

Dr. Phil Schwadel Joins the NSYR Team to Begin Analyses of Denomination-Specific Data

Dr. Phil Schwadel has joined the National Study of Youth and Religion research team as a postdoctoral research associate. His work with the study focuses on analyses of NSYR Protestant and Jewish data gathered from a nationwide random-digit-dial telephone survey of households with teenagers. More than 3,350 teens along with one of their parents participated in the survey, making it the most extensive sociological research project on youth and religion ever undertaken.

“The denominational reports that Phil produces will provide valuable information based on our survey data to religious decision-makers in specific traditions and denominations. The reports will tell how youth evaluate their own religious congregations and experiences and how well or badly they are doing in life according to a variety of outcome measures,” noted Christian Smith, principal investigator of the NSYR.

“These reports will help to make the findings of the NSYR relevant not only to religion scholars and the general public but to a variety of specific American religious institutions and organizations as well,” Smith observed.



Schwadel comes to the NSYR from The Pennsylvania State University, where he received both his master’s degree and doctorate in sociology. His areas of interest include religion, politics, civic activity, inequality and organizations. In the four years prior to his joining the NSYR, Schwadel was a research associate for the American Religion Data Archive (www.TheARDA.com), an Internet-based archive used by many American religion scholars and headed by Dr. Roger Finke, an eminent sociologist of religion.

Schwadel's doctoral dissertation examines the effects of education on Christian beliefs, practices and affiliations in the United States. He holds memberships in the American Sociological Association, the Association for the Sociology of Religion, the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association.

The National Study of Youth and Religion is a four-year research project funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. It began in August 2001 and will continue until August 2005. The purpose of the project is to research the shape and influence of religion and spirituality in the lives of U.S. adolescents; to identify effective practices in the religious, moral and social formation of the lives of youth; to describe the extent to which youth participate in and benefit from the programs and opportunities that religious communities are offering to their youth; to foster an informed national discussion about the influence of religion in youths' lives, and to encourage sustained reflection about and rethinking of our cultural and institutional practices with regard to youth and religion.