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AN EXAMINATION OF RELIGIOSITY, SPIRITUALITY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-  
BEING AMONG PAGAN WOMEN: A MIXED METHOD APPROACH

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

Using a convergent mixed method design, the present investigation constitutes a preliminary inquiry into 246 Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality, as well as an initial examination of the relationship among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being. A cluster analysis was conducted based on the Religious Commitment Index (RCI; Worthington et al., 2003) and the three subscales of the Spirituality Scale (SS; Delaney, 2005) resulting in three distinct religious-spiritual groups of Pagan women: Disengaged, Engaged, and Divided. Using two one-way analyses of variance, the three groups were found to differ significantly on measures of mental health and life satisfaction. The religiously-spiritually Disengaged cluster reported significantly lower mental health and life satisfaction. A thematic analysis was conducted in order to extract themes from Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality. A total of 11 themes emerged - five for religiosity and six for spirituality. In addition, logistic regression models revealed some relationship between the themes that emerged from Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality and their religious-spiritual group membership which was based on participants' responses to accepted measures of religiosity and spirituality within the field.

*This dissertation is dedicated to the woman who showed me the profound depth of the human spirit, my mother Eileen Denise King*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

There are many diverse religious and spiritual paths within the United States. Paganism is one facet of that diversity. Paganism is an umbrella term for myriad earth-centered, nature-based, often polytheistic faiths that found fertile ground in this country during the 1960s era of social change (Barner-Barry, 2005; Carpenter, 1994). Contemporary Paganism is religiously and spiritually heterogeneous; there are myriad denominations in the U.S. and around the world, particularly in Europe (Berger, Leach, & Shaffer, 2003; Harvey, 2011). In the context of the American religious landscape where Christianity dominates, Paganism is a minority faith. As such, adherents of this spiritual tradition are not only often socially and politically overlooked, but are frequently neglected within the scholarly literature (Barner-Barry, 2005).

According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2009) approximately 82% of Americans indicated that religion was either very important or somewhat important to them. Due to the significance of religion in people's lives, social science researchers have conducted studies focusing on participants' levels of religiosity as well as their definitions of this important construct. Many studies also address the association between religiosity and a range of physical and mental health variables (Koenig, King, & Carson, 2012). In the majority of investigations in the literature religiosity has been conflated with a related but distinct construct, spirituality (Hill et al., 2000; Koenig et al., 2012; Mattis & Watson, 2008). Spirituality only recently has been distinguished from religiosity. Researchers have found that participants typically define religiosity in terms of beliefs and practices in reverence of a Higher Power, while spirituality often centers the relationship between humans and the divine (Halkitis et al., 2009; Koenig, 2010; Mattis, 2002). Recently, these related but distinct constructs have been examined in

relation to psychological well-being and mental health (Koenig, 2010; Reed & Neville, 2014). Findings consistently indicate positive correlations among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being (Koenig et al., 2012; Seybold & Hill, 2001). However, the vast majority of these studies were conducted among predominantly Christian samples, a limitation regularly cited by scholars in the area (e.g., Hill & Pargament, 2008; Koenig et al., 2012; Mattis & Watson, 2008). Consequently, little is known about religiosity and spirituality as distinct constructs, and their psychological well-being correlates, among adherents of minority and non-Judeo-Christian faiths like Paganism.

In the field of psychology our knowledge of Pagans is sparse despite decades of research on religion and spirituality. We remain uncertain of how Pagans conceptualize religiosity and spirituality, and we remain in the dark about the associations among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being within this population. Pagans adhere to a constellation of worldviews that are distinct from Judeo-Christian faiths (Carpenter, 1994). Pagan women in particular are the focus of this study because women are the majority within Pagan religion - ranging from approximately 57% according to Jorgensen and Russell (1999) to 65% according to Berger and colleagues (2003), but women are often an overlooked population in society at large. The present investigation offers an opportunity to deepen knowledge of religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being in general and to increase understanding of Pagan women in particular. By exploring Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality and placing those definitions into conversation with existing measures of religiosity and spirituality, psychology researchers may be able to better conceptualize and operationalize religiosity and spirituality in future studies. Pagan women's definitions may add complexity and nuance to the field's understanding of these important constructs, thereby influencing how we view these constructs

among other populations. With a fuller understanding of religiosity and spirituality, researchers also may be poised to more thoroughly explore these key constructs' associations with psychological well-being. Moreover, Pagans in general and Pagan women in particular benefit directly from this study as its findings have the potential to raise awareness about Pagan faiths, highlight the diversity of meanings associated with spirituality and religiosity among Pagan women, and demonstrate the important link between Pagan women's faith and their psychological well-being. Increasing awareness of and knowledge of Pagan woman is an important step toward improving the lived experiences of Pagan women.

In this investigation, qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed in order to collect and analyze the data obtained. Specifically, qualitative methods were employed in order to examine definitions of religiosity and spirituality among a group of Pagan women thereby expanding the literature on non-Judeo-Christian definitions of religiosity and spirituality. Quantitative methods were utilized in order to identify religious and spiritual profiles of Pagan women and to explore the relationships between the profiles and global mental health and life satisfaction. To unite the qualitative and quantitative methods, a convergent mixed method design as articulated by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) was employed in order to deepen understanding of religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being and improve the interpretability of the findings. The convergent mixed method design employed in this study allowed for mixing throughout. In the present study, special attention was given to the similarities and differences between Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality, and those developed by psychology researchers through decades of study among predominantly Christian samples.

The overall mixed method approach for this investigation was grounded within pragmatism. This paradigmatic stance was elected because of its focus on practicality in choosing methods to answer research questions and its underlying assumption that different methodologies are commensurable. Pragmatism also emphasized the importance of being aware of contextual conditions as well as political concerns (Morgan, 2007). Given that Pagan women are a marginalized religious and spiritual population with socio-political factors that must be considered in conducting research, mixing methods within the pragmatism paradigm was deemed appropriate. Thus, the paradigm was equipped to facilitate what we know about religiosity and spirituality among Pagan women by fusing various methodological approaches while maintaining sensitivity to social, political, and cultural contexts (Barner-Barry, 2005; Berger, Leach, & Shaffer, 2003). This study sought to advance the psychological literature in the area of religiosity and spirituality by applying mixed methods, as a distinctive approach (Greene, 2008) that exceeds the sum of its qualitative and quantitative parts, in service of a set of research questions within the field. This study aimed to advance the psychological literature in the area of religiosity and spirituality by increasing academic engagement with and knowledge of a marginalized religious and spiritual group through the application of a pragmatic mixed method approach.

The present study was guided by the following four research questions:

1. What are Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality?
2. Are there distinct religious-spiritual groups of Pagan women?
3. In what ways do the emergent religious-spiritual groups differ on measures of mental health and life satisfaction, if any?

4. In what ways do Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality differ by religious-spiritual group, if at all?

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following sections, I describe common Pagan beliefs and related practices, outline common definitions of religiosity and spirituality; discuss Pagan women's perspectives where available in the scholarly literature; examine the relation between psychological well-being, religiosity and spirituality; critique the methods utilized in the extant literature; and lastly present and defend the rationale and purpose of the present study.

#### **Paganism: An Introduction**

Paganism is an umbrella term for a diversity of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices with roots in a variety of religious and spiritual traditions from around the world. It has adherents in many different countries, with the majority concentrated in the U.S. and Europe (Barner-Barry, 2005). Paganism is grounded within a range of philosophical commitments including animism, polytheism, pantheism, humanism, and existentialism (Barner-Barry, 2005; Carpenter, 1994). Denominations within Paganism include but are not limited to Wicca, Witchcraft, Reconstructionism (e.g., Druidry, Heathenry, and Hellenismos), and Goddess Spirituality. On the margins of Pagan identity are New Age Practitioners, Shamans, Odinists, Satanists, and others. No matter their denomination, in the context of the American religious landscape where Christianity dominates, Paganism is a marginal religious and spiritual movement. As such its members are subject to discrimination and persecution in their personal and professional lives (Barner-Barry, 2005). There are myriad examples of individual Pagans as well as Pagan groups struggling for recognition and equal treatment of their spiritual identity and traditions. For example, The Wild Hunt, which is a commentary on and news media outlet for perspectives on Paganism and other minority religions founded in 2004, documents cases of

workplace discrimination, protests of public Pagan rituals by opposing individuals as well as groups, and attacks on Pagan-owned magic shops. The contents of the archives detail the challenges that Pagans often face in a Christian dominated society that does not share key elements of the Pagan worldview. However, despite these struggles, Pagans are thriving.

Paganism is a relatively new religious and spiritual movement that has its roots in many of the philosophical, social, and political shortcomings of 1960's America. As a countercultural religious and spiritual path, it sought to overcome patriarchy, materialism, mounting environmental catastrophe, and alienation from other people, nature, and the divine by reconnecting humanity to the sacredness of the Earth and to the promise of personal growth and renewal contained in that holiness (Berger, 1999; Carpenter, 1994). The unique cultural and political situation of Paganism as a whole creates a particularly interesting community among which to explore religiosity and spirituality.

Collectively, Pagans typically emphasize individual spiritual experience over institutional religious experience and thus Paganism does not have formal organization or bureaucracy, nor does Paganism have a universal sacred text, dogma, or prescribed practices (Barner-Barry, 2005; Berger, 1999). Pagans are free to engage their spirituality as a creative enterprise in which each person identifies, defines, and articulates their own trajectory, working alone or in a group (sometimes called a coven; Berger, 1999). Within this largely self-made context Pagans utilize religious ritual and various spiritual practices to engage with a range of forces and entities including nature, deities, other non-corporeal entities, animals, plants, and the dead (Adler, 1986; Berger, 1999; Carpenter, 1994). Also, Paganism is distinct from other religious and spiritual paths in that it often gives equal emphasis to the self. Personal growth and development are

championed and seen as important pathways to the divine (Adler, 1986; Berger, 1999; Carpenter, 1994)

Without the confines of organized religion and with a focus on individual spiritual experience, Paganism lends itself to an array of rich and dynamic beliefs in any number of combinations. Carpenter (1994) articulated several beliefs that are common to many self-identified Pagans: 1) interconnectedness, 2) pantheism and panentheism, 3) animism, 4) monotheism and polytheism, 5) magic, 6) sacred space, and 7) cyclicity. Carpenter (1994) defined interconnectedness as a belief in the ultimate relationship among all things. The scientific understanding of ecology reflects a similar notion. Pantheism and panentheism as defined by Carpenter (1994) focus on the presence of divinity and the connection of that divinity to life on Earth. Specifically, pantheism is the belief that everything is the divine, and so everything and the divine are one and the same. Panentheism, a variant of pantheism, is the belief that divinity is contained within all things and that all things are within the divine. In panentheism the divine is both immanent and transcendent. Animism, another related concept, is the belief that all things have a spirit and therefore are alive and worthy of respect. Pantheism, panentheism, and animism each recall interconnectedness by affirming the presence of life and spirit in all things and establishing the divinity of all things. By way of these beliefs, humans are a part of a larger planetary community, one that includes everything from rocks and rivers to trees, plants, and animals, and that entire community is sanctified, and connected by ecological necessity. Interconnectedness, pantheism, panentheism, and animism are beliefs that could influence any and all facts of Pagan practices. For example, a Witch who believes in animism may choose to work closely with the plant mugwort because she believes it has a spirit much like her own. In another case, a Wiccan who believes in the interconnectedness of all things may

choose to plant a garden that supports the health of bees because of their crucial role in the ecosystem. In another example, a Druid who believes in pantheism or panentheism may avoid stepping on an ant because she respects the divinity of the ant just as she respects her own. In the examples above, each Pagan's practices are shaped by the first four beliefs Carpenter (1994) articulated.

Monotheism and polytheism are important parts of Pagan beliefs as well (Carpenter, 1994). Monotheism is the belief in a singular and transcendent divinity while polytheism is the belief in multiple transcendent divinities. For a Pagan, monotheism might, for example, express itself as belief in the Mother Goddess as the one true divinity. The women's spirituality movement within Paganism has yielded many who honor the Great Mother exclusively. In polytheism a wide and varied range of divinities are often acknowledged and honored. For example, a polytheistic Pagan might honor Gaia, the ancient Greek Goddess who embodies the Earth as well as Demeter, the Greek Goddess of fertility, grain, and harvest, and the whole of the Greek family of Gods.

Alongside belief in deity or deities, Pagans are distinctive in that they often believe in magic. Wiccans and Witches in particular have magic as a core belief. According to Carpenter (1994), magic is based upon the understanding that the universe is composed of energy. Those who believe in magic often believe that it is possible to manipulate that energy through various religious and spiritual operations. Most commonly, magic utilizes the concept of interconnectedness discussed above. Interconnectedness implies that one thing can have influence with another, and so magic is the process by which one strand in the web of interconnected things accesses and alters another. The approaches to and techniques of magic are many and varied.

Magic and other practices are often completed in sacred space, a location that is set apart from the mundane and made holy for encounter with the divine (Carpenter, 1994). Many Pagans place value on having a clearly defined region that is marked as pure, a place where spiritual workings can be safely conducted. That safety is intended to be both physical and metaphysical. Many Pagans prefer a natural space in which to celebrate and practice magic but that is not a requirement. Sacred space within Pagan communities is often mobile because there often is not property set aside for religious purposes. Pagans often pride themselves on their spiritual ability to erect sacred space anywhere the people are gathered. For example, many Pagan gatherings take place in a person's private home, consecrated for the evening as a sacred place. Once blessed, many activities, including magic, may take place, and once the observances have ended, the home returns to mundane use.

The last of the beliefs outlined by Carpenter (1994) was the concept of cyclicity. It is rooted in the understanding that much of human life is cyclical. Things begin, end, and begin again. Pagans celebrate these, typically as solar and lunar cycles. For example, oft-celebrated solar cycles include rituals to note the changing of the seasons, and commonly recognized lunar cycles include observances during the full moon, which is often a particularly important time for magical practice for those who believe.

### **Defining Religiosity**

Religiosity is commonly defined as adherence to religious doctrine and participation in a religious institution (Hill et al., 2000; Hill & Pargament, 2008). Religiosity typically emphasizes devotional behaviors and actions associated with worship of a sacred force or power. Common behaviors and actions include church attendance, prayer, adherence to doctrine, and commitment to ritualistic practices (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Koenig, 2010; Zinnbauer et al., 1997).

However, there are many aspects of religiosity (e.g., belief in and worship of God or a Higher Power) that are not observable and therefore remain unaddressed by the commonly accepted academic definition.

With a predominantly Christian sample composed of both men and women, Zinnbauer and his colleagues (1997) found that participants defined religiosity as attending worship services, church membership, subscription to institutional dogma, a personal faith or belief in God or a Higher Power, prayer, and integrating beliefs into daily life and practice. Zinnbauer's (1997) sample included a small number of "New Age" participants. Their data were aggregated. Although this definition of religiosity has overlap with other characterizations of religiosity within the literature, integrating beliefs into daily life was an emergent theme in their study that is not captured by the current accepted general definition of religiosity. Similarly, among a sample of Christian women in midlife, Geertsma and Cummings (2004) found that religiosity was associated with concepts such as rules, restrictions, and judgment. These aspects of religiosity seem less positive than those found by Zinnbauer and his colleagues (1997). Further, they are not well accommodated by the current common definition of religiosity.

Pagans conceptualize religiosity in less favorable ways as well, often contrasting it with spirituality (Barner-Barry, 2005; Carpenter, 1994). Adler (1986), Berger (1999), Berger et al. (2003), and Carpenter and Fox (1993) each collected qualitative data via a combination of written survey and ethnographic interview methods in which Pagans described religion as hierarchical, orthodox, dogmatic, and concerned with rules, restrictions, and conservative politics. Pagans are a group having emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in conversation with the counterculture, women's, and environmental movements (Barner-Barry, 2005). Consequently, many stand boldly and intentionally in opposition to dominant ideologies, and so many are

acquainted with the realities of marginalization and discrimination at the hands of social, political, and religious institutions (Barner-Barry, 2005).

The psychology of religion needs additional research based on non-Judeo-Christian populations. Pagans are virtually invisible in psychological scholarship. Pagan participants were included in only two of the studies cited above (Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Zinnbauer et al., 1997), in which Pagan participants were referred to as New Age practitioners; additionally, their results were presented aggregate data (most likely due to the small number of participants). Harrington (2004), a scholar in the emerging field of Pagan Studies, invited theorists and researchers to explore the psychology of religion from a Pagan perspective. Berger and colleagues (2003), Barner-Barry (2005), and many others have amplified the voices of Pagan individuals and communities within the fields of sociology and anthropology but psychology lags behind. Researchers in psychology thus have not examined Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and what we know via sociological and anthropological research is limited.

### **Defining Spirituality**

Where religiosity is defined as engagement with religious institutions and adherence to specific pre-determined beliefs, spirituality is defined as one's personal relationship with the sacred and centers on subjective individual experiences of the sacred as opposed to religious participation and adherence to dogma (Hill et al., 2000; Koenig, 2010). Spirituality often incorporates belief in a Higher Power, a personal connection with a Higher Power, prayer, connection to others, and meaning-making (Geertsma & Cummings, 2004; Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Zinnbauer et al., 1997). In Zinnbauer and his colleagues' (1997) study with a community sample of predominantly Christian men and women, participants characterized spirituality as a relationship with a Higher Power, personal faith in God or a Higher Power, prayer and

integrating beliefs and values into daily life and practice. Findings from Geertsma and Cummings' (2004) interviews with Christian women in midlife shared key themes with Zinnbauer and his colleagues' (1997) findings. For the women in Geertsma and Cummings' (2004) sample, spirituality was defined in terms of a belief in and connection to a Higher Power, connection to nature and to human others, personal choice, an awareness of the unknown, and mystery. Although the definitions that emerged from these studies share some commonality with definitions of religiosity, a significant difference is spirituality's focus on a relationship with or connection to a Higher Power. Furthermore, spirituality excludes such behaviors and actions as attending services, maintaining church membership, and subscription to accepted dogma.

As was the case in the literature on religiosity, Pagans are missing in empirical psychological investigations of spirituality. What we know of Pagan individuals' definitions of spirituality comes primarily from the interdisciplinary field of Pagan Studies (which includes sociology, anthropology, and religion, among others); findings are drawn from open-ended survey data as well as ethnographic interview methods collected across three decades and across five studies during annual festivals such as the Pagan Spirit Gathering or via online surveys (Adler, 1986; Berger, 1999; Berger et al., 2003; Carpenter, 1994; Carpenter & Fox, 1993). Pagans' conceptualizations of spirituality are steeped in philosophical traditions such as animism, humanism, and existentialism which honor the environment and nature, encourage connection to other human beings and respect for non-human beings including various divinities, and seeking out one's purpose and individual potential (Adler, 1986; Berger, 1999; Berger et al., 2003; Carpenter, 1994; Carpenter & Fox, 1993).

The studies cited above proffered insight into Pagans' definitions of spirituality with little to no attention given to Pagans' definitions of religiosity. Some participants within each study

articulated spirituality by contrasting the construct with religiosity but others did not note religiosity at all. This approach to defining spirituality is not surprising given that Paganism emerged during the social change and counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Barner-Barry, 2005; Berger, 1999) and so exemplifies the schism between religion and spirituality discussed by Hill and his colleagues (2000). Further investigation of this marginal population's definitions of both religiosity and spirituality as related but distinct constructs is needed.

### **Methods in Religiosity and Spirituality**

Qualitative methods are the dominant approach to obtaining participants' definitions of religiosity and spirituality, especially among Pagans. Adler (1986) and Berger (1999) conducted ethnographic interviews in their respective investigations among this population. With non-Pagan populations, some researchers have used a combination of qualitative and quantitative elements in their studies. For example, Zinnbauer and colleagues (1997) employed psychosocial measures (including *independence from others* and *self-sacrifice for others*) and open-ended questions assessing definitions and levels of religiosity and spirituality. However, the study lacked the paradigm, research purpose, and design elements needed to clearly identify it as methodologically mixed. In addition, Zinnbauer and his colleagues (1997) compared and contrasted definitions of religiosity and then connected them to the extant literature, but did not incorporate existing quantitative measures of spirituality and religiosity. Such an inclusion, in combination with a mixed methodology, may have allowed for richer comparisons with existing findings across the literature and yielded an enhanced understanding of these complex constructs.

Interestingly, in the literature on Pagans specifically, Carpenter's (1994) dissertation research included both qualitative (structured interviews) and quantitative methods (descriptive analysis of three scales examining mysticism, life changes, and environmental paradigms); however, like Zinnbauer and colleagues (1997), Carpenter's (1994) investigation lacked the paradigmatic convictions and rigorous research design that have come to characterize mixed methods research in the last two decades. His study also lacked strong integration of the data and findings across strands. In addition, Carpenter's (1994) exploration of Pagan's spiritual experiences did not give distinct attention to religiosity. His conflation of the two constructs may be unwarranted given the increasing amount of empirical literature that acknowledges religiosity and spirituality as related and linked, but distinct from one another (Geertsma & Cummings, 2004; Mattis, 2002; Reed & Neville, 2014). With each new study in the field, researchers better understand the ways in which the constructs are related but distinct. Hill and his colleagues (2000) discussed the growing distinction between the two constructs, which contributed to the formulation of the two separate but related definitions which are gaining attention from scholars in the field. The present investigation aims to contribute to the literature by bringing together selected strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to obtain Pagan women's definitions of both religiosity and spirituality, and to examine the relationship of these constructs to psychological well-being outcome variables.

### **Religiosity, Spirituality, and Psychological Well-being**

The positive effects of religiosity and spirituality on mental health and psychological well-being are well documented. Given the salience of religion and spirituality in the lives of the majority of adults in the United States, it is important to expand knowledge of these two constructs in relation to various well-being outcomes. Due to the association between spirituality

and religiosity, there is rarely a distinction made between the salutogenic effects of religiosity and spirituality independent of one another with regard to specific psychological well-being outcomes. Koenig (2012) conducted a comprehensive theoretical review of the literature in which he conflated religiosity and spirituality, using the terms interchangeably when describing the constructs' associations with a variety of salutogenic effects such as increased optimism, hope, self-esteem, meaning, and sense of control, and decreased anxiety, depression, suicidality, and substance abuse. Depression and anxiety in particular are common markers of psychological distress, and as such they are common affective dimensions in measures of mental health. Together with cognitive dimensions of well-being such as life satisfaction, researchers are able to obtain a snapshot of an individual's overall mental health and well-being. Given that life satisfaction and global mental health (as marked by levels of depression and anxiety) are among the longest standing psychological well-being correlates of religiosity and spirituality (Koenig et al., 2012), these three constructs are of particular interest in the present investigation.

*Life satisfaction.* According to the literature, higher levels of religiosity have been related to higher levels of life satisfaction (Koenig, 2012; Koenig, Carson, & King, 2012). For example, Greene and Yoon (2004) examined the influence of religious service attendance on life satisfaction by applying an estimated ordered logit model to a large data set in which they controlled for socioeconomic status, political views, macroeconomic trends, and other socioeconomic variables. The researchers found that higher levels of religiosity as operationalized in their investigation were linked to greater life satisfaction. Fiori and colleagues (2007) found a similar association; however, findings from their study indicated that the relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction was mediated by an individual's perceived locus of control. Among older individuals and women locus of control (internal) mediated the

relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction. There is a dearth of research on the influence of spirituality on life satisfaction. The current study will address this gap in the literature.

*Depression.* As with life satisfaction, higher levels of religiosity have been associated with lower levels of depression (Koenig, 2012; Koenig, Carson, & King, 2012). Kennedy, Kelman, Thomas, and Chen (1996), for example, found that attendance at religious services among a large sample of Jewish individuals, Catholics, and others in late life was negatively correlated with depressive symptomology. Strawbridge, Shema, Cohen, and Kaplan (2001) conducted a longitudinal study in which they obtained similar results; participants who attended religious services regularly showed improvement in their mental health scores over time. Strawbridge and colleagues defined mental health as a score of 5 or less on a depressive symptom measure very similar to the Beck Depression Inventory. As with life satisfaction the studies reviewed did not analyze spirituality as a distinct construct. Researchers did not acknowledge spirituality's potential influence on depressive symptoms. The current study proposes to examine the influence of spirituality in addition to religiosity on psychological well-being variables.

*Anxiety.* There is support in the extant literature for the influence of religiosity on anxiety. A number of studies have found that higher levels of religiosity are associated with lower levels of anxiety. For example, Koenig, Ford, George, Blazer, and Meador (1993) found that among younger (18-39 years old) study participants who were frequent church-goers rates of anxiety disorders were lower than they were for those who did not indicate that they were frequent church-goers. In the same study the researchers found that middle-aged (40-59 year old) participants who attended church frequently had lower rates of social phobia than their less

frequently attending peers; however, those effects faded when social support was controlled. Similarly, Williams, Larson, Buckler, Heckmann, and Pyle (1991) found that religious participation was associated with lower levels of psychological distress, serving as a buffer against the negative effects of stress on mental health. In the studies highlighted above, researchers chose to focus on religiosity to the exclusion of spirituality due to the difficulties inherent in operationalizing this complex construct. This trend in the literature is problematic because qualitative data often suggest the importance of spirituality, to Pagan women in particular (Adler, 1986; Carpenter, 1994). It is important that researchers begin to explore this meaningful construct, and the present investigation will be one of the first to treat both religiosity and spirituality in their own right as they relate to psychological well-being and mental health.

Life satisfaction, depression, and anxiety all have a long history of empirical association with religiosity (Koenig et al., 2012). However, spirituality's involvement with life satisfaction, depression, and anxiety is less clear. Spirituality's influence is often conflated with that of religiosity; however, there may be value in disaggregating each constructs influence on psychological well-being variables. For example, in one study, researchers found that for a sample of 167 predominantly Christian Black women spirituality predicted higher levels of mental health and life satisfaction over and above religiosity, with spirituality fully mediating the relationship between religiosity and the two psychological well-being outcomes (Reed & Neville, 2014). Due to the invisibility of Pagans in the psychology literature we do not know if or how psychological well-being is influenced by religiosity and spirituality for this population. Furthermore, the conflation of the two constructs makes it difficult to accurately determine the salutogenic effects of each construct as distinct from the other. Given the confusion between the two constructs, the positive (or negative) mental health effects of spirituality could be falsely

attributed to religiosity, or vice versa. Also, the salutogenic effects that the constructs actually have in common remain unclear due to conflation of the constructs. Without additional investigation we remain in the dark regarding the associations among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being for this marginalized population.

### **Methods in Psychological Well-Being**

The examinations of psychological correlates to religiosity and spirituality cited above were quantitative in nature; none of them were combined with qualitative methods in order to address complex research questions that consider the meaning that a group of Pagan women draw from religiosity and spirituality. Although a mixed methods approach was not a part of the research agendas driving those studies, as we move forward, mixed methods approaches could afford the field an opportunity to cultivate more complete understandings of religiosity and spirituality as they relate to psychological well-being. Given that so little is known and understood about religiosity and spirituality among Pagan women, and the relation of the two constructs to psychological well-being the literature will benefit from a mixed method study that allows deeper exploration of this topic. The present study seeks to make an initial step toward this important objective.

### **Rationale and Purpose**

As the literature evidences, religion and spirituality are important aspects of people's lives, and each has a long history of positive association with psychological well-being outcomes including depression, anxiety, and life satisfaction. Consequently, psychological scholarship needs continued exploration of religiosity and spirituality, and their influence on well-being. Specifically, an examination of the distinct psychological correlates of religiosity and those of spirituality is warranted given Pagans' diversity of philosophical commitments, beliefs, and

practices as well as Paganism's long and often tense relationship with organized religion (Barner-Barry, 2005; Carpenter, 1994). Moreover, a selection of studies in the literature examined religiosity without reference to spirituality as it relates to well-being outcomes such as depression, life satisfaction, and distress; however, the same is not true of spirituality which may be the more salient of the two constructs for Pagans based on the literature (Barner-Barry, 2005; Berger, 1999; Carpenter, 1994).

With regard to methodological considerations, as noted previously, the literature on religiosity and spirituality includes both qualitative and quantitative studies, evidencing the importance of both approaches to understanding religiosity and spirituality, and relating these important constructs to global mental health and life satisfaction for Pagan women. However, no studies were found that mix methods. Given my interest in gaining a more complete and deeper understanding of how Pagan women from religiously and spiritually diverse backgrounds define religiosity and spirituality, and how psychological well-being (i.e., global mental health and life satisfaction) in turn is related to religiosity and spirituality, this study's aims are best represented by the *complementarity* purpose which aims to elaborate and enhance understanding, where the results of a particular method (e.g., open-ended/qualitative responses) are used to illuminate or clarify those of another method (e.g., quantitative survey data) thereby increasing the interpretability of the overall results (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989).

To address the conceptual and methodological gaps in the literature, first, the present study addresses how a sample of Pagan women defines religiosity and spirituality. Second, the current investigation examined religiosity and spirituality in relation to two facets of psychological well-being - global mental health and life satisfaction - in order to determine the relationship among the constructs. Third, the present study used a mixed methods approach to

synthesize the two lines of inquiry detailed in the first two objectives, with the aim of enhancing what we know about Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality, and the relationship of these constructs to psychological well-being.

Four specific research questions guided this investigation:

1. What are Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality?
2. Are there distinct religious-spiritual groups of Pagan women?
3. In what ways do the emergent religious-spiritual groups differ on measures of mental health and life satisfaction, if any?
4. In what ways do Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality differ by religious-spiritual group, if at all?

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

#### **Mixed Method Design**

A convergent mixed methods design was employed (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011), as shown for the present investigation in Figure 1. Due to the nature of the research questions quantitative methods were prioritized. By prioritizing quantitative methods over qualitative methods, some of the nuance that may have been captured by the qualitative methods may have been lost. In accordance with convergent mixed methods design as articulated by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011), the design consisted of four steps. In step 1, data collection for quantitative and qualitative strands was completed simultaneously. In step 2, the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately. In step 3, I transformed the qualitative data in order to facilitate comparison of qualitative and quantitative results. In step 4, the transformed and merged quantitative and qualitative results were interpreted in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the interplay between religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being. Inferences drawn from the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study were integrated in the discussion in order to provide a holistic interpretation of the findings. The convergent mixed methods design was selected because it allows the results yielded by two different methods to be placed in conversation with one another in order to enrich and enhance the researchers' understanding of the findings of both methods (i.e., the complementarity purpose).

#### **Participants**

A religiously and spiritually diverse sample of 246 women was recruited. Participants self-identified as Pagan (42%,  $n = 103$ ), Wiccan (30%,  $n = 73$ ), Reconstructionist (6%,  $n = 15$ ), Witch (6%,  $n = 15$ ), or a combination thereof (16%,  $n = 40$ ) and ranged in age from 18 to 73 ( $M$

= 44,  $SD = 11.5$ ). The vast majority of participants were White (99.4%). In addition, 44% self-identified as heterosexual, 18% as bisexual, 31% as lesbian, and 7% as questioning.

### **Quantitative Measures**

*Religiosity.* The Religious Commitment Index (RCI; Worthington et al., 2003) is a 10-item scale. It does not share dimensions with the spirituality measure used in this study, thus it is distinct. The RCI assesses religious participation and values across a variety of religious activities. Items include: “My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life”; “It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and reflection”; and “I enjoy working in the activities of my religious affiliation.” A Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all true of me*) to 5 (*Totally true of me*) is used to score the RCI. Higher total scores are indicative of greater levels of religiosity.

Worthington and his colleagues (2003), with a racially diverse, mostly women sample, found a one-factor solution for the data using principal components analysis (with varimax rotation). The researchers reported that higher levels of self-reported salvation as well as higher scores on a single-item measure of religious participation were significantly correlated to higher scores on the RCI. Cronbach alpha estimates of .92 to .96 were obtained with adult, predominantly Christian, gender-balanced samples (Lopez, Riggs, Pollard, & Hook, 2011; Walker, Worthington, Gartner, Gorsuch, & Hanshew, 2011). Internal consistency estimates were acceptable for the present study ( $\alpha = .88$ ).

*Spirituality.* The Spirituality Scale (SS; Delaney, 2005) is a 22-item measure that assesses participants' lifestyle choices, beliefs, and practices across three subscales: Relationships (6 items; e.g., “My faith in a Higher Power/Universal Intelligence helps me cope during challenges in my life.”), Eco-Awareness (13 items; e.g., “I believe that nature should be respected.”), and

Self-Discovery (4 items; e.g., “I find meaning in my life experiences.”). Based on the growing body of scholarly Pagan Studies literature, this scale was selected to assess spirituality because it captures human as well as non-human relationships and it also addresses the meaning-making process, both of which are important aspects of earth-centered pantheistic, and polytheistic spiritualities. Moreover, this scale’s limited conceptual and linguistic overlap with the selected religiosity measure is critical given that religiosity and spirituality are considered to be related but distinct constructs. The SS is scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly agree*). Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of spirituality. Delaney (2005) found, using principal factor analysis with an oblique rotation method, that a three-factor solution fit the data best among a mostly White women sample. Cronbach alpha estimates ranged from .81 to .94 on the three substances among a predominantly Christian sample of Black women (Reed & Neville, 2014). For the same sample, a Cronbach alpha estimate of .90 was obtained. For the present study internal consistency estimates on the three subscales ranged from .77 to .89 with an estimate of .91 for the full scale.

*Psychological well-being.* The Mental Health Inventory-5 (MHI-5; Stewart, Hays, & Ware, 1988) assesses both psychological distress and psychological well-being using 5 brief items (e.g., “How much of the time, during the past month, have you been a nervous person”). This measure was selected because it contains clear and accessible items and because it broadly captures both well-being and distress. The MHI is scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*All of the time*) to 6 (*None of the time*). Higher scores indicate greater psychological well-being. Cronbach alpha estimates ranged from .88 to .89 among predominantly Christian, gender-balanced samples (McHorney & Ware, 1995; Stewart et al., 1988). The internal consistency estimate for the present study was .82.

With a socio-economically diverse, gender balanced, non-patient population ages 16-64, McCabe and his colleagues (1996) found acceptable internal consistency estimates as well as acceptable convergent and discriminant validity estimates for the MHI-5. The researchers found that the MHI-5 correlated significantly with the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) and it performed psychometrically as well as the GHQ-12 in the study.

*Life satisfaction.* The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) has been extensively employed over the three decades. The SWLS measures global contentment with life (e.g., “In most ways my life is close to my ideal”) in 5 short items. The SWLS was selected because it has been used extensively with a wide range of populations. SWLS items are scored on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). Cronbach alpha estimates have ranged from .79 to .89 (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The internal consistency estimate for the present investigation was .86.

Lucas, Diener, and Suh (1996) found support for convergent validity of the SWLS with a single-item measure of life satisfaction using multitrait-multimethod matrix analysis. In addition the researchers distinguished positive and negative affect and also optimism and self-esteem from life satisfaction thereby supporting discriminant validity for the SWLS. Pavot and Diener (1993) found support for construct validity for the measure as well by showing a negative correlation with the Beck Depression Inventory and other measures of distress.

### **Qualitative/Open-Ended Measure**

*Open-ended questionnaire.* In order to ascertain participants' personal definitions of religiosity and spirituality, two open-ended questions were asked: “Please give us your personal definition of religiosity (spirituality). To help us better understand your definition, please write at least three sentences and be as specific as possible.” One question focused on religiosity and the

other on spirituality. Two questions designed to capture participants' subjective levels of religiosity and spirituality were also included. The two questions were: “Based on your own definition of religiosity, how religious are you?” and “Based on your own definition of spirituality, how spiritual are you?” Each item was scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all religious/spiritual*) to 5 (*Very religious/spiritual*). These two self-ratings were included in order to complement the standardized measures of religiosity and spirituality.

### **Demographic Questionnaire**

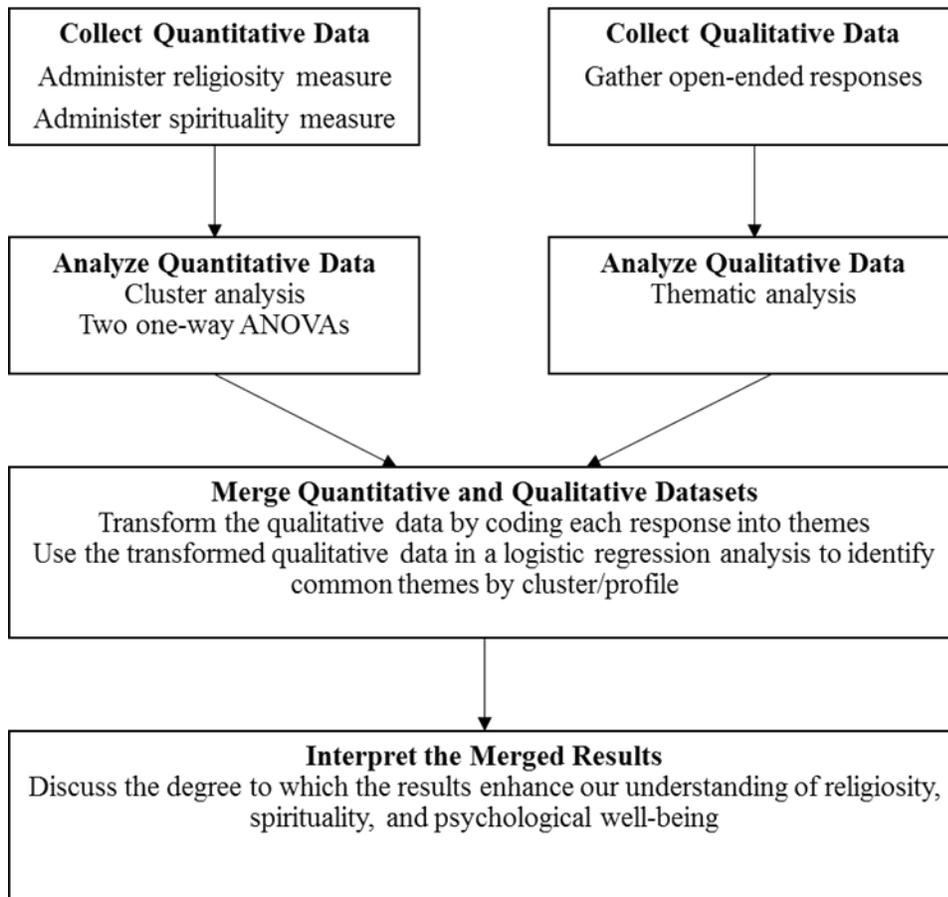
*Demographic information.* Questions regarding age, gender, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational attainment, place of residence, and religious and spiritual affiliation were asked in a brief questionnaire specially designed for this study.

### **Procedure**

All participants completed four quantitative measures (a religiosity measure, a spirituality measure, a global measure of mental health, and a measure of life satisfaction), two qualitative measures (an open-ended questionnaire soliciting personal definitions of religiosity and spirituality), and a demographic questionnaire. The total 61-item questionnaire was administered via the Internet using Survey Monkey. The questionnaire was composed of 43 Likert-type scaled questions, two open-ended short answer questions, two Likert-typed scaled questions asking participants to indicate their level of religiosity and spirituality based on their own definitions of religiosity and spirituality, and 14 demographic items. The entire survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The researcher selected a diverse group of contacts from her spiritual and professional networks in order to recruit study participants. A mailing list was then created consisting of the researchers' colleagues. In addition, the researcher distributed the survey through Circle Sanctuary's mailing list. Circle Sanctuary is a legally recognized Wiccan church

based in Wisconsin. A recruitment email was sent introducing the study and containing the survey link. The initial group of 79 individuals on the researcher's mailing list was encouraged to forward the message within their networks. When participants clicked on the link within the recruitment email, they were immediately directed to the consent form. The form clearly stated that participation was voluntary and anonymous. No identifying information was recorded that could be linked to the participants' individual responses. Following the informed consent, participants began the survey. Those who completed the survey were entered into a raffle for a chance to win one of five \$50 cash awards. Institutional review board approval was obtained, prior to data collection.

## Figures



*Figure 1.* The convergent mixed method design as applied to the present investigation.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Qualitative Analysis

##### **What are Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality?**

I used thematic analysis (Aronson, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify patterns in participants' definitions of religiosity and spirituality. Both Aronson (1994) and Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that the process is iterative. Braun and Clarke recommended several close readings of the data set in order to gain familiarity with it prior to beginning a conscious search for patterns and points of interest. After gaining familiarity, I identified potential codes, recording words, ideas, and patterns that recurred in the data set. Continued engagement with the data set revealed patterns among the codes and related extracts. I refined the initial set of themes for each construct in consultation with my doctoral research advisor, and a religiously and spiritually diverse team of graduate students. Aronson (1994) recommended that participants offer feedback but this was not possible considering the web-based design of the study; instead, a Pagan leader was consulted. Specifically, once the themes, definitions, and examples were developed, a self-identified Pagan with over 25 years of experience with Pagan philosophy, belief, practice, and leadership offered feedback on the themes which were then revised by the primary researcher.

After the review process, themes were finalized for each construct and each theme was coded as either present or absent for each participant by two independent Pagan women raters. Coders were trained on the definitions of each theme and given examples (i.e., extracts). Once the coders demonstrated understanding of the themes they were asked to code the data set. When each coder completed their analysis, Cohen's (1960) kappa statistics were calculated for the

religiosity and spirituality themes. Of the religiosity themes the Kappa coefficients for Adherence to Beliefs (.63), Adherence to Practices (.65), Shared Beliefs and Practices (.68) were below .7. Two religiosity themes obtained Kappa coefficients above .70: Affiliation with an Organized Religion (.76) and Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) (.95). For the spirituality themes, kappa coefficients for Self-Discovery (.34), Personal Connection to Humans and the Natural World (.38), Belief in Magic and/or Energy (.66), and Awareness of and/or Connection to the Unseen World (.68) were below .70. The Kappa coefficients for Personal Connection to (a) Higher Power(s) (.75) and Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) (.94) were above .7. The two raters met and through discussion acknowledged that their own perspectives on religiosity and spirituality influenced how they read and understood the open-ended responses. For example, one rater consistently over-coded for Personal Connection to Humans and the Natural World because she has a strongly earth-centered, planetary stewardship focus within her own practice and so she readily observed that orientation within Pagan women's responses. The other rater was aware of the Self-Discovery theme in her approach to her own spirituality and so she overcompensated; therefore under-coding that theme within the dataset. Following discussion, the two raters resolved disagreements regarding the codes and reached consensus for each open-ended response.

The five religiosity themes and six spirituality themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the participants' responses to the open ended questions are detailed below. One theme was shared by the two constructs. Frequencies of endorsement for each of the religiosity and spirituality themes as well as exemplar responses are provided in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.

### ***Shared religiosity and spirituality themes.***

*Belief in (a) Higher Power(s).* Definitions containing this theme posited that belief in God(s), Goddess(es), or other Higher Power(s) is an essential component of religiosity and spirituality. One Pagan woman wrote, “[Religiosity is] the understanding and acceptance of a Mother Goddess. The honoring of our Mother Goddess thanking her for my gifts, and asking for her assistance.” Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) was endorsed by 27% and 51% of participants in their definitions of religiosity and spirituality, respectively. Fourteen percent of participants endorsed this theme for both religiosity and spirituality. Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) was defined similarly in participants’ definitions of both religiosity and spirituality; however, in their definitions of spirituality, participants were more likely to list multiple potential Higher Powers in which a person might believe. For example, a participant stated that “[s]pirituality is being in touch with God, Goddess, or Lifeforce.” In addition, spirituality definitions were more likely to employ open and personal language (e.g., “being in touch”) that pointed to forming a personal attachment to a divine being.

### ***Religiosity themes.***

*Adherence to beliefs.* This was the most frequently endorsed religiosity theme, appearing in 57% of women’s responses. This theme emphasized the presence of a belief system as a key element of religiosity. This could include a set of personal beliefs with religious significance and/or acceptance of prescribed dogma. What one believes to be true is central to this theme. For example, one participant declared that “[r]eligiosity is how much a person identifies with a religion or belief system.” The participant went on to say that “[religiosity] can apply to Christian/Catholic dimensions, Buddhism, Paganism, or any other religious system. Religiosity describes the amount of individual belief and action in the person's life.” Participants who

endorsed this theme did not relegate the presence of a belief system to organized religion. Any system of belief, whether personal or shared with a larger religious institution, was sufficient to identify religiosity within a person.

*Adherence to practices.* Definitions containing this theme (48%) asserted that participation in prescribed religious services, practices, rituals, and other activities is an important feature of religiosity. This includes attendance at religious functions, engaging in prayer or meditation, studying religious texts, etc. For example, one woman described religiosity “dedication to one’s religion.” She went on to write, “For me this includes conducting or attending religious rites (private, small group, or public), prayer, reading about religion, talking about your religion with others of the same and different religions, and living by the tenets professed by your religion.”

*Affiliation with an organized religion.* This theme emphasized the rules and structures of religion. It posited that a core element of religiosity is association with a religious institution. Affiliation with an Organized Religion emerged in 28% of the definitions and was best illustrated by one participant who declared: “I think of religion/religiosity as following a mainstream religion. It is rather structured [and has] lots of rule. [E]ach thinks their way is the only way.”

*Shared beliefs and practices.* This theme emerged in 14% of the definitions offered by study participants. Definitions that incorporated this theme centered on the collectivity or group orientation of religious beliefs and practices, typically expressed in the context of a congregation or another religious group or community. For example, one participant wrote:

Religiosity is the articulation of shared system of belief involving deities or higher powers through shared practices, symbolism, and identity label(s). It does not require

adherence to a set of written doctrine, but to a set of shared principles or a moral code pledged by those observing the particular religion. It's also expressing these beliefs in a group setting and in everyday life.

### **Spirituality themes.**

*Self-discovery.* Participants who endorsed this theme (42%) characterized spirituality as primarily focused a person's process of self-discovery, self-development, and/or self-growth. The individual is a key aspect of spirituality in this theme (e.g., "Spirituality is an inner path which leads a person to discovering themselves and their purpose through the aid of Deity.").

*Personal connection to (a) Higher Power(s).* Participants who endorsed this theme emphasized a personal connection with a higher power or higher powers. The importance of having a close personal relationship with the divine was stressed. Thirty-four percent of participants endorsed this theme. One participant offered the following representative example: "It [spirituality] is my relationship with God/Goddess/Spirit and my understanding of my connectedness to all that is."

*Personal connection to humans and the natural world.* Participants who endorsed this theme defined spirituality as having a focus on one's relationships with and connections to other humans and to the natural world including but not limited to planet Earth as a whole, animals, plants, and other aspects of the environment. One woman explained that spirituality from her perspective is "[c]onnectivity to the world around you. How you view others including animals are connected to you and how that connects to a higher power or purpose."

*Awareness of and connection to the unseen world.* Those who endorsed this theme in their definitions of spirituality (15%) articulated awareness of and connection to the non-corporeal and/or immaterial, including but not limited to animal spirits, plant spirits, astral

entities, guardian spirits, and the spirits of the dead. Definitions containing this theme were characterized by intuitive awareness of or mystical connection with myriad spirits and beings that often exist beyond the visible world. For example, “[r]eliance on the supernatural facets of life - whether in angels, demons, God, or even those things within ourselves that help us to see ourselves connected to all things - yoga for example.”

*Belief in magic and/or energy.* Definitions containing this theme (8%) described spirituality as belief in the various energies that pervade the Universe, energies that can sometimes be detected, accessed, and/or manipulated by human beings (e.g., “Spirituality is connection with the Universal energy on all levels...including mentally, emotionally, psychically, and physically.”).

## **Quantitative Data Analyses**

### **Preliminary analysis.**

Before statistical analyses for the quantitative data were completed, missing values for the study variables were replaced using the series mean default option in SPSS. Missing data ranged from a low of 2% to a high of 8% for the study variables. Following missing data replacement, the data were examined for skewness, kurtosis, and outliers. One outlier was identified and removed from the dataset. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations were calculated and are reported in Table 3.

### **Are there distinct religious-spiritual groups of Pagan women?**

A cluster analysis was completed in order to address the second research question because it allows identification of groups or clusters of Pagan women based on their scores on measures of religiosity and spirituality. Specifically, scores on the RCI and the three subscales of the SS (i.e., Self-Discovery, Relationships, and Eco-Awareness) were standardized and then

subjected to this analysis in order to determine if there are unique groups of Pagan women with a particular constellation of religious and spiritual characteristics. Cluster analysis was selected over and above other clustering techniques (i.e., latent class analysis) because it has been found to yield the most distinctiveness between clusters as well as homogeneity within clusters (Eshghi, Haughton, Legrand, Skaletsky, & Woolford, 2011). Clusters were constructed using a two-step process recommended by Gordon (1999). As a part of that two-step process, a hierarchical cluster analysis was completed using Squared-Euclidean distance to maximize between-group differences and Ward's hierarchical agglomerative clustering method to minimize within-group differences (Ward, 1963). As recommended by Aldenderfer and Blashfield (1984), in order to interpret the cluster solution fusion coefficients were then examined for a significant "jump" in their values, because a "jump" indicates that dissimilar groups had been merged. In conjunction with the fusion coefficients, the dendrogram was also heuristically examined. Cluster solutions ranging from two to four emerged from this process. Each possible solution was then evaluated based on conceptual distinction as well as interpretive value. Based on the above criteria, the three-cluster solution was selected.

A non-hierarchical K-means cluster analysis was then conducted with three clusters specified: Disengaged, Engaged, and Divided. The Disengaged cluster represented study participants whose scores fell below the mean on both religiosity and spirituality measures as compared to other study participants, whereas the Engaged cluster described study participants whose scores were above the mean on both religiosity and spirituality measures as compared to other study participants. Participants in the Divided cluster showed a split pattern in that their scores on the religiosity measure fell below the mean and their scores on the spirituality measure were above the mean as compared to other study participants.

The Disengaged cluster contained 77 (31%) Pagan women, the Engaged cluster contained 116 (47%), and the Divided cluster contained 53 (22%). To help validate this three-cluster solution, two one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted comparing participants' self-ratings of their levels of religiosity and spirituality based on their personal definitions of each construct as presented in the open-ended data. Statistically significant differences were found among the group means for both religiosity [ $F(2, 240) = 35.93, p = .000, \eta^2 = .23$ ] and spirituality [ $F(2, 239) = 14.57, p = .000, \eta^2 = .11$ ], thereby lending support to the three-cluster solution. In post-hoc comparisons statistically significant differences were detected among all pairs for *religiosity*, with the Engaged group scoring the highest ( $M = 3.77, SD = 1.27$ ); however, no statistically significant difference was detected between the Engaged and the Divided clusters on the subjective *spirituality* measure, though the Disengaged cluster was significantly different ( $M = 4.04, SD = .82$ ) from the other two ( $M = 4.60, SD = .72$  and  $M = 4.58, SD = .70$ , respectively).

Figure 2 visually depicts the average mean differences among each of the clusters on each of the three SS subscales and the RCI. Members of the first cluster, the religiously-spiritually Disengaged as compared to their peers, had mean RCI and SS subscale scores ranging from an average of .41 to .93 standard deviations below the total sample mean, where as members of the second cluster, the religiously-spiritually Engaged, had scores ranging from an average of .42 to .76 standard deviations above the total sample mean. Members of the final cluster, the religiously-spiritually Divided, had scores on the RCI that were an average of 1.1 standard deviations below the mean and scores on the SS subscales that ranged from an average of .15 to .49 standard deviations above the mean.

Members of the Disengaged cluster had mean scores of 31.01 ( $SD = 7.71$ ), 18.42 ( $SD = 2.00$ ), 30.52 ( $SD = 2.11$ ), and 61.29 ( $SD = 6.38$ ) on the RCI and the Self-Discovery, Relationships, and Eco-Awareness subscales, respectively. This cluster's mean score on the RCI was in the upper range of possible scores on this measure suggesting that this group identifies as religious despite scoring below the sample mean. Research by Worthington and colleagues (2003) suggests that the mean RCI score for the general U.S. population is 26 ( $SD = 12$ ) with scores one standard deviation or more above the mean indicating high religiosity. By this standard, the Disengaged cluster qualifies as religious, but not highly religious, as compared to the general U.S. population. The Disengaged cluster's mean score on the spirituality measure indicates that participants who were members of this cluster identified as moderately spiritual, with scores in the higher range of possible scores on this measure.

Members of the Engaged group had higher mean scores of 41.62 ( $SD = 4.72$ ), 22.16 ( $SD = 1.67$ ), 33.85 ( $SD = 1.70$ ), and 72.83 ( $SD = 3.89$ ) on the RCI and the Self-Discovery, Relationships, and Eco-Awareness subscales, respectively. On average, members of the Engaged group are more spiritual and more religious than their Disengaged counterparts. Those participants in the Engaged group were more than one standard deviation above the projected general U.S. population mean given by Worthington and his colleagues (2003). Consequently, Pagan women in the Engaged group qualified as highly religious as compared to both the Engaged and the Divided groups. Similarly, the spirituality measure indicated that Engaged group members identified as highly spiritual as well.

Members in the Divided cluster had a mean score on the RCI (24.98,  $SD = 5.79$ ) that was lower than either of the other two groups; however, their scores on the Self-Discovery ( $M = 22.28$ ,  $SD = 1.55$ ), Relationships ( $M = 33.40$ ,  $SD = 1.90$ ), and Eco-Awareness ( $M = 69.45$ ,  $SD =$

5.48) subscales of the SS were comparable to those of the Engaged group. Members of the Divided cluster endorsed significantly lower levels of religiosity than their counterparts, maintaining scores comparable to predominately secular groups examined in studies by Worthington and his colleagues (2003). Scores on the spirituality measure for the Divided group were comparable to those endorsed by members of the Engaged group but higher than the scores obtained by the Disengaged group.

Demographic data for each cluster is presented in Table 4. Of the three clusters examined in this study, the Divided group had more members who identified as diverse in sexual orientation (32.1%) with greater educational attainment (98.1% obtaining a college degree or higher) and higher socioeconomic status (60.3% in the middle class or above) as compared to the other two clusters. Fewer members of the Divided cluster identified as Wiccan (22.6%) as compared to the other two clusters. Also, fewer members of the Engaged group identified as Pagan (37.1%) as compared to the other two clusters. These demographic differences indicate diversity among Pagan women with regard to religious and spiritual affiliations, and with regard to various demographic variables. Further study is warranted.

**In what ways do the emergent religious-spiritual groups differ on measures of mental health and life satisfaction, if any?**

To determine if the clusters of Pagan women differed significantly on mental health and life satisfaction outcomes, two one-way ANOVAs were conducted. The emergent religious-spiritual clusters were the independent variable with mental health and life satisfaction as the dependent variables, respectively. Results of both one-way ANOVAs are summarized in Table 5.

ANOVA results indicated statistically significant differences on mental health [ $F(2, 140.82) = 10.38, p = .000, \eta^2 = .07$ ] and life satisfaction [ $F(2, 243) = 15.39, p = .000, \eta^2 = .11$ ].

When testing for differences among the cluster means for the mental health outcome variable, the Welch test was completed in order to adjust for heteroscedasticity. For post-hoc comparisons the Games-Howell test was conducted on the one-way ANOVA for mental health. As given in Table 5, results of the test indicated that the Disengaged cluster was significantly different from both the Engaged and Divided clusters; however, there was no statistically significant difference detected between the Engaged and Divided clusters. Post-hoc testing for specific differences in cluster means on the life satisfaction outcome measure employed Tukey's HSD statistic. Results indicated the same pattern of statistical significance in which the Disengaged cluster reported lower means than did the other two clusters with the Engaged and Divided clusters showing no statistically significant difference in means between them.

**In what ways do Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality differ by religious-spiritual profile, if at all?**

A series of logistic regressions were calculated in order to determine whether the presence or absence of each theme was predicted by participants' cluster membership. Before conducting the analyses, as is consistent with convergent mixed method designs with a complementarity purpose, the open-ended responses were transformed by coding each response for the presence or absence of the five religiosity and six spirituality themes (Caracelli & Greene, 1993; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Data were transformed in order to facilitate comparing qualitative data (themes) and quantitative data (the three clusters). For each cluster, two logistic regression models were created: one for the religiosity themes and one for the spirituality themes. Three of the six models were statistically significant.

Among the religiosity themes, as indicated by significant Wald tests (Agresti, 2007) on the logistic regression models (Table 6), membership in the Divided group significantly

predicted a decreased likelihood of the Affiliation with an Organized Religion theme ( $\chi^2_{(5)} = 38.07, p < .001$ ) and Adherence to Practices theme ( $\chi^2_{(5)} = 4.70, p < .05$ ), and an increased likelihood of the Shared Beliefs and Practices theme ( $\chi^2_{(5)} = 8.13, p < .01$ ). Also, membership in the Engaged group significantly predicted an increased likelihood of the Affiliation with an Organized Religion theme ( $\chi^2_{(5)} = 21.27, p < .001$ ) and a decreased likelihood of the Shared Beliefs and Practices theme ( $\chi^2_{(5)} = 5.50, p < .05$ ). Among the spirituality themes, as indicated by significant Wald tests on the logistic regression models (Table 7), membership in the Divided group significantly predicted a decreased likelihood of the Self-Discovery theme ( $\chi^2_{(6)} = 6.65, p < .01$ ).

## Tables

Table 1

*Frequencies of Endorsement for Religiosity Themes*

Theme	Example	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Adherence to Beliefs	“[Religiosity is a] set of beliefs that follow a set of rules or morals made by [one] or many higher beings.”	141	57
Adherence to Practices	“Religiosity, in my own words, is a spiritual practice that involves a doctrine, faith, and active participation in the form of meditation, rituals, ceremonies, and observances.”	118	48
Affiliation with an Organized Religion	“[Religiosity is a] system of religious study or worship as set forth by a particular Faith [sic] or Sect [sic] and practice[d] by its follower.”	69	28
Belief in (a) Higher Power(s)	“[Religiosity is a] strong belief and contentment in a higher power around me at all times.”	67	27
Shared Beliefs and Practices	“Religion is the perpetuation of a group identity which includes spiritual and ethical thoughts, including behavioral rules and manners of expression of religious devotion.”	34	14

Table 2

*Frequencies of Endorsement for Spirituality Themes*

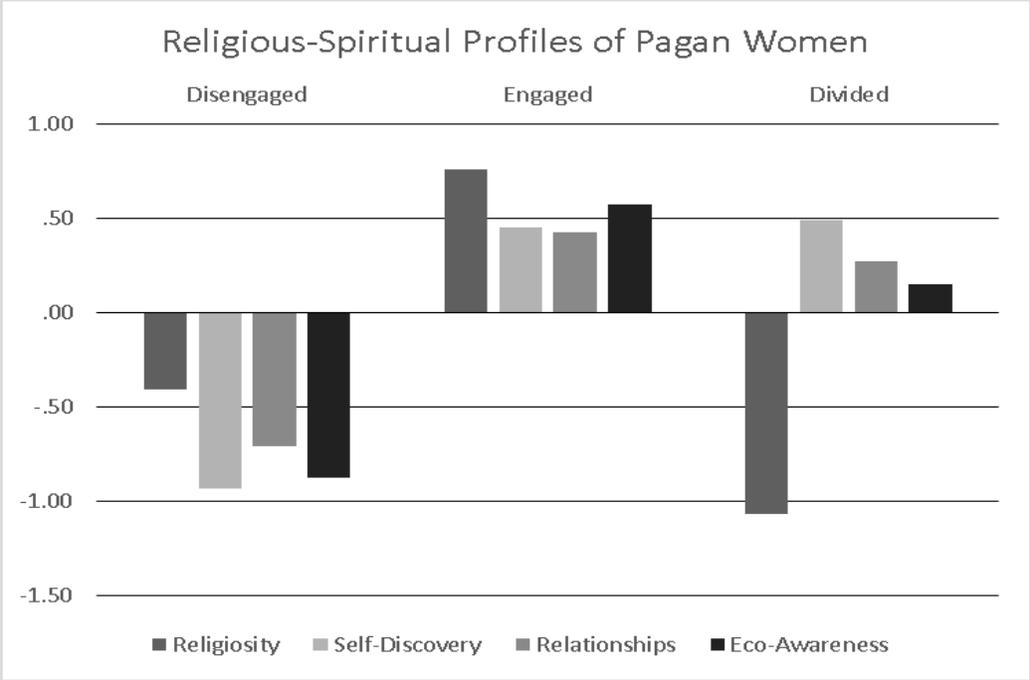
Theme	Example	<i>f</i>	%
Belief in (a) Higher Power(s)	“Spirituality is to me the part of one's self that believes in some one or thing higher than one's self.”	125	51
Self-Discovery	“[Spirituality is c]ontemplation of one's place in the world and/or in the spiritual world. [It is s]tudy and practice intended to nurture or improve one's spirit or soul.”	104	42
Personal Connection to (a) Higher Power(s)	“[Spirituality is y]our personal relationship with the divine.”	84	34
Personal Connection to Humans and the Natural World	“Everything on earth has a spirit and as humans we have a responsibility to care for those spirits. Learning and gathering together enables us to help reach a better understanding of our part of the larger scheme of life.”	63	26
Awareness of and Connection to the Unseen World	“Spirituality includes communing with deceased people that you knew or did not know. I think it is being aware of spirits unseen.”	36	15
Belief in Magic and/or Energy	“Spirituality is the experience of being connected with, and experiencing of the energy of the planet, our world and all of the creatures in it. It is a willingness to seek the unknowable mystery in a personal way.”	20	8

Table 3

*Zero-Order Intercorrelations, Means, and Standard Deviations among Variables*

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	M	SD
1. Age	--										44.13	11.5
2. Educational	.08	--									5.69	1.93
3. Religiosity Item	-.16*	-.18**	--								3.15	1.39
4. RCI	-.06	-.03	.55**	--							34.72	9.13
5. Spirituality Item	.23**	.09	.14*	.13	--						4.42	0.79
6. SS Total	.16**	.00	.14*	.39**	.41**	--					122.22	10.26
7. SS Self-Discovery	.12	.03	.05	.17**	.32**	.70**	--				21.02	2.48
8. SS Relationships	.03	.03	.04	.23**	.18**	.73**	.49**	--			32.71	2.39
9. SS Eco-Awareness	.17**	-.01	.17**	.43**	.42**	.95**	.50**	.54**	--		68.49	7.18
10. MHI-5	.15*	.01	-.09	-.02	.02	.28**	.45**	.26**	.15*	--	23.41	4.52
11. SWLS	.03	.02	.01	0.1	.04	.37**	.54**	.35**	.22**	.62**	25.31	6.02

Note. RCI = Religious Commitment Index; SS = Spirituality Scale; MHI-5 = Mental Health Inventory; SWLS = Satisfaction With Life Scale. Educational was scored on a scale from 1 to 7 (1 = Elementary School to 7 = Graduate or Professional Degree). Both the religiosity and spirituality single items were scored on a scale from 1 to 6. Possible scores on the RCI ranged from 10 to 50, on the SS Total from 23 to 138, on the MHI-5 from 5 to 30, and on the SWLS from 5 to 35. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .



*Figure 2.* The three religious-spiritual clusters of Pagan women with cluster means on the Religious Commitment Index and the three subscales of the Spirituality Scale.

Table 4

*Demographic Data for the Disengaged, Engaged, and Divided Clusters of Pagan Women*

	Disengaged Group ( <i>n</i> = 77)	Engaged Group ( <i>n</i> = 116)	Divided Group ( <i>n</i> = 53)
Age <i>M</i> (SD)	42.35 (1.35)	43.67 (1.01)	47.72 (1.43)
Sexual Orientation (%)			
Bisexual	20.8	22.4	24.5
Lesbian	5.2	3.4	3.8
Heterosexual	72.7	73.3	67.9
Questioning	1.3	0.9	3.8
Education (%)			
High School	6.5	12.0	1.9
College	67.5	55.2	52.0
Graduate School	26.0	32.8	46.1
SES (%)			
Lower Class	26.0	13.1	18.9
Working Class	31.1	34.8	20.8
Middle Class	36.4	44.3	52.8
Upper Middle Class	6.5	7.8	7.5
Religion (%)			
Pagan	44.1	37.1	47.2
Wiccan	31.2	31.9	22.6
Witch	6.5	6.0	5.7
Reconstructionist	5.2	6.9	5.7
Pagan Combination	5.2	10.3	9.4
Pagan and Other	7.8	7.8	9.4

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Group Differences on Psychological Well-being Outcome Variables*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Cluster A</i>		<i>Cluster B</i>		<i>Cluster C</i>		Tukey HSD/Games- Howell <sup>a</sup> <i>p</i> < .05
	<i>Disengaged</i>		<i>Engaged</i>		<i>Divided</i>		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Mental Health (MHI-5)	21.17	4.60	23.13	4.23	24.28	3.19	A<B, C
Life Satisfaction (SWLS)	21.34	6.62	26.08	6.04	26.00	5.81	A<B, C

Note, <sup>a</sup> Commas separate letters of that were not significantly different from one another.

Table 6  
Predicting Religiosity Themes by Cluster

Cluster <sup>a</sup>	Belief in (a) Higher Power(s)			Adherence to Beliefs			Adherence to Practices			Organized Religion			Shared Beliefs and Practices		
	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR
Disengaged	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Engaged	0.11	0.30	0.90	0.15	0.29	0.86	-0.04	0.28	1.04	1.67***	0.36	0.19	-1.04**	0.44	2.83
Divided	-0.39	0.43	1.48	-0.02	0.39	1.02	-0.80*	0.37	2.23	-2.47**	0.40	11.84	1.74*	0.61	0.18

Note. <sup>a</sup> The logistic regression model for the indicated cluster was not statistically significant; therefore, parameter estimates for the model were not reported here. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 7  
Predicting Spirituality Themes by Cluster

Cluster <sup>a</sup>	Belief in (a) Higher Power(s)			Connection to (a) Higher			Connection to Nature			Awareness of/ Connection to the			Self-Discovery			Belief in Magic/Energy		
	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR	$\beta$	SE	OR
Disengaged	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Engaged	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Divided	0.40	0.45	0.67	0.31	0.51	0.74	-0.66	0.35	1.93	-0.12	0.45	1.12	-.84*	0.33	2.31	0.16	0.59	0.85

Note. <sup>a</sup> The logistic regression model for the indicated cluster was not statistically significant; therefore, parameter estimates for the model were not reported here. \*  $p < .01$ .

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

Using a convergent mixed method design, the present investigation constituted a preliminary inquiry into Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality, as well as an initial examination of the relationship among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being. Specifically, three distinct religious-spiritual groups of Pagan women – Disengaged, Engaged, and Divided – emerged and were found to differ significantly on measures of mental health and life satisfaction. The religiously-spiritually Disengaged cluster reported significantly lower mental health and life satisfaction. Further, the themes that emerged from Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and spirituality showed some relationship to their religious-spiritual group membership which was based on participants' responses to accepted measures of religiosity and spirituality within the field. These findings indicate that different groups among Pagan women define religiosity and spirituality differently, endorse religiosity and spirituality at significantly different levels, and have significantly different mental health and life satisfaction outcomes.

Findings from the qualitative strand of the present study included a total of 11 themes: five for religiosity and six for spirituality. The religiosity themes included Adherence to Beliefs, Adherence to Practices, Affiliation with an Organized Religion, Belief in (a) Higher Power(s), and Shared Beliefs and Practices. Each theme highlighted a key aspect of religiosity as it was defined by the Pagan women who participated in this study. The religiosity themes were consistent with findings from previous studies among predominantly Christian samples (Zinnbauer et al., 1997). This implies that some Pagan women, at least in this sample, define religiosity similarly to their Christian counterparts. Given Paganism's socio-political roots as an

alternative religion in the United States, and as a direct reaction to tension between the mainstream and countercultural philosophies, that implication is not unexpected. This understanding may apply especially to some members of the Disengaged and Divided clusters. Interestingly, participants in this study generally rated themselves as moderately religious on the single-item self-rating measure of religiosity based on their own definition of the concept, which implies a subtle shift among Pagans toward religion as a meaningful concept that applies to Pagans as well as members of mainstream religions. This understanding may apply most strongly to the Engaged group who are potentially more invested than their peers in the social and political view of Paganism as a legitimate and valid religion.

Also noteworthy among the religiosity themes is the lower percentage of endorsement of the Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) theme compared to the other religiosity themes. In contrast, Zinnbauer and his colleagues (1997) found that belief in a Higher Power was endorsed over and above all other religiosity themes including adherence to institutional beliefs and practices among their predominantly Christian sample. Among the Pagan women in the present investigation, Adherence to Beliefs and Adherence to Practices were the top two themes that emerged from their personal definitions of religiosity. Although there are similarities between Pagan women's definitions of religiosity and the definitions given by Christian samples, there are apparent differences in the salience of those themes to Pagan women.

There was one theme that emerged from Pagan women's definitions of both religiosity and spirituality: Belief in (a) Higher Power(s). This theme was one of the least prevalent among the religiosity themes but was the most prevalent among the spirituality themes. When the theme Belief in (a) Higher Power(s) emerged from definitions of religiosity it often acknowledged a

singular divinity whereas endorsements of this theme that emerged from definitions of spirituality often accommodated polytheistic views of divinity and/or Goddess-centered views.

The Self-Discovery, Personal Connection to (a) Higher Power(s), Personal Connection to Humans and the Natural World, Awareness of and Connection to the Unseen World, and Belief in Magic and/or Energy themes found in this investigation were unique to spirituality. These qualitative findings support those from previous inquiries involving Pagan women participants (Adler, 1986; Carpenter, 1994). For example, using a semi-structured interview protocol, Carpenter (1994) found similar themes (e.g., experiences with animals, experiences with plants, experiences with “energy”, etc.). Adler (1986) also found similar themes in her survey of festival-going Pagans in the early 1980’s.

In comparison, some Pagan women identified similar spirituality categories as their predominantly Christian counterparts. For example, Geertsma and Cummings (2004) noted that their sample of predominantly White women approaching mid-life described spirituality as, in part, forming a relationship with the divine. One of the most frequently endorsed aspects of spirituality for both Pagan women and non-Pagans is belief in and/or a connection to (a) Higher Power(s). Other scholars have found similar results for spirituality (Geertsma & Cummings, 2004; Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Mattis, 2002).

There are however some differences between Pagan women’s and non-Pagans’ definitions of spirituality. For example, Zinnbauer and colleagues (1997) found that only 2% of their sample endorsed themes of spirituality as a path to self-growth and self-actualization; however, 42% of Pagan women in this study defined spirituality as a part of the self-discovery process. Also, Hodge and McGrew (2006) explored religiosity among a mostly Christian sample

of mental health professionals and found that their study participants attended to how spirituality applied directly to religion, whereas this category of definition did not emerge among the present study's sample of Pagan women. Hodge and McGrew (2006) also found that their sample noted culture and guidance as important aspects of spirituality, but neither of those themes emerged in the present investigation.

Differences in the endorsement frequencies of some existing spirituality and religiosity themes in the literature indicates that those themes may be less salient for Pagan women. For instance, where some spirituality and religiosity themes are absent among Pagan women it could indicate that the theme in question is irrelevant to Pagan conceptualizations of spirituality and religiosity, or those absent themes may be captured in an unexpected way by Pagan beliefs or concepts. To illustrate, in Hodge and McGrew's (2006) study some participants endorsed culture as an aspect of religion in its own right. However, Pagans might capture the concept of culture and its connection to religion using the Shared Beliefs and Practices religiosity theme identified in the present investigation. For Pagan women the Shared Beliefs and Practices theme emphasizes the group-oriented, communal aspect of religiosity. Pagan women might capture the connection of culture to religion by highlighting shared, communal beliefs and practices which are a facet of culture. Based on these findings, Pagans may think about religiosity and spirituality somewhat differently than their counterparts in other faiths.

The Disengaged cluster was composed of participants who had scores below the sample mean on religiosity and spirituality scales. Drawing upon the content of the scales used in the clustering procedure, members of the religiously-spiritually Disengaged group may be described as less participatory in religious activities, less attuned to nature and the divine, less connected to other people, and less focused on their inner resources than their Engaged and Divided

counterparts. Based on the logistical regression which united the qualitative and quantitative strands of the study, no themes emerged that particularly characterize this group of women in relation to the other two groups, but the analyses of variance did show that members of the Disengaged group were less mentally healthy and less satisfied with life than their Engaged and Divided counterparts. This finding is consonant with the literature. Life satisfaction and mental health have a long history of empirical association with religiosity (Koenig et al., 2012). The growing literature on spirituality's unique relationship to psychological well-being outcome variables also indicates that those who are less spiritual tend to score lower on life satisfaction and mental health measures than do their more spiritual counterparts, as was found among a sample of Black, predominantly Christian women (Reed & Neville, 2014). This suggests that the positive relationship between religiosity and spirituality, and psychological well-being holds across religious-spiritual affiliations. Whether Christian or Pagan higher levels of religiosity and/or spirituality are associated with greater psychological well-being.

The Engaged cluster group of Pagan women in this sample was distinct from the Disengaged group with mean scores markedly above the overall sample mean for both religiosity and spirituality. Findings suggest that Pagan women within this cluster are distinct from their Disengaged counterparts. They are actively involved in religious activities, attuned to nature and the divine, connected to others people, and focused on their inner resources. Members of the Engaged group were significantly more likely to include the Affiliation with an Organized Religion theme, but also significantly less likely to include the Shared Beliefs and Practices theme in their definitions of religiosity. The Engaged group of Pagans chose to articulate the structured aspect of religiosity rather than the group-focused aspect. As religious diversity in the U.S. continues to grow and more individuals become aware of that diversity, the Engaged

group's focus on structured religion may be indicative of a political investment in Paganism as a legitimate religious path, where religion is viewed as a concept that can apply meaningfully to all faiths, not only mainstream traditions. With regard to the psychological well-being outcomes of interest in this investigation, the Engaged group possessed significantly higher levels of mental health and life satisfaction compared to the Disengaged group, though there was no significant difference between the Engaged group and the Divided group.

The Divided group of Pagan women in this sample also possessed scores above the mean for spirituality; however, members of this group had scores well below the mean on the religiosity measure. Divided Pagan women may be characterized as religiously Disengaged but spiritually Engaged compared to their counterparts. They are disinvested in religious participation but remain connected and focused on spiritual convictions and commitments. Though the Divided Pagan women are conceptually different from their peers, there was no statistically significant difference between the mental health and life satisfaction of this group of Pagan women and the Engaged group. Again, this is consonant with the extant literature on psychological well-being correlates of religiosity and spirituality. A logistic regression model indicated that the Divided group of Pagan women had a significantly increased likelihood of endorsing the Self-Discovery theme. Also, members of the Divided group were less likely to endorse the Affiliation with an Organized Religion theme, and scored approximately one standard deviation below the mean on the religiosity measure. These findings suggest that they do not view Paganism as an organized religion, but rather as a spiritual path. Interestingly, a logistic regression model indicated that the Engaged group had a significantly increased likelihood of endorsing the Affiliation with Organized Religion theme, and this group scored approximately three-quarters of a standard deviation above the mean on the religiosity measure.

This suggests that the Pagan women in the Engaged group view Paganism as an organized religion but without a negative connotation.

*Limitations.* Although this study expands the literature on religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being, there were some limitations. First, the present study employed an Internet sampling design. Internet-based sampling techniques often result in a selection bias in favor of respondents with a higher socioeconomic status (Best, Krueger, Hubbard & Smith, 2001). In the present investigation, the sample was relatively homogeneous on socioeconomic and educational attainment variables. Consequently, the sample is non-representative which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, several kappa statistics for the religiosity and spirituality themes were below .70 which indicates weak inter-rater reliability. The lower kappa statistics may have been due, at least in part, to the complexity and nuance of the Pagan worldview as characterized by Carpenter (1994). Further exploration of this population with consideration for its unique challenges is warranted. Third, despite measures taken to recruit a diverse sample, the vast majority of participants were Pagan or Wiccan, with few study participants represented from other Pagan denominations. Although Pagan and Wiccan are the primary religious affiliation of Pagans in the United States, the current study would have been enriched by the inclusion of diverse perspectives that may have altered the definitions of religiosity and spirituality, or other aspects of the results. In future investigations, researchers might consider forming connections with communities of Pagan women who adhere to less common Pagan paths such as Druidry, Odinism, or New Age in order to increase the chances of participation from that demographic.

*Implications.* Pagans are a marginalized religious and spiritual group within the U.S, and one that is absent from psychological inquiry. As a result, many psychologists possess very little

empirical knowledge of Pagan's conceptions of religiosity and spirituality. Psychologists possess even less empirical knowledge of this population's psychological well-being. Research continues to link both religiosity and spirituality to positive psychological well-being among other populations; findings from the present investigation support the positive association between mental health and life satisfaction among a previously unstudied population. In psychology, researchers and counselors and other groups of professionals concerned with well-being are consistently being asked to increase their competence in the areas of religiosity and spirituality. This investigation offers preliminary findings that will help to build awareness, knowledge, and competence in conceptualizing and crafting clinical interventions for Pagan women.

Religiosity and spirituality are important aspects of people's lives. With continued study, psychologists can unpack the significance of these constructs in the lives of Pagans across the country and begin the arduous task of examining the mechanisms that drive the unique salutogenic effects of each construct. The present investigation constitutes a first step in a larger program of research committed to knowing and understanding the complex relationship among religiosity, spirituality, and psychological well-being for Pagans and using what we learn to test and strengthen accepted conceptualizations and operationalizations of religiosity and spirituality.

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## APPENDIX A

### IRB APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects  
528 East Green Street  
Suite 203  
Champaign, IL 61820



November 10, 2014

Helen Neville  
Educational Psychology  
226 Education Bldg  
1310 S Sixth St  
M/C 708

RE: *An Examination of Religiosity Spirituality and Psychological Well-Being among Pagan Women: A Mixed Method Approach*  
IRB Protocol Number: 15359

Dear Dr. Neville:

Thank you for submitting the completed IRB Application form for your project entitled *An Examination of Religiosity Spirituality and Psychological Well-Being among Pagan Women: A Mixed Method Approach*. Your project was assigned Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Number 15359 and reviewed. Since the researchers will be doing a secondary data analysis of data collected via an online anonymous survey and there was no identifiable information collected that could link responses to the participants, it has been determined that this project as described does not meet the definition of human subjects research as defined in 45CFR46(d)(f) or at 21CFR56.102(c)(e) and does not require IRB approval.

This determination only applies to the research study as submitted. Please note that modifications to your project need to be submitted to the IRB for review and status determination or approval before the modifications are initiated.

We appreciate your commitment to university policies and regulations regarding human research. If you have any questions about the IRB process, or if you need assistance at any time, please feel free to contact me, the OPRS Office, or visit our website at <http://www.irb.illinois.edu>.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Van Tine, MS  
Human Subjects Research Specialist, Office for the Protection of Research Subjects

c: Tamilia Reed

**APPENDIX B**  
**CONSENT FORM**

I consent to participate in a study entitled, “The Influence of Spirituality and Religiosity on Psychological Well-Being” directed by Tamilya Reed and Dr. Helen Neville of the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I understand that the purpose of this study is to explore women’s definitions of religiosity and spirituality. I understand that participation consists of completing an online survey, which should take about 15-20 minutes.

I understand that my participation in this project is completely voluntary. I also understand that there will be no negative consequences if I choose not to participate. Further, I have the right to discontinue my participation at any time without penalty. Participation is not expected to cause any harm outside of what is normally encountered in daily life. In the rare event that I become upset or deeply offended by an item, I may choose to skip the item.

Several safeguards will be taken to protect my identity. All of my answers will be strictly confidential. My name will not be attached to the data (or responses) I contribute. My responses will be sent directly to a password-protected database, separate from my name and email address, accessible only to the two primary researchers.

One potential benefit of my participation is that I may learn more about my religious and spiritual beliefs and practices, and my responses might inform future inquiry in this area. I understand that results from this study may be published in a professional journal or government grant application, but I will not be identified as an individual. Instead, results will be reported as group averages.

I understand that as a token of appreciation for my participation, I will be given an opportunity to enter my name into a drawing to win one of five \$50 cash awards. My chances of winning an award are 1 in 100. Should I choose to enter the raffle the contact information collected will be kept in a secure location, separate from the data that I contribute. The cash award winners will be notified by email.

If I have any questions or concerns about participation in this research, I may contact Tamilya Reed (tdreed2@illinois.edu) or Dr. Helen Neville (hneville@illinois.edu). For additional information regarding the rights of human participants in research, I may contact the Bureau of Educational Research (217-333-3023; [www.ed.uiuc.edu/BER/](http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/BER/)).

Please click the proper button below:

- I have read this page, and I would like to take the web based survey.
- I have read this page, and I would NOT like to take the web based survey.

Please print a copy of this form for your records.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **PERSONAL RELIGIOSITY AND SPIRITUALITY**

1. Please give us your personal definition of RELIGIOSITY. To help us better understand your definition, please write at least three sentences and be as specific as possible.
  
2. Based on your own definition of religiosity, on a scale of 1 to 5, how religious are you?
  1. Not at all religious
  2. Somewhat religious
  3. Moderately religious
  4. Fairly religious
  5. Very religious
  
3. Please give us your personal definition of SPIRITUALITY. To help us better understand your definition, please write at least three sentences and be as specific as possible.
  
4. Based on your own definition of spirituality, on a scale of 1 to 5, how spiritual are you?"
  1. Not at all spiritual
  2. Somewhat spiritual
  3. Moderately spiritual
  4. Fairly spiritual
  5. Very spiritual

## APPENDIX D

### RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT INDEX

(RCI; Worthington et al., 2003)

Below is a set of statements that deal with various beliefs and practices. Using the scale of 1 to 5 given below, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

(1) Not at all true of me (2) Somewhat true of me (3) Moderately true of me (4) Mostly true of me (5) Totally true of me

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. I often read books and magazines about my faith.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. I make financial contributions to my religious organization.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. I enjoy spending time with others of my religious affiliation.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and reflection.         | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. I enjoy working in the activities of my religious affiliation.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I keep well informed about my local religious group and have some influence in its decisions.      | 1 2 3 4 5 |

**APPENDIX E**  
**SPIRITUALITY SCALE**

(SS; Delaney, 2005)

Below is a set of statements that deal with various beliefs and practices. Using the scale of 1 to 6 given below, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

(1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Mostly Disagree (4) Mostly Agree (5) Agree (6)

Strongly Agree

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. I find meaning in my life experiences.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 2. I have a sense of purpose.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 3. I am happy about the person I have become.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 4. I see the sacredness in everyday life.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 5. I meditate to gain access to my inner spirit  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 6. I live in harmony with nature.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 7. I believe there is a connection between all things that I cannot see but can sense. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 8. My life is a process of becoming.   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 9. I believe in a Higher Power/Universal Intelligence.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 10. I believe that all living creatures deserve respect.                               | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 11. The earth is sacred.   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 12. I value maintaining and nurturing my relationships with others.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 13. I use silence to get in touch with myself.   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 14. I believe that nature should be respected.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 15. I have a relationship with a Higher Power/Universal Intelligence.                             | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 16. My spirituality gives me inner strength.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 17. I am able to receive love from others.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 18. My faith in a Higher Power/Universal Intelligence helps me cope during challenges in my life. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 19. I strive to correct the excesses in my own lifestyle patterns/practices.                      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 20. I respect the diversity of people.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 21. Prayer is an integral part of my spiritual nature.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 22. At times, I feel at one with the universe.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 23. I often take time to assess my life choices as a way of living my spirituality.               | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

## APPENDIX F

### MENTAL HEALTH INVENTORY

(MHI-5; Stewart, Hays, & Ware, 1988)

Using the scale of 1 to 6 given below, please indicate how much of the time you felt in the specified way during the past month; please circle the appropriate number corresponding to your response. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

(1) All of the time (2) Most of the time (3) A good bit of the time (4) Some of the time  
(5) A little more of the time (6) None of the Time

How much of the time, during the past month, have you...

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Been a very nervous person.                                | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 2. Felt calm and peaceful.                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 3. Felt downhearted and blue.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 4. Been a happy person.                                       | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 5. Felt so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer you up. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

## APPENDIX G

### SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

(SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffen, 1985)

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1 to 7 scale below, indicate your level of agreement with each item by selecting the appropriate number.

Please be open and honest in your responding; there are no right or wrong answers.

(1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Slightly Disagree (4) Neither Agree Nor Disagree  
(5) Slightly Agree (6) Agree (7) Strongly Agree

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 2. The conditions of my life are excellent.                    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 3. I am satisfied with my life.                                | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 4. So far I have gotten the important things in life.          | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 5. If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

## APPENDIX H

### DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your age?
2. What is your sex?  
Female      Male      Transgender
3. How would you describe your current sexual orientation?  
Bisexual      Gay or Lesbian      Heterosexual      Questioning
4. What is your primary racial identification?  
Asian/Asian American      Biracial/Multiracial  
Black      Native American/American Indian  
White
5. Are you Latino/Hispanic?  
Yes      No
6. Please indicate your primary ethnic background (e.g., African American, Filipino, Chinese, Taiwanese, French, Mexican American, Italian American, Haitian, Irish American, Cuban, etc.)
7. What is the highest level of education you have attained?  
Elementary school (up to 8th grade)      Some high school  
High school diploma or equivalent      Some college  
Associate or two-year degree      Bachelor's or four-year degree  
Some graduate or professional school      Business or trade school  
Graduate or professional degree (e.g., M.D., Ph.D.)
8. What is your current social class status?

Poor (for example, you receive welfare/TANF/relief or have employment without benefits, etc.)

Working Class (for example, you have manual labor, clerical, or unionized jobs, etc.)

Middle Class (for example, you have professional or technical jobs such as teacher, manager, accountant, social worker, small business owner, etc.)

Upper Middle Class (for example, you have high paying professions such as doctor, lawyer, engineer, etc.)

Wealthy (for example, you are a CEO, manager/owner of a major financial institution or corporation, etc.)

9. In what city, state, and country were you born?

10. In what city, state, and country do you currently reside?

11. What is your current religious affiliation? If you do not currently have one, please indicate "none".

12. Do you consider yourself to be at all spiritual?

Yes No

13. How would you describe your current physical health?

Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good

14. How would you describe your current mental health?

Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good