Self-Structure, Identity, and Commitment: Promise Keepers' Godly Man Project

Michael Armato
New York University

William Marsiglio
University of Florida

We address current debates related to identity theory and the organization of the self by examining how a sample of men involved in the Promise Keepers movement construct, maintain, and organize their identities. Our qualitative analysis shows that these men have undertaken a continuous project of gender identity work to become godly men. We find that the Promise Keepers movement provides these men with both the ideological and the organizational resources that enable them to sustain their godly man identity. This "master identity" becomes enmeshed with other identities and is used to modify and reorganize those identities, restricting potential identity conflicts. The result is a relatively harmonious self structure. More generally, we identify several criteria for defining the master identity concept and highlight its potential for advancing identity theory.

Promise Keepers, or PK as members refer to it, is an evangelical Christian movement that challenged men in the 1990s to heighten their self-awareness as men of God and to become spiritual leaders of their families. A growing body of scholarly (Clatterbaugh 1997; Claussen 1999, 2000; Messner 1997; Silverstein et al. 1999) and popular press (Bearden 1997; Cose 1997; Goodstein 1997; Janofsky 1997; Stodghill 1997) literature focuses on PK. We seek to add to this burgeoning literature by exploring systematically the process by which PK members emphasize their self-awareness as men of God. As social psychologists, we are compelled to ask: How do PK men construct and manage their self-structure over time? What are the key features of their identities or self-meanings as husbands, fathers, and godly men? What processes underlie their commitment to particular self-meanings in their everyday lives?

These and related questions are closely tied to recent work on gender and

"men's issues" as well as central themes of symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1969), identity theory (Stryker 1980), and affect control theory (Heise 1979, 1988; Smith-Lovin and Heise 1988). We are particularly interested in recent competing conceptualizations of the organization of the self (Marks and MacDermid 1996; Stryker 1980; Stryker and Serpe 1982) and alternative formulations of identity and commitment (Burke and Reitzes 1991; Stryker and Serpe 1994).

The PK movement, given its biblically based essentialist beliefs about gender and its emphasis on homosocial networks, provides us with a timely and unique opportunity to advance these ongoing debates about self structure and identity while engaging issues of gender. Unlike most previous identity theorists who have explored their formulations by using quantitative strategies, we forge our understanding of these issues primarily from in-depth interviews of PK members. Our analysis enables us to extend the theoretical literature noted above by examining the processes through which men engage in what we call "godly man" identity projects, a heuristic device we discuss below. Informed by several related theoretical perspectives and our substantive analysis, we propose a theoretical model of self structure and identity relevant to particular types of identity projects in which a "master identity," a concept we explain below, governs individuals' experiences of self.

PROMISE KEEPERS' IDEOLOGY

Promise Keepers was founded in 1990 by Bill McCartney and Dave Wardell. Since then it has flourished, attracting millions of men to its stadium events. Leaders of the PK movement assert that current societal problems have grown out of a moral crisis resulting from men "giving up" their God-given roles as spiritual leaders in families and communities. While PK argues for male leadership in families, analysis of PK texts reveals that PK actually offers men multiple though somewhat limited messages about masculinity and power (Bartkowski 1999). Members are asked to keep seven promises.[1] The key to helping men keep these promises and become godly men lies in the formation of homosocial "accountability" groups that expect men to share private details about their lives. These arrangements are central to PK's teachings, and they foster influential social ties congruent with participants taking on godly man projects (Silverstein et al. 1999).

Though Promise Keepers has ideological ties to a larger conservative evangelical movement in the United States, it differs from this broader movement because it has an exclusively male membership. Promise Keepers therefore deviates from the Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition, and many other evangelical organizations that formed in the past few decades. PK is perhaps most reminiscent of the Men and Religion Forward Movement (M&RFM) of the early twentieth century led by Billy Sunday. This male-only movement grew out of Muscular Christianity, whose participants wished to inject manliness into Victorian religion (Kimmel 1996). M&RFM responded to social conditions under which men felt vulnerable to becoming "sissified" by religion in particular and society in general. With their identi-

ties as men challenged by social and economic conditions, participants in this move-
ment celebrated their status as masculine Christian men. Like M&RFM, the PK
movement seeks to reinforce its version of manhood while celebrating men's status
as men. Some argue that PK reflects men's reactions to what they perceive as a so-
cial and cultural threat to their gendered identities. For example, Messner (1997)
contends that men's identities as breadwinners in the United States have been chal-
lenged in recent years as a result of changes in their economic status. He also con-
tends that the influence of the women's movement since the 1970s has encroached
on men's sense of themselves as men. While similar in many respects, PK differs
from M&RFM significantly:

> The Promise Keepers are not just concerned with remasculinizing Christianity;
> they are just as concerned with maintaining and expanding Christianity's
> "softer" side. This softer side is redefined as a natural masculine characteristic,
> complementing and not contradicting a man's "harder" side. (Brickner 1999:80)

Conceptually, PK is similar to other religious groups and "new" social move-
ments in its relevance to individuals' identities. Emile Durkheim ([1912] 1995) un-
derscored the importance of religious collectivities and their rituals to individuals'
lives, and scholars have since noted that religious groups often encourage people to
use their religious identities as the basis for organizing their sense of self (Ammer-
man 1987; Peshkin 1986; Thumma 1991). But religion is not the only realm of social
life with such significance. As Cole (2000:113) recently noted, "Organized men's
movements not only serve to shape social and political policies, but they also stand
as influential sources for their adherents' continual remaking of their own physical
bodies and gendered modes of being." PK, as a religious men's movement, is there-
fore a prime site for exploring processes associated with identity formation and
maintenance.

Making sense of men's experiences and self-understandings as they relate to
PK's identity-oriented ideology and all-male social networks requires the applica-
tion of a theoretical framework that takes into consideration the structural, sym-
bolic, and emotional factors integral to the movement's teachings and practices.
Working toward this end, our concern with PK members' identities and selves di-
rects us to integrate Connell's (1995) notion of gender projects, key concepts associ-
ated with structural symbolic interactionism (Stryker 1980), and, to a lesser extent,
ideas about interaction rituals (Collins 1988). This synthesis is appealing because it
addresses gendered self-meanings, the organization of the self, and the social net-
works in which these meanings and structures emerge and are maintained.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Gender scholars often stress how gender is socially constructed in particular situa-
tions and on the various levels at which it operates, including identities, discourses,
and institutions (Connell 1995; Hearn 1987). They attend to the diverse types of

gendered images available to individuals in their everyday lives and how these images vary according to sociohistorical context, culture, and other social factors, such as individuals' race or ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation (Connell 1992, 1995; Kimmel 1996; Kimmel and Messner 1989). When individuals act as men or women, they do so within historically specific, dynamic structures of patterned behaviors, or "configurations of gender practice" (Connell 1995:72). Underscoring the dynamic nature of these configurations, Connell suggests that individuals undertake "gender projects" as they struggle to make sense of themselves as gendered beings on an ongoing basis. These processes are complicated because men (and women) are exposed to competing images of manhood and individuals are differentially situated to use resources suitable for "doing gender." Connell (1987, 1995) relates these issues to what he calls crisis tendencies in each of the gender system's three main substructures—labor, power, and cathexis. These crisis tendencies have yielded transformations or ruptures in the configurations of practice that constitute manhood. For example, women's increased labor force participation and other related economic and cultural transformations have resulted in changes in the division of labor in the paid labor force, severely undermining many men's identities as sole breadwinners. In addition, men's legitimacy as power holders in the family, the state, and economic institutions has been called into question. Finally, the emergence and continued visibility of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender movements and media personalities and characters have challenged the once taken-for-granted ubiquity of heterosexuality. This complexity has been captured by many scholars who have written about the problems associated with being a man in postindustrial societies (e.g., Connell 1992, 1995; Gerson 1993; Kimmel 1996; Kimmel and Messner 1989; Messner 1997).

Specific to our interests, Newton (1999:37) has pointed out that "PK—like the mythopoetic movement, many black nationalisms, and Pentacostalism to boot—offers an alternative paradigm for masculine identity." PK assists men in undertaking gender projects that celebrate evangelical Christian manhood and its central tenet of male leadership in families. Doing so provides these men with a safe haven from what they perceive as an overly permissive, rapidly changing secular world. Men who participate in PK to discuss the meaning of being a godly man resist recent transformations in the gender system that affect their daily lives while attempting to construct adaptive responses (Brickner 1999; Deardorff 2000; Kimmel 1996; Messner 1997).

The notion of a gender project is closely related to the postmodern concept of the "project of the self." Postmodernists see identity as an ongoing process instead of a given ontological status (Bauman 1996; Hall 1996; Lupton and Barclay 1997). In keeping with this idea, Zygmunt Bauman (1996:19) describes identities as having "the ontological status of a project and a postulate." Individuals continuously strive to maintain their identities but never completely attain them in any stable sense because the world around them changes too rapidly to allow stability. Thus the project of the self is a never-ending, lifelong process. While postmodernist notions of the

self influence our work, we move beyond a strict adherence to postmodernist ideas. Indeed, the world is rapidly changing, but we contend that institutions and social networks can mediate the effects of the hyperfragmentation of the self stressed by some postmodernists (Gergen 1991).

Conceptualizing the self as a project assumes that individuals have a certain level of self-awareness and purposefulness of action in their daily lives. Promise Keepers' teachings indicate that their members take part in their own individual projects of self that deal with their souls and godly man identities. Promise Keepers has even published a training workbook, *The Making of a Godly Man* (Trent 1997), to assist its members in their efforts. To capture the processes by which PK men construct, maintain, and organize their male selves, we refer to the men's projects as "godly man projects." This conceptual tool captures postmodernist insights about the self and gender projects while underscoring the central role men's religiosity plays in their efforts.

While men sometimes work on these projects privately, the PK stadium rallies and accountability groups provide powerful interaction rituals for pursuing them (Collins 1988). Viewed from Collins's model, these rituals help men to solidify their generalized and particularized cultural capital; the former includes such things as men's awareness of Christian philosophy as well as PK's rhetoric and group rituals, while the latter refers to the personal, often emotional experiences men share with one another as PK members. By intensifying the positive emotional energy men associate with their individual and joint quest to be godly men, PK membership enables them to embrace powerful group symbols that strengthen their interpersonal, male bonding.

Identity, Commitment, and Self-Structure

Structural symbolic interactionists also inform our analysis given their dual emphases on individuals' commitment to particular identities and how identities come together in an organized fashion to comprise the self (Stryker 1968, 1980). For Stryker (1980:60), identities represent "internal positional designations" that index individuals' participation in structured role relationships.

Identity theorists have developed the concept of commitment to explain why individuals work to maintain specific identities that require them to be a certain type of person. The more committed a person is to an identity, the harder that individual will work to attain and maintain congruence between reflected appraisals and the identity (Burke and Reitzes 1991).

Burke and Reitzes (1991) offer two bases for commitment: cognitive and socioemotional. Cognitive bases refer to individuals' perceived net cost or benefit of maintaining the identity. Socioemotional bases of commitment refer to the emotional and identity-sustaining ties created by interacting with others in structured role relationships. Structured role relationships are therefore an important aspect of commitment, because commitment is measured by the cost of giving up identity-

relevant relationships, which are, in turn, dependent on an individual being a certain type of person (Stryker 1980; Stryker and Serpe 1982). While there are variations among identity theorists (see Stryker and Burke 2000), the key point is that their conceptions of commitment underscore the importance of relationships to identity formation and maintenance.

Contemporary identity theorists conceptualize the self as an emergent entity that reflects the complexity of society. From this perspective, a primary aim of social psychology is to develop a conceptualization of self that accounts for the differentiated yet organized features of society. Recent identity theorists tend to expand on the work of William James (1890) who argued that individuals have as many selves as others to whom they relate. These theorists transform James's idea of multiple selves by suggesting that the individual self comprises multiple identities.

From this common vantage point, researchers have formulated two contrasting accounts of the organization of self-structure. The first and widely held conceptualization is that the identities that make up the self are organized into a hierarchy of salience or centrality (Burke and Reitzes 1991; Stryker 1980; Stryker and Serpe 1982, 1994). The higher the salience of an identity, relative to other identities, the more likely individuals are to enact behaviors congruent with that identity across contexts (Stryker 1968). Therefore, in times of identity conflict, individuals are apt to choose a line of action consistent with the most salient identity.

Some theorists have used terms other than *identity salience* or *centrality* in their formulations of a hierarchical self. Gecas (1981), Hart and Richardson (1981), and Thumma (1991) opted for the term *core identity* in their work. Similarly, Hughes (1945) and Becker (1963), among others, have used the concept of *master status* to capture much of the intent of the identity salience concept described above. Although the concepts of core identity and master status are not entirely redundant to identity salience or psychological centrality, a great degree of overlap exists in how these concepts are applied. Despite variations in terminology, a hierarchical self-structure is implicit in most conceptualizations of the self.

Although the master status concept has typically been applied in cases in which identities are ascribed to individuals from external sources, such as in labeling theory (e.g., Schur 1971), Adler and Adler's (1991) work represents one notable exception to this trend. In their research on college athletes, they found that a master status was not solely imposed on individuals from outside sources. Rather, the master status of the athletic role rose to prominence in a process influenced by both internal and external factors: "Internally, are the athletic role's promise to fulfill players' dreams, its ability to make them feel important and famous, and its larger-than-life media stature; externally are the demands of their athletic scholarship, its reinforcement by athletic role-set members, and its status as the primary identity cast onto them by others" (Adler and Adler 1991:226). They therefore conclude that the rise of a master status in the self structure may include self-labeling by individuals. This approach is an improvement over earlier models because it calls attention to the internal processes associated with the development and maintenance of a master status.

Adler and Adler, among others, suggest that the existence of a master status can be problematic for individuals. For example, they discuss the phenomenon of a *role-self merger* (Turner 1978) that occurs when individuals are unidimensionally and hegemonically identified—both internally and externally—by their master status. These conditions suggest *role engulfment* (Adler and Adler 1991), a state in which one particular role monopolizes the individual, thus making it more difficult, sometimes impossible, to play multiple roles successfully. Medical sociologists have developed the notion of "identity spread" to capture the process in which an identity associated with a disability or chronic illness redefines other identities (Locker 1983; Strauss and Glaser 1975). Thus the most extreme cases of a hierarchical self, which are marked by self-engulfment or identity spread, are conceptualized as problematic.

We challenge this assertion. Role engulfment is not always problematic. Our findings suggest that it is possible for individuals to have an engulfed self and yet not suffer the consequences typically associated with this self-organization because of the interrelation among identities. To account for this possibility conceptually, we draw on recent work that challenges the widely held assumption of the hierarchical self.

Marks and MacDermid (1996) assert that the self can be organized in a state of balance. They state that "role balance is a general orientation across roles, an inter-role predisposition, not a role-specific one" (p. 421). Therefore, when individuals invoke any particular identity, it is accompanied by a crude awareness of their entire system of interrelated identities. In addition, individuals actively organize and maintain their "multiple selves" as they navigate their experiences. In short, their conceptualization of the self suggests that it can exist as a balanced condition rather than a hierarchy because of the interrelatedness and consistency of the identities as well as individuals' awareness of their self structure. However, Marks and MacDermid base their notion of balance on the central assertion that this type of self-organization exists without dominant identities, thus making the "balanced self" antithetical to Adler and Adler's "engulfed self."

We can integrate these seemingly incompatible perspectives to render a hierarchical conception of self-structure that fosters a relative state of balance among identities. Our general approach is to theorize the self as having a dominant identity—itself an outcome of fervently pursuing gender projects to be a certain type of man—that is harmoniously enmeshed with other identities. Hence an engulfed self may not be problematic in all cases, as scholars have implied.

Master Identity Concept

We discuss our alternative view of self structure by moving away from the master status concept and employing the concept of *master identity* (Charmaz 1994). For our purposes, master identity represents an improvement over master status because advocates of the latter tend to emphasize external influences. The few schol-

ars (e.g., Adler and Adler 1991) who address internal influences problematize the engulfed self-structure that emerges from having a master status. Thus master status is conceptually linked with an imbalanced hierarchical self monopolized by one identity. Charmaz (1994) uses master identity in a related way to account for how chronically ill and recently disabled men negotiate the penetration of a master identity associated with their illness or disability into all aspects of their lives and other identities. In contrast, our approach privileges the efforts of individuals to develop and maintain a dominant identity that works in concert with other identities to form a relatively balanced self structure while preserving the importance of relevant social networks (external influences). To this end, master status is not as precise a concept as we require. Many individuals can be said to have a master status, if the concept is interpreted as a highly salient identity—whether ascribed externally or internally. By using the concept of master identity, we connect our work more explicitly to recent structural symbolic interactionism. Finally, applying the master identity concept to Promise Keepers adds a new dimension by suggesting that individuals may strive to develop a master identity and foster "identity spread" in specific situations.

A master identity rises to prominence within the self in a way that reorganizes the self structure to conform to the expectations associated with this master identity (Charmaz 1994). The existence of a master identity suggests the process of identity spread and the engulfment of the self by a particular identity. It also highlights individuals' efforts to manage their self structure by pointing to the high degree of zeal an individual must possess to transform an identity into a master identity. We speculate that in order to develop and maintain a master identity successfully, individuals probably need to embed themselves in networks and rituals explicitly relevant to the identity, such as those associated with social movements or other social collectivities.

METHODS

Our style of inquiry into the lives of PK participants rests on the premise that research is a social process in which researchers actively participate (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Kvale 1996). Knowledge gained from this research therefore represents a social construction that must take into account the biases and values of the researchers involved (Creswell 1998). Our interest in PK grew out of our shared interest in men's gender identities particularly as they relate to their familial roles and the mobilizations around "men's issues" of the past few decades. When PK held stadium events near us, we were eager to observe the gatherings. Given that PK is an evangelical Christian men's movement, we are obliged to report that we do not identify ourselves as Christians. Some of the participants in this study asked us about our religious beliefs before taking part in an interview. Others asked about our beliefs during the interviews. In all cases, we revealed our status as non-Christians if and when the men asked. In a few instances during the interviews, men offered to

"share Christ" with us. We told them that we did not wish to do so; this response proved satisfactory. Throughout the interviews we did not detect any signs of distrust or hostility toward us as "outsiders." Although our status as outsiders may have influenced the knowledge construction process, the men enthusiastically related their experiences in the PK movement and how it has influenced their lives. Moreover, we interpreted their willingness to bring up their shortcomings, past and present, as evidence that they were not intentionally trying to dupe us.

On deciding to conduct qualitative research using in-depth interviews as our primary data source, we first familiarized ourselves with the teachings of PK by reading some of its main texts and frequenting its Internet Web site. We each attended a three-day PK stadium event, one in Tampa and one in Jacksonville, where we had informal conversations with participants. Gaining entry through a PK acquaintance, the second author initially traveled with five PK members to a stadium event and spent thirty-six uninterrupted hours with them. Candid discussions dealt with God, family, gender, sexual ideologies, and prayer. The first author also observed a couple of accountability group meetings held by men at a local restaurant. Our attendance at these meetings and at stadium events helped to sensitize us to PK participants' experiences before we conducted the interviews. After spending time with PK members, we were convinced that they were committed to becoming better godly men, meaning, among other things, becoming better fathers and husbands. Toward the end of the interviewing, the first author attended the much-publicized Stand in the Gap gathering on the mall in Washington, D.C., and participated in additional informal conversations with participants. Although we have not formally included these conversations in our sample or analysis, some of them could be considered unstructured mini-interviews, lasting more than an hour in a few instances. Thus what began as an inquiry into the degree of egalitarianism in these men's marriages was transformed into research on identity issues.

We recruited participants for the study by posting fliers at a PK stadium event in Tampa. We also contacted local churches, asking if they had PK participants in their congregations. In addition, we used convenience sampling via personal acquaintances who knew PK participants. In order for men to participate in the study, we required that they be actively involved in accountability groups that met at least once a month. Once in contact with PK members, we used snowball sampling to recruit more members. The majority of the participants lived in the north central or northern region of Florida ($N = 19$), and a few lived in the New York City metropolitan area ($N = 3$).

The semistructured interviews addressed the men's participation in PK; their identities as husbands, fathers, and men of God; and their relationships with their wives, children, God, and other PK members. We asked the men about their self-meanings and their practices related to identities and relationships. We also asked them about conflicts among life situations and their identities and how they negotiate such discord. Although we used our interview guide to make sure we covered our research areas of interest, we also encouraged men to elaborate on anything they felt was

important. Interviews typically lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and were conducted by the first author, with the exception of one face-to-face follow-up joint interview. The second author had extensive informal discussions with PK men during a two-day stadium event in Jacksonville. We systematically analyzed only the formal interview data, which took the form of transcribed audiotapes. Once transcribed, interviews were thematically coded and organized with our theoretical concerns in mind.

After completing our initial analysis of the data, we sent the participants a brief written synopsis of our findings. We were able to contact seven of the twenty-two participants for brief follow-up interviews in which we discussed the men's opinions of our analysis. One of these interviews was an hourlong face-to-face interview with a minister who served as a "key informant" (Crabtree and Miller 1992); the others were conducted over the telephone. This validity check confirmed our interpretation of the data and helped to strengthen our understanding of the men's experiences.

Of the twenty-two participants, all were married and twenty-one were fathers. Nineteen of the men were in their first marriage. Twenty had been involved with PK for at least one year. Their ages ranged from twenty-five to fifty-nine. Fourteen of the participants had annual household incomes over $50,000, while three had annual household incomes under $20,000. Two of the men were African American; the others were white. We included two ministers in our sample because they offered insights into the relationship between PK's recent popularity and the men's ministries in their churches. Although we did not base our sample of Promise Keepers on a random sample of PK members, it is consistent with published PK literature concerning the racial and economic profile of the national membership (Abraham 1997).

FINDINGS

Becoming and Being a Godly Man

How do men go about being godly men? This question states the overarching concern for the Promise Keepers in our study. We began our research knowing that being godly men was important to PK members, but we remained uncertain about the relationship between men's godly man identity and their other identities. When we asked the men how they thought about themselves in their roles as husbands, fathers, and employees, they almost always incorporated their view of themselves "as a Christian man" in their responses. Indeed, being a godly man was central to their understanding of themselves. It became apparent to us that these PK men see themselves as godly men moving through a complex world.

The Promise Keepers we interviewed appear to have undertaken a godly man project that involves most of their thoughts and behaviors. In a sense, they continually work at becoming and remaining godly men. This seems to occur consistently across social contexts and relationships. Therefore, their godly man identities prove to be influential in shaping their other identities.

We are concerned with the self-meanings the men create and their efforts to establish and maintain their godly man identity. Our analysis reveals that faced with a plethora of potentially corrupting social experiences, PK men do a great deal of identity work to sustain their understandings of themselves as godly men. They do this by strategically negotiating different structural contexts—some more amenable to being a godly man than others. We do not suggest that these men act precisely in a uniform way in their everyday lives or that their behavior is always consistent with their idealized beliefs. Rather, we argue that the work they undertake in their identity projects embodies clear and common themes and allows them to emerge from disparate life experiences with relatively similar self structures. This identity work serves to provide them with a sense of contentment that they at least make a concerted effort to live their lives as godly men, even if they may fall from the path from time to time. Given our theoretical objectives and space limitations, then, our analysis focuses on men's commonalities.

We illustrate our subsequent analysis of men's ongoing godly man projects in Figure 1. The larger circle represents a snapshot at one point in time of a man's entire conscious existence and the most common connections between the identities we discuss, represented by the smaller circles. Each of these identities is produced, maintained, and expressed through *intra*personal and *inter*personal activities. The series of overlapping circles at the bottom of the figure reflect the dynamic nature of men's identity projects as godly men, projects that evolve over the life course.

Men typically referred to their godly man projects as their "walk with the Lord" or "Christian walk." As explained to us, a man's "walk" begins with the acceptance of Jesus Christ as his personal savior. From that point forward, he enters into a new phase of his life. The transition to this new phase of life serves as a critical marker for him in terms of the organization of his various identities. By accepting Christ, he begins to mesh his godly man identity with many of the identities that comprise his self. Being "born again" represents the beginning of the man's godly man project, the process of developing and sustaining his godly man identity. Although the born again or conversion experience is critical, our primary concern lies beyond this initial phase of the men's projects. Because all but one of the men in our sample were born again before their participation in PK, our discussion focuses on the processes surrounding the ongoing development and maintenance of the godly man identity.

Our data suggest that the godly man project has two closely related facets. The first deals with the men's spiritual world and includes all the activities they engage in to maintain their relationship with God. These activities are perhaps best summarized by the men's use of the common phrase "walk with the Lord." Men use this metaphor to express their sense of being on a moral, ethical, and religious journey with Jesus, their spiritual leader whose principles they attempt to emulate. Given their high level of commitment to becoming and remaining godly men, the men work hard at maintaining their sense of having a relationship with God. They do so by immersing themselves in Christian media and Christian social networks, both of
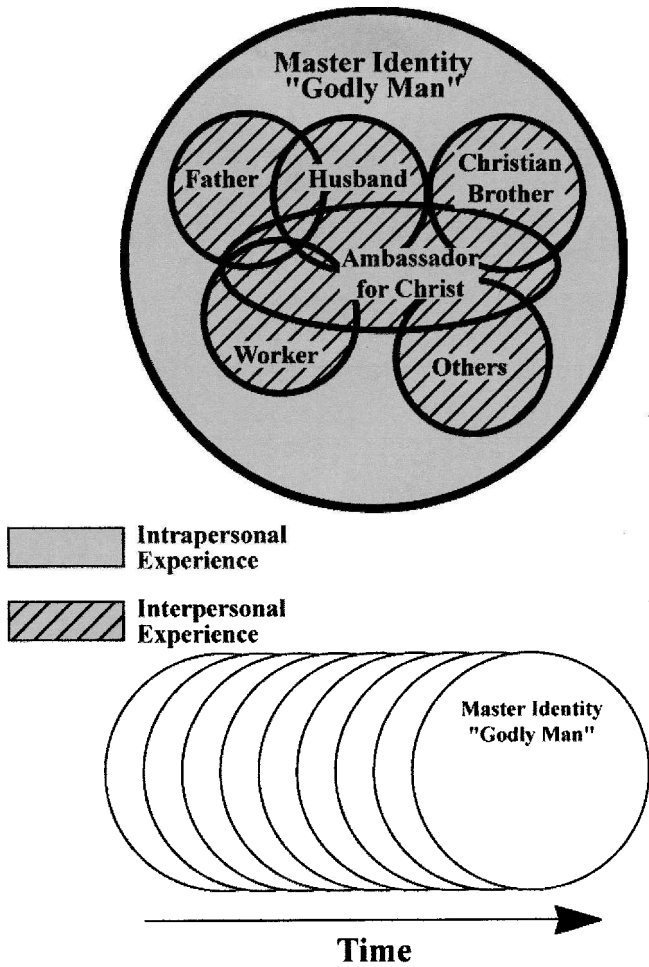
FIGURE 1.   The Godly Man Project

which reinforce their belief system. The men also seek out consistencies among prayers and life experiences by looking for similarities between things "requested" from God and ensuing experiences. In adverse situations, rather than question their faith, they assume that there is a reason for their adversity; it is part of God's plan. In addition, they experience thoughts and emotions that they interpret as signs from God. Consider the following example given to us by Pat, a forty-two-year-old father of four:

> We were unable to make a decision to go west . . . after the time of my grand-mother's death. We'd been asked to get together for a family reunion. We . . . couldn't make a decision to go or not. We asked God, and we put it in His hands and asked Him to give us a clear sign—something we couldn't misinterpret . . . And I suppose about forty-five minutes later—out of a clear sky—came the

biggest, prettiest . . . rainbow you ever saw. And a voice in my ear said, "This is for you." So He still does old-fashioned, Old Testament miracles.

Approaching their experiences from this interpretive framework assures the men that God is actively working in their lives.

Promise Keepers also use language that suggests a personal relationship with God, such as describing the Bible as "God's word" or prayers as "answered" to invoke imagery of dialogue. As their part in the dialogue, they "spend time with God" in prayer and personal devotion. They also "speak" (pray) to God throughout the day. Because of this work, they remain conscious of God, and themselves as godly men, in virtually all that they do. Many of the men gave us similar accounts of their attempts to sustain a heightened consciousness of God in their lives. For example:

> I'm very interactive with God on a daily basis. I mean I can't go 15, 20 minutes without thinking about God. I mean, I just can't. It's weird in a way, but it's a nice weird. It's just strange how I think about, you know, He just pops in my mind and it's just like He's a person. You know, think about you're involved with your wife or some girlfriend or something, it's just like always thinking about it and making a decision based on Him being there watching me. (Neil)

> You have to spend time with him daily. You may have heard the term, "pray without ceasing." That doesn't mean be on your knees all of the time in a sackcloth and weeping somewhere. It means being in a constant state of presence of God and being free enough to talk to Him anytime. (Steven)

> As far as your relationship with God, He's supposed to be like your father or your friend. That takes regular communication through prayer. (John)

The second facet of the godly man project deals with the men's "earthly" attempts to emulate Christ and is perhaps best summarized by their use of the phrase "Christian walk." It incorporates all of the intrapersonal and interpersonal activities related to the way men put their emulation of Christ into practice in their daily lives. The intrapersonal component of the Christian walk includes men's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors when they are alone. They aim to emulate Christ in these activities by preventing sins from occurring in the first place. To this end, the men actively prepare themselves by getting into the "right frame of mind" or "in the spirit" when they start their day by praying and "spending time" with God. This process of becoming mindful of their Christian responsibilities and commitments enables the men to "put on their Christian armor" as they prepare themselves to enter the secular world.

This type of preparation intensifies men's consciousness of themselves as godly men and is sometimes linked with their anticipated interactions with others. To assist them in their efforts, some men make use of objects as signifiers—to others and themselves—of their godly man identity:

> [B]eing a PK, let's say a man of integrity, when I walk around with a PK shirt, I put it on intentionally. When I walk out of that door with a PK shirt on, I am labeling myself. "Watch this guy. He's not going to fall. He's going to stand for what's right." When I put that PK shirt on, I make a commitment to my family, to

my wife, to my children, to God, . . . every single time I put it on it's, I actually think about all those things. "OK, [Steven], you better watch it. Don't you make a mistake." When you put on a regular shirt and go out there, you blend into the crowd, people don't pay attention to you. But today, they're going to pay attention to you. Put on a Christian shirt, they're going to watch you. . . . The way you talk. The way you treat people and so forth. (Steven)

Maybe instead of wanting to reach across the desk with this rude person that I'm with [at my workplace], whereas I would just say, "Get the heck out of here," in no uncertain terms, I try to calm down and a real good analogy is the new bracelets, I don't know if you've seen them. It's the new fad, it says, WWJD. It's basically, What would Jesus do? So your analogy is, OK, if the Lord is standing here with me, which in most cases, he is. And you're about to cuss this person out, would Jesus do that? No. (Frank)

As the last example suggests, some men sustain their heightened consciousness of themselves as godly men by continually asking themselves, What would Jesus do? as they go about their daily activities. In a similar vein, some men attempt to "see the world through the eyes of Jesus:"

And [when I'm] with my non-Christian friends, I just keep myself in check and I put that in my mind. If Jesus was right here with us, handcuffed with us together, would he want us to do that? And so I just use . . . myself as best as I can to be an example. (Donald)

The men also avoid situations that might tempt them to sin. Like Donald, above, some of the men revealed that when they find themselves in a tempting situation, they invoke the reflected appraisals of others, including their "accountability partners," pastors, Christ, and their wives and children, to remain Christlike in both thought and deed. For example, Frank, a husband with two children, described an instance in which a large-breasted woman came into his workplace and how he invoked the reflected appraisals of his PK accountability group members to thwart sinful thoughts. What follows is his account of how he addressed the tempting situation within his PK accountability group.

I say [to my accountability group], "This woman came in, she was like this [he gestures that she has large breasts] and all I could see was [your three] faces." We joke about it and I say, "Here I'm [staring] at this woman and I'm thinking what would Tom or Burt [think]? Or what would you guys think of me [if you were] standing behind me? So you get that [feeling that] somebody [is] watching over your shoulder.

By invoking the reflected appraisals of the other men, Frank reminded himself of his godly man identity and was able to divert his attention away from this woman. Consistent with identity theory, this example illustrates the powerful intrapersonal processes that underlie men's commitments to their godly man identities, processes that bring to mind Mead's (1934) "generalized other" as well as the "internal conversations" that are part and parcel of the self in society.

The interpersonal component of PK members' Christian walk includes the men's interactions with their families, their friends, their coworkers, and both Christians

and non-Christians. When men spoke about how they think of themselves in various social contexts, they evidenced "identity spread" (Strauss and Glaser 1975) as they described how they meshed their godly man identity with their other identities (as depicted by the overlapping circles in Figure 1). For example, one participant explained how he approaches his interactions with others at work.

> I have to admit when my boss tells me I did a good job, it makes me feel good. But when I really think about it, people at work that tell me I do good—that is very on the surface . . . I feel good when I know I'm doing what God wants me to do. When I come to work each day, I pray and ask God to help me to . . . work for Him, to glorify Him because I'm a Christian. Therefore the Bible says that I'm an ambassador of Christ. . . . I want Christ to look good, . . . that's my motivation. (Brian)

Many of the men we spoke with described themselves in a manner consistent with this notion of being a "ambassador for Christ," setting an example for Christians, non-Christians, and their own children. James, talking about his involvement with a recreational softball team, explained, "[I]t's a good time for me to mix with people who aren't necessarily Christians. That's really important for the Christians to do. . . . You can really be an encourager and I think a positive influence on people."

As PK members go about their daily lives, they do a great deal of identity work to remain aware of themselves as godly men. As many men explained, their "godly part" is who they are, suggesting that their godly man identity is high in their salience hierarchy. Indeed, these men do not tend to think of themselves as husbands, fathers, employees, or friends without incorporating, as they put it, their "godly part" into those identities. In other words, they think of themselves as godly husbands, godly fathers, and even godly employees.

Master Identity

We argue that the godly man identity represents a master identity for the Promise Keepers we interviewed because of its centrality and seemingly powerful influence over their other identities. Nearly all of the men we interviewed said explicitly that their relationship with God was their first priority in their lives. As Kyle, a thirty-one-year-old father told us, "I mean the Lord is the whole basis. I try to put the Lord before anything, before my family, before my wife."

Since the master identity concept is not addressed explicitly in the identity theory literature, our data suggest three criteria that an identity must meet if it is to be considered a master identity. First, the identity must remain highly salient across numerous social contexts. Individuals with a master identity probably have to work at maintaining the identity's level of salience, influence, and psychological centrality. To accomplish this, an individual must have a heightened level of awareness of being a certain type of person consistent with the master identity, thus enacting the role-self merger Turner (1978) describes. The PK men in our study repeatedly reported that they were keenly aware of themselves as godly men as they attended to

objects, people, and situations in their lives. Tim succinctly expressed this idea when we spoke to him:

> Being a man of God means that . . . you cannot say you are a man of God [when] you come home . . . [but when] you go out, you are a different person. You have to live a life that glorifies God . . . whether in your home or outside your home.

The men's commitment to being godly men should not be underestimated. One of our participants, Al, was nearly fired for upholding his beliefs while working as an outdoor advertising sales representative.

> I've got stuff on the wall [of] my cubicle at work, [so] they know where I stand. . . . Some of the people have apologized for the things they've said because they realize how I feel. And it puts me in an awkward position sometimes. One real awkward thing that just happened [there] was that . . . they fired a guy who had talked to a client. . . . I got in touch with this client so I could take care of whatever was done and come to find out that it was a palm reading [business], and I didn't know. . . . So when I got down there, I went to the address and that's what it was. . . . I walked in and we went to write up contracts for my [outdoor advertising] boards and I told him I couldn't do business with him. And he said, "Why?" And I said, "Well, I don't believe in this. I won't be a part of this." He told me he'd have me fired and he called up the company. And when I got back to [the office], I got brought in [to my boss's office] with the door closed behind me. [My boss told me,] "You can't do that! It's a free market!" and all this stuff. And I said, "Well, I did, and whatever you got to do to me, fine." They went, "God, quit doing that, Al! Now go out there and call somebody!" They know that I'll stand up for what I believe and I probably wouldn't have done that a few years back.

The second criterion for a master identity is that it must be enmeshed with other identities. A master identity derives much of its meaning for individuals through its connection with other "host identities." We use the term *host* because it conveys the image that the more focused nonmaster (host) identities have their own presence in people's lives whereas the master identity is incorporated into them. Host identities are distinguished from other identities by their unique relationship with the master identity; they are interrelated with the master identity in a symbiotic relationship. Host identities help to articulate the master identity, and the master identity influences the host identities as we discuss below. Nonhost identities are either neutral or antithetical to the master identity. A host identity, such as father, is often expressed by individuals who do not have a master identity, but it takes on new meaning and significance when influenced by a master identity. If individuals integrate their master and host identities, they must remain aware of their unique sense of self—consistent with the master identity—while taking part in activities associated with the host identities. Donald, a twenty-five-year-old father of three commented on what it means to him to be a PK member and the significance for him of being a godly man as a churchgoer, a husband, and a father:

> . . . to be devoted to your church, . . . to be a better parent to your children and a better husband to your wife. Just trying to be the godly man; as Christ is the head

of the church, the husband should be the head of the household. . . . Make sure my children are raising up to be Christian children.

Third, the master identity is connected to its host through creating or changing the host in two ways. First, individuals define, redefine, and/or reinforce role expectations so that they are consistent with the master identity. For instance, when individuals take part in their godly man projects, they inundate themselves with various forms of media and integrate themselves into social networks that inform them how to be a godly husband or father. They internalize these Christian role expectations so that their definitions of what it means to be a husband or a father is consistent with what it means to be a godly man. Second, if the meaning of the master identity requires or promotes the existence of a specific host identity, that host identity's salience and psychological centrality is likely to increase or at least stabilize. Because Promise Keepers' definition of a godly man encourages men to be husbands and fathers, their identities in these areas remain or become highly salient and central to their sense of self. Meanwhile, if the meaning of the master identity inhibits a potential or preexisting identity from being expressed, that identity may never fully emerge, decrease in its level of salience and centrality, or vanish over time. For example, a man may have an identity as a friend or a buddy in a group of men with whom he spends time drinking at a local bar. Should the man begin a godly man project, he will likely alter, limit, or abdicate this identity. The man does not necessarily discontinue his non-Christian friendships. Many men we spoke with still retain non-Christian friendships, but their orientation to those friendships suggests that they approach them like Donald, as a godly man and ambassador of Christ:

> My best friend in the world, he's not a Christian. And I'm doing my best to minister him without trying to break his arm and force him to accept Jesus. But, you know, I keep praying for him. I keep praying that one day, maybe I might have planted the seed and somebody else . . . might finally convince him. . . . I try to live my self as an example on how to be a Christian. And I'm not perfect, but we went to a sports restaurant and . . . he had a couple glasses of beer and offered to buy me one and I'm like, "No, I can't do that."

Al, the man who was nearly fired for not compromising his beliefs at work, articulated a similar sentiment:

> I love the taste of beer. So every now and then I'd drink some O'Doul's, which is nonalcoholic. Then my wife pointed out that, "Somebody who sees you as a real strong Christian guy, that's not an alcoholic beverage, but you could cause them to struggle in some ways." And I said, "You're right." So I don't mess with that no more. So there's been a lot of things that I've put on hold, not on hold, just done away with to make that walk. And it's been a challenge to me in certain circumstances. . . . Those people or that situation mean absolutely nothing to me. I'd walk away, whatever. If it takes me trading in my beliefs or my walk with the Lord, then whatever it costs me, I'll walk. Those friendships or money or whatever it could be.

Although the master identity affects other identities, much of its practical meaning is derived from the host identities. The master identity also remains highly sa-

lient as well as psychologically central. Typically, it does not change as the host identities do; rather, it remains consistent with the idealized image of self. With time, though, it may be redefined. Host identities tend to develop in a manner that reduces the potential for conflict between them and the master identity.

We suspect that in order for master identities to remain stable, individuals must remain diligent in their efforts to sustain both the social ties and the ideologies on which the host identities depend. Men who aggressively pursue godly man projects orient themselves in a way that deflects the challenges they face in social contexts not amenable to their host identities. In the process, they reduce the potential for identity conflict by defining and organizing their host identities in particular ways. Given the relationship between the master and host identities, we suggest that the men in our study can be characterized as having engulfed self-structures (Adler and Adler 1991). Though the men's self-structure is relatively harmonious, it remains somewhat dynamic. Identities continue to fluctuate in their level of salience as well as their meanings for individuals, but for the most part host identities remain consistent with the master identity.

Although undertaking a godly man project requires a great deal of identity work, the men typically enjoy a sense of serenity with relatively little identity conflict, if they remain faithful to their projects, or as they put it, do well in their "walk." These men, of course, feel challenged at times and sometimes behave in ways at odds with their Christian beliefs. But they also do a great deal of interpretive work that enables them to make sense of their experiences in a way that serves to preserve their identities as godly men. Other evangelicals provide evidence supporting this activity. Wilcox and Bartkowski (1999) discuss the "evangelical family paradox" of "progressive" practices that coexist with "conservative" gender ideology. Similarly, Gallagher and Smith (1999) describe many of the evangelicals they interviewed as ideologically subscribing to "symbolic traditionalism" but enacting "pragmatic egalitarianism" in their everyday lives. Similar contradictions likely exist between the views and the practices of PK followers. Although we do not focus on such contradictions, one outcome of PK practices is that members' conflicts are less likely to challenge their self-structure. Their PK ideology provides them with a plan of action or road map that helps them to manage and resolve these conflicts. An ideology guides them through these processes and social networks provide them with relatively unambiguous prescriptions for how they should think, feel, and behave. These practices reinforce a self-structure organized around the godly man master identity. Meanwhile, men negotiate numerous household decisions and tasks with their wives and families that may produce conflict. Our data suggest that their identities as husbands may be altered according to how they negotiate and resolve these conflicts; however, these changes do not seem to challenge in any fundamental way their self-structure or godly man master identity. We suspect that this outcome occurs in part because the men's wives are also evangelical Christians who support the men's gender projects.

Godly Man Identity and the Promise Keepers Movement

Many identity projects evolve because individuals are disillusioned with certain features of society. The men we interviewed, for instance, choose to stand against what they perceive as a social tide of immorality. But when pressed about what characterized that immorality, the men often cited factors that could be alternatively characterized as ruptures or transformations in the gender order (Connell 1987, 1995), such as changing familial arrangements, the increasing visibility of gays and lesbians, and women's increased labor force participation. Against this backdrop, the men's gender identity projects seem to provide a position from which to defend their gendered selves against the challenges posed by a context that is quite confusing for many men, Christian and non-Christian. By approaching their non-Christian social interactions with a heightened consciousness of themselves as godly men with their guard up and by posturing as "ambassadors for Christ" while moving through secular and non-Christian environments, these men insulate themselves from challenges to their belief system and their self structure.

PK members highly value the PK movement and its accountability groups in particular because they enable them to deal with the inevitable "temptations" they face, as Christians, on a daily basis. A forty-two-year-old mechanic with four children spoke for most participants when he shared his thoughts on Satan:

> Oh, yeah. Men are targets. They are targets. Well, they're probably the easiest targets that the devil has because he can consistently know just about any of us by finding the right set of circumstances to undermine us with money or extramarital sex. . . . [T]his is probably the most effective target that the devil has at destroying families and destroying people, he attacks the fathers. He is really good at instilling alcoholism. Crack cocaine is one of his latest efforts.

Thus, according to their worldview, Satan and the world "out there" pose many challenges for Christian men. In our participants' minds, if they took the path of least resistance and went along with what exists "out there," that is, gave in to Satan's numerous temptations, they would become something other than godly men. Tim elucidated this point when he told us about the challenges he faces as a godly man:

> Outside of PK, you have people that you work with. [They] probably [will] indirectly try to influence you to [do] some things that are probably contrary to your principles, to what you believe. . . . One is still living in the world, so you cannot . . . close yourself off [from] such influences. I know they will certainly come, but with Christ in you, you will be able to stay away [from such influences], not allowing [them] to actually take you out of your beliefs or your principles.

In Goffman's (1961) terms, their identities as godly men represent "stance taking entities" central to their self-definitions; they constantly contrast themselves to other men in the world. Consider the following statements made by Brian when discussing what it means to him to be a godly man:

> The contrast is [with] what you hear in the world or on TV is [to] be out for yourself, dog eat dog. It's violence, dominate women sexually, [and] all these kind of

things. A godly man, which PK promotes, is the exact opposite. . . . It's just the exact contrast of what the world [says] a man should be.

In contrast to the challenges posed to men in the secular world, PK offers men an ideological and social oasis, a belief system and social networks that reinforce their identities as godly men. Should they become weary from their battle in the secular world or begin to question their beliefs, they can always retreat to their back region which is for the most part limited to other godly men, God himself, and, to a lesser degree, other Christian women and children.

Many of the men emphasized the significance of having their stadium rallies and smaller accountability groups restricted to men. Their descriptions revealed how their faith in the PK message and their exposure to intimate PK rituals enabled them to find the courage to talk and pray openly with other men, an experience they recognized as challenging stereotypical norms of masculinity. Al summarizes this point:

PK, they go beyond the convention and do what they really need to do as far as the small groups and all. That's the way you gotta be because guys really hold a lot of stuff in. And if they get that one intimate friend that they can share with, that's what's going to make a difference with PK.

Brian echoes this sentiment:

What really develops the character of a godly man is having close relationships with other men and other Christian men particularly, where you can open yourself up and hold yourself accountable for walking [with God] the way you should, according to scripture. When you have weak times . . . you call your buddy and let him, kind of use him as a sounding board.

Clearly, men's social networks, especially PK's all-male rallies and accountability groups, are critical to the men's efforts to experience themselves as godly men. These group contexts and related rituals reinforce men's commitment to relationships that enable them to realize particular identities while maintaining a hierarchical but balanced self-structure shaped by their godly man master identity. Consistent with Collins's (1988) model of interaction rituals, men who engage in all-male rituals encouraged by the PK movement tend to generate positive emotional energy that facilitates their male bonding and godly man projects.

CONCLUSION

Our qualitative analysis of a sample of Promise Keepers' identity projects provides fresh insights to the extant literatures on gender and identity. The men's passion for sustaining their godly man identity prompted us to suggest three criteria for assessing whether an identity is a master identity: (1) high salience across diverse social contexts, (2) enmeshment with other identities, and (3) creation or transformation of host identities to make them consistent with the master identity while increasing their salience and psychological centrality.

Our work indirectly builds on medical sociologists' observation that identity issues are fundamental to those suffering from the onset of chronic illness and disability as they struggle to negotiate their sense of self (Charmaz 1994, 1995, 2000; Locker 1983; Strauss and Glaser 1975). We take the master identity concept in a new direction by showing that within certain contexts individuals strive voluntarily to nurture identity spread and develop a master identity with positive meaning for them. Our findings should encourage future theorists and researchers to study more systematically the master identity concept and the associated self-structure and social contexts in which it operates.

We found compelling evidence among our sample of Promise Keepers of a hierarchical relationship between what we have labeled a master identity and other host identities. Host identities linked to a master identity become increasingly important as individuals undertake an identity project. As a result, the host identities central to the master identity are more salient than identities less important to the development of the master identity. For example, our participants' identities as husbands and fathers are more important for them than their identity as a worker. This supports identity theorists' assertion that the structure of the self is hierarchical.

However, the overall self-structure that develops once individuals undertake an identity project likely resembles Marks and MacDermid's (1996) conceptualization of identities existing in a state of balance. The master identity, as it becomes enmeshed with host identities, enhances the interconnectedness of the elements of the self, resulting in the engulfment of the self (Adler and Adler 1991). However, unlike the case of the athletes studied by Adler and Adler, we suggest that features of the Promise Keepers' engulfed self-structure minimize the potential for identity conflict. For instance, whereas PK members are likely to strive consciously to become engulfed and put great efforts into structuring their lives to this end, athletes and career-minded individuals do not. Promise Keepers' lack of identity conflict may also occur because the ideological nature of the godly man identity distinguishes it from other types of identities. More specifically, being a godly man does not, for the most part, temporally compete with other identities, as does being an athlete or having a career. Indeed, activities associated with other identities, such as being a husband or a father, enhance the godly man identity, though others might inhibit its prominence if they are not modified or eliminated. Thus, while somewhat hierarchical, PK participants' self-structure tends to be relatively balanced because of the consistency among identities that are connected to and shaped by the master identity.

Our findings also illustrate how the development of a master identity is intertwined with an identity project in which individuals express a great deal of zeal about attaining an idealized self. Because the general type of identity project we explore in connection with men's spirituality also applies to other areas of life, the master identity concept may enrich the growing body of literature on identity theory within feminist and transgender communities.

We suspect that many people fail (or never desire) to attain or maintain a master

identity. For example, in PK many men attend weekly meetings for a time but then drop out. Still more—perhaps the majority—attend a conference and never attend an accountability group. Although the master identity concept is limited in its application because relatively few people possess such an identity, its significance for those who do possess it is profound. Thus efforts are warranted to understand how various identity projects involving master identities are situated in and affected by larger social and organizational contexts. More specifically, these efforts should consider how common language, rituals, and organizational practices shape the social psychological processes associated with the construction and maintenance of master identities and social movements.

NOTE

1. A Promise Keeper is committed to (1) honor Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to God's Word through the power of the Holy Spirit; (2) pursue vital relationships with a few other men, understanding he needs brothers to help him keep his promises; (3) practice spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity; (4) build strong marriages and families through love, protection, and biblical values; (5) support the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor and by actively giving his time and resources; (6) reach beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity; (7) influence his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (Mark 12:30–31) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20) (Janssen and Weeden 1994).

REFERENCES

Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. 1991. *Backboards and Blackboards: College Athletes and Role Engulfment*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Abraham, Ken. 1997. *Who Are the Promise Keepers? Understanding the Christian Men's Movement*. New York: Doubleday.

Ammerman, Nancy T. 1987. *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Bartkowski, John P. 1999. "Godly Masculinities Require Gender and Power." Pp. 121–30 in *Standing on the Promises: Promise Keepers and the Revival of Manhood*, edited by D. S. Claussen. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1996. "From Pilgrim to Tourist—Or a Short History of Identity." Pp. 18–36 in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by S. Hall and P. du Gay. London: Sage.

Bearden, Michelle. 1997. "Promise Keepers Flock to Stadium." *Tampa Tribune*, May 17:A5.

Becker, Howard. 1963. *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: Free Press.

Blumer, Herbert. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Brickner, Bryan W. 1999. *The Promise Keepers: Politics and Promises*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Burke, Peter J. and Donald C. Reitzes. 1991. "An Identity Theory Approach to Commitment." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 54:239–51.

Burke, Peter J. and Judy C. Tully. 1977. "The Measurement of Role Identity." *Social Forces* 55:881–97.

Charmaz, Kathy. 1994. "Identity Dilemmas of Chronically Ill Men." *Sociological Quarterly* 35:269–88.

———. 1995. "The Body, Identity and Self." *Sociological Quarterly* 36:657–80.

———. 2000. "Experiencing Chronic Illness." Pp. 277–92 in *Handbook of Social Studies and Health and Medicine*, edited by G. L. Albrecht, R. Fitzpatrick, and S. A. Scritchfield. London: Sage.

Clatterbaugh, Kenneth. 1997. *Contemporary Perspectives on Masculinity*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Claussen, Dane S. 1999. *Standing on the Promises: Promise Keepers and the Revival of Manhood*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.

———, ed. 2000. *The Promise Keepers: Essays on Masculinity and Christianity*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

Cole, Robert A. 2000. "Promising to Be a Man: Promise Keepers and the Organizational Constitution of Masculinity." Pp. 113–32 in *The Promise Keepers: Essays on Masculinity and Christianity*, edited by D. S. Claussen. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

Collins, Randall. 1988. *Theoretical Sociology*. New York: Har

court Brace Jovanovich.

Connell, R. W. 1987. *Gender and Power*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

———. 1992. "A Very Straight Gay: Masculinity, Homosexual Experience, and the Dynamics of Gender." *American Sociological Review* 57:735–51.

———. 1995. *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cose, Ellis. 1997. "Promises . . . Promises." *Newsweek* 80 (15):30–31.

Crabtree, Benjamin F. and William L. Miller. 1992. *Doing Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Creswell, John W. 1998. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Deardorff, Don. 2000. "Sacred Male Space: The Promise Keepers as a Community of Resistance." Pp. 76–90 in *The Promise Keepers: Essays on Masculinity and Christianity*, edited by D. S. Claussen. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

Durkheim, Emile. [1912] 1995. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press.

Foote, Nelson. 1951. "Identification as the Basis for a Theory of Motivation." *American Sociological Review* 26:14–21.

Gallagher, Sally K. and Christian Smith. 1999. "Symbolic Traditionalism and Pragmatic Egalitarianism: Contemporary Evangelicals, Families and Gender." *Gender and Society* 13:211–33.

Gecas, Victor. 1981. "Contexts and Socialization." Pp. 165–99 in *Social Psychology: Sociological Perspectives*, edited by M. Rosenburg and R. H. Turner. New York: Basic Books.

Gergen, Kenneth J. 1991. *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life*. New York: Basic Books.

Gerson, Kathleen. 1993. *No Man's Land: Men's Changing Commitments to Family and Work*. New York: Basic Books.

Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

———. 1961. *Asylums*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Goodstein, Laurie. 1997. "Hundreds of Thousands Gather on the Mall in a Day of Prayers." *New York Times*, October 5:A1, A24.

Hall, Stuart. 1996. "Who Needs 'Identity'?" Pp. 1–17 in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by S. Hall and P. du Gay. London: Sage.

Hart, John and Diane Richardson. 1981. "The Development and Maintenance of a Homosexual Identity." Pp. 73–92 in *The Theory and Practice of Homosexuality*, edited by J. Hart and D. Richardson. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hearn, Jeff. 1987. *The Gender of Oppression: Men, Masculinity, and the Critique of Marxism*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Heise, David R. 1979. *Understanding Events: Affect and the Construction of Social Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1988. "Affect Control Theory: Concepts and Model." Pp. 1–34 in *Analyzing Social Interaction: Advances in Affect Control Theory*, edited by L. Smith-Lovin and D. R. Heise. New York: Gordon and Breach.

Holstein, James A. and Jaber F. Gubrium. 1995. *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hughes, C. Everett. 1945. "Dilemmas and Contradictions in Status." *American Journal of Sociology* 50:353–59.

James, William. 1890. *Principles of Psychology*. New York: Holt.

Janofsky, Michael. 1997. "Women, on the Rally's Edge, Mirror Divided View of Group." *New York Times*, October 5:A24.

Janssen, Al and Larry K. Weeden, eds. 1994. *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*. Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family.

Kimmel, Michael S. 1996. *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. New York: Free Press.

Kimmel, Michael S. and Michael A Messner. 1989. "Introduction." Pp. 1–13 in *Men's Lives*, edited by M. S. Kimmell and M. A. Messner. New York: Macmillan.

Kvale, Steinar. 1996. *InterViews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Locker, David. 1983. *Disability and Disadvantage: The Consequences of Chronic Illness*. London: Tavistock.

Lupton, Deborah and Lesley Barclay. 1997. *Constructing Fatherhood: Discourses and Experiences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marks, Stephen R. and Shelley M. MacDermid. 1996. "Multiple Roles and the Self: A Theory of Role Balance." J*ournal of Marriage and the Family* 58:417–32.

Mead, George H. 1934. *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Messner, Michael A. 1997. *Politics of Masculinities: Men in Movements*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Newton, Judith L. 1999. "A Reaction to Declining Market and Religious Influence." Pp. 34–43 in *Standing on the Promises: Promise Keepers and the Revival of Manhood*, edited by D. S. Claussen. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.

Osgood, Charles E., George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum. 1957. *The Measurement of Meaning*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Peshkin, Alan. 1986. *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schur, Edwin M. 1971. *Labeling Deviant Behavior*. New York: Harper and Row.

Silver, Ira. 1996. "Role Transitions, Objects, and Identity." *Symbolic Interaction* 19:1–20.

Silverstein, Louise B., Carl F. Auerbach, Loretta Grieco, and Faith Dunkel. 1999. "Do Promise Keepers Dream of Feminist Sheep?" *Sex Roles* 40:665–88.

Smith-Lovin, Lynne and David R. Heise. 1988. *Analyzing Social Interaction: Advances in Affect Control Theory*. New York: Gordon and Breach.

Stodghill, Ron. 1997. "God of Our Fathers." *Time* 150 (14):34–40.

Stone, Gregory P. 1962. "Appearance and the Self." Pp. 86–118 in *Human Behavior and Social Processes*, edited by A. Rose. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Strauss, Anselm and Barney G. Glaser, eds. 1975. *Chronic Illness and the Quality of Life*. 2d ed. St. Louis: Mosby.

Stryker, Sheldon. 1968. "Identity Salience and Role Performance: The Relevance of Symbolic Interaction Theory for Family Research." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 30:558–64.

———. 1980. *Symbolic Interactionism*. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin/Cummings.

Stryker, Sheldon and Peter J. Burke. 2000. "The Past, Present, and Future of an Identity Theory." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63:284–97.

Stryker, Sheldon and Richard T. Serpe. 1982. "Commitment, Identity Salience, and Role Behavior: Theory and Research Example." Pp. 199–218 in *Personality, Roles, and Social Behavior*, edited by W. Ickes and E. S. Knowles. New York: Springer-Verlag.

———. 1994. "Identity Salience and Psychological Centrality: Equivalent, Overlapping, or Complementary Concepts?" *Social Psychology Quarterly* 57:16–35.

Thumma, Scott. 1991. "Negotiating a Religious Identity: The Case of the Gay Evangelical." *Sociological Analysis* 52:333–47.

Trent, John. 1997. *The Making of a Godly Man*. Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family.

Turner, Ralph H. 1978. "The Role and the Person." *American Journal of Sociology* 84:1–23.

Weinstein, Eugene A. 1969. "The Development of Interpersonal Competence." Pp. 753–75 in *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*, edited by D. A. Goslin. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Wilcox, W. Bradford and John P. Bartkowski. 1999. "The Evangelical Family Paradox: Conservative Rhetoric, Progressive Practice." *Responsive Community* 9:34–39.