identify your mother? (e.g. English, French, German) _____
---	---

7. With which ethnic group do you identify? _____

8. How important do you consider your ethnic group background to be?

- 1 Very Important
- 2 Quite Important
- 3 Somewhat important
- 4 Not at all important

9. What is your father's (guardian's) occupation?

What does he do at his work?

10. What is your mother's (guardian's) occupation?

What does she do at her work?

11. What is the highest level of formal schooling completed by each of your parents?
(Please check one for each parent or guardian.)

Level	Father/Guardian	Mother/Guardian
1 Less than grade 7		
2 Junior high school (grade 7-9)		
3 Some high school, did not graduate		
4 High school graduate		
5 Vocational or technical school		
6 Some college or university (1-3 years)		
7 College or university graduate		
8 Postgraduate degree, e.g. Master's, M.D.		

12. As compared to your classmates, do you personally feel that financially your family is?

- 1 Far below average
- 2 Below average
- 3 Average
- 4 Above average
- 5 Far above average

13. How many years have you been attending school in "Riverton"?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7+

14. What grade are you in this school year? _____

15. What is the average grade you expect to receive this year?

- | | |
|---------|----------------------|
| 1 90+ | 4 60-69 less than 60 |
| 2 80-89 | 5 50-59 |
| 3 70-79 | 6 less than 50 |

Section II: Behaviour and Practices

We would like to learn more about what Canada's young people do. Please circle the number that most closely describes your behaviour.

1. How often do you travel to: (Please indicate for each place)

Frequency	Calgary	Other parts of Alberta	Other parts of Canada	Outside Canada
Never	1	2	3	4
Less than once/year	1	2	3	4
About once a year	1	2	3	4
Several times a year	1	2	3	4
About once a month	1	2	3	4
2-3 times a month	1	2	3	4
Nearly every week	1	2	3	4
Every week	1	2	3	4
Several times a week	1	2	3	4

2. Thinking now of your life outside of school, how often would you estimate that you:

Frequency	Very Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Listen to music	1	2	3	4
Go to a movie	1	2	3	4
Follow sports teams	1	2	3	4
Read the newspaper	1	2	3	4
Read books	1	2	3	4
Spend time with family	1	2	3	4
Work out	1	2	3	4
Attend parties	1	2	3	4
Go out to dinner	1	2	3	4
Watch television	1	2	3	4

Smoke	1	2	3	4
Attend sports events	1	2	3	4
Watch or listen to the news	1	2	3	4
Attend a play or drama	1	2	3	4
Read the Bible or other religious materials	1	2	3	4
Visit the arcade	1	2	3	4
Spend time with friends	1	2	3	4
Drink alcohol	1	2	3	4
Watch videos	1	2	3	4
Participate in sports	1	2	3	4
Dance	1	2	3	4
Read your horoscope	1	2	3	4
Engage in a hobby	1	2	3	4
Watch religious TV programs	1	2	3	4
Listen to religious radio programs	1	2	3	4
Pray privately	1	2	3	4
Sit and think	1	2	3	4

3. How often do you and your parents attend religious services?

Frequency	Myself	Mother (guardian)	Father (guardian)
Never	1	2	3
Less than once a year	1	2	3
About once a year	1	2	3
Several times a year	1	2	3
About once a month	1	2	3
2-3 times a month	1	2	3
Nearly every week	1	2	3
Every week	1	2	3
Several times a week	1	2	3

4. How often do you?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often
Talk about religion with your friends or classmates?	1	2	3	4	5
Spend evenings at church meetings or doing church work?	1	2	3	4	5
Pray privately in places other than churches?	1	2	3	4	5
Share with others the joys and problems of trying to live a life of faith in God?	1	2	3	4	5
Ask God to forgive you your sins?	1	2	3	4	5
Say table grace before or after meals in your home?	1	2	3	4	5
Say table grace before or after meals away from home?	1	2	3	4	5
Personally try to convert someone to a faith in God?	1	2	3	4	5
Read literature about your faith (church)?	1	2	3	4	5

Section III: Attitudes and Beliefs

In this section we would like to learn more about the beliefs and practices important to teenagers today.
--

1. Which of the following statements comes closest to describing the nature of YOUR religion?

- a. I am not a religious person
 b. I regard myself as a committed Christian
 c. I am deeply committed to a religion other than Christianity

- ____ d. I find myself interested in a variety of religions, but not committed to any particular one
- ____ e. I have a mild interest in Christianity and an inquisitive interest in other religions, but I hardly regard myself as a strongly religious person.
- ____ f. Other (please specify)
-

2. Do you personally believe?

	Yes, I definitely do	Yes, I think so	No, I don't think so	No, I definitely do not
In ESP (extrasensory perception)	1	2	3	4
In astrology (horoscope)	1	2	3	4
In reincarnation	1	2	3	4
That there is life after death	1	2	3	4
That it is possible to communicate with the dead	1	2	3	4
That God exists	1	2	3	4
That you personally have experienced an event before it happened (precognition)	1	2	3	4
That Jesus was the divine Son of God	1	2	3	4
That some people have psychic powers enabling them to predict events	1	2	3	4

That you have
experienced God's
presence

1 2 3 4

As you know, there are a growing number of religious groups and people sometimes shift from one group to another. We would like to ask you a few questions about your religious preference and affiliation.

1. Would you please indicate your general religious preference, along with that of your parent(s) or guardian(s).

Religion	Myself	Mother	Father
Alliance	1	2	3
Anglican	1	2	3
Ba'hai	1	2	3
Baptist	1	2	3
Buddhist	1	2	3
Catholic	1	2	3
Christian Reformed	1	2	3
Full Gospel	1	2	3
Hare Krishna	1	2	3
Hindu	1	2	3
Hutterites	1	2	3
Jehovah Witness	1	2	3
Jewish	1	2	3
Lutheran	1	2	3
Moonies	1	2	3
Mormon (LDS)	1	2	3
Nazarene	1	2	3
Presbyterian	1	2	3
Salvation Army	1	2	3
United	1	2	3
Other _____	1	2	3
No preference	1	2	3

2. We are closer to certain groups of people than others. Please look at each group and circle the number of corresponding to the closeness of the relationship you would want with that specific group. Please answer for each group.

	1 Would marry into group	2 Would have as close friends	3 Would have as member of my group	4 Would have as speaking acquaint ances	5 Would have as visitors only to Canada	6 Would exclude from my country
Alliance	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anglican	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ba'hai	1	2	3	4	5	6
Baptists	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blacks	1	2	3	4	5	6
Buddhist	1	2	3	4	5	6
Canadian Indians	1	2	3	4	5	6
Catholic	1	2	3	4	5	6
Christian Reformed	1	2	3	4	5	5
East Indians or Pakistanis	1	2	3	4	5	6
English Canadian	1	2	3	4	5	6
French Canadian	1	2	3	4	5	6
Full Gospel	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hare Krishna	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hindu	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jehovah Witness	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jew	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lutheran	1	2	3	4	5	6
Moonies	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mormon (LDS)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nazarene	1	2	3	4	5	6
Orientals	1	2	3	4	5	6
Presbyterian	1	2	3	4	5	6
Salvation Army	1	2	3	4	5	6
United	1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Please read each statement and circle the number which most nearly matches your opinion or belief.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Without religious faith, the rest of my life would not have much meaning.	1	2	3	4
I am not a spiritual person.	1	2	3	4
The Bible is the literal word of God.	1	2	3	4
There is no eternal life.	1	2	3	4
Jesus is the Divine Son of God and I have no doubts about him.	1	2	3	4
Private prayer is one of the most important and satisfying aspects of my religious experience.	1	2	3	4
I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in my life.	1	2	3	4
Salvation is attained through personal faith in Jesus Christ.	1	2	3	4
The attempt to believe in a supernatural being is a sign of people's failure to accept responsibility for their own life.	1	2	3	4
I doubt that God exists.	1	2	3	4
I believe miracles are stories and never really happened.	1	2	3	4

Section IV. People and Politics

We now want to learn more about your opinions on life in Canada.

1. Some people say that Canada should be a "melting pot" for people coming here from other countries--they should give up their cultural differences and become Canadians. Others say that Canada should be a "mosaic", where people are loyal to Canada yet keep many of the customs of their previous countries.

How do you feel about this?

- ____ (1) I favor the "melting pot" idea
 ____ (2) I favour the "mosaic" idea
 ____ (3) I have no preference
 ____ (4) Other (please specify)

2. How much CONFIDENCE do you have in the people in charge of?

	A great deal	Quite a bit	Some	Little or none
Newspapers	1	2	3	4
Television	1	2	3	4
The schools	1	2	3	4
The police	1	2	3	4
The court system	1	2	3	4
The church	1	2	3	4
Labour Unions	1	2	3	4
Science	1	2	3	4
Federal Government	1	2	3	4
Provincial Government	1	2	3	4

3. Of all the above, please write the letter of the one in which you have:
 The greatest confidence _____ The least confidence _____

4. Do you think the following groups have (1) TOO MUCH POWER, (2) ABOUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF POWER or (3) TOO LITTLE POWER in our nation's affairs?

	Too much	Right amount	Too little
Labour unions	1	2	3
Big corporations	1	2	3
Protestants	1	2	3
Canadian Indians	1	2	3
Jews	1	2	3
Blacks	1	2	3
Orientals	1	2	3
East Indians and Pakistanis	1	2	3
Americans	1	2	3
French Canadians	1	2	3
Women	1	2	3
Men	1	2	3
Roman Catholics	1	2	3
Rich people	1	2	3
English Canadians	1	2	3
The media (t.v., radio, etc.)	1	2	3
Churches	1	2	3
Politicians	1	2	3

5. What is your opinion concerning bilingualism in Canada?
- _____ (1) Canada should have two official languages - French & English
- _____ (2) Canada should have one official language - French
- _____ (3) Canada should have one official language - English
- _____ (4) Canada should have no official language
- _____ (5) Canada should have two official languages - Other (please specify)
-

6. Do you feel that any racial or cultural group in your community is discriminated against?
- _____ (1) Yes, and it is getting worse
- _____ (2) Yes, but it is getting better
- _____ (3) Yes, but it is no better or worse
- _____ (4) No, although it was a problem in the past
- _____ (5) No, and such a problem has never been very serious

7. Below are a list of recent films that deal with religious groups and cults. Please indicate those to which you have been exposed.

	Have never heard of	Heard of but not seen	Have seen
Mormon-Zion Builders of Alberta	1	2	3
History of the Jewish World Conspiracy	1	2	3
The Temple of the Godmakers	1	2	3
The Last Temptation of Christ	1	2	3
The Godmakers	1	2	3
Gods of the New Age	1	2	3
Mormon Dilemma	1	2	3
Counterfeits at Your Door	1	2	3
The Aryan Nations	1	2	3
Other (please specify)	1	2	3

8. Please indicate the degree to which you have been exposed to materials critical of specific religious or ethnic groups.

	None	Occasional	Quite Often	Very Often
Brochures	1	2	3	4
Newspapers	1	2	3	4
Books	1	2	3	4
Magazines	1	2	3	4

Sermons	1	2	3	4
Movies	1	2	3	4
Group Discussions	1	2	3	4

9. How do you feel about marriage between:

	Strongly approve	Approve	Disapprove	Strongly disapprove
Whites and Canadian Indians	1	2	3	4
Whites and Blacks	1	2	3	4
Whites and Orientals	1	2	3	4
Whites & East Indians or Pakistanis	1	2	3	4
Protestants & Catholics	1	2	3	4
Protestants & Jews	1	2	3	4
Jews & Catholics	1	2	3	4

10. Below are some statements regarding public issues, with which some people agree and others disagree. Please give us your opinion about these items, i.e., whether you agree or disagree with the items as they stand. Please circle the number that most nearly matches your opinion.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Sometimes I feel all alone in the world.	1	2	3	4
I worry about the future facing today's children.	1	2	3	4
I don't get invited out by friends as often as I'd like.	1	2	3	4
The end often justifies the means.	1	2	3	4
Sometimes I have the feeling that other people are using me.	1	2	3	4
Everything is relative, and there just aren't any definite rules to live by.	1	2	3	4
I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.	1	2	3	4
There is little or nothing I can do towards preventing a major war.	1	2	3	4

There are few dependable ties between people anymore.	1	2	3	4
With so many religions to choose from one doesn't know which to believe.	1	2	3	4
Most people today seldom feel lonely.	1	2	3	4
People's ideas change so much that I wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on.	1	2	3	4
Real friends are as easy as ever to find.	1	2	3	4
The world in which we live is basically a friendly place.	1	2	3	4
The only thing one can be sure of today is that he can be sure of nothing.	1	2	3	4
People are just naturally friendly and helpful.	1	2	3	4
The future looks very dismal.	1	2	3	4
One can always find friends if one shows oneself friendly.	1	2	3	4
There are so many decisions that have to be made today that sometimes I could just explode.	1	2	3	4
I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd really like.	1	2	3	4

11. You undoubtedly know people from various ethnic and religious groups. From the list below, please indicate for each group, the number of persons with whom you are acquainted. Also, indicate the closeness of your relationship with the one from this group you know best.

	Number of Acquaintances					Closeness of Relationship with Person you know best in each group. (Leave blank if you do not know anyone from a group.)			
	0	1	2	3	4+	Very close	Quite close	Not close	Very Impersonal
Alliance	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Anglican	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Ba'hai	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Baptist	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Blacks	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Buddhist	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Canadian Indian	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Catholic	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Christian Reformed	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
East Indians Or Pakistanis	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
English Canadian	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
French Canadian	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Full Gospel	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Hare Krishna	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Hindu	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Hutterites	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Jehovah Witness	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Jews	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Lutheran	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Moonies	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Mormon	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4

(LDS)									
Presbyterian	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Nazarene	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Oriental	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Salvation Army	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
United	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Non-Religious	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4
Other	0	1	2	3	4+	1	2	3	4

Thank you for your help in this study. Please feel free to add any additional comments you may have regarding the issues raised.
