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## **INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON UNLIMITED LOVE**

### **COMPLETE SUMMARIES OF FUNDED PROJECTS: 2002**

#### AREA ONE: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Four research studies have been funded in the area of other-regarding love and human development. These include: a psychological study of autism aimed at illuminating the process of affiliation as a precursor to love; a psychological study of the mother-child relationship and its effects on the human development of empathy, with special attention to the variable of maternal spirituality; a sociological study of adolescents investigating relational and environmental contexts (including the effects of spiritual resources) and their impact on the development of other-regarding love in this age group; a psychological study examining the potential benefits of spiritual attachments and altruistic behaviors in the general adult population traumatized by the violent tragedy of 9/11/01. Together, these studies will contribute to a better understanding of the development of unselfish love and its relationship to psychological well-being.

#### Research Area Consultant

Gregory Fricchione, MD, IRUL's research area consultant for Human Development, is a psychiatrist specializing in medical and neuropsychiatry. He is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Associate Chief of Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He is also Director of the Division of Psychiatry and Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital. His basic research interests have centered on immune cell behavior and nitric oxide effects. His clinical research has focused on the catatonic syndrome and on the interface of psychiatry and medicine in cardiac and other diseases, where attachment behavior in the doctor-patient relationship is of key importance. In the last several years, he has been working on a project that examines the connection between brain evolution and the human spiritual imperative. Before returning to Boston in 2002, he spent 2 years as Director of the Carter Center Mental Health Program in Atlanta, working on domestic and international public mental health projects

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### *1. The Comprehension of Love and Altruism in Autistic and Normal Children*

Jerome Kagan proposes a powerful, creative approach to peeling away the mystery of autism by determining whether the empathic deficits of the child with autism lie in the mind, behavior, or both. Much can be learned about the human development of empathy, altruism, and love from the psychophysiological and behavioral study of those with dysfunctions in these attributes. This project will study children with apparent dysfunction in social affiliation due to autism and those on the normal spectrum in this regard.

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### *2. Love, Emotion and Empathy: Infancy to Early Childhood*

Alan Fogel will examine how the quality of the mother-child relationship at 1, 2, 3 and 5 years is related to empathy development at age 5. The capacity to be attuned to others' emotions begins in relationships marked by secure attachment and co-regulation of feelings. The empathic capacity presupposes the ability to become part of a larger whole. It may be encouraged in families in which spirituality and religion play a larger role. Fogel hypothesizes that empathy at age 5 will correlate with a high stable or a rising pattern of co-regulation and secure attachment between ages 1 and 5. Spiritual and religious well-being and engagement will be entered into the analysis to check for moderating effects. This project will provide much-needed insight into the development of empathy in children, as well as the importance of mother – child attunement and maternal spirituality.

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### *3. Cultivating Adolescents' Other-Regarding Virtues: The Developmental Pathways to Unlimited Love*

This study by Peter Benson seeks to understand the linkages among the ecologies of youth that promote, discourage, or remain silent on altruistic love, other-regarding virtues, and actions that are designed to enhance the welfare of others. The bioecological systems model of Bronfenbrenner forms its theoretical base. Two existing data sets will be used: a cross-sectional data set of 229,000 adolescents, and a longitudinal set of almost 400 adolescents assessed at 3 points in time. Both data sets contain responses to the Profile of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors (PSL-AB), which was designed by the Search Institute to assess developmental assets. This study examines the developmental ecologies of families, religious institutions, schools, neighborhoods, local communities, and non-parental adults with regard to other-regarding dispositions and helping behaviors. Spiritual and religious assets are important variables to study.

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#### *4. What Love Has To Do With It: Altruism, Generativity and Spirituality in the Aftermath of 9/11/01*

The principal investigators of this study will study altruism, generativity, and spirituality in a sample of 3000 respondents to a web-based questionnaire. Quantitative measures include: the 9/11 specific coping questionnaire; Brief COPE; Posttraumatic Growth Inventory; Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness and Spirituality; Scale of Psychological Well-Being; Social Well Being Scale; Brief Symptom Inventory; PTSD Checklist; demographics; exposure extent. Qualitative data for 100 subjects will be gathered for linguistic analysis. The researchers hypothesize that those with higher altruism and generativity, and those who draw upon more spiritual resources at the outset, will have less post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and less general symptom distress at baseline and at follow-up. This study will be a part of a Stanford University 9/11 project being led by David Spiegel MD. Spirituality will be assessed in terms of global religiousness/spirituality, religious coping, and spiritual change. This project hypothesizes a connection between aspects of other-regarding love and human resilience in the face of trauma and tragedy.

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## AREA TWO: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Three research studies have been funded in the Public Health and Medicine section. These include a clinical intervention study in breast cancer patients and their partners, an epidemiologic case-control study of military veterans experiencing PTSD, and a sociological study of how broken lives are healed and empowered among participants in a charismatic church ministry program. Together, these investigations will document how love impacts on physical and psychological well-being across the natural history of disease in both clinical and community settings. This work promises to start a new field of medical research concerned with the health effects of love.

### Research Area Consultant

Jeff Levin, Ph.D., M.P.H., an epidemiologist and former medical school professor, is IRUL's research area consultant for Public Health and Medicine. Beginning in the 1980s, his research helped create the field of religion, spirituality, and health. He is the author of over 130 scholarly publications, as well as the popular book, *God, Faith, and Health*. Dr. Levin is currently researching historical and theological perspectives on what it means to love and be loved by God, as well as the physical and mental health effects of such a loving relationship.

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### *1. Effects of Compassionate/Loving Intention as a Therapeutic Intervention by Partners of Breast Cancer Patients: A Randomized Controlled Trial*

Ellen G. Levine, Ph.D., M.P.H., medical psychologist at California Pacific Medical Center, is principal investigator of this research project. This study will investigate the effects of compassionate loving intention by partners of breast cancer patients on a variety of health and health-care outcomes; it will also examine quality-of-life indicators in both patients and partners. The study will include measures of functional health, medical services utilization, psychological and spiritual well-being, marital satisfaction, physiological response to stress, and several psychological tests.

Stage I or II breast cancer patients and their partners will be recruited from the San Francisco Bay Area and randomized into experimental and control groups. Experimental-group partners will be given a training workshop structured to enhance their ability to provide loving compassion. Supported by daily home practice for three months, the training will consist of guided instruction in several meditative and mental focusing approaches, including a Tibetan Buddhist breath-based technique for eliciting compassion and LeShan type I healer training.

This project will provide an excellent opportunity to examine whether an intervention designed to strengthen the sense of self-efficacy in partners of breast cancer patients can enhance their success as caregivers. If systematic training in techniques of loving compassion is shown to be effective, it may offer a means of improving the care of people suffering from a wide range of chronic illnesses.

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## *2. Care for the Soul: The Role of Divine Love and Human Love in Adjustment to Military Trauma*

Robert Hierholzer, M.D., psychiatrist with the Veterans Affairs Central California Health Care System, is principal investigator of this project, which is a longitudinal epidemiologic investigation of the protective effects of divine and human love on adjustment to military trauma among U.S. veterans.

Study subjects will be recruited from outpatient veterans at VA clinics in the Fresno area. A total of 100 case subjects who meet DSM-IV criteria for military-related post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and 100 control subjects who do not meet these criteria, will be sampled from this population. Participants will be given a battery of health-related tests – i.e., assessments related to PTSD, psychopathology, and symptomatology, as well as numerous psychosocial scales. These will include a set of validated measures assessing the presence of loving relationships with God and other people. Using a case-control design and epidemiologic methods of analysis, investigators will explore the relationships among different types of loving attachments, level of combat exposure, and development of current military-related PTSD in veterans.

This project promises to make exciting contributions to clinical care for sick veterans and to the validation of theoretical work in psychology that proposes salutary effects for secure attachments to significant others. Additionally, results should advance our understanding of the etiology and prognosis of PTSD.

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### *3. Charismatic Empowerment and Unlimited Love: A Social Psychological Assessment*

Margaret M. Poloma, Ph.D., emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Akron, is principal investigator of the project, which entails a multifaceted investigation of dimensions of love, religious experience, and mysticism within a charismatic Christian church community serving Atlanta's poor.

Using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches, Dr. Poloma will conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the church's training program, which seeks to rebuild and heal broken lives by empowering people with spiritual gifts. A centerpiece of this study will be the psychometric development and validation of a new multidimensional scale of love that is based on the work of sociologist Pitirim Sorokin and others. A battery of questions will be given to at least 200 respondents; the resulting scale will be used in subsequent analyses.

Results of this study will make an important contribution to research in the sociology and psychology of religion, as well as to ministries seeking to reach out to disadvantaged individuals through religiously grounded loving compassion.

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### AREA THREE: MECHANISMS BY WHICH ALTRUISTIC LOVE AFFECTS HEALTH

The chain of events leading from negative emotional responses to external events to impact on disease has been well investigated. There has been less research into applying the same model to studying the effects of positive emotional responses on health. The same approaches and standards that have been used in the stress literature can be applied to the study of the chain of events leading from altruistic love to beneficial effects on health. It is possible that the mechanism by which altruistic love affects health occurs through blocking or attenuating the stress response, or through activating positive neurotransmitter pathways in the brain.

#### Research Area Consultant

Esther M. Sternberg, M.D. is our IRUL research area consultant in this area. She was trained at McGill University and practiced medicine in Montreal. She then returned to a research career and teaching at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. Her recent book, *The Balance Within: The*

*Science Connecting Health and Emotions* (2000, paperback 2001), has been universally well-received as one of the best books on emotions and health.

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### *1. The Physiology of Love: Empathic Responding to Emotional Reactions*

Stephanie D. Preston's highly original and exciting project studies empathy from a perception-action perspective. That is, it postulates that empathy is a biological process that involves a set of specialized nerve cells in the brain that allow one to mimic motor actions, emotions, and social behaviors. These nerve cells, called mirror neurons, have been well studied in the context of perception-motor response – i.e., the phenomenon that allows a person to watch and mimic the actions of others, much as in the child's game "Simon Says." This study proposes that a similar process, utilizing the same sorts of neurons, may underlie the biological process of empathy.

The grant proposes to use a story-telling situation, combined with neuro-imaging, psychological instruments, and objective physiological measures, to compare subjects selected from different professions with high empathic components (firemen, ministers, and doctors) with others, and with a group of brain-damaged patients.

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### *2. Towards an Understanding of the Neurobiology of Parental Love*

This project, conducted by James F. Leckman, M.D., proposes to compare some aspects of the neurobiology of parental love with the processes involved in obsessive behaviors. It uses a very powerful naturalistic situation to study these interactions – i.e., an infant's cry and the visual stimulus of seeing the infant. This project addresses parental love behaviors and their neural and neuroendocrine underpinnings, and postulates that these may be biologically set to focus and perpetuate a connection between the parent and child. The study will use neuro-imaging (fMRI), psychological instruments, and physiological hormone measures (oxytocin and cortisol) known to be activated in association with such behaviors. The project is likely to yield important information regarding the neurobiology of pathways of love, and those elements of love that resemble the more extreme behaviors that can be seen in obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). The theory that extreme behaviors seen in OCD may in part stem from dysregulated biological pathways that evolutionarily evolved to cement parent-infant relationships is novel and exciting; if validated, it will serve to change our thinking about both the state of love and OCD. It could in fact

contribute to a paradigm shift in the field by relating some aspects of parental love and empathy with some obsessive behaviors. When parental love and empathy are appropriately applied in measured amounts and contexts, they are necessary and adaptive for both parent and offspring; when inappropriate or excessive, they may constitute disease.

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### *3. Is There a Neurobiology of Love?*

This project, proposed by Dr. Sue Carter, Psychiatric Institute, Chicago, is an extremely well designed animal study in a model that has shown that the hormones oxytocin and vasopression play an important role in affiliative behavior and development of social bonds between parent and offspring. While it is difficult to devise ways to study empathy and love in animals, this project provides an extremely well controlled approach to understanding the precise relationships between different brain hormones and social bonding. This model will definitely shed light on the role of oxytocin in these behaviors. Most importantly, the project will examine the health benefits of loving interactions, which have been observed in epidemiological studies in humans, but are difficult to address in a systematic way in human studies. Preliminary data indicate that female animals exposed to pups show a lower level of the stress hormone cortisol. Oxytocin, one of the other hormones that will be studied, oxytocin, may mediate these anti-stress effects. The experimental approach is novel in that it measures a mother's hormonal and behavioral responses to a naturalistic setting – i.e., exposure to a pup, to determine the health effects on the mother. This project also considers the extent to which generalized love for humanity has a hormonal basis.

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AREA FOUR: OTHER-REGARDING VIRTUES

Recent advances in the social sciences point to character traits or dispositions that equip people for success in the interpersonal world. These traits, which some philosophers have called “virtues,” include trust, generosity, faith, empathy, kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, and honesty, among others. Such traits are presumed to help people live lives in which they are useful to other people, seek just solutions to social dilemmas, and care for the welfare of others. These other-regarding virtues may also foster physical health or psychological and relational well-being. Collectively, funded projects in the “Other-Regarding Virtues” area shed light on how such virtues can be facilitated in laboratory and applied settings, and how they influence physical health, psychological well-being, and interpersonal relations. The projects are distinct from much of the “mainstream” social-scientific work on these topics in that they explore distinctively religious or spiritual contours of other-regarding virtues under investigation.

#### Research Area Consultant

Michael E. McCullough, PhD is the IRUL research consultant in this area. He is an associate professor of Psychology, with a secondary appointment in the Department of Religious Studies, at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL. He has authored over sixty scientific articles and book chapters on religion, spirituality, and the virtues, including work on the relationships of such variables to physical health, psychological well-being, and interpersonal relations. He has also written and edited several books on these subjects.

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#### *1. Other-Regarding Love for Individuals Outside One’s Social Group*

Stephen Wright and Arthur Aron will conduct a study at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and at the State University of New York at Stony Brook that examines love for people outside one’s own social group, the absence of which is one of the world’s most grievous and seemingly intractable moral and spiritual problems. Hope for addressing this problem in novel and effective ways comes from a psychological model of close relationships that was originally inspired by the Upanishads and has recently been applied to intergroup relations. The central idea of the model is that close others and those in one’s social groups function in a sense as part of oneself; the regard and caring that one usually experiences for oneself is thereby extended to close others. Further, the social identities of close others become to some extent one’s own. As a result, one becomes more inclined to extend caring and love to the friend’s ethnic group. This project will explore this phenomenon by examining (a) variables such as caring, empathy, and trust toward outgroup members; (b) the specific role of inclusion of other in the self as the mechanism underlying the effects of cross-group friendship on prejudice toward members of that outgroup; (c) the possible moderating role of religiousness/spirituality; (d) the practical potential for applying these concepts in the real world. Three studies will be conducted: a laboratory study that creates interpersonal closeness

between people of different ethnic groups; a survey of students' friendships with people from different ethnic groups; an applied study designed to increase students' other-regarding love for members of other ethnic groups by using established laboratory procedures for fostering inclusion of the others in the self.

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## *2. The Gift of One's Self: Expressions of Unlimited Love and Gratitude in Organ Donors and Recipients*

Robert A. Emmons will study organ donation, often referred to as the "gift of life." The overall goal of this project is to examine expressions of unlimited love in the form of organ donation and the role that the virtue of gratitude plays in motivating donation and recipient behavior. The specific aims of the project are to: (a) investigate the degree to which self-transcendent strivings (spirituality, intimacy, and generativity) predict intentions to donate organs and actual organ donation; (b) test the "moral motive" hypothesis of gratitude: Does the virtue of gratitude for life predict intention or willingness to donate part of one's self?; (c) examine whether an intervention designed to increase gratitude increases actual intention to become an organ donor; (d) examine whether the expression of gratitude by transplant recipients increases their likelihood of thriving post-transplant. The project is strengthened by the diversity of its methods. The investigators will incorporate correlational, prospective longitudinal, qualitative, and experimental methods.

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## *3. The Self as a Conduit of Love*

Julie Juola Exline will examine the ways in which receiving love from others enhances one's ability to love. Love is a common thread that underlies many virtuous actions, including helping behavior, emphasis on positive qualities in others, and forgiveness and apology in the wake of offenses. This project will test a conduit model of altruistic love. The model predicts that we are most able to love if we have first received love, either from other people or from God. The proposed research also addresses the role of grace, or undeserved favor, in the transmission of love. Studies will be primarily experimental, beginning with laboratory-based designs and culminating in an intervention study. Laboratory-based studies will address whether feeling loved—especially when the love is seen as undeserved—motivates people to return love to the source. A second set of studies will address whether people who receive love, and are reminded to pass it on, will become more loving to third parties. Finally, an intervention will be developed to give participants the tools to love in situations in which doing so would be difficult. Religious themes will be emphasized, including participants' relationships with God. One major aim of the proposed project is to provide a bridge between scientific and theological literatures on the topics of altruistic love, forgiveness, justice, and grace. By focusing on the dual roles of giving and receiving love, the long-term aim of the project is to give people practical tools that will enhance their well-being, their perceived relationships with God, and their ability to love others.

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#### AREA FIVE: EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVES ON OTHER-REGARD

Evolutionary biology has a unique relationship to the issue of unlimited love for two reasons. First, from Darwin on, sacrificial behavior has been recognized as a crucial question for evolutionary theory. Many contemporary accounts have tended to dismiss altruism as an end, or even a possibility, of human existence, because this has been understood to be a core entailment of evolutionary theory. Second, over the last generation, evolutionary theory has dramatically influenced other academic disciplines, and has been turned to by popular media for authoritative exegesis of the human condition. Thus, evolutionary biology is crucially important to popular and scholarly discussions of love. Recent promising approaches to the evolutionary elucidation of altruism include multilevel selection theory, econometric and evolutionary game theory, comparative anthropology, and behavioral studies of non-human primates. IRUL is funding seminal work in each of these four areas.

#### Research Area Consultant

Jeffrey P. Schloss, Ph.D., serves as IRUL research consultant in this area. He received his Ph.D. in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology from Washington University, and has taught at the University of Michigan, Wheaton College, Jaguar Creek Tropical Research Center, and is now Professor and Chair of

Biology at Westmont College in Santa Barbara. He has been awarded a Danforth Fellow, a AAAS Fellow in Science Communication, and serves on the editorial and advisory boards of numerous journals and organizations relating science and religion. He is interested in evolutionary theories of human nature. His most recent projects include a collaborative volume just released from Oxford University Press, *Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*, and coediting a two-volume *Journal of Psychology & Theology*, focusing on biological and theological perspectives on human nature.

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### *1. Altruistic Love, Evolution, and Individual Experience*

Evolutionary theory tends to be theory rich, but data poor: in comparison, the human behavioral sciences are data abundant, but lack a unifying theoretical foundation. David Sloan Wilson will apply the theoretical perspective of multilevel selection to the interpretation of data of life experience in one of the most voluminous databases available – the experience sampling method (ESM) of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. ESM is to psychological life experience what integrated cross-cultural databases are to anthropological assessment. Wilson's group selectionist model posits that human groups are significant functional units that facilitate the emergence of capacities for both genuine sacrifice and defection. This allows a variety of testable predictions about the relationship among altruism, religion, life stress, and other variables. Wilson's proposal is the first attempt to test these predictions on a large scale with highly regarded data. This study is likely to be landmark in its use of data that poll life experience and establish its relationship to altruism.

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### *2. Unlimited Love in the Laboratory: Evaluating the Effect of Religion on Sharing and Cooperative Behavior*

Peter Richerson proposes to test the relationship among religious experiences, beliefs, and involvements in cooperative sacrifice by unifying two well-developed and never before integrated approaches of research: game theory experiments and psychometric religious assessment. In two different phases involving student subjects and members of religious and non-religious communities, subjects will be given a variety

of standardized measures of religious experience, belief, and involvement, and subjected to two classic game theoretic experiments: the Ultimatum Game (which measures cooperative fairness and altruistic punishment), and the Commons Game (which assesses commitment or detraction from the common good). These tools will be used to examine how sacrificial behavioral patterns relate to self-reported varieties of religious experience, religious belief, and religious involvements. Group selection theory suggests that increased intra-group commitment will result in more in-group sacrifice and out-group rejection. This theory will be tested with an experimental design intended to illuminate the relationship between group loyalty and expansive sympathy.

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### *3. Cross Cultural Survey of Altruistic Behavior*

Christopher Boehm proposes to compile, tabulate, and assess a landmark cross-cultural database of cooperative behaviors in Paleolithic-representative hunter-gatherer societies. Out of 339 available h-g cultures, he has chosen 154 that are credible as representatives of Paleolithic ancestry due to lack of contact with agricultural or industrial influences. He will scan and code ethnographies for a wide variety of kin, reciprocal, non-reciprocal in-group/out-group cooperation, plus variables relating to religion and moral social controls. This work is important because the empirical basis for sociobiological theories of human nepotism and strict reciprocity is largely untested or relies on a limited selection of available ethnographies. Boehm will assemble an exhaustive database, with extensive coding for altruism and related parameters, in order to test competing theories of the origin, nature, and maintenance of altruism. This work may provide empirical basis for an understanding of human love.

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### *4. An Evolutionary Perspective on the Emotional Prerequisites for Love*

Love requires that one examine the situation of the other; while empathy may not be sufficient, it is certainly a necessary building block for other regard. Capacities underlying altruistic love and compassion build upon a human psychological architecture that has been shaped by evolutionary history. If we wish to learn more about the evolution of constituent capacities of love, it is important to understand expressions of empathy and sympathy in other animals. The chimpanzee, our closest relative, exhibits

evidence for “consolation behavior,” defined as a bystander providing reassuring contact to a distressed conspecific. We don’t, however, understand the underlying motivation, which could entail simple emotional contagion or extension of sympathetic concern. Behavioral predictions for these two models differ. The proposed research involves a behavioral study – with both observational and experimental components – designed to distinguish between different sources of empathic response in this closely-related primate.

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#### AREA SIX: THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES AND THEIR ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE SPIRITUAL IDEAL OF UNLIMITED LOVE

This topic area examines the significance of concepts of “love for all humanity” in a sociological context, giving attention to the ways in which this spiritual ideal is implemented within faith traditions through volunteerism and service to the neediest. While religious communities can and do fall short of the ideal of “unlimited love,” and sometimes even descend into in-group insularity, love for all humanity is nevertheless a key precept that often translates into personal and organizational altruistic behavior.

##### Research Area Consultant

Byron R. Johnson, Ph.D. is the IRUL research area consultant for this area. Based at the University of Pennsylvania, he is Director of the Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, and distinguished senior fellow in the Robert A. Fox Leadership Program. He is a senior fellow in the Center for Civic Innovation at the Manhattan Institute. Before coming to the University of Pennsylvania, Johnson directed the Center for Crime and Justice Policy at Vanderbilt University, and remains a senior scholar in the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies.

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##### *1. A National Study of Altruistic and Unlimited Love*

The project will allow key variables on aspects of unlimited love to be added as a new module to the General Social Survey (GSS), one of the most utilized and highly respected social science surveys in the world, located at the University of Chicago. Led by Dr. Tom Smith, Director of the General Social Survey, the project will include the introduction of a pilot module in 2003, that will be based on the best data from previous research on the subject. Based on the pilot, the new module on unlimited love questions will officially be added to the GSS in 2004. Housed within the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), the GSS will bring much needed social science attention and credibility to the topic of unlimited love as NORC holds substantial capital within the academic community and well beyond. The GSS is a very large, random, representative survey that allows social scientists to analyze national level trends and patterns. This new module will provide unprecedented opportunities for junior and senior scholars to explore the relationship between unlimited love and other socially important factors, including the roles of religion, religious practices and beliefs. Because the GSS is so accessible, it will provide researchers with quick access to some of the best social survey data available. This project has the potential to be super catalytic by providing future researchers with nationally representative data on unlimited love, as well as hundreds of other relevant and important social science variables. Such data will make it possible to “fast-forward” the research and scholarship in the area of altruism and unlimited love – which is perhaps the main overall objective of the Institute.

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## *2. Faith-Based Service Organizations, Altruistic Caregiving, and Understandings of Love*

Led by the sociologist Robert Wuthnow, this study is part of a larger community study of the social agencies and churches in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania. The proposed study will focus on persons volunteering for caregiving for the poor, needy, or elderly. Wuthnow hypothesizes that among people working in nonprofit agencies, caring leads to trust, and trust in turn engenders effectiveness. Wuthnow goes on to postulate that faith-based organizations (FBOs) are more likely than non-faith-based organizations to exhibit the caring and loving attitudes that lead to trust and effectiveness. The proposed research is extremely important because it is perhaps the first to provide a strong theoretical foundation for the assumption that faith-based organizations are more effective than their secular counterparts. Wuthnow plans on conducting 120 in-depth interviews with volunteers that will yield rich data on motivations, understandings of unlimited love, beliefs about God’s love, and much more. Interviews will be conducted with representatives from both faith-based and non-faith-based organizations. Importantly, Wuthnow plans to relate the attitudes and behavior of the volunteers to their own religious beliefs and practices. This is an important step in helping to understand the linkages between volunteer motivation and religious commitment, as well as the linkage between religiosity and community agencies, including churches. The sophisticated nature of the study methodology and its tight theoretical underpinnings lead us to believe that Wuthnow’s study will eventually become a sociological classic. In summary, this study

will shed important empirical light on the relationship among faith, spirituality, and motivations toward volunteering, trust, and the efficacy of caregiving.

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### *3. Antecedents and Correlates of Civic Engagement for African American Adolescents and Their Parents*

The proposed study takes advantage of recently collected longitudinal data from the University of Rochester Youth and Family Project. The research is a multi-method, multi-informant investigation of civic engagement among a sample of African American adolescents. Judith Smetana, the principal investigator, posits that there is a relationship between adolescent love and trust for parents, racial socialization, religiosity, and how these influence adolescent involvement in their communities. Civic engagement is a topic of key interest; the issues of civic engagement among African American adolescents and their parents is particularly important. The proposed study will provide new and much needed knowledge about the role of religion or faith-based communities in encouraging civic participation within many black communities. We need to increase our understanding of civic engagement among minority populations and adolescents who face adversity; this project does both. This important study will advance our understanding of how spirituality, religiosity, compassionate love, and concepts of social justice in family contexts become instantiated in African-American late adolescents' involvement and service on behalf of the well-being of others.

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### *4. Self-Forgetfulness in Seeking the Lost: A Sociological Study of Relentless Love and Compassionate Service at Ground Zero*

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the country will long remember the thousands of construction workers, firemen, police, and chaplains who poured into Lower Manhattan to conduct the rescue, recovery, and clean-up operation. They worked around the clock for days in the early weeks, then in grueling 12-hour shifts looking for survivors and the dead. At St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel on Lower Broadway in New York, located on the precipice of Ground Zero, some 5,000 volunteers fed these

workers, gave them sleeping quarters, comforted them, clothed them, and built a spiritual community of mutual gratitude. What motivated these particular individuals to volunteer for this work? What human attributes were displayed in greatest abundance? With all the array of resources at ground zero, why did these persons make the Chapel their home? What was it about the experience of life in the Chapel that sustained the massive work? This study will provide scientifically-based explanations for questions surrounding such notable and sustained altruistic behavior. Led by Dr. Courtney Cowart, a theologian in the St. Paul's ministry at ground zero, and Dr. Bambi Schieffelin, a cultural anthropologist and linguist, this important study will document the role that religious perceptions may have played in motivating and sustaining this remarkable human response to the tragedy of September 11.

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In addition to the above 21 grants, the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love partnered with the Fetzer Institute initiative on the Science of Compassionate Love to fund four additional studies that are currently in progress:

*1. Benevolent Love and Marriage*

This study examine "benevolent love," (described in classical terms as the love of true friendship and in contemporary terms as unconditional love) within long-term marriage. Benevolent love exhibits virtues of temperance, fortitude, justice, prudence, and charity. The study will focus on the relationship of benevolent love to attractive love, marital quality and stability, and partners' religiousness.

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*2. Volunteerism, Community, and Compassionate Acts among Older Adults*

This study examines the role of service, spirituality, religion, and older persons' personal identity in individuals at a religiously-oriented retirement community and a comparison community. The interviews and self-reports will focus on the personal meanings of service, religion, altruistic love, and the role of each, and will examine whether the religiously oriented have a more highly integrated sense of concepts.

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### *3. The Development, Antecedents, and Psychosocial Implications of Altruism in Late Adulthood*

This project studies altruistic love in terms of Eric Erikson's concept of generativity, the concern for, and commitment to, guiding the next generation. The data are from a longitudinal sample of Americans born in California in the 1920s (140 participants interviewed 4 times over the years, with the latest in 1997/2000). It will examine the vocabulary and the reasoning people use as they refer to generative/altruistic acts and the relationship of these acts to social background, personality characteristics, religion, health, and attitudes.

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### *4. The Impacts of Religious, Intellectual, and Civic Engagement on Altruistic Love and Compassionate Love as Expressed Through Charitable Behaviors*

This study supports analysis from the 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, which is intended to measure a US representative sample of people's "social capital" – i.e., the wealth of connections among people thought to lead to pro-social behaviors and attitudes. This data analysis will examine connections between people's acts of giving and volunteering and their religious, intellectual, social, and civic development.

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