Black Conversions to Catholicism: An Analysis of Louisville Data

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BLACK CONVERSION TO CATHOLICISM: AN ANALYSIS OF LOUISVILLE DATA

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Sociology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Lynda F. Dickson
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BLACK CONVERSION TO CATHOLICISM:
AN ANALYSIS OF LOUISVILLE DATA

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[Signatures]

Dean of Graduate School
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to Alphonso Pinkney, religion has been important to black people. He writes:

Religion has traditionally played an important role in the life of black Americans. The character of their religion is a reflection of their uncertain status in the larger society. Denied the opportunity to participate as equals in the religious life and other institutions of the larger society, black people organized their own religious denominations as a means of coping with the social isolation which they encountered.¹

As the opportunities for social, economic, and educational advancement became feasible for the black however, he became less satisfied with his religion and began to look in other directions for finding religious satisfaction. It appears that a significant number of blacks who were dissatisfied with their affiliation with the black Protestant denominations turned to Catholicism.

For the past quarter of a century, researchers have speculated over the reasons for blacks converting to Catholicism. Except in passing references in larger studies, little research of a sociological nature has been completed on the topic. Daniel F. Collins and Joe R. Feagin provide the two exceptions.

Collins studied black converts to Catholicism in Durham, North Carolina; and attempted to understand their conversion through reference to characteristics of the black Protestant churches. Feagin traced the historical background of black Catholicism and then presented membership data for the years 1947, 1957, and 1967, indicating dramatic increases in numbers of black Catholics. Lacking attitudinal data, Feagin speculated that four explanations might be employed in understanding black adult conversion: "... the educational, status, ritual, and civil rights attractiveness of the American church ...".

Using Feagin's perspective, the author will attempt to provide a greater understanding of why black conversion to Catholicism occurs. More specifically, the researcher will attempt to determine whether conversion to Catholicism is related to social status strivings, viewing parochial educational systems as being more likely to provide integrated schooling and high quality education, preferring the more formal ritualistic worship service found in the Catholic church, and viewing the Catholic church and clergy as being more helpful in the civil rights cause.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Before concentrating upon literature pertaining to the black Catholic, it is necessary to consider the black Protestant religion, its strengths and weaknesses, in order to tentatively explain why blacks turn to Catholicism. Why would blacks who have been more or less socialized into accepting with little question black (Protestant) religion, turn to a religion so unlike their own? Does this reflect any limitations within the church itself, or strivings for change within the individual? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to examine the literature concerning the black church and its past influence, whether it be of a social, political, or economic nature, upon the American black.

Daniel F. Collins points out that the term "Negro church" has been generally accepted as encompassing the religious activities of Negro Americans. It is unanimously accepted as being the oldest and largest institution of the Negro community, and that it functioned to provide structure and to control the social, economic, and political life of the Negro.¹ Other than this wide generality concerning the

¹Collins, "Black Conversion...", p. 216.
Negro church, various authors have indicated other, more specific functions of the church. According to Vattel Elbert Daniel, the Negro church enables members to express their religious life, enhances their morale, and through its various rituals, serves the various classes of blacks found in its membership.\(^2\) Gunnar Myrdal places more emphasis upon Daniel's second function of the Negro church. Myrdal writes:

> The chief function of the Negro church is to buoy up the hopes of its members in the face of adversity . . . . This is . . . especially true of Negroes, who have had a hard lot and to whom so many channels of activity outside the church have been closed. Negroes have had to place their hopes for a better life in religion.\(^3\)

Drake and Cayton suggest in their book *Black Metropolis* that the black church represents an element of stability among the lower class blacks.\(^4\)

According to Mays and Nicholson, the Negro church is "the Negro's very own." It provides an opportunity for the development of initiative and self-direction and helps to bring out any hidden potentialities that may exist. This opportunity in the Negro church to be recognized has reinforced the Negro who might otherwise be submerged by life. It also encourages the educational advancement of its members and provides leadership through its ministry.\(^5\)


Alphonso Pinkney states that "Negro religion is a reflection of their uncertain status in the larger society. It provides a means of coping with the social isolation they encounter in the white world." According to Pinkney and others, Negro religion contains both characteristics of white Protestantism and elements of their African heritage.

The types of services held by the Negro church are important since they supposedly represent the needs of the members. Myrdal points out that the Negro denominations do not have strong formal ritual. However, Daniel attempts to explain this by stating that:

The type of ritual found in the Negro church must perform different functions for different classes within the urban Negro population while at the same time performing a function also common to the entire class and one that is common to all members of the particular denomination or sect with which the individual church is identified.

The religious service is often seen as extremely emotional, with emphasis upon otherworldly matters. According to Myrdal, whites are likely to attribute this emotionalism to the Negro's "animal nature" or "excessive sexuality" because it is so different from their own and they do not know how else to explain it. Booker T. Washington discussed the otherworldly emphasis in the black church from his practical (or self-help) perspective. He wrote:

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8 Daniel, "Ritual and Stratification...," p. 120.

9 Myrdal, "The Negro Church...," p. 83.
It seems to me that what the Negro church needs is a more definite connection with the social and moral life of the Negro people. Could this connection be effected in a large degree, it would give to the upbuilding of the race and inspiration of a religious motive. It would give the Negro religion more of the missionary spirit, the spirit of the service, that it needs to purge itself of some of the worst elements that still cling to it.  

Emphasis upon the blacks' need for little formal ritual and much emotionalism is based upon the assumption that the black is the underdog and is using the church and its services as a means of escape. As the process of assimilation into the total white society has occurred, however, blacks begin to place less emphasis upon their church and become more involved with other outside activities. In order to get a clearer understanding of the importance of the church and its services upon blacks, it becomes necessary to examine the church's influence upon each particular class of blacks for it is no longer true that all blacks view the church in the same perspective.

According to Daniel, lower class blacks have low income and educational levels and exhibit poor self-conduct. This class consists mainly of common laborers and domestic servants, including the majority of unemployed persons and relief clients. Daniel points out that two main attitudes toward religious beliefs and church attendance are prevalent among the lower class. They appear either to be antagonistic to religion, or have a blind devotion to God. Frazier indicates that lower class blacks attempt to outwardly conform to the manners and customs of American society, but they are still influenced in their thinking, feelings, and sentiments by the social heritage of the Negro. This


11 Daniel, "Ritual and Stratification...", p. 128.
social heritage is found in the church, especially in the spirituals. Though some lower class blacks may criticize their church and ministers, they are still bound by their heritage.\textsuperscript{12}

There appears to be little or no associational life among lower class men, but lower class women find associational involvement through their church clubs and activities. Drake and Cayton indicate that lower class blacks are found predominately in Baptist, Pentecostal, and Spiritual congregations.\textsuperscript{13} While many authors attribute black affiliation with these congregations to their simple uncomplicated forms of church services and extreme emotionalism, Herskovits, in his discussion of Africanisms, suggests that these services are more complicated than they outwardly appear. He also suggests that the great appeal of these religions, particularly the Baptist religion, may well lie in the attractiveness of its water ritual of baptism.\textsuperscript{14}

The upper-middle class black, characterized by conservatism, conformity, thrift, industry, and ambition, is deeply interested in community affairs, especially those affecting his class. This class includes less successful business men and women, minor executives, government employees, more advanced clerical workers, and important politicians who don't qualify for higher positions. The upper-middle class shows the greatest variety in church and associational interests.


\textsuperscript{13}Drake and Cayton, Black Metropolis (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1945), p. 646.

Drake and Cayton state that the upper-middle class black might well be found in the Congregational, Episcopal, and Presbyterian denominations, along with some Methodist and Baptist churches. This class is similar to the upper class in ritual and ceremony but is more faithful in attendance.  

Lower-middle class blacks differ from those who are upper-middle class in point of view, family connections, education, and occupational status. Daniel indicates that the lower-middle class (found predominately in Baptist and Methodist churches) strongly supports demonstrative types of churches (both large and small).

Some attempt to join smaller churches because they feel more comfortable. There are some middle-class persons who attempt to get away from deep religious involvement because they feel it is a reflection of their class.

The middle class, according to Frazier, most nearly represents the norms of the white society. They participate more in American life. This class is represented by white collar workers and professional men and women. The main goal appears to be acceptance and integration into the white community. Integration to those in the middle class means a loss of racial identity. Their religious attitudes vary from continued affiliation with Baptist and Methodist churches (though they usually pick churches with better educated ministers and a relatively large middle class membership) to joining Presbyterian, Congregational, and

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16 Daniel, "Ritual and Stratification...", p. 127.
Episcopal churches. Their continued interest in the Baptist and Methodist churches may be due to the fact that their families have been associated with the churches which provide a satisfying form of religious service.\footnote{Frazier, "The Negro Church...", p. 137.}

Frazier points out that "the church is no longer the center of social life among the middle class Negroes as it is among the lower class."\footnote{Frazier, "The Negro Church...", p. 140.} They become affiliated with professional, business, and Greek-letter organizations which to them satisfies their need for class strivings. Some middle class blacks do not find satisfactory life in the Negro church and turn to the Catholic, Christian Science, or Bahaist churches in hopes of losing their racial identity. Frazier further states that though many new middle class persons continue to seek assimilation into the white American society through channels other than the church, a large minority still consider the Negro church as a place of refuge in a hostile, white world.\footnote{Frazier, "The Negro Church...", p. 141.}

The upper class blacks consist of leading business men and women, statesmen and politicians, as well as the professional class. The most important elements of the upper class are found in activities outside the church. Church attendance is not an important activity for many persons in the upper stratum, although formal membership is expected. There are small groups of "church oriented" members who strongly participate in the church. These are mainly women who are not in exclusive
sets of society, widowers, and older settlers who live in the past, according to Drake and Cayton.  

For persons seeking upward mobility, upper class churches are an important stepping stone. Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches have been traditionally viewed as upper class churches, but since the upper class blacks are in such small number, no one congregation has a majority of upper class black members.

Drake and Cayton suggest that the pastors of upper class churches are all college trained men who deliver scholarly sermons. The upper class church functions more for status than religious reasons. The churches participate in all worthwhile civic organizations, but these activities are seemingly more a part of an upper class social ritual than a deep desire to help others.

It becomes apparent that the higher the black ascends the social class ladder, the less emphasis he places on the church. This is also true the farther North he goes. According to Frazier, the Negro in the North places less emphasis on the Negro church because he has been drawn into the complex organization of the American society, viewing it as a means of survival. Blacks began to find that the Negro church had little influence as an agency of social control.

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22 Frazier, "The Negro Church...," p. 13h.
Frazier writes:

... the Negro Church has lost much of its influence as an agency of social control. Its supervision over the marital and family life of Negroes has declined. The church has ceased to be the chief means of economic cooperation. The church is no longer the main arena for political activities which was the case when Negroes were disfranchised in the South. In a word, the Negroes have been forced into competition with whites in most areas of social life and their church can no longer serve as a refuge within the American community.23

One may conclude, then, that the black who finds that his religious needs are not met through participation in the black church might seek other religions in the hope of finding religious satisfaction. The contention here is that the Catholic church, with its strong formal ritual, little emphasis upon emotionalism, and greater interest in the here and now might provide an answer to the black's disappointment in his own religion.

Literature pertaining to the black Catholic is admittedly limited. Joe R. Feagin, in an exploratory analysis of black Catholics in the United States, discusses conversion trends and suggests tentative explanations for black conversion. According to Feagin, prior to 1870, little contact was made between Negroes and Catholics in the United States. In the South, where the majority of Negroes were located, there were few Catholics, and in the North, Catholic immigrant laborers were often in competition with free black laborers for jobs in the various industrial areas, causing much conflict between them.24


Feagin points out that prior to the Civil War, missionary efforts among the slaves in the South were carried out mainly by Baptist and Methodist proselytizers. This is largely attributable to the fact that the slaveowners were members of these churches. Maryland and Louisiana were the two exceptions in the South, having more interaction between blacks and Catholics and also meeting with more success in their black conversion efforts. Again, this coincides with the fact that many slaveowners in these states were Catholic. The 1785 Jesuit Report to Rome indicated that there were at least 3,000 black Catholics in Maryland. Louisiana appeared to have even larger numbers of black Catholics.

The migration of thousands of black refugees from Louisiana and Maryland accounts for the presence of black Catholics in other states. However, after the Civil War many former slaves rejected Catholicism in hopes of breaking off any ties with their former masters. An added fact was that there were few facilities for aid and instruction of Catholic slaves in the North and West. The Catholic churches realized this and gradually developed large-scale efforts to convert and aid black Americans. 25

Feagin indicates that by 1865 there were approximately 16,000 black Catholics in Maryland, 63,000 in Louisiana, and no more than 100,000 in the United States. The first relatively comprehensive census of Negro Catholics occurred in 1928, followed by a comparative study in 1939. Gillard, as reported in Feagin, indicated just over 200,000 black Catholics, but by 1939 the number had grown to 297,000 (it should be kept in mind that a part of this apparent increase was probably due to

more precise reports). It should also be noted that by 1939, 145,000 of the total 297,000 black Catholics resided outside the deep South.

In considering whether these trends have continued since 1939, Feagin views the crude estimates for the years 1947, 1957, and 1967, published annually by the Commission for Catholic Missions Among the Colored People and the Indians, as the best available data. These reports suggest a continuation of the trends indicated by the 1928 and 1939 surveys. The number of black Catholics increased from 202,886 to 343,667 from 1928 to 1947 and from 343,667 to 808,332 in 1967. This indicates a systematic growth of black Catholics even though Catholics are still a relatively small percentage of the Negro population.

Feagin suggests some working hypotheses that suggests why an increasing number of blacks are converting to Catholicism. One explanation offered is that some blacks, as they strive to heighten their class standing, may be joining the Catholic church in hopes of escaping from their lower class background. The Catholic emphasis upon traditional ritual in its service may also attract upwardly mobile blacks who wish to get away from the highly emotional, less ritualistic and more socially-oriented services of many lower class Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal churches.

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28 Feagin, "Black Catholics... ," p. 248.
29 Feagin, "Black Catholics... ," p. 252.
Another explanation given by Feagin may be centered around the fact that for several decades the Catholic church has allowed non-Catholic Negroes to send their children to regular, parochial schools. The parents may feel that their children can get a better education from Catholic schools. Perhaps out of a desire to help their children become more accepted with the Catholic children, they may convert.

A final explanation given by Feagin centers around the Civil Rights Movement. In the past, the only place Southern Negroes could attend white churches was in the Catholic parishes in Southern Louisiana. Since the 1940's, the Catholic church has supported the attempts to desegregate schools and colleges. Blacks view the Catholic church as being more helpful than the Protestant churches in the Negro Civil Rights Cause.  

Daniel F. Collins also discusses the Protestant-Catholic differences in terms of theology, morals, class concern, and ritual. Black Catholic converts felt that what little theology there was in the Protestant church was kept at a distance from them. They felt that the Catholic church gave them the opportunity to find greater meaning in life and a clearer understanding of the Christian ethic.  

Collins points out that the converts also mentioned the hypocrisy found in the Protestant church. The ministers and members did not appear to practice what they preached. Drinking and gambling were

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30 Feagin, "Black Catholics...," p. 252.

forbidden in the church, yet these behaviors persisted. Converts felt that the Catholics actually believed what they said they believed.

Social interaction appeared to play an important role in the Protestant church. Members went to see what everyone else was wearing. The Catholic church seemed less concerned with the individual. Little emphasis was placed upon dressing up and being seen.

Black converts found the Catholic ritual to be ordered and more formal than in the Protestant churches. Protestant church services tended to be emotional and less formal.\(^{32}\)

According to Collins, the dissatisfaction over the Protestant church appeared to revolve around its lack of relevance to their lives.\(^{33}\)

In conclusion, it appears that Protestant religion is losing its influence upon blacks, relative to Catholicism. The Protestant church is no longer satisfying the needs of its members as it formerly did, and those who are dissatisfied with their religion are turning to Catholicism.

This review of the literature suggests many reasons why blacks are converting to Catholicism. However, little research has been done to test these explanations. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to focus more directly on these theoretical explanations, with particular emphasis upon Feagin's reasons for black conversion to Catholicism.

The next chapter will be concerned with a description of the setting in which the data were collected. Black Catholic churches located in Louisville, Kentucky, are described, and the hypothesis is formally stated.

\(^{32}\)Collins, "Black Conversion...", p. 216.
\(^{33}\)Collins, "Black Conversion...", p. 216.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODS

The purpose of this thesis is to report the analysis of data collected in Louisville, Kentucky. The data were gathered in an exploratory study of black conversion to Catholicism. It would be pertinent at this point to describe the setting in which the sample of black Catholics (and Protestants) were located.

In order to tentatively explain why Christ the King was chosen as the church from which the sample of black Catholics was taken, it is necessary to briefly describe the Catholic churches in the surrounding area. According to a report concerning West End Catholic churches which was completed by the Urban Studies Center of University of Louisville, there are approximately sixteen Catholic churches in the West End of Louisville. These sixteen churches are divided into four districts (A, B, C, and D) on the basis of geography, population, common problems, and the like.¹

The data were collected in district D, which covers the southwest corner of Louisville's West End and is considered to be the more stable of the four districts.

The churches included in this district are Holy Cross, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Christ the King. Holy Cross, located at 32nd and Broadway, (approximately ten blocks from Christ the King) is predominately (90 per cent) black. There is a much larger percentage of converts than "birth Catholics," and some who attend Holy Cross are not Catholic (they go out of curiosity).

The sermons at Holy Cross are quite emotional. Father Reise, the priest at Holy Cross, feels that black members prefer this emotionalism because it seems to be a part of the black religious tradition outside the Catholic church. The members also feel they are keeping pace with the Catholic change.

Holy Cross appears to attract members because of both upward mobility and black awareness. However, a large proportion of its members are lower and lower-middle class, therefore emphasis is placed upon black culture since Father Reise feels that blacks should become more aware of and unite around their culture. The two black priests (Fathers Reise and Bell) feel that it is more important to learn about the black culture and gain pride in being black than conform to traditional Catholic theology.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, located at 3308 Southwick Avenue, is the newest West End parish (established in 1953). Immaculate Heart of Mary serves the black community of the Park-Du-Valle area. There are 1500 parish members, and the school enrolls 200 students. Approximately 98 per cent of the members of the parish are black. The parish is unable to support itself financially. It is in an area inhabited by poor families who cannot support themselves, much less the church.
Father Heitzman, the priest at Immaculate Heart, views serving the black parish as challenging. He places emphasis upon membership participation in the mass.

The researcher felt that Holy Cross and Immaculate Heart of Mary would be unsuitable for selection of a black Catholic sample for two reasons. First, there is a large black majority in both parishes. It is felt that the more nearly even the black-white ratio is, the more suitable is the church in terms of sampling since black-white interaction is an important factor used to help determine attitudes toward integration. The second reason stems from the first. The fact that both churches are located in deprived areas (Cotter Homes, Park-Du-Valle, and so forth) suggests that the role of the church might be directed outside the church, that is, through community development and improvement, to a larger extent than exhibited by churches in higher income areas, leaving less time for providing meaningful, religious motivation.

Next, a more detailed description of Christ the King will be given, along with reasons for selecting this parish.

Description of the Church Under Study

Christ the King, located in the West End of Louisville, is the church from which the sample of black Catholics was taken. The total population of the church is 919 active members. Approximately 75 per cent are black and 25 per cent are white.

The church, which has been in existence for 44 years, has gradually shifted from being a predominately white parish to a predominately black one. The major reason for this change is centered around its location. The West End, once considered to be a relatively
respectable white residential area, has gradually lost its white members. Whites moved ten years ago for reasons stemming from overt prejudice, and since that time whites have continued to move because of their discomfort over being a minority. Following the rioting which occurred in the West End in 1968, they began to move since almost every house on their block had been broken into.

According to Father Rapp who is the priest at Christ the King, the white membership has declined about 12 per cent in the past five years. Father Rapp pointed out that when death came to one, the remaining white person moved away. He does not foresee any gain in white members since whites are not moving into the area. Father Rapp predicts that in ten years, the parish will be 90 per cent black. When few white people are left, they become uncomfortable and move.

As far as the blacks are concerned, Father Rapp does not predict a loss of membership. In a personal interview he commented that "as indicated by door to door visiting over the past four years, there is a very positive indication of respect the community has for our school and church. Many visit on Sunday who are not Catholic. About 25 per cent of the children in our school are not Catholic, and in other ways the church relates to the greater community and its needs."

Father Rapp points out that there appears to be a very good relationship between black and white members of the parish. It is interesting to note that the greatest differences occur in the teen culture. Grade school children also show discomfort when they are in a minority. The adults appear to make little or no issue of it.

The family life-styles of the upper and middle class black and white members are quite similar. But differences occur for the lower
class members of both races. Most homes have a father, but dominant mothers are most common. In the majority of family life patterns, the differences tend to be economic rather than racial.

When asked if he, as a white priest, enjoys serving a black parish, Father Rapp replied: "I like it, enjoy working here and chose to come here. Most (90 per cent) of our West End priests are here by choice and are men of great hope. Other white priests may very much dislike it, or be depressed by it."

More than 51 per cent of the parishioners are "birth Catholics". There are about 60 known persons who became Catholics as adults. In most instances, the black members reside within a three-mile radius of the church.

The church service at Christ the King is quite relaxed and informal. There is little emphasis placed upon dressing up and being seen. The hymns appear to have a little more soul than those sung in the average (predominately white) Catholic church.

In summary, Christ the King was selected as the church from which the sample of black Catholics was to be taken for several reasons: black members reside within a three-mile radius of the church, the church is integrated, (about three-fourths of its members are black, and over the past 44 years it has gradually shifted from being predominately white to being predominately black), the black membership is heterogeneous in terms of social class, and the black membership includes both "birth Catholics" and converts.
The Hypotheses

In conjunction with Feagin's reasons for black conversion to Catholicism, four hypotheses will be considered for this research.

Formally stated, the hypotheses are:

Hypothesis I  Black conversion to Catholicism will be positively related to social status strivings.

Hypothesis II  Black conversion to Catholicism will be positively related to viewing parochial educational systems as being more likely to provide integrated schooling and high quality education.

Hypothesis III Black conversion to Catholicism will be significantly related to preferring a formal worship service as found in the Catholic church.

Hypothesis IV  Black conversion to Catholicism will be significantly related to viewing the Catholic church and clergy as being more active in the Civil Rights cause.

Though the main emphasis in this thesis is placed upon differences between Catholics and Protestants, it is felt that Catholics should be further divided into "birth Catholics" and converts since converts might be most likely to give responses indicating appeal of Catholicism to blacks. On the other hand, converts might carry with them some influence of prior socialization into the Protestant religion. An example would be that converts might be more likely to evidence sectarianism than "birth Catholics."
The hypotheses were tested through a primary analysis of data collected in Louisville, Kentucky, during the summer of 1971. These attitudinal data were secured from black Catholics and Protestants. As indicated, Christ the King was selected as the church from which the sample of black Catholics was taken. From a list of 200 active black families, 75 black Catholics were chosen randomly and interviewed. A technique for randomly drawing a (Catholic) member of each household was used to randomize selection of individual respondents, but the technique depended upon repeated callbacks to secure the interview from the selected respondent. In general, however, only one callback was made because of time limitations, and then another respondent, generally female, was interviewed in the household. An additional 75 blacks were interviewed who were Protestant (one identified himself as "none" but was reared Protestant; and therefore this person is included as Protestant). These individuals were selected on the basis of close residential proximity to individual black Catholic families (as in the case of Catholics, three-fourths of the respondents were female). The pairing of black Catholics and Protestant households (not all members within each household were of the same religious preference, of course) provided a control for residence and, to a lesser degree, a control for social class for the two populations under study. The interview schedule, administered in the home, required about one hour for completion. Individuals 18 years of age and older were interviewed. The interview schedule included items concerned with status concern, social class, identification of characteristics of Catholic and public schools and Catholic and Protestant clergymen, preference of religious style, and the like.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The findings of an analysis of the Louisville data are reported in this chapter. Particular attention is given to ascertaining possible attitudinal differences rather than focusing on differences on background characteristics. The primary statistics applied to the data were Chi-square (to test significance of differences), and gamma (to test strengths of association).

Table 1 indicates the relationship between age and preference and class and preference. From this table it can be observed that a curvilinear relationship exists between preference and age for Louisville blacks. Black Catholics were more likely to be middle-aged. There were no significant differences between Catholics and Protestants in terms of social class. However, this is probably due to the fact that in controlling for residence, social class was also indirectly controlled.

Conversion to Catholicism has been linked with social class mobility and status-concern as stated in Hypothesis I. Four items from Kaufman's Status-Concern Scale were employed as a measure of this variable.\(^1\) (See the appendix for the items utilized.) While Catholics were slightly less likely to evidence status concern, there were no

Table 1. Background Characteristics of Louisville Interviewees, by Religious Preference

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<td></td>
<td>Low V IV III II I High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protestant (N=73)</td>
<td>12.3% 56.2 28.3 1.4 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catholic (N=73)</td>
<td>5.5% 63.0 23.3 6.8 1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age: Chi-square = 11.47 d.f. = 4 P < .05 Gamma = +.19
Class: Chi-square = 3.65 d.f. = 4 P > .05 Gamma = +.11

<sup>a</sup>Hollingshead Two-Factor Index of Social Class
significant differences between Protestants and Catholics (gamma = -.11, with P > .05, as determined by Chi-square). Again, the nature of the sampling must be remembered; class differences between Protestants and Catholics were minimized. Yet, for status concern to have acted as an intervening variable, a control on social class (assuming class differences had existed) would have implied a continued relationship, with black Catholics being more likely to evidence status concern.

It has been suggested that black Catholics prefer a different religious style than black Protestants. Such a suggestion might imply differences between these two groups on various dimensions of religiosity. Yet Lenski observes that such groups as black Catholics and non-believers "share in the subculture of the dominant Negro Protestant majority," and he cites Orbach's study indicating the similarity of attendance patterns of black Catholics and Protestants. Using Lenski's dimensions of Devotionalism and Associational Involvement and Nelsen's measure of sectarianism (see the appendix for the last measure), black Protestants and Catholics have been compared on these several dimensions; and these comparisons are shown in Table 2. There were no differences on associational involvement (gamma = -.19 with P < .05, as determined by Chi-square) but black Catholics were more likely to score high on devotionalism (gamma = +.37, with P < .05, as determined by Chi-square) and less likely to hold to a sectarian religious ideology (gamma = -.45).

Related to sectarianism is the belief that the church should act as an agent of social control, prescribing moral activity on the part of

---

Table 2. Religious Orientation of Louisville Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Devotionalism Per Cent</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Associational Involvement Per Cent</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Sectarianism Per Cent</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Devotionalism: \( \chi^2 = 4.67 \) d.f. = 1 \( P < .05 \) Gamma = +.37 (or Q)

Associational Involvement: \( \chi^2 = .97 \) d.f. = 1 \( P > .05 \) Gamma = -.19

Sectarianism: \( \chi^2 = 6.23 \) d.f. = 1 \( P < .05 \) Gamma = -.45
its adherents. Table 3 reports Protestant-Catholic differences in preference for the church speaking out against the drinking of alcohol. Not too surprisingly, black Catholics were less likely to report such a preference (gamma = - .64, with P < .001 as determined by Chi-square). Similar results were obtained from a question concerned with preference for the church speaking out against dancing (gamma = - .62, with P < .001, as determined by Chi-square), although the majority of both Protestants and Catholics did not report such a preference.

More directly to religious style is the type of worship service preferred by the religious adherent (Hypothesis II). The interviewees were asked: "What do you prefer in a worship service—one that is quiet and reserved or one in which you feel free to express your emotions?" The responses are summarized in Table 4. Catholics were much more likely to prefer a worship service that was quiet and reserved. Feagin's comment that Catholicism would be appealing to individuals preferring a less emotional religious style is given support by these data.

The third hypothesis linked conversion with parochial education. In this regard the interviewees were asked two questions: "If you lived in an area that mostly consisted of people of one race and you wanted a child of yours to attend an integrated school, would you be more likely to send him to a public school, a Catholic school, or wouldn't it make any differences between the two?" and "If you wanted a child of yours to get a high quality education, would you be more likely to send him to a public school, a Catholic school, or wouldn't it make any difference between the two?" The responses are summarized in Table 5. As would be anticipated, Catholics were more likely to identify Catholic schools as providing integrated schooling and high quality education, giving support to Hypothesis III.
Table 3. Preference for Church Speaking Out Against Drinking of Alcohol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>Approve</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 16.68  d.f. = 1  \( P < .001 \)  Gamma = -.64
Table 4. Preference for Worship Service Atmosphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Per Cent Preferring Service</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiet and Reserved</td>
<td>Free for Emotional Expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 16.75  d.f. = 1  P < .001  Gamma = -.69
Table 5. Identification of Public or Catholic School as More Likely to Provide Integrated Schooling and High Quality Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>More Likely to Provide -- In Per Cent</th>
<th>Integrated Schooling</th>
<th>High Quality Ed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Cath-</td>
<td>Public Diff.</td>
<td>olic N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrated Schooling: Chi-square = 12.80 d.f. = 2 P < .001
Gamma = +.46

High Quality Education: Chi-square = 8.82 d.f. = 2 P < .05
Gamma = +.42
Two additional questions asked how they would have felt about these two topics 10 or 15 years ago. Analysis of these responses gave relationships in the same direction, but stronger. The data are summarized in Table 6. In comparing Tables 5 and 6, it can be noted that Protestants are slightly more likely to identify today's Catholic schools rather than those 10 or 15 years ago as providing integrated schooling and high quality education. Conversely, Catholics are much less likely to identify Catholic schools of today rather than 10 or 15 years ago as having these characteristics. It would seem that these appeals of parochial education have lessened for Catholics, although Catholics are still more likely than Protestants to attribute integrated schooling and high quality education to the Catholic schools.

Finally, a link has been suggested between conversion to Catholicism and identifying the Catholic clergy and Church as being more receptive to integration and Civil Rights. Several questions were asked on this point, including "Thinking of the clergymen you know, would you say that they strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of racial integration?" Two-thirds of the respondents, both Catholic and Protestant, stated that the clergymen they knew favored integration (there were no religious differences here). More to the point, the interviewees were asked: "Who do you think has been more active in the cause for black people, that is, working for Civil Rights and the like, Catholic priests or Protestant ministers and preachers?" The responses to this item make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. On the 71 Protestants responding to the item, 21.1 per cent identified Protestant ministers, while 7.0 per cent identified Catholic priests, compared to 33.8 per cent and 20.3 per cent (respectively) of
Table 6. Identification of Public or Catholic School as More Likely to Provide Integrated Schooling and High Quality Education 10 or 15 Years Ago

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>More Likely to Provide -- In Per Cent</th>
<th>Integrated Schooling</th>
<th>High Quality Ed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Cath.</td>
<td>Public Diff.</td>
<td>olie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrated Schooling: Chi-square = 25.38 d.f. = 2  P < .001
Gamma = +.65

High Quality Education: Chi-square = 30.69 d.f. = 2  P < .001
Gamma = +.70
the 74 Catholics. The remainder replied "About the same." In other words, Catholics were more likely to respond than Protestants (that is, to name either priests or ministers). Perhaps this question had more saliency for Catholics than Protestants, which would support the fourth hypothesis suggesting that conversion and identifying the Catholic church and clergy as being more receptive to Civil Rights are linked. The relationship between these two variables can be seen in Table 7.

On the other hand, analysis of Protestant-Catholic differences on militancy and black power orientations indicated that by the time of this study, outlooks on these variables did not differ by religious group. (A six-item scale measuring receptivity to Civil Rights militancy and a four-item scale concerning attitude toward black power were utilized; these are described in the appendix.) Two-thirds of the respondents (either Catholic or Protestant or both) felt that the government was pushing integration too fast. The remainder felt that the government was pushing it "about right." Gary Marx reported that militancy was positively related to class.\(^3\) Here, with class more or less controlled, there were no differences between Protestants and Catholics. Without such a control and because of the class factor, one might expect Catholics to be more militant, but such a relationship apparently would be spurious.

Table 7. Identification of Clergy on Civil Rights Outlook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Who has been more active in civil rights?</th>
<th>Catholics</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protestant Ministers</td>
<td>About the Same</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 10.84  d.f. = 2  P < .01  Gamma = +.02
Comparison of "Birth Catholics" and Converts

A separate analysis of Catholics was completed, contrasting "birth Catholics" and converts. Of the Catholics, 52.0 per cent were Protestant as children, 44.0 per cent were "birth Catholics," and 4.0 per cent were reared in a "no preference" home. In comparison of Protestants, converts, and "birth Catholics," the converts to Catholicism usually assumed a stance between Protestants and "birth Catholics," making causal interpretation difficult. Also, the small N sizes for the two groups of Catholics generally meant a lack of significance (.05 level) when the two groups were compared.

There were few differences between birth Catholics and converts on age, except that converts were underrepresented in the youngest and oldest age categories (see Table 8). There were no class differences. On associational involvement, converts resembled Protestants (who scored highest) and birth Catholics (who scored lowest) (see Table 9). On devotionalism, converts resembled birth Catholics (see Table 9). There were no differences among the three groups on status concern (see Table 8). Concerning attitude toward the church speaking out on alcohol and dancing, converts were between Protestants and birth Catholics (but closer to the latter) on outlook (see Table 10).

Of the Protestant respondents, none were reared in a Catholic home. Concerning present denominational preferences, 73.3 per cent of the Protestants were Baptist, 10.7 per cent were Methodist, none were Presbyterian, Lutheran, or Episcopalian, 14.7 per cent were other Protestant, and 1.3 per cent claimed "no preference." As noted, this one individual with no preference was reared Protestant, however.
Table 8. Characteristics of Interviewees, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Categories of Dependent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24&amp;-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>(73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>(42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>(33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status Concern</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age:**  
Chi-square = 14.46  
d.f. = 8  
P > .05  
Gamma = +.16

**Status Concern:**  
Chi-square = 2.06  
d.f. = 4  
P > .001  
Gamma = -.12
Table 9. Religious Orientations of Interviewees, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Devotionalism</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Devotionalism: Chi-square = 5.64  d.f. = 2  P > .05  
Gamma = +.28

Associational Involvement: Chi-square = 2.35  d.f. = 2  P = .309
Gamma = .20

Sectarianism: Chi-square = 8.40  d.f. = 2  P > .01
Gamma = -.40
Table 10. Per Cent Disapproving or Approving of the Church Speaking Out Against Dancing and Drinking of Alcohol, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Dancing</th>
<th></th>
<th>Drinking of Alcohol</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>Approve</td>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>Approve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>68.6 (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>39.5 (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Cath.</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>23.3 (30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dancing:

Chi-square = 6.13  d.f. = 2  P < .05

Gamma = +.56

Drinking of Alcohol:

Chi-square = 19.85  d.f. = 2  P > .001

Gamma = +.60
Table 11. Identification of Clergy on Civil Rights Outlook, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Protestant Ministers</th>
<th>About the Same</th>
<th>Catholic Priests</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>(71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>(41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>(33)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square = 14.14  d.f. = 4  P > .001  Gamma = -.09
Converts were more likely to identify priests as being more active in the cause for black people, while birth Catholics were more likely to identify Protestant ministers and preachers (for the comparison of converts and birth Catholics: gamma = -.09, with P > .001 as determined by Chi-square). For these data, see Table 11.

On Civil Rights orientation, there were no differences between converts and birth Catholics (see Table 12). However, birth Catholics were more receptive to black power (gamma = +.33 with P = .11, as determined by Chi-square), which makes it quite difficult to draw any firm conclusions from these data (for black power orientations, also see Table 12).

On the two questions concerning parochial education 10 or 15 years ago, converts occupied a position intermediate between Protestants and birth Catholics. On the two questions concerning parochial education today, converts resembled birth Catholics. For these responses, see Table 13.

More interesting were replies concerning the type of worship service preferred by the respondent. Of the 39 converts responding to the question, 43.6 per cent preferred freedom to express emotion, compared to 53.3 per cent of the 30 birth Catholics who gave this response (gamma = +.19, with P = .58, as determined by Chi-square). Due to low N sizes we cannot draw any firm conclusion. Here, however, birth Catholics were between Protestants and converts (see Table 14).

Finally, all respondents were asked what they liked about their present religious preference. One-fifth of birth Catholics compared to two-fifths of converts (and one-fourth of Protestants) gave answers that were coded as "it is the one true religion." Noting that the structure
Table 12. Orientation Toward Civil Rights and Black Power, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Civil Rights Receptivity</th>
<th>Black Power Receptivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Cath.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N

Civil Rights Receptivity: Chi-square = 2.25  d.f. = 4  P = .69
Gamma = -.07

Black Power: Chi-square = 4.85  d.f. = 4  P > .001
Gamma = -.005
Table 13. Identification of Public or Catholic School as More Likely to Provide Integrated Schooling and High Quality Education, by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Integrated Schooling</th>
<th>High Quality Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Today</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or 15 Years Ago</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrated Schooling Today: \( \chi^2 = 15.62 \), d.f. = 4, \( P > .001 \)

Gamma = +.40

High Quality Ed. Today: \( \chi^2 = 8.17 \), d.f. = 4, \( P < .10 \)

Gamma = +.34

Integrated Schooling 10 or 15 Years Ago: \( \chi^2 = 23.39 \), d.f. = 2, \( P < .001 \)

Gamma = +.59

High Quality Ed. 10 or 15 Years Ago: \( \chi^2 = 27.70 \), d.f. = 4, \( P < .001 \)

Gamma = +.65
Table 14. Preference for Worship Service Atmosphere by Religious Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Identification</th>
<th>Quiet and Reserved</th>
<th>Free for Emotional Expression</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>(65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Catholic</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 18.97  d.f. = 2  P < .001  Gamma = -.51
and tone of the worship service was pleasing were one-seventh of the birth Catholics and Protestants, compared to one-third of the converts. Birth Catholics (and Protestants) were more likely than converts to give some other response, including "there is nothing in particular that I like about the faith" or "I was brought up that way and never thought to change."
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis has been concerned with assessing reasons given by Joe R. Feagin for black conversion to Catholicism. It was suggested by Feagin that conversion occurs for educational, ritual, status, and civil rights reasons. Data collected in the summer of 1971 from black Catholic and Protestant residents of the West End of Louisville, Kentucky, were analyzed to provide tests for each of these speculations. Attitudinal variables, as well as face-sheet information, were included in this data set.

From this analysis it was concluded that black Catholics prefer a more quiet religious worship service, that there were no differences by religious preference on status concern, and that conversion might be linked with parochial education. While Catholics were more likely to identify Catholic priests as being more active in the cause of black people, there were no differences by religious preference on militancy.

The results of this analysis gave support to hypotheses II, III, and IV since there were significant differences between relationships. However, all of the relationships were weak. Hypothesis I, linking black conversion to Catholicism with social status, was not supported and therefore must be rejected. However, the method of obtaining the sample controlled for residence, and thus, in effect, controlled for
social class. Had the black Protestants been selected from the total area rather than from the specific neighborhood in which the black Catholics resided, a relationship between the two variables might have been found.

Comparisons of Protestants, converts and birth Catholics indicated that generally converts either occupied a position intermediate between Protestants and birth Catholics or resembled birth Catholics on the various attitudinal items. Only on the item concerning preference of type of worship service was the ordering changed, with converts being most likely to prefer a worship service that was quiet and reserved. Further research comparing convert and birth Catholics is suggested. While it may seem simplistic, a direct question asking why they converted would be most appropriate.\(^1\)

In the mid-1960's it would have been easier to have come to a conclusion concerning possible future rates of black conversion to Catholicism. With the spirit of integration felt to be present in American society, there seemed less reason to maintain strong black communal organizations, including the church. But with the rise of black power and the realization of the failure of the movement toward integration, organizations within the black community apparently revived. First, then, the Catholic church will face a more competitive situation in attracting converts. Second, the spirit of black

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\(^1\)Converts were not asked the specific question of why they converted. This question was not included in the interview schedule because the schedule was already too long and because at the time the schedule was constructed, the researcher did not intend to have a separate analysis specifying birth and convert Catholics. However, for future research on birth and convert Catholics this question would be most appropriate.
conversion to Catholicism was strongly linked to a perspective of integration. From the writings of Frazier and others, it appeared that the black middle and upper classes endorsed integration into the mainstream of American society, as they identified it, and concomitantly, desired to escape from what they considered to be a stifling atmosphere which extended through the lower reaches of the black community. (It should be noted, however, that the writings of Frazier and others having a perspective solely centered on integration are increasingly coming under suspicion in terms of validly portraying the black community and desires for and barriers to integration.) If integration is no longer the dominant motif, and if Catholicism depended upon it for conversion, then one factor aiding conversion will be diminished or will have disappeared.

For future rates of black conversion to continue at the apparently high level now in existence, as suggested by Feagin, black Catholicism will have to undergo considerable change, including the inducement of blacks into the priesthood, the embracing of black power (with black power defined at least as the church encouraging cohesion in the black community), and the adapting of liturgy and the service to include more active participation and freer expression on the part of its adherents. Yet the denial of this last element has apparently been one of the mainstays of the appeal of Catholicism to blacks in the past. Whether participation of middle-aged black Catholics would fall should such changes be made would remain to be seen.

Apparently one appeal of Catholicism to blacks has been the parochial educational system. The uncertainty of the direction ghetto education will take (bussing, quality of education in the ghetto, and
the like) precludes any assessment of future conversion rates linked with enrollment of black children in parochial schools. On the other hand, the difficulties now facing parochial systems (costs and staffing problems) do not portend well for providing increased educational opportunities for ghetto children.

From the analysis of the Louisville data, it is quite apparent that additional research should be completed on reasons for conversions. The small sample size made it difficult to draw firm conclusions concerning the conversion process.
APPENDIX

The four items from Kaufman's Status-Concern Scale were concerned with having a good name with the right kind of people, living in a respectable neighborhood, the importance of raising one's social position, and choosing friends who can be of aid in mobility. The wording was slightly changed. The value of coefficient alpha was .36, and the item-total coefficients ranged from .34 to .63. The responses were collapsed into low (score 0, summing for agreement), moderate (score 1), and high (scores 2 through 4).

Sectarianism was measured by agreement with three or more sectarian attitudes, including: preference for the church over political activity, rejection of situation ethics, belief drinking is always wrong, literal interpretation of the Bible, preference for testifying as part of worship service, and belief God sends misfortune and illness as punishment for sins. For the responses to these six items, coefficient alpha was .40, and the item total correlation coefficients ranged from .34 to .62. Consequently, the scale was judged to have internal reliability. The validity of the scale is judged elsewhere (see Nelsen¹).

The six-item scale measuring receptivity to civil rights militancy included: belief that civil rights demonstrations over the past few years have helped the cause of the black people, strong approval or approval of greater political power for Negroes, strong approval or approval of all labor unions open to Negro membership, strong disapproval or disapproval of "Negroes are pushing too hard for equal rights," strong disapproval or disapproval of "interracial marriages should be discouraged," and strong disapproval or disapproval of "Negroes should be satisfied with separate but equal treatment in education, housing and jobs." The surrattled index values were collapsed into low (scores 0-4), moderate (score 5), and high (score 6). Coefficient alpha was .49 and the item-total coefficients ranged from .39 to .65.

The four-item scale concerning attitude toward black power included: "The Black Power Movement, in general"; "Black power means that Negroes are trying to obtain the power due to them in this country"; "Black power is a legitimate response to white power"; and "Black power means that militant Negroes are trying to stir up a rebellion." One point (each) was assigned for responses of strong approval and approval for the first three items and disapproval and strong disapproval of the fourth item. The index scores were collapsed into low (scores 0-2), moderate (score 3), and high receptivity (score 4). Coefficient alpha was .57, and the item-total coefficients ranged from .54 to .72.
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