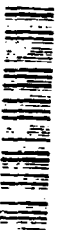# FACTORS THAT MAY TEND TO LIMIT THE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF RECRUITS

A Report
Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Education
San Diego State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Course
Education 795B Seminar
Dr. Alfred Merino

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by
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Religious education programs at the Navy's recruit training commands are regularly impacted by certain potentially limiting factors, most of which are not normally encountered at local churches or synagogues. These include such things as the religiously pluralistic nature of recruit populations, the short-term nature of recruit training, the transient quality of the recruit experience, the intense activity schedule of recruit training, and the limited opportunity chaplains have for follow-up with recruits. Chaplains at recruit training commands must be sensitive to these factors, and they must be resourceful and creative if they are to overcome them. In addition, they must have some gauge of the results of their efforts so as to assess their success in overcoming these and other potentially limiting factors, and to make adjustments as necessary. Given that such potentially limiting factors exist, how effective is the existing religious education program in meeting the religious and spiritual needs of recruits? Obtaining such an assessment is the problem that will be addressed in this study.

Importance of the Study

Having an accurate assessment of religious education outcomes is absolutely essential to effective future planning for any

command religious program. It can help identify both weak
areas that need strengthening, and strong areas that may need
little if any change at all. It also can be the spawning
ground for innovations as it provides an additional vehicle
through which members such as recruits can communicate their
opinions about the command religious program. This study will
not only provide that information, but will also assess it in
terms of the relative strength of recruit opinion on how well
their religious needs have been met.

Assumptions of the Study

All the assumptions connected with this study are, in some
way a result of the nature of recruit training. They include
the following:

The Religiously Plural Nature
of Recruit Populations

This is a natural result of the fact that recruits come to
the Navy from American society in general where at least 225
different religious bodies have been identified (Mead and Hill, 1990).

The Short-Term Nature of
Recruit Training

The recruit training cycle is only eight weeks long.
Recruits may spend an additional week or so at recruit training,
however, as they are being formed into companies prior to
beginning the training cycle.

The Transient Nature of the Recruit Experience

Recruit training is, by definition, a transitional phase, where people enter from civilian life, undergo approximately eight weeks of intense training, and then move on to either apprenticeship training or a service school where they learn the basics of a rating specialty before ultimate assignment to the fleet.

The Intense Activity Schedule at Recruit Training

This is, in part, the result of a master training schedule that covers a wide range of formal instruction and training for recruits, and partly the result of rigorous training and other activities at the company level before and after scheduled sessions. Added to these are inspections, drills, physical training and daily cleaning (or field day) in the barracks.

Limited Opportunity for Chaplain Follow-up with Recruits

A natural consequence of both the short-term nature of recruit training and the intense activity schedule for recruits, this situation is intensified when, at peak recruit levels, the chaplain-to-recruit ratio is at its lowest. This is of special concern during the early phases of training, when requests for counseling are most frequent.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the religious education program at RTC San Diego, and it focuses on graduating recruits' opinions

of how well their religious needs were met while at RTC. Dates

for study data gathering were affected when a high level Navy

decision resulted in no new recruits coming to RTC San Diego

between October, 1991, and March, 1992. Cons ,iently, the last

day for any data gathering was identified as November 27, 1991.

That study termination date was complied with as were other

requirements imposed by the Deputy Command Chaplain's letter of

October 17, 1991. Additionally, it was verbally agreed that

draft copies of the research report would be made available to

the Command Chaplain and the Commanding Officer before final

submission to the faculty of San Diego State University.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions

are given:

Recruit - A newly enlisted person, assigned to or about to be

assigned to one of the Navy's recruit training commands where

they will undergo eight weeks of intense training in their

transition from civilian to sailor. All Navy recruits undergoing

training in San Diego are males, and 97% of the recruits are

between 18 and 26 years of age.

Recruit Training Command (RTC) - One of the Navy's three commands

for the training of recruits. They are located in Orlando,

Florida; Great Lakes, Illinois; and San Diego, California.

(This study will concern itself with the San Diego center only).

Command Religious Program (CRP) - The entire program of pastoral

care and religious ministries provided at a naval activity. The
Commanding Officer is ultimately responsible for the CRP, and it
is administered for him or her under the leadership of a Command
Chaplain.

Religious Pluralism - As applied to naval activities, the
religious diversity of the membership of a particular command.

Assimilation - The absorption of minority members into a larger
society in such a way that the smaller group's distinctives
are minimized or eliminated.

Amalgamation - The merging of societies such that, the result
is one more or less uniform homogeneous whole.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Although Navy chaplains have been providing ministry for
over two centuries and have had to consider such things as
religious pluralism, intense unit schedules, and the impact of
various time constraints on their ministries, there is a notable
lack of research in the literature on these and similar matters.
For that reason, this review also includes a survey of the
literature in general education that has applicability to
religious education in recruit settings. Additionally, sources
were developed by interviewing the chaplains assigned to RTC,
San Diego.

Religious Pluralism

The Handbook of Denominations in the United States (Mead
and Hill, 1990) lists more than 225 different religious bodies.
People who enlist for military service represent those faith
groups and they come to boot camp with quite diverse religious
needs. With only five chaplains assigned to Recruit Training
Command, and with recruit populations that may exceed 2,500
the challenge of providing for such diverse religious needs
is tremendous, and it has no parallel among local churches or
synagogues.

Application from Sources in
General Education

Religious pluralism is a given in the Armed Forces, and it is a product of the cultural and ethnic diversity that exist in society in general. Chaplains who provide ministry to religiously plural groups can benefit from the literature in general education on multicultural approaches to the extent that they can transfer parallel concepts to their religious setting. Most writers on multicultural education reject the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences and favor the view that such diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved (Baptiste, 1979). Likewise, those involved in religious education in the military should recognize the great religious diversity of our nation and treat it as a source of cultural richness that is to be treasured and safeguarded.

Neglecting the needs of minority groups in public education has been seen as a major reason for dropouts among minorities as minority members feel alienated, develop an outsider mentality, and finally give up entirely (Kitching, 1991). Kitching and most other writers on the subject feel that multicultural education can go a long way to reducing that dropout rate. In a chapel religious education setting the parallel is direct, and as minority members are made to feel belonging rather than alienation, chapel communities will be made stronger at the same time minority members are given further incentive to continue in their faith.

Much of the past problem for minorities in public education has been attributed to the "melting pot" approach with its emphasis on assimilation and amalgamation. It simply has not worked for all ethnics, particularly ethnics of color, and they understandably have desired to maintain their separate identities (Sobel, 1990). The multicultural approach to education would provide that opportunity and bring other benefits as well. Some educators, however, such as John Pfordresher, have urged an approach that is deliberate and carefully planned in order not to sacrifice excellence for a token version of multicultural education (Pfordresher, 1991). The same must be considered by chaplains who must guard against a watered-down version of the various faiths in order to include all. In practice, this means keeping the identity and richness of each faith group while promoting better understanding among groups.

Input from Chaplain Sources

Chaplains typically provide worship and religious education for their own faith groups, while facilitating the free exercise of religion for other faiths. Worship and religious education of other faiths are provided by obtaining the services of outside clergy or lay readers who then lead those groups. According to the Director of the Recruit Ministries Division at Recruit Training Command, this means scheduling and coordinating 12 different faith groups each week, six of them led by lay readers from outside religious bodies, the remainder being led by Navy chaplains. In the case of Protestant Christians, however, it

means their being grouped together with other Protestants in either of two services, a General Protestant service or a Liturgical Communion service (Vieira, 1991).

Chaplain Donald Muchow, then an instructor at the Navy Chaplains School Basic Course in Newport, Rhode Island, wrote of his concern that chapel ministries may fall short of meeting the "particularistic needs of persons who make up the Protestant agregate (1980)." With the grouping together of so many different Protestant faiths, it is legitimate to ask whether their particularistic needs are being met. Do they feel they are included in a sort of "melting pot" approach? On the other hand, does their being grouped this way contribute to a richer religious experience for all and add to better understanding and harmony among Protestants? In interviews with the two Protestant chaplains assigned to Recruit Training Command, both expressed their concern for meeting the religious needs of those who come from diverse Protestant backgrounds (Vieira, 1991 and Chun, 1991).

The Short-term Nature of Recruit Training

The short-term nature of recruit training (eight weeks) suggests that recruits will undergo many of the stresses typical of transient populations. It also implies the limited opportunity chaplains have to work with recruits to accomplish religious education goals. Military members are among the most mobile groups in the country with 60% moving annually compared with approximately 20% in the general population

(McCubbin, Dahl & Hunter, 1976). Furthermore, the Navy recruit is in the most transient phase of military life. Having left the familiar surroundings of home, the recruit will travel to one of the Navy's three recruit training commands, undergo approximately eight weeks of recruit training, then attend either apprenticeship training or a service school for rating specialty training before ultimate assignment to the fleet. On arrival at recruit training, most are very disoriented and under considerable stress, and some are genuinely fearful as company commanders begin the process that will transform them from civilians to sailors. Especially during the early phases of recruit training many may feel out of balance with their surroundings, experience self-doubts, have problems coping, and question the wisdom of their decision to enlist. How do these pressures impact the learning process and the effectiveness of recruit religious education programs? Donovan Walling suggests that such uncertainties and negative feelings can hinder the learning process significantly (1991). This is particularly true in the adjustment phase, when the sense of disorientation is at its highest. Donovan goes on to suggest that educators can do much to improve that situation by helping the transient to develop a sense of belonging and community, by providing opportunity for sharing information, by establishing support groups for transients, and by helping the transient to have realistic expectations.

Much of what regularly happens in worship and religious education may go a long way to helping the adjustment of recruits.

The chapel represents one of the few familiar and predictable things a recruit still has after entering boot camp, that is, his or her personal faith. There is a unifying factor in the common experience of all recruits that tends to draw them together in worship, and programs of worship and religious education help to affirm the recruit's self-worth and give a sense of belonging.

Concerns about the transient nature of the recruit experience and the effectiveness of religious education programs for recruits were voiced by various chaplains. Mentioned was recruit turnover and the difficulties turnover adds to the fact of sheer numbers in making it difficult for a chaplain to know his or her recruit congregation on an individual basis (Chun, 1991). Also mentioned as a consequence, was the need to limit the focus of religious education, since chaplains will have only eight weeks to work with recruits (Hoffman, 1991). One chaplain saw the limited amount of time available to work with recruits as a motivating factor, however, stating that, since there is only an eight-week period, the incentive to reach and minister to recruits is greater than it otherwise might be (Targonski, 1991). Finally, two chaplains spoke of discontinuity in attendance as due, at least in part, to time constraints, as some recruits elect to remain in the barracks to study training material rather than attend worship services and religious education (Vieira, 1991 and Nelko, 1991).

Other Potentially Limiting Factors

In addition to concerns having to do with the religiously pluralistic nature of recruit populations and various time constraints, chaplains also mentioned the following as tending to limit recruit religious education: (1) a lack of adequate chapel facilities, (2) not enough chaplains, and (3) the generally limited amount of prior religious instruction of the average recruit.

Inadequate Chapel Facilities

Presently, there are inadequate chapel facilities at Recruit Training Command for recruit worship and religious education. This is a particular concern for the Catholic and General Protestant congregations which must meet in an auditorium and the base theater, respectively. As a result, the atmosphere in which worship and religious education occur is not the most desirable. Efforts have been made to improve the environment at the present locations by the use of religious banners and other decorative religious items. However, the reverence that normally begins at the moment of entering a church or chapel typically takes longer to develop in the theater and auditorium, and there is some doubt that it can ever be achieved in such facilities to the degree it would in a local church or synagogue (Vieira, 1991).

Another difficulty results from the fact that other groups also use the same facilities and, from time to time, various items needed for the Sabbath cannot be located because they have been moved for some reason (Vieira, 1991).

Not Enough Chaplains

One chaplain suggested that religious education in the sense of traditional Bible study groups is not feasible for the General Protestant congregation at this time because only two Protestant chaplains are assigned, while the attendance of this group averages 1,215 (Chun, 1991). It should be mentioned, however, that religious education is not neglected. Rather, it is provided by non-traditional means, utilizing visiting drama and musical groups from local churches and Christian schools. Typically, their presentations have more than entertainment value, with a biblical message usually included in the drama or music. On occasion, films are also used for religious education. This non-traditional approach to religious education may not mirror what is done in churches where religious education may be viewed as catechism or step-by-step teaching about a particular faith group's beliefs. It is, however, one way of seizing the "teachable moment" and maximizing its opportunities. And, although its impact may have more to do with spiritual encouragement and making recruits feel good about their faith than with conveying biblical content, it is religious education none the less. This broader view of religious education was suggested by Frazier when he asked:

> Is religious education only teaching about a
> particular religion? Is it only catechism? Do
> we not "teach" through pastoral care? Through
> counseling? Through worship and liturgy? Is it
> religion only that we teach, or a response to
> life which at its deepest faith level moves
> beyond any set of beliefs and casts itself
> ultimately upon God (Frazier, 1982)?

Limited Prior Religious Instruction
Of the Average Recruit

With notable exceptions, most recruits have only limited prior religious instruction. This means that content must be kept limited and basic if everyone is to understand what is happening. Those who lead in chapel must guide recruits through worship and religious education, assuming that they know little if anything about their faith groups (Hoffman, 1991). The challenge is to do this without jeopardizing the interest level of recruits who come with more prior religious instruction.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Subjects

Subjects of the study were members of Division Six, the graduating division of recruits at the Navy's Recruit Training Command in San Diego, California. 148 recruits, or 39% of the divisional population of 377 recruits completed a research questionnaire on October 22-23, 1991. The sample was drawn from Division Six without prior sorting by faith group. As a result, the sample approximates the faith group balance of RTC overall, with the exception that not all the smaller faith groups were represented. The sample was taken during the Division's last week of recruit training. On that week, 252 recruits from Division Six attended worship and religious education.

Procedures

Data was gathered by distributing questionnaires to members of Division Six on October 22-23, 1991. Participation was voluntary, and anonynimity was assured for all respondents. Distribution and collection of the questionnaire was accomplished by the Director of the Recruit Ministries Division with the cooperation of Division Six Company Commanders.

In addition to the recruit questionnaires, information was gathered also by direct researcher observation, and by

interviews with the chaplains assigned to Recruit Training Command.

Instruments

The primary instrument for data gathering was a ten-item questionnaire (Appendix A). The first item on the questionnaire asked which service the respondent usually attended at RTC. The second asked for suggestions on how the services could be improved. The third question asked respondents whether they had attended Saturday Night Alive, a monthly Christian concert. It also asked whether they liked it and solicited comments on the program. Questions four through eight asked for multiple choice responses with four possible answers for each question. Possible responses were: "not at all," "very little," "considerably," and "greatly." These four items asked the following:

.To what extent had religious education at RTC strengthened their faith?

.To what extent had religious education at RTC helped them to get through boot camp?

.To what extent had religious education at RTC helped them to prepare for life in general?

.To what extent had religious education at RTC helped them to learn about the Scriptures and their own faith groups?

.To what extent had religious education at RTC helped them to learn about other denominations and how they worship?

The ninth question asked whether the recruit had made a major decision about his faith while at RTC. Finally, question ten asked respondents to indicate what they desired more of in religious education. Response options for question ten were:

(a) Music   (d) Religious Drama
(b) Prayer   (e) Testimonies
(c) Religious Films (f) Other_____(specify)_____

While the questionnaire was being designed, it was learned that no new recruits would be entering recruit training between October, 1991, and March, 1992. This meant that there would be only a few weeks to gather data before the recruit population and the command religious program would experience greatly reduced numbers. Consequently, the questionnaire had to be finalized in a matter of days. Unfortunately, that also meant that there would be no opportunity to test the questionnaire before actual use of the instrument.

CHAPTER 4

Reporting of the Data

After the completed questionnaires were collected, a question-by-question tabulation of recruit responses was made. After obtaining the faith group make-up of the sample from question one, it was possible to show not only the response of the entire sample for the remaining items, but also the responses of component faith groups. An item-by-item report follows.

Question One

Question number one asked respondents to indicate which services they attended at RTC. Table 1 shows their response.

Table 1. Faith Group Representation of the Sample

Services Attended	Number	Percent of the Sample
Roman Catholic	49	33
Protestant Liturgical	19	13
General Protestant	67	45
Al-Islam	2	1
Latter Day Saints	2	1
Church of Christ	2	1
Christian Science	1	1
*Attended More than One Service	4	3
Did Not Indicate Which Service	2	1
	148	100

*These four recruits indicated that they attended the

following combinations of services during their time at RTC:

<u>Services Attended</u>   <u>Number</u>

General Protestant and Roman Catholic   1
Protestant Liturgical and Roman Catholic   1
General Protestant and Protestant Liturgical   1
Al-Islam and General Protestant   1
                                                ———
                                                 4

No one in the sample attended the following services:

Orthodox Christian
Seventh Day Adventist
Buddhist
Jewish

Figure 1 shows the faith group balance of the sample as

indicated in their choice of services.
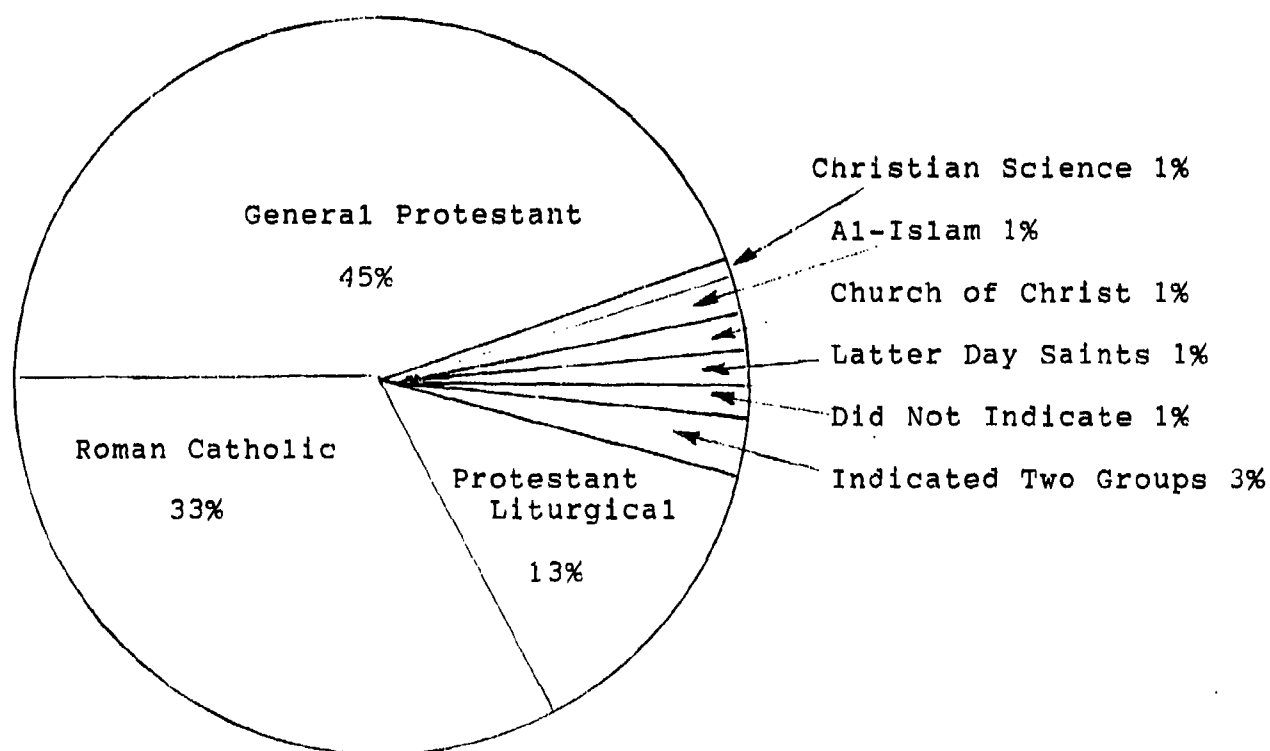
Figure 1

Faith Group Balance
of the Sample

Question Two

Question number two asked respondents to indicate how they felt the services could be improved. Responses are first listed by faith group, then combined under "composite totals."

General Protestant

.No Change................ 25
.Longer Services.......... 8
.More Music............... 3
.More Outside Groups..... 3
  (choral)
.More Outside Groups..... 1
  (unspecified)
.More Testimonies........ 1
.Better Facilities....... 2
  (AC, seating)
.More Guidance........... 1
.No Recruit Sleeping..... 1
.More Bible Readings..... 1
.Did Not Respond......... 22

Latter Day Saints

.Longer Services......... 1
.No Change............... 1

Church of Christ

.More Music.............. 1
.No Change............... 1

Christian Science

.Longer Services......... 1

Did Not Indicate Which Faith

.Did Not Respond......... 2

Roman Catholic

.No Change................ 23
.Better Facilities........ 4
  (AC, seating)
.More Music............... 2
.More Bible Preaching..... 2
.Longer Services.......... 1
.More Song Books.......... 1
.Baptismal Opportunity.... 1
.Recruit Leadership....... 1
.More People.............. 1
.More Traditional Svc's... 1
.Did Not Respond.......... 13

Protestant Liturgical

.No Change................ 3
.More Music............... 2
.More Emphasis on
  Faithfulness............ 1
.Did Not Respond.......... 13

Al-Islam

.No Change................ 1
.Did Not Respond......... 1

Attended More Than One Service

.More Testimonies......... 1
.No Change................ 1
.Did Not Respond.......... 2

Composite Totals

.No Change...............................   55
.Longer Services........................   11
.More Music.............................   8
.Better Facilities.....................   6
.More Outside Choral Groups............   3
.More Testimonies......................   2
.More Bible Preaching..................   2
.More Outside Groups (unspecified).....   1
.More Encouragement to be Faithful.....   1
.More Guidance.........................   1
.No Recruit Sleeping...................   1
.More Traditional Services.............   1
.More People...........................   1
.More Song Books.......................   1
.More Baptismal Opportunity............   1
.More Recruit Leadership...............   1
.More Bible Readings...................   1
.Did Not Respond.......................   53

Most of the responses need no further comment. However, it
is interesting to note that, by far, most recruits who responded
desired no change to the services. Also, it is likely that some
who did not respond to this question did so because they desired
no changes, although it is possible that some may not have
responded due to indifference.

Question Three

Question number three asked recruits whether they had
attended Saturday Night Alive, whether they liked it, and also
solicited comments on the program. Saturday Night Alive is a
monthly Christian concert presented by outside musical groups
as part of the religious education program. According to the
completed questionnaires, only nine, or 6% of the 148 respondents
had attended. Further inquiry by the researcher apart from the
questionnaire revealed that such low attendance was not caused

by a lack of interest, but by evident problems in scheduling.
Of the nine who attended, the following faith groups were
represented with responses as indicated:
General Protestant - 4 attended (4 said they enjoyed)
Protestant Liturgical - 1 attended (said he enjoyed)
Roman Catholic - 4 attended (2 said they enjoyed, 2 did not say).

Question Four

Question number four asked recruits to respond to the
statement: "Religious education at RTC has strengthened my faith."
Possible responses were: "not at all," "very little," "considerably,"
and "greatly." Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. How Religious Education Strengthened Recruit Faith

Faith Group	Not At All	Very Little	Considerably	Greatly
Latter Day Saints (3.5)	-	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
Church of Christ (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Christian Science (4.0)	-	-	-	1 (100%)
Al-Islam (3.0)	-	-	2 (100%)	-
*Attended More Than One (3.25)	-	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Did Not Indicate Faith (3.0)	-	-	2 (100%)	-
Protestant Liturgical (3.0)	-	4 (21%)	11 (58%)	4 (21%)
General Protestant (3.31)	3 (4%)	1 (1%)	33 (49%)	30 (45%)
Roman Catholic (3.24)	2 (4%)	4 (8%)	23 (47%)	20 (41%)
Combined Totals:	5 (3%)	10 (7%)	73 (49%)	60 (41%)

*Responses within this group were:

.General Protestant/Roman Catholic (very little)
.General Protestant/Protestant Liturgical (considerably)
.Protestant Liturgical/Roman Catholic (greatly)
.Al-Islam/General Protestant (greatly)

143, or 97% of respondents indicated that religious education at RTC had strengthened their faith to some extent. The degree to which their faith had been strengthened varied from person to person and group to group. Overall impact on the faith of the sample population was calculated by determining the mean of the sample based on the following assigned values for recruit responses:

Not at All = One Point

Very Little = Two Points

Considerably = Three Points

Greatly = Four Points

The mean score of the sample for question four was 3.27. Mean scores for component faith groups were also calculated and are shown in parentheses in Table 2 following the faith group name. (This same procedure of determining and reporting mean scores was also used with questions five through eight). Figure 2 depicts the degree to which respondents felt that religious education at RTC had strengthened their faith.
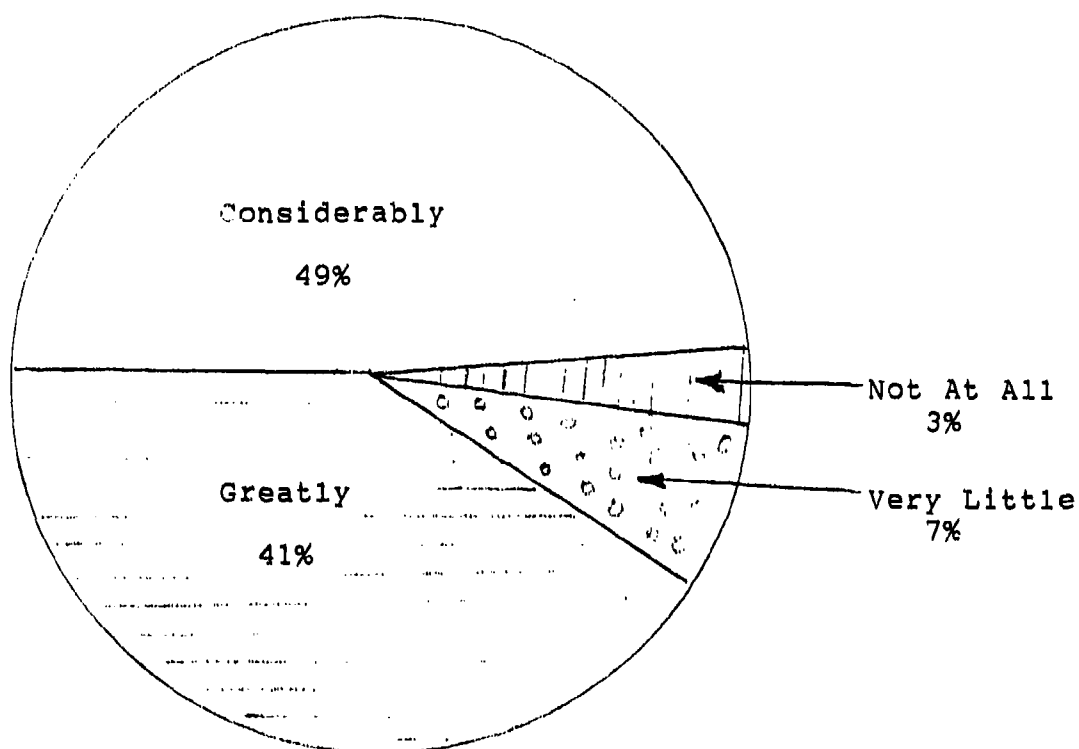
Figure 2

Degree that Recruit Faith
Was Strengthened

Question Five

Question number five asked recruits to respond to the
statement, "Religious education at RTC helped me get thru
boot camp." As in question four, there were four possible
responses: "not at all," "very little," "considerably," and
"greatly." Table 3 shows the results of their response to
this item.

Table 3.   How Religious Education Helped
Recruits Get Thru Boot Camp

Faith Group	Not At All	Very Little	Considerably	Greatly
Latter Day Saints (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Church of Christ (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Christian Science (4.0)	-	-	-	1 (100%)
Al-Islam (3.5)	-	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
*Attended More Than One (3.0)	-	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
Did Not Indicate Faith (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Protestant Liturgical (3.42)	-	-	11 (58%)	8 (42%)
General Protestant (3.35)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	25 (37%)	40 (60%)
**Roman Catholic (3.35)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	22 (46%)	22 (46%)
Combined Totals:	2 (1%)	5 (3%)	61 (41%)	79 (54%)

*Responses within this group were:

    .General Protestant/Roman Catholic (very little)
    .General Protestant/Protestant Liturgical (considerably)
    .Protestant Liturgical/Roman Catholic (greatly)
    .Al-Islam/General Protestant (considerably)

**One respondent from this faith group did not complete question five.

145, or 99% of respondents indicated that religious education at RTC had helped them to get through boot camp. The degree that it helped them was calculated as a mean of 3.48 for the sample on a scale of 1 to 4. Figure 3 shows the extent to which recruits felt that religious education helped them get through boot camp.
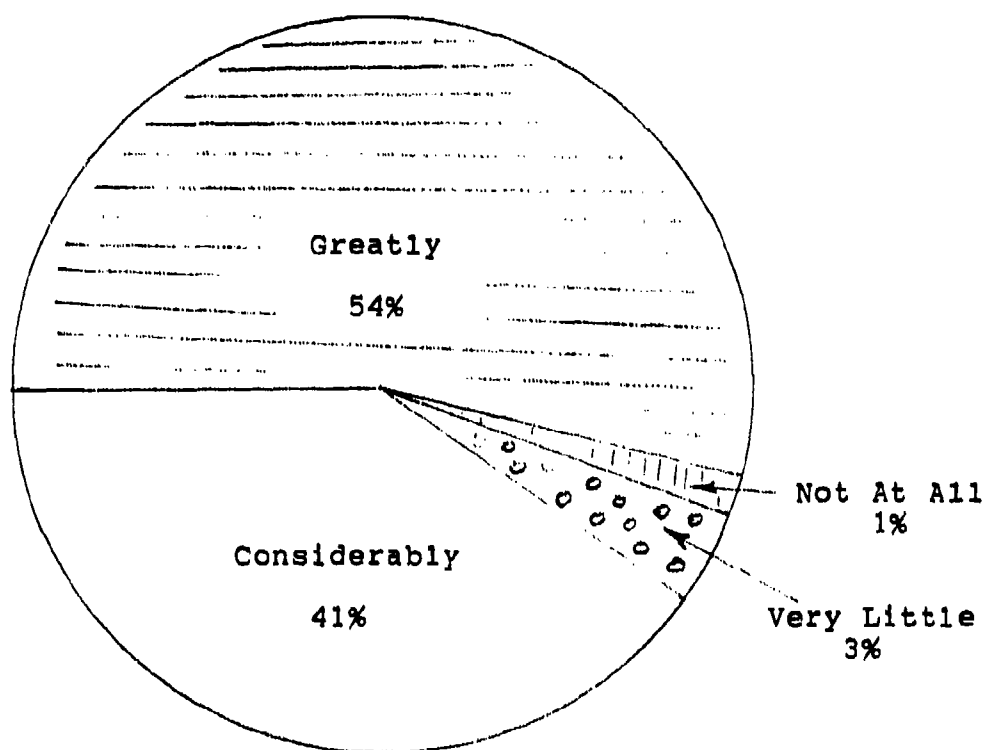
Figure 3

Degree to which Recruits were
Helped through Boot Camp

Question Six

Question number six requested a response to the statement:
"Religious education at RTC has helped me to prepare for life
in general." Again, there were four possible responses: "not
at all," "very little," "considerably," and "greatly." Table
4 shows the sample population's response to this item.

Table 4. How Religious Education Prepared Recruits for Life

Faith Group	Not At All	Very Little	Considerably	Greatly
Latter Day Saints (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Church of Christ (4.0)	-	-	-	2 (100%)
Christian Science (3.0)	-	-	1 (100%)	-
Al-Islam (3.0)	-	-	2 (100%)	-
*Attended More Than One (2.75)	1 (25%)	-	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
Did Not Indicate Faith (2.5)	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	-
Protestant Liturgical (2.84)	-	6 (32%)	10 (53%)	3 (16%)
**General Protestant (3.11)	1 (2%)	10 (15%)	36 (55%)	19 (29%)
Roman Catholic (2.67)	2 (4%)	12 (24%)	31 (63%)	4 (8%)
Combined Totals:	4 (3%)	29 (20%)	83 (56%)	31 (21%)

*Responses within this group were:

    .General Protestant/Roman Catholic (not at all)
    .General Protestant/Protestant Liturgical (considerably)
    .Protestant Liturgical/Roman Catholic (greatly)
    .Al-Islam/General Protestant (considerably)

**One respondent from this faith group did not complete item six.

    143, or 97% of respondents indicated that religious education at RTC had helped them to prepare for life in general. The degree they indicated it had helped them was calculated as a mean of 2.96 for the sample population on a scale of 1 to 4. Figure 4 shows the degree to which the sample population felt that religious education at RTC helped them to prepare for life in general.

Considerably

56%

Greatly

21%

Very Little

20%

3%

Not At All

Figure 4
Degree to which recruits felt
Religious Education Helped
Prepare them for Life

Question Seven

Question number seven asked for a response to the statement:
"Religious education at RTC has helped me to learn about the
Scriptures and my own faith group's teachings." As before,
there were four possible responses: "not at all," "very little,"
"considerably," and "greatly."   Table 5   shows the response of
the sample population.

Table 5.   How Religious Education at RTC Helped Recruits Learn
About the Scriptures and their Own Faith Group's Teachings

Faith Group	Not At All	Very Little	Considerably	Greatly
Latter Day Saints (3.0)	-	-	2 (100%)	-
Church of Christ (3.5)	-	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
Christian Science (4.0)	-	-	-	1 (100%)
Al-Islam (3.5)	-	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
*Attended More Than One (2.75)	1 (25%)	-	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
Did Not Indicate Faith (2.0)	-	2 (100%)	-	-
Protestant Liturgical (2.63)	1 (5%)	8 (42%)	7 (37%)	3 (16%)
General Protestant (2.97)	5 (8%)	10 (15%)	33 (50%)	18 (27%)
Roman Catholic (2.92)	4 (8%)	6 (12%)	29 (59%)	10 (20%)
Combined Totals:	11 (7%)	26 (18%)	75 (51%)	35 (24%)

*Responses within this group were:

.General Protestant/Roman Catholic (not at all)
.General Protestant/Protestant Liturgical (considerably)
.Protestant Liturgical/Roman Catholic (greatly)
.Al-Islam/General Protestant (considerably)

137, or 93% of respondents indicated that religious education
at RTC had helped them to learn about the Scriptures and their
own faith groups.   The degree that it had helped them was calculated
as a mean of 2.91 for the sample on a scale of 1 to 4.   Figure 5
shows the degree to which the sample felt that religious education
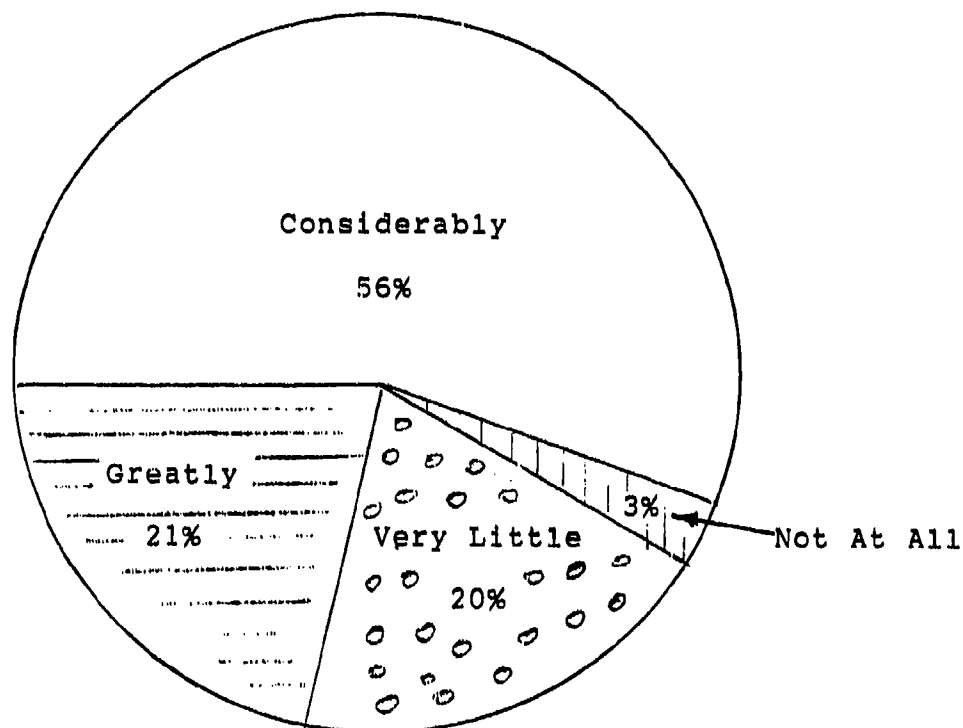at RTC helped them learn about the Scriptures and their own faith
groups.
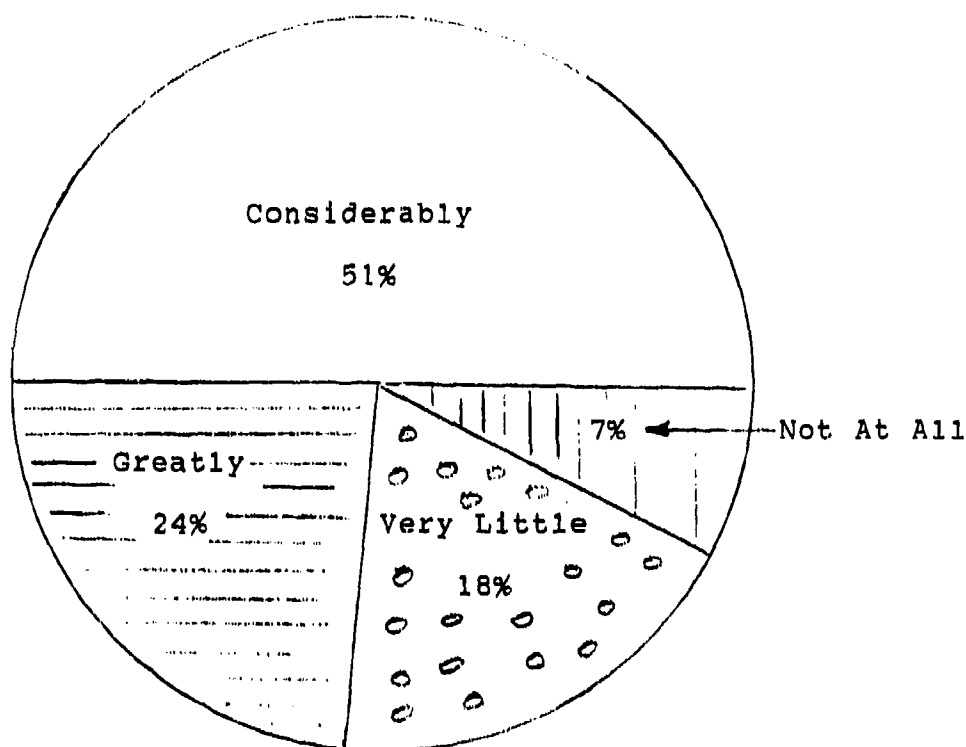
Figure 5

Degree to which Religious Education
Helped Recruits Learn About the
Scriptures and Own Faith Groups

Question Eight

Question number eight asked recruits to respond to the
statement: "Religious education at RTC helped me to learn more
about other denominations and how they worship." Again, possible
responses were: "not at all," "very little," "considerably,"
and "greatly." The response of the sample population is shown
in Table 6.

Table 6. How Religious Education at RTC Helped Recruits to Learn about Other Denominations and How They Worship

Faith Group	Not At All	Very Little	Considerably	Greatly
Latter Day Saints (3.5)	-	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
Church of Christ (2.5)	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	-
Christian Science (1.0)	1 (100%)	-	-	-
Al-Islam (2.5)	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	-
*Attended More Than One (3.25)	-	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Did Not Indicate Faith (2.5)	-	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	-
Protestant Liturgical (2.89)	1 (5%)	5 (26%)	8 (42%)	5 (26%)
**General Protestant (2.83)	2 (3%)	21 (33%)	27 (42%)	14 (22%)
Roman Catholic (2.92)	11 (22%)	15 (31%)	20 (41%)	3 (6%)
Combined Totals:	15 (10%)	45 (31%)	60 (41%)	25 (17%)

*Responses within this group were:

.General Protestant/Roman Catholic (very little)
.General Protestant/Protestant Liturgical (considerably)
.Protestant Liturgical/Roman Catholic (greatly)
.Al-Islam/General Protestant (greatly)

**One respondent from this faith group did not answer question eight.

136, or 90% of respondents indicated that religious education at RTC had helped them to learn more about other denominations and how they worship. The degree it helped them was calculated as a mean of 2.66 for the sample on a scale of 1 to 4. The degree to which religious education helped recruits learn of other faiths is shown graphically in Figure 6.
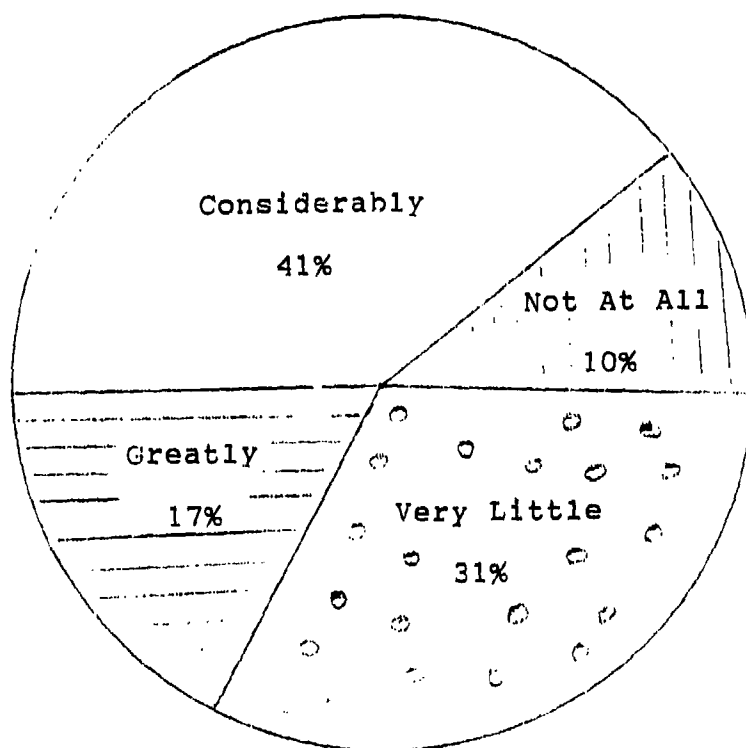
Figure 6

Degree to which Religious
Education Helped Recruits
Learn of Other Faiths

Question Nine

Question number nine was a true or false item asking whether the respondent had made a major decision about his faith while at RTC. The following "true" responses were made:

Latter Day Saints	2	(100%)
Church of Christ	2	(100%)
Christian Science	1	(100%)
Al-Islam	1	(50%)
Attended More Than One	3	(75%)
Protestant Liturgical	16	(84%)
General Protestant	52	(77%)
Roman Catholic	40	(82%)
Combined Totals:	117	(79%)

Question Ten

Question number ten asked respondents to indicate areas in which they desired more emphasis in religious education. The question invited the following responses: Music, Prayer, Religious Films, Religious Drama, Testimonies and Other (specify). No limit was placed on how many categories a respondent could check. Responses are listed by faith group, followed by composite totals for the entire sample.

General Protestant

```
.Music.................... 21
.Prayer................... 19
.Religious Films.........  11
.Religious Drama.........   8
.Testimonies.............   8
.Other:
    -Religious Ed........   2
    -Teaching............   2
    -Other Faiths........   1
    -Recruit Faith.......   1
    -Comedy..............   1
.No Response............. 11
```

Protestant Liturgical

```
.Music....................  6
.Prayer...................  6
.Testimonies.............   6
.Religious Drama.........   1
.Religious Films.........   1
.Other:
    -Philosophy..........   1
    -Guest Speakers......   1
.No Response.............   1
```

Did Not Indicate Faith

```
.Other:
    -Ministry............   1
.No Response.............   1
```

Attended More Than One

```
.Music....................  1
.Prayer...................  1
.Religious Drama.........   1
.Testimonies.............   1
.Other:
    -More of Everything..   1
```

Roman Catholic

```
.Music.................... 16
.Prayer...................  9
.Religious Drama.........   9
.Religious Films.........   5
.Testimonies.............   4
.Other:
    -Rest Time...........   1
    -Baptism.............   1
    -Access to Head......   1
    -Longer Homily.......   1
    -Motivation..........   1
    -Football Scores.....   1
    -Meeting Other
        Recruits.........   1
.No Response............. 11
```

Latter Day Saints

```
.Music....................  1
```

Church of Christ

```
.Music....................  2
.Other:
    -Recruit Talent......   1
```

Christian Science

```
.Music....................  1
.Prayer...................  1
```

Al-Islam

```
.Other:
    -Religious Culture....  1
.No Response.............   1
```

Composite Totals

```
.Music.....................  48
.Prayer....................  36
.Religious Drama...........  20
.Testimonies...............  19
.Religious Films...........  17
.Other:
    -Religious Ed..........   2
    -Teaching..............   2
    -More of Everything...   1
    -Religious Culture....   1
    -Philosophy...........   1
    -Comedy................   1
    -Guest Speakers.......   1
    -Recruit Faith........   1
    -About Other Faiths...   1
    -Rest Time............   1
    -Access to Head.......   1
    -Football Scores......   1
    -Longer Homily........   1
    -Motivation...........   1
    -Outside Groups.......   1
    -Baptism..............   1
    -Recruit Talent.......   1
.Did Not Respond..........  25
```

The above totals need no other comment than to say that write-in suggestions under "other" are reported as given, even in cases where the meaning may be unclear or frivolous. In any case, the item desired most strongly was music, with prayer, religious drama, testimonies and religious films following in that order.

Impact on the Average Recruit

Figure 7 shows the impact that religious education at RTC had on the average recruit in the study based on mean scores for questions four through eight of the questionnaire.
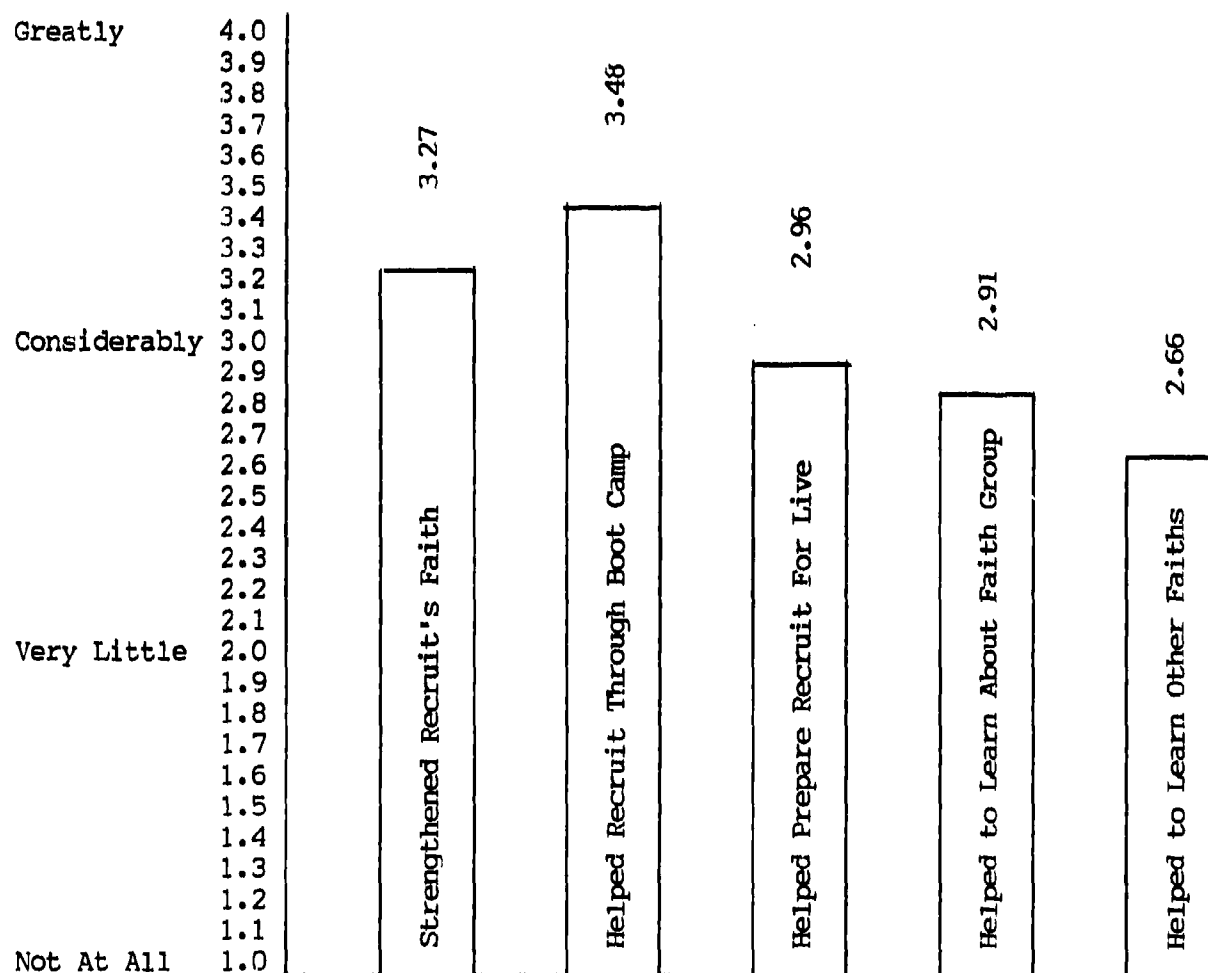
Greatly	4.0	
	3.9	
	3.8	
	3.7	
	3.6	
	3.5	
	3.4	
	3.3	
	3.2	
	3.1	
Considerably	3.0	
	2.9	
	2.8	
	2.7	
	2.6	
	2.5	
	2.4	
	2.3	
	2.2	
	2.1	
Very Little	2.0	
	1.9	
	1.8	
	1.7	
	1.6	
	1.5	
	1.4	
	1.3	
	1.2	
	1.1	
Not At All	1.0	

Bars:
- Strengthened Recruit's Faith — 3.27
- Helped Recruit Through Boot Camp — 3.48
- Helped Prepare Recruit For Live — 2.96
- Helped to Learn About Faith Group — 2.91
- Helped to Learn Other Faiths — 2.66

Figure 7

Degree to which Religious
Education at RTC Helped
the Average Recruit

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this research project was to examine
potentially limiting factors that regularly impact religious
education programs at the Navy's recruit training commands, but
which are not normally encountered at local churches or
synagogues. These included the religiously pluralistic nature
of recruit populations, the short-term nature of recruit training,
the transient quality of the recruit experience, the intense
activity schedule of recruit training, and the limited opportunity
that chaplains have for follow-up with recruits. Interviews
with chaplains assigned to the Navy's San Diego Recruit
Training Command affirmed the presence of these factors and
revealed the chaplains' strategies for coping with them in the
religious education of recruits. What might be called a non-
traditional approach was central to their plan, particularly
with the General Protestant congregation, where traditional
study was replaced by outside musical and drama group
presentations. While the amount of biblical content involved
in this approach may have been less than with a studies approach,
the visiting groups did much to encourage faith group committment,
fidelity to religious values and the importance of a personal
response to the Gospel.

Recruit opinion on how well the religious education program
ministered to their religious and spiritual needs was obtained
by conducting a survey of graduating recruits. Results of
the survey indicated that religious education at RTC had a
major impact in all the areas considered by the questionnaire.
Recruits were in strong agreement that the area where religious
education had helped them most was in helping them to get
through boot camp. Strengthening their faith was the second
strongest area, followed by the help religious education had
provided in preparing them for life in general. Religious
education was seen as somewhat less effective in helping them
to learn more about their own faith groups, and still less
effective in helping them to learn about other denominations.
The survey also indicated that 117 of the 148 respondents, or
79% of the sample population had made a major decision about
their faith while at RTC. There is no way to anticipate the
long-term results of those decisions, but the potential for
changed lives is great.

Conclusions

It is concluded that religious education at RTC has been
highly successful in meeting the religious and spiritual needs
of recruits. This statement is based on the weight of recruit
opinion as expressed in the survey, and it was found to be true
especially in areas of practical and immediate application,
such as increasing recruits' faith and helping them to make it
through boot camp. The program was also highly successful in

helping recruits to make major decisions about their faith,
and to learn (at least in general terms) about their own
faith groups, while it was slightly less successful in
helping them to learn about other denominations.

Chaplain efforts in the design and delivery of religious
education showed some accommodation in order to cope with
what earlier were described as potentially limiting factors.
For example, the focus of religious education was kept limited
and basic in order to accommodate recruits with little prior
religious instruction, and to make the most practical use of
the limited time that was available. In response to the great
religious diversity within the Protestant category, recruits
were provided with two options, a practice not uncommon in
large chapel communities. They could attend either a General
Protestant program or a Liturgical Protestant program depending
on recruit preference. Also within the General Protestant
program, traditional religious study was replaced by outside
musical and religious drama group presentations. Other
adjustments had to do with individual chaplain responses to
time limitations that resulted from the short-term nature of
recruit training and the intense activity schedule of the
recruit training program.

In conclusion, it can be said that the chaplains' efforts
have not been in vain. In view of recruit opinion as expressed
in the survey, RTC chaplains have been able to deliver a very
popular and highly successful program of religious education
in spite of the presence of potentially limiting factors.

Recommendations

It is recommended that outside musical and drama groups continue to be utilized in the religious education program at RTC. Not only does their ministry provide an important practical emphasis, shown by the research to have a major and positive impact on the recruits, but it also provides a vital and beneficial link to local religious bodies that is good for both the Navy and the churches. Also, it is felt that its replacement by traditional religious study groups might diminish the overall practical impact of the program. The possible addition of elective study to supplement the present program might be considered, but cannot be recommended without a commensurate increase in the chaplain manning level.

Recruit preferences, given in their response to survey questions two and ten deserve some consideration. Overall, recruits were very pleased with the program as it is and are not in favor of major changes other than perhaps to have even more emphasis on music and prayer.

Further study is recommended. In particular, continued periodic surveys of recruit opinions and preferences would seem appropriate, and could provide a means of soliciting recruit suggestions in addition to determining their opinions on program effectiveness. It may also prove informative to have a pre-test given to new recruits in order to determine the role of religion in their lives prior to enlisting.

Results of that test could later be compared to a post-test of the same recruits at the end of their training cycle to determine how attitudes towards religion may have changed during their time at RTC.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Letter From Deputy Command Chaplain

MEMORANDUM

From: Deputy Command Chaplain
To: LCDR Forrest E. Wessendorf, CHC, USN

Subj: PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT

Ref: (a) Your request dtd 10 Oct 91

1. In behalf of the Command Chaplain, I am pleased to grant permission for you to "Examine factors that impact on the Religious Education of Recruits but are not normally experienced by local churches." You have permission to interview RTC chaplains in your pursuit of this research process; however, your request to "survey graduating recruits" is subject to existing RTC policy concerning recruits, and is limited to supervised discussions with recruits.

2. Hence, the following suggestions, limitations and requirements apply:

    a) The prime dates for your gathering (data) activity with RTC chaplains/RPs/recruits are 23 Oct-27 Nov 91. Beyond 27 Nov, there will be no recruits and/or Religious Education Programs until the early Spring of 1992, as it is currently projected.

    b) All activities and appointments with RTC chaplains, RPs and recruits are to be coordinated through the RTC Division Director, CDR Jane Vieira.

    c) Interviews with chaplains/RPs are authorized, and any discussion with recruits will be monitored by a RTC chaplain.
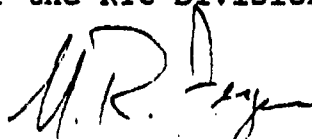
    d) The RTC Division Director will take responsibility to arrange for you to receive a comprehensive tour of all RTC programs of worship and religious education, in order to orientate, update and indoctrinate you to these programs.

    e) The RTC Division Director will provide you lesson plans for (P-2, 7-2) the ongoing programs of instruction which are part of the recruit training process, and will also provide you a statistical program overview of FY91 within the RTC Religious Ministries Division.

    f) The RTC Division Director will provide a statistical overview of Recruit Religious demographics, in order to aid your study.

3. My final thought ~~concerns~~ *contains one* reservation. Because our numbers of chaplains are below our authorized billet structure, we necessarily are "streched". Therefore, any request you have of RTC chaplains to write extensively in response to your inquiries will require the direct approval of the RTC Division Director.

V/R

M. R. FERGUSON

Coy to:
Command Chaplain
RTC DivDir

APPENDIX B

Recruit Questionnaire

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Recruit Questionnaire

1. Worship services I usually attend at RTC:

   (a) Jewish
   (b) Seventh Day Adventist
   (c) Protestant – Luce
   (d) Protestant – Liturgical
   (e) Roman Catholic
   (f) Al-Islam

   (g) Christian Science
   (h) Church of Christ
   (i) Latter Day Saints
   (j) Eastern Orthodox
   (k) Buddhist

2. How can the services be improved?

3. Did you attend Saturday Night Alive?   (a) Yes   (b) No

   Did you like it?   (a) Yes   (b) No

   Your comments about Saturday Night Alive_____.

4. Religious education at RTC has strengthened my faith.

   (a) not at all (b) very little (c) considerably (d) greatly

5. Religious education at RTC helped me get thru boot camp.

   (a) not at all (b) very little (c) considerably (d) greatly

6. Religious education at RTC has helped me to prepare for life in general.

   (a) not at all (b) very little (c) considerably (d) greatly

7. Religious education at RTC has helped me to learn more about the scriptures and my own faith group's teachings.

   (a) not at all (b) very little (c) considerably (d) greatly

8. Religious education at RTC helped me to learn more about other denominations and how they worship.

   (a) not at all (b) very little (c) considerably (d) greatly

9. While at RTC I made a major decision about my faith.   (a) True   (b) False

10. I wish there had been more emphasis on:

    (a) Music
    (b) Prayer
    (c) Religious films

    (d) Religious drama
    (e) Testimonies
    (f) Other (specify)_____

APPENDIX C

Chaplain's Information Form

RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND
San Diego, CA

CHAPLAIN'S INFORMATION FORM

NAME _____
(Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial)

DIVISION _____ COMPANY _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED _____ (11,12,13, etc.)

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE
(Indicate your Religious Preference with a check mark (✓)

Al-Islam		Lutheran	
Assemblies of God		Methodist	
Baptist		Nazarene	
Buddhist		Orthodox Christian (Greek/Russian/O.C.A., etc.)	
Catholic		Pentecostal	
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)		Presbyterian	
Christian Scientist		Protestant	
Christian		Seventh Day Adventist	
Church of God		Unitarian	
Church of Christ		United Church of Christ	
Episcopal		Other (List)	
Jewish (Conservative/Orthodox/Reformed)		No Preference	
LDS (Mormon)			
LDS (Reorganized)			

Two Catholic and two Protestant Religious Petty Officers will be chosen for each company. One Liturgical Protestant Religious Petty Officer will be chosen for each division. They will be chosen by the chaplain with approval of the Company Commanders. Once chosen, RPOs will be expected to attend a meeting each Wednesday at 1500, will be assisting Chaplains and Religious Program Specialists at the religious worship services each Sunday, and will be asked to lead Evening Prayers in the Barracks each night. In addition, the RPO will relay to the company any announcements the Chaplains make at the Wednesday meetings, and will relay to the Chaplains any concerns expressed by the company.

Thank you for volunteering to serve in this most important leadership position in the Company. Your company commanders will inform those who have been selected.

Would you like to be the Religious Petty Officer (RPO) for your company?

YES _____ NO _____

APPENDIX D

Recruit Profile

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Recruit Profile

Age

97%	18 - 26 years old
2%	27 - 29 years old
1%	30 years & older

100%	

Education
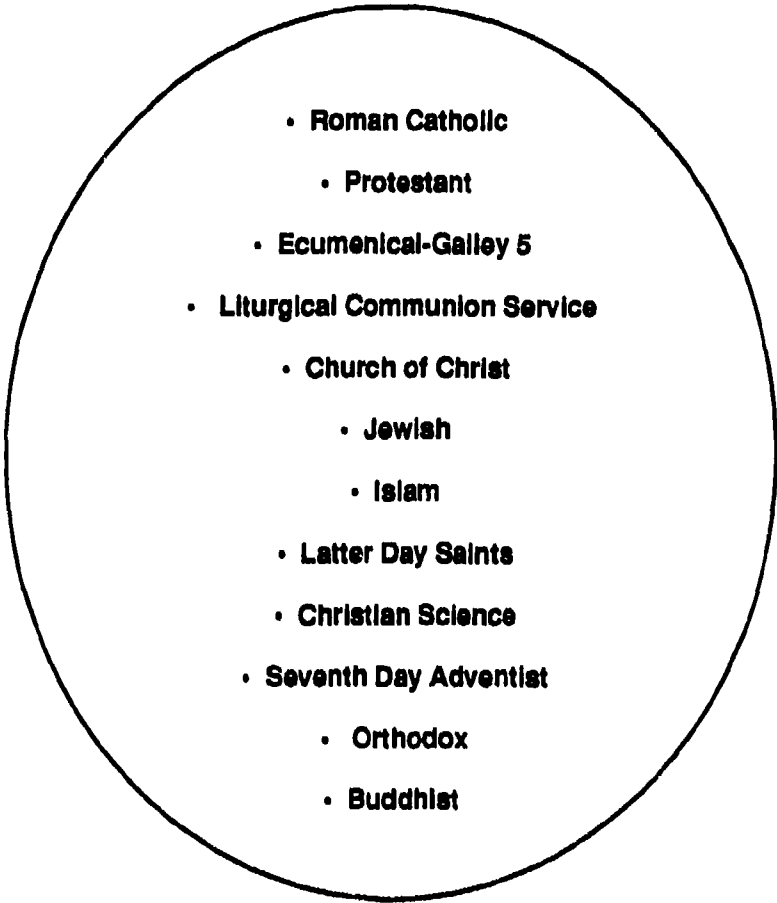
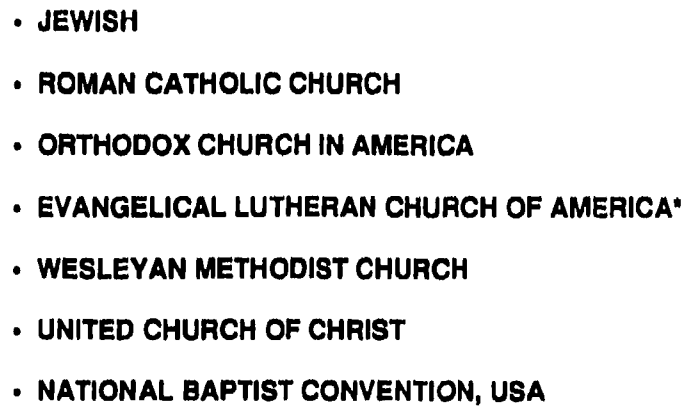|	
Under 12 years	4%
High School Graduate	89%
1 to 3 years of college	5.5%
College Graduate	1.5%

	100%

APPENDIX E

RTC Religious Services

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RTC RELIGIOUS SERVICES

- Roman Catholic

- Protestant

- Ecumenical-Galley 5

- Liturgical Communion Service

- Church of Christ

- Jewish

- Islam

- Latter Day Saints

- Christian Science

- Seventh Day Adventist

- Orthodox

- Buddhist

Distinctive faith groups and religious denominations represented among chaplains within Recruit Training Command:

- JEWISH

- ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

- ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

- EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA*

- WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

- UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

- NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, USA

* Provided by CCO

APPENDIX F

RTC Religious/Moral Development

RTC RELIGIOUS/MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- LDS (MORMON)

- PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- JEWISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS STUDIES

- FORMING LECTURES

- INDOCTRINATION LECTURES

- 7-2 MORAL VALUES LECTURES

Each Division Chaplain delivers a lecture to all Company Commanders forming new companies. Recruits in the second day aboard are provided indoctrination by chaplains on what will happen in Boot Training and how chaplains can be of assistance. By their second day of their seventh week, recruits are given a Moral Values Lecture, and each week chaplains visit each Division to discuss concerns, prayers, and upcoming weekend religious events. Chaplains visit an average of 21 times with each company during recruit training.

Abstract

FACTORS THAT MAY TEND TO LIMIT THE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF RECRUITS

Forrest E. Wessendorf

This research project was conducted at the Navy's Recruit
Training Command in San Diego with the permission of the Commanding
Officer and the Command Chaplain. Its purpose was to examine
potentially limiting factors that regularly impact religious
education programs at the Navy's recruit training commands, but
which are not normally encountered at local churches or synagogues.
Among them are the religiously pluralistic nature of recruit
populations, the short-term nature of recruit training, the
transient quality of the recruit experience, the intense schedule
of recruit training, and the limited opportunity chaplains have
for follow-up with recruits.

Interviews with chaplains at Recruit Training Command
affirmed the presence of those factors, and also disclosed their
strategies for dealing with them, including the major role that
outside religious music and drama groups have in the program.
Recruit opinion on how well the program had provided for their
religious needs was obtained through a survey of graduating
recruits. The survey indicated that religious education at
Recruit Training had been highly successful in all areas considered
by the questionnaire. Recruits were in strong agreement that the

the area where religious education had the greatest impact was in helping them to get through boot camp. Strengthening their faith was the second strongest area, followed by the help religious education had provided in preparing them for life in general. Religious education was seen as somewhat less effective in helping them to learn more about their own faith groups, and still less effective in helping them to learn about other denominations. The survey also indicated that 117 of the 148 respondents, or 79% of the sample had made a major decision about their faith while in recruit training.