

My dissertation, “Seeking the Good Life: The Moral Development of Young People in American,” examines how Americans develop their moral views during the transition to adulthood, drawing on longitudinal interviews and surveys with the same youth over 10 years from the National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR). Its first chapter, “Moral Religiosities,” identifies a widespread moral framework guiding young Americans’ reflexive deliberation during the transition to adulthood and conceptualizes four dominant types of religiosity that emerge from different orientations to this framework. This chapter is published in *Sociology of Religion*—the top social scientific journal of religion—and has won two awards from national sociological associations. The second chapter, “Fight-or-Flight for America,” longitudinally examines the development of Christian nationalist ideology among American youth. It finds that rage and fear-producing authoritarian upbringing experiences are more consistently associated with Christian nationalist views than measures of religion or politics and theorizes “affective conditioning” as a crucial mechanism shaping people’s ideological views and cultural attitudes. This chapter has won two awards from sections of the American Sociological Association. The final chapter, “The Perceptual Bases of Morality and Politics,” examines the development of “Extremely Liberal” young adults and develops a tripartite model of political orientation, explaining how particular combinations of three social factors at different stages in people’s lives create different perceptions about the need for progressive reform. Together, these chapters advance our understanding of the social mechanisms shaping moral, cultural, religious, and political views develop during the transition to adulthood.