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# Bridging Alone: Religious Conservatism, Marital Homogamy, and Voluntary Association Membership

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**Abstract** This study characterizes social insularity of religiously conservative American married couples by examining patterns of voluntary association membership. Constructing a dataset of 3938 marital dyads from the second wave of the National Survey of Families and Households, the author investigates whether conservative religious homogamy encourages membership in religious voluntary groups and discourages membership in secular voluntary groups. Results indicate that couples' shared affiliation with conservative denominations, paired with beliefs in biblical authority and inerrancy, increases the likelihood of religious group membership for husbands and wives and reduces the likelihood of secular group membership for wives, but not for husbands. The social insularity of conservative religious groups appears to be reinforced by homogamy—particularly by wives who share faith with husbands.

**Keywords** Religious conservatism · Marital homogamy · Voluntary association membership · Social insularity

## Introduction

Sociologists have long studied the social insularity of religious conservatives by looking at patterns of voluntary association membership (e.g., Dynes 1957; Gaede 1976; Iannaccone 1994; Stark and Glock 1968: 168–173; Welch 1981). Much evidence indicates that individuals who belong to conservative denominations tend to be less involved in secular voluntary associations. Recognizing the role of conservative congregations in discouraging wider engagement, recent research has shifted its focus from the individual to the congregation, providing evidence for

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contextual effects: The higher the mean biblical literalism in a congregation, the less likely an individual is to be involved in secular voluntary associations, regardless of the individual's own belief in biblical literalism (Schwadel 2005).

Although research has studied the voluntary associational life of religious conservatives at the individual and congregational level, one unit of analysis that has been neglected in the literature is the married couple. Such oversight is regrettable because ties among religion, marriage, and communal life are especially strong among conservative religious communities (Bengtson 2013: Ch. 9; Cornwall and Thomas 1990). Indeed, the literature on the family-religion nexus has documented greater endogamy of conservative religious groups (Sherkat 2004). Perhaps due to strong in-group sanctions against exogamy (Kalmijn 1998) and marital norms practiced by these communities (Heaton et al. 2001), religious heterogamy involving one conservative spouse is associated with an increased risk of marital instability (Vaaler et al. 2009). Although religious homogamy is known to increase marital stability, little is known about whether it relates to the voluntary associational patterns of religiously conservative couples.

To address this deficit in the literature, the present study examines whether conservative religious homogamy—which is operationalized as shared affiliation with conservative denominations and orthodox views on the Bible—is associated with the probability of membership in religious and secular types of voluntary associations. In particular, I investigate whether wives and husbands in homogamous conservative unions are less likely to belong to secular voluntary associations and more likely to belong to religious voluntary associations than those in homogamous non-conservative unions. I test these hypotheses by estimating a seemingly unrelated probit model that takes into account shared unobserved couple-level characteristics. A dyadic dataset ($N = 3938$ couples) was constructed from the second wave of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) data, which includes information on each spouse's beliefs about the Bible, denominational affiliation, and voluntary association participation. The NSFH data are obviously old, but despite its popularity for over two decades, no study has used these data to examine the links between marital homogamy, religion, and voluntary association membership.

## Background and Theoretical Rationale

Social insularity can be defined as the tendency for people in a group to avoid interaction with people outside their own group. One way to study the extent to which one is inward-looking is to examine patterns of *voluntary* association membership, which, by definition, indicates an individual's location in social space and social distance between individuals (Popielarz and McPherson 1995).[1]

There are several substantive reasons why religious conservatives are inward-looking. First, theological orientation may drive social insularity: Otherworldly beliefs (Bainbridge and Stark 1980) or beliefs in human sinfulness may reduce

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[1] Although this study focuses on voluntary group membership, another line of research has long studied social insularity by looking at patterns of friendship networks. For a recent study in that line, see Porter and Capellan (2014).

generalized trust (Hempel et al. 2012), inducing them to avoid or curtail interactions with outsiders. Second, organizational closure may also come into play: Conservative congregations make greater demands on members' time and money, leaving them with fewer physical and financial resources to spend on secular voluntary groups (Iannaccone 1994). Third, conservative congregations tend to serve as "one-stop shops," meeting educational, social, and emotional needs of members in one location—the church; thus, members of conservative congregations may not feel a need to belong to secular voluntary groups.[2]

In fact, a substantial body of empirical literature has provided evidence for greater insularity among individuals affiliated with conservative denominations. Two studies, using the General Social Survey (GSS), compared patterns of voluntary association membership across denominations and found that secular group involvement is lower among individuals who belong to sectarian (Iannaccone 1994) and evangelical Protestant denominations (Wuthnow 1999) compared to among liberal Protestants and Catholics, respectively. By using a finer-grained measure of voluntary association types, another study found that evangelical Protestants are involved in fewer organizations that forge links with other voluntary associations (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006). A more recent study—focusing on one subgroup of conservative Protestantism—found that being a member of Pentecostal denominations is associated with less involvement in secular voluntary associations (Dougherty et al. 2011).

In addition to the individual-level evidence, a growing body of research has provided further evidence that religious conservatism is linked to lower levels of secular involvement at a macro level. Using congregational data, Schwadel (2005) found that higher biblical literalism at the congregational level was associated with lower likelihood of membership in secular organizations, which means that a person who attends congregations that hold a greater belief in biblical literalism is less likely to belong to a secular voluntary group, regardless of his or her own belief in biblical literalism. More recently, Scheitle and Adamczyk (2009) found that the more exclusive a congregation's theology, the more likely individuals are to participate in church-based friendship networks. Taken together, these studies clearly suggest that religion is a group property, influencing individuals' behaviors (Stark 1996). If religion exerts such a strong contextual force, we can expect such effect also to be manifested in the smallest group unit in a family: the couple.

Couples, more than most of their fellow congregants, have an intensity of interaction. Put simply, a contextual effect operates all year round. In their classic article, Berger and Kellner (1964: 1) argue that marriage is a crucial "*nomos*-building instrumentality," identifying a spouse as an important conversation partner who can validate the social world around the couple. Given that two relative strangers with no shared past must deal with how to redefine their nomos in a marriage (p. 5), marrying a person of same religious faith should ease this new nomos-building process, which in turn renders their belief more plausible (Berger 1967). In this regard, religious homogamy, by definition, self-produces a plausibility structure. This, in part, explains why religious homogamy is positively linked to marital quality (e.g., Ellison et al. 2010) and why religious heterogamy is linked to

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[2] I thank one anonymous reviewer of the earlier version of this manuscript for providing this insight.

an increased risk of marital dissolution (Lehrer and Chiswick 1993; Vaaler et al. 2009). These facts suggest that religious homogamy lubricates the workings of marriage in general, and lifestyle decision making in particular. For example, couples who share conservative religious beliefs should be more likely to agree on joining a weekly Bible study group than couples in which only the wife is theologically conservative.

Not only does religious homogamy facilitate couples' nomos-building process for themselves, but it may help to form a friendship support network that provides a plausibility structure (Berger and Kellner 1964: 12; Cornwall 1987). Among religious groups, conservative congregations have more in-church friendship networks than mainline Protestant and Catholic congregations do (Scheitle and Adamczyk 2009). Because religious conservatives center most of their social activities around the church (Rhodes 2012) and because voluntary associations recruit new members through existing members' homophilous ties (Popielarz and McPherson 1995: 70), it is plausible to predict that homogamous conservative couples are more likely than homogamous non-conservative couples to be a member of church-affiliated groups and are less likely to be a member of secular voluntary groups.

## Confounding Factors

To control for spuriousness, I included a set of variables known to be correlated with voluntary association membership and/or religious conservatism.

### Social and Human Resources

Religious congregations hold a vast reservoir of social (Putnam 2000) and human resources (Verba et al. 1995), functioning as a hub of community involvement that links congregants into secular voluntary associations (Lenski 1963; McIntosh and Alston 1982). Thus, regular attendees should have many opportunities to expand social networks and cultivate civic skills transferrable to secular voluntary associations. Along with religious attendance, education has been found to encourage voluntary association membership (Smith 1994). Because religious conservatives have lower levels of schooling (Darnell and Sherkat 1997; Lehrer 1999), education differences between religious conservatives and non-conservatives might explain why religious conservative couples are less involved in voluntary organizations. The income effect is modest relative to education, but it is known to be positively associated with membership in secular voluntary associations (Bonikowski and McPherson 2007; Kingston and Nock 1992). Religious conservative households tend to have lower income than that of non-conservative households (Heath et al. 1995); thus, income differences may explain in part the negative relationship between religious conservatism and secular involvement.

Employment can facilitate voluntary association membership by increasing opportunities to expand social networks (Rotolo and Wilson 2003; Wilensky 1961), although it can also reduce voluntary association involvement by imposing time

constraints. In particular, employed wives might have less time than husbands do to participate in voluntary associations as they spend more hours on housework and childcare (Gerstel and Gallagher 1994). Indeed, one national study yielded mixed results depending on the type of voluntary organizations to which the married women belonged: Full-time employed wives were more involved than housewives married to full-time employed husbands in job-related voluntary organizations regardless of husbands' employment status, whereas full-time employed wives married to unemployed husbands were less involved in church-affiliated groups than were housewives married to full-time employed husbands (Kingston and Nock 1992). Accordingly, I expect that wives' full-time employment status will increase the likelihood of secular group membership and decrease the likelihood of religious group membership. In addition, the negative relationship between religious conservatism and wives' secular involvement may be explained by the different employment status between religious conservatives and non-conservatives because conservative religious wives tend to stay at home (Lehrer 1995), particularly when young children are present in the home (Glass and Nath 2006; Sherkat 2000).

## Gender-Related Correlates

Although the literature on voluntary associations has highlighted gender differences in the composition of voluntary groups (e.g., Popielarz 1999), little is known about whether gender ideologies and practices—measured herein by gender egalitarianism, wives' relative economic resources, and household labor—might condition associational opportunities differently for married men and women (Rotolo 2000: 1137). First, wives' gender egalitarianism may be directly associated with an increased likelihood of their certain types of associational membership (e.g., women's activism organization). Alternatively, wives' gender egalitarianism may be indirectly related to their secular group membership via increasing their economic resources (Corrigall and Konrad 2007). Whether direct or indirect, wives' gender egalitarianism may be positively associated with their membership in secular organizations (see Burns et al. 1997, for evidence of political participation). Husbands' gender egalitarianism may also be positively associated with wives' secular group membership because husbands who embrace gender egalitarianism may be more likely to support wives' public activities; otherwise, such husbands would become cognitively uncomfortable (Huber and Spitze 1981).[3]

Second, wives' economic independence can also be an important correlate of couples' voluntary association membership. A large body of research on marriage and family has demonstrated that women's economic power is related to couples' allocation of housework (e.g., Bittman et al. 2003) and power in decision making (e.g., Blumberg and Coleman 1989), but little research has

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[3] Although gender ideology was operationalized in the direction of gender egalitarianism, it could have been hypothesized that gender traditionalism would be responsible for the association of interest, especially for conservative theological homogamy and women's secular group membership. Because theological conservatism is significantly associated with gender traditionalism among conservative Protestant women (Bartkowski and Hempel 2009; Peek et al. 1991), gender traditionalism may explain why wives in homogamous conservative unions are less likely to belong to secular voluntary groups.

examined whether women's economic advantage may be related to women's participation in public life. One exception is the study by Burns et al. (1997), which found no significant relationship between the proportion of income contributed by each spouse and each spouse's political participation. I apply this proposition to voluntary group membership to explore whether women's relative economic resources are associated with an increased likelihood of women's secular group membership.

Finally, the division of household labor may also be linked to couples' associational life given that housework constitutes an important proportion of domestic lives. I examine whether each spouse's housework hours are negatively associated with voluntary association membership. Because conservative wives spend more hours doing housework than non-conservative wives do (Ellison and Bartkowski 2002), housework differentials might produce a spurious relationship between conservative religious homogamy and wives' voluntary association membership.

## Life Cycle Correlates

Voluntary association membership can change over the course of the marriage as couples go through life events such as having a child. The presence of preschool children tends to inhibit parents' involvement in voluntary associations, especially for mothers (Munch et al. 1997; Rotolo 2000); however, as children enter schools, they draw their parents into youth-related voluntary associations such as Scouting. Marital duration was used as an alternative for age, which may rise in the middle years of marriage and decline in later years of marriage.

## Data and Measures

### Data

I analyzed data from the second wave of the National Survey of Families and Households [NSFH2 (1992–1994)], which is based on a national, multi-stage area probability sample of the United States (for a detailed description of the data, see Bumpass and Sweet 1995).

In the first wave of the survey [NSFH1 (1987–1988)], one adult was randomly selected from each household as the primary respondent and completed in-person interviews and self-administered questionnaires; secondary respondents in households were also asked to complete self-administered questionnaires. NSFH2 re-interviewed 10,008 of NSFH1's 13,008 original respondents for a response rate of approximately 77 %. NSFH2 also interviewed current spouses or partners of its original respondents.[4] Response rates averaged slightly more than 80 % for the spouses of married respondents (Bumpass and Sweet 1995).

I constructed my analytic sample as follows: I began with the primary respondent data file, in which I identified 5751 respondents who were married at NSFH2 (Of the 5751 married individuals, 4710 were already married at W1 and 1041 were married

between W1 and W2). I then used the secondary respondent data file to identify 5628 spouses/partners of the primary respondents who responded to the NSFH2 spouse/partner questionnaire. 5001 couples were matched by the identification number for each couple. 58 of the 5001 couples did not answer the self-administered questionnaire and were thus excluded from the study. I further excluded 202 couples with missing data related to the dependent variables and 176 couples for missing three or more of the nine housework items following South and Spitze (1994), thereby yielding 4565 couples.

Of my key variables, most had a small amount of missing data (0.1–3.3 %). Given the paucity of missing data, they were deleted listwise, resulting in a final sample of 3938 respondents who provided data for all the variables in the analysis. The statistics and analyses used for this study were based on weighted data.

## Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is a dichotomous measure of couples' membership in secular and religious forms of voluntary associations. In NSFH2, spouses were asked to report how often they participated in four types of voluntary organizations: (1) fraternal-service groups; (2) job-related groups; (3) recreational groups; and (4) church-affiliated groups.[5] Following the rationale of Knoke and Thompson (1977: 62) and Kingston and Nock (1992: 867), I separated church-affiliated organizations from other organizations, and thereby was able to discern distinct patterns of involvement between religious and secular settings. The original answer categories for the question on voluntary organization participation ranged from 1 = "never" to 5 = "several times a week." Because my research question concerns the likelihood of being a member of any voluntary association rather than the level of participation in each organization, I employed a dichotomous measure. For membership in secular voluntary associations, I assigned a value of 1 to respondents who participated in any of the first three types of organizations several times a year or more and a value of 0 to respondents who never participated in these voluntary associations. For membership in religious voluntary associations, I assigned a value of 1 to those who participated in church-affiliated groups several times a year or more and a value of 0 to those who never participated in church-affiliated groups.

## Theological Homogamy/Heterogamy

Following Ellison and Bartkowski (2002), I used two items that tap into convictions about the inerrancy and authoritativeness of the Bible. Primary and secondary respondents were asked about their agreement with the following statements: (1) "The Bible is God's word and everything happened or will happen exactly as it

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[4] I used NSFH2 because NSFH1 did not ask secondary respondents about their participation in voluntary associations.

[5] NSFH1, similar to GSS, provides a list of fifteen types of voluntary associations, but NSFH2 collapsed these into just four, which prevented analysis of the number of memberships.

says" and (2) "The Bible is the answer to all important human problems." Responses to these two items were coded from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." For my purposes, I categorized husbands and wives who agree or strongly agree with both statements as theologically conservative. Based on this classification, four types of couples were generated: homogamous conservative couples [26 % of the couples ($n = 1027$)], homogamous non-conservative couples [49 % of the couples ($n = 1920$)], conservative wives married to non-conservative husbands [15 % of the couples ($n = 576$)], and conservative husbands married to non-conservative wives [10 % of the couples ($n = 415$)].

## Denominational Homogamy/Heterogamy

Following the classification of Lehrer and Chiswick (1993), I identified couples affiliated with conservative denominations such as sectarian, fundamentalist, evangelical, and Pentecostal (see Appendix for the full list of denominations). This classification generated four groups: homogamous conservative couples [26 % of the couples ($n = 1015$)], homogamous non-conservative couples [61 % of the couples ($n = 2420$)], conservative wives married to non-conservative husbands [7 % of the couples ($n = 284$)], and conservative husbands married to non-conservative wives [6 % of the couples ($n = 219$)].[6]

## Religious Service Attendance

Primary and secondary respondents were asked to indicate the number of times they attended religious services. Following the General Social Survey's coding scheme, wife's and husband's religious attendance was coded from 0 = "never" to 8 = "several times a week."

## Socioeconomic Status

Educational level was measured in years of schooling, ranging from 0 to 20. Income was measured as the couple's total income (in tens of thousands) and logged to correct for skewness. For couples' employment status, four dummy variables were constructed using the number of hours worked: (a) men working 40 h a week or more were coded as husbands working full time; (b) men working 1–39 h a week were coded as husbands working part time (men who did not work were the reference category); (c) women working 40 h a week or more were coded as wives working full time; and (d) women working 1–39 h a week were coded as wives working part time (women who did not work were the reference category).

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[6] As a robustness check, I estimated additional models that exclude stricter sectarian groups such as Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, but this did not alter my key results (results available upon request). I also performed sensitivity analysis to test the robustness of the results with regard to different non-conservative grouping, which excluded the nonaffiliated, Jews, and other religions. Again, the results were not sensitive to whether these groups are included in the non-conservative groups (results available upon request).

**Gender-Related Variables**

I employed three gender-related variables: gender egalitarianism, wife's relative economic resource, and hours of household labor. First, to measure gender egalitarianism, I relied on six variables that tap male and female marital role obligations and functions using three attitudinal measures. Both primary and secondary respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the following statements: (1) "It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family"; (2) "Preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed"; and (3) "It is all right for mothers to work full time when their youngest child is under age 5." Responses to these items were averaged and coded from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating higher levels of gender egalitarianism (a = .74 for husbands, a = .73 for wives; The last item was reverse coded). Second, wife's relative economic resource was measured using wife's income as a proportion of the couples' total income. Finally, with regard to housework hours, I measured the amount of time that wives and husbands spent on nine household tasks: preparing meals, washing dishes, cleaning house, outdoor tasks, shopping, ironing, paying bills, maintaining autos, and driving. These tasks were summed up and logged.

**Life Cycle Variables**

Duration of marriage was constructed by taking the difference between the survey year and the year of marriage. A count of the number of children under 18 years old in the household and the presence of preschool children, with at least one preschool child (aged 0–4), were included in the model. In all models, I controlled for race. Given strong racial endogamy (Rosenfeld 2008), I used information only from the primary respondent: White and non-White. The reference category was non-Hispanic, White. Finally, two dichotomous variables were used to measure region: South and non-South. The reference category was non-South.

**Analytic Strategy**

I used a seemingly unrelated bivariate probit model, an extension of a probit analysis of seemingly unrelated regression (SUR). I utilized Stata's biprobit procedure to estimate models simultaneously with two equations: one predicting the husband's voluntary association membership and the other predicting the wife's as a function of religious conservatism and covariates, similarly used by Wilson et al. (1987). Employing a simultaneous estimation technique was appropriate because voluntary association membership for husbands and wives can be affected by unmeasured characteristics that couples share equally. SUR provides efficient estimates of parameters and standard errors because error terms are allowed to be correlated across equations for the husband and the wife (Godwin 1985). In addition, the seemingly unrelated probit analysis allowed me to test the significance of differences in coefficients across equations. All equations were estimated with

robust (Huber/White sandwich) standard errors that relax the assumption of the independence of observations.

I estimated eight seemingly unrelated probit models, each of which contained equations for the probability that the husbands and wives belong to any type of secular or church-affiliated organizations. I entered variables in two steps to explore the net religious differences in voluntary association membership patterns. The first model included only the religion variables and life-cycle/demographic controls. To this baseline model, I added other covariates that could account for the observed religious differences in the husband's and wife's membership in voluntary associations. Before proceeding to the multivariate analyses, I first examined the bivariate relationship between key independent and dependent variables.

# Results

## Bivariate Analyses

Table 1 presents zero-order differences in membership in secular and religious voluntary associations among four types of couples: couples who are religiously conservative, mixed-faith couples whose wives are conservative, mixed-faith couples whose husbands are conservative, and couples who are religiously non-conservative. For each group, the first column denotes classification by theological orientation and the second column denotes classification by denominational affiliation. Since I conducted pairwise tests for multiple comparisons, I use Bonferroni-adjusted $p$ values to determine statistical significance [i.e., $p \backslash$ .008 (.05/6)]. To conserve space, I report the mean difference only for homogamous conservative (Group A) and homogamous non-conservative (Group D) couples.

Data in the top half of Table 1 show that both husbands and wives in homogamous conservative unions report significantly lower membership in secular organizations than those in homogamous non-conservative unions do, regardless of whether couples are classified according to theological beliefs or denominational affiliation. Turning to religious involvement, husbands and wives in homogamous conservative marriages report higher levels of membership in religious voluntary associations compared to those in homogamous non-conservative unions, regardless of which method is used to classify couples. Although the zero-order relationship provides support for my hypothesis, it is possible that the relationship between religious conservative homogamy and voluntary association membership is spurious due to covariate differences between homogamous conservative and non-conservative couples. Thus, I compare the four sets of couples on the covariates discussed earlier.

Table 2 presents zero-order differences in the covariates of voluntary association membership across four types of couples. As expected, a significant difference emerges in religious service attendance among the four sets of couples. Husbands and wives in homogamous conservative unions report greater levels of religious service attendance than their non-conservative counterparts, regardless of the classification type. Socioeconomic status variables show consistent patterns.

**Table 1** Zero-order differences in voluntary association membership across four types of couples (N = 3938 couples)

| Variables | (A) Both = RC | | (B) Wife = RC | | (C) Husband = RC | | (D) Neither = RC | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | |
| Secular involvement | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's membership in secular groups | $0.65_d$ | $0.66_d$ | 0.69 | 0.65 | 0.69 | 0.72 | $0.76_a$ | $0.74_a$ | 0.71 |
| | (0.48) | (0.47) | (0.46) | (0.48) | (0.46) | (0.45) | (0.43) | (0.44) | (0.45) |
| Wife's membership in secular groups | $0.51_d$ | $0.53_d$ | $0.57_d$ | $0.54_d$ | 0.60 | $0.52_d$ | $0.66_{a,b}$ | $0.65_{a,b,c}$ | 0.60 |
| | (0.50) | (0.50) | (0.50) | (0.50) | (0.49) | (0.50) | (0.47) | (0.48) | (0.49) |
| Religious involvement | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's membership in religious groups | $0.67_{b,c,d}$ | $0.64_{b,c,d}$ | $0.49_{a,d}$ | $0.34_a$ | $0.55_{a,d}$ | $0.40_a$ | $0.35_{a,b,c}$ | $0.43_a$ | 0.47 |
| | (0.47) | (0.48) | (0.50) | (0.47) | (0.50) | (0.49) | (0.48) | (0.49) | (0.50) |
| Wife's membership in religious groups | $0.69_{b,c,d}$ | $0.66_{b,c,d}$ | $0.55_{a,d}$ | $0.45_a$ | $0.51_{a,d}$ | $0.36_a$ | $0.35_{a,b,c}$ | $0.43_a$ | 0.49 |
| | (0.46) | (0.47) | (0.50) | (0.50) | (0.50) | (0.48) | (0.48) | (0.49) | (0.50) |

Means are significantly different from those in columns denoted by subscripted letters ($p \backslash .008$). Standard deviation in parentheses

*RC* religious conservative

**Table 2** Zero-order differences in key covariates across four types of couples ($N = 3938$ couples)

| Variables | (A) Both = RC | | (B) Wife = RC | | (C) Husband = RC | | (D) Neither = RC | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | Belief | Affiliation | |
| **Social/human resources** | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's religious service attendance | $5.56_{b,c,d}$ | $4.90_{b,c,d}$ | $3.60_{a,c,d}$ | $2.36_{a,d}$ | $4.36_{a,b,d}$ | $2.81_a$ | $2.61_{a,b,c}$ | $3.44_{a,b}$ | 3.71 |
| Wife's religious service attendance | $6.10_{b,c,d}$ | $5.56_{b,c,d}$ | $4.79_{a,d}$ | $3.80_a$ | $4.62_{a,d}$ | $3.16_{a,d}$ | $3.08_{a,b,c}$ | $3.90_{a,c}$ | 4.28 |
| Husband's education | $12.45_d$ | $12.51_d$ | $12.88_{b,d}$ | $12.79_d$ | $12.59_{c,d}$ | $12.68_d$ | $13.96_{a,b,c}$ | $13.69_{a,b,c}$ | 13.27 |
| Wife's education | $12.36_d$ | $12.49_d$ | $12.65_{b,d}$ | $12.68_d$ | $12.44_{c,d}$ | $12.79_d$ | $13.73_{a,b,c}$ | $13.39_{a,b,c}$ | 13.08 |
| Couple's income (in $10,000s, logged) | $1.56_d$ | $1.58_d$ | $1.60_d$ | $1.59_d$ | $1.60_d$ | 1.64 | $1.73_{a,b,c}$ | $1.69_{a,b}$ | 1.65 |
| Husband works full-time | $0.67_d$ | 0.70 | 0.69 | 0.75 | 0.68 | 0.78 | $0.74_a$ | 0.70 | 0.71 |
| Husband works part-time | 0.06 | $0.05_d$ | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.06 | 0.04 | 0.08 | $0.08_a$ | 0.07 |
| Wife works full-time | $0.30_d$ | 0.36 | 0.32 | 0.35 | 0.36 | 0.38 | $0.38_a$ | 0.34 | 0.35 |
| Wife works part-time | $0.21_d$ | $0.20_d$ | 0.22 | 0.23 | 0.23 | 0.23 | $0.26_a$ | $0.26_a$ | 0.24 |
| **Gender-related covariates** | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's gender egalitarianism | $2.34_{b,c,d}$ | $2.49_{b,d}$ | $2.75_{a,c,d}$ | $2.77_a$ | $2.54_{a,b,d}$ | 2.69 | $2.97_{a,b,c}$ | $2.82_a$ | 2.73 |
| Wife's gender egalitarianism | $2.53_{b,c,d}$ | $2.67_{b,c,d}$ | $2.73_{a,c,d}$ | $2.96_a$ | $3.05_{a,b}$ | $3.06_a$ | $3.21_{a,b}$ | $3.05_a$ | 2.95 |
| Wife's proportion of couple income | 0.28 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.29 | 0.32 | 0.30 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.30 |
| Husband's hours of housework (logged) | 1.17 | 1.19 | 1.15 | 1.16 | 1.21 | 1.16 | 1.19 | 1.19 | 1.18 |
| Wife's hours of housework (logged) | $1.52_d$ | 1.52 | $1.52_d$ | 1.51 | 1.52 | 1.52 | $1.47_{a,b}$ | 1.49 | 1.50 |
| **Life cycle covariates** | | | | | | | | | |
| Marital duration | $21.70_d$ | $20.83_{b,c}$ | $20.56_d$ | $16.55_{a,c,d}$ | 20.17 | $16.33_{a,b}$ | $17.96_{a,b}$ | $19.65_b$ | 19.55 |
| Number of children age 0–18 | 1.26 | 1.23 | 1.20 | 1.27 | 1.21 | 1.26 | 1.15 | 1.17 | 1.19 |
| Presence of preschool children | 0.24 | 0.23 | 0.21 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.31 | 0.25 | 0.24 | 0.24 |

Means are significantly different from those in columns denoted by subscripted letters ($p \backslash$ .008). Standard deviation is omitted for clarity

RC religious conservative

Educational attainment and couples' income are significantly lower for homogamous conservative couples than they are for homogamous non-conservative couples, regardless of the classification type. For employment status, husbands in homogamous conservative unions were significantly less employed full or part time than those in homogamous non-conservative unions. Wives' employment status shows similar patterns. With regard to gender-related covariates, women and men in homogamous conservative unions hold much less egalitarian gender role attitudes than those in homogamous non-conservative couples, regardless of the choice of classification. Regarding household labor, women in homogamous conservative couples report more hours of housework than women in homogamous non-conservative couples do; however, there is no difference in husbands' hours of housework. Finally, conservative unions have longer marriages than non-conservative unions when couples are classified according to religious beliefs. Next, I examine whether the relationship between conservative religious homogamy and voluntary association membership holds when these potential confounders are taken into account.

## Multivariate Analyses

Table 3 presents unstandardized probit coefficients of seemingly unrelated probit models estimating the net differences between husband's and wife's membership in secular and religious voluntary associations among four types of couples. Because the probit coefficients are not directly interpretable, I limit my report to the direction of significance while also reporting the marginal effects for key independent variables in the full model, holding other covariates constant at their means. Model 1 shows that both husbands and wives in homogamous conservative unions are less likely to belong to secular voluntary associations than those in homogamous non-conservative unions. In addition, husbands and wives in mixed-faith couples in which the wives are conservative are also less likely to be members of secular organizations than their counterparts in homogamous non-conservative couples.

Model 2 shows that the introduction of covariates completely eliminates the net difference between homogamous conservative and non-conservative unions for husbands' secular voluntary group membership. Wives in homogamous conservative unions and conservative wives married to non-conservative husbands are still less likely than wives in homogamous non-conservative unions are to belong to secular organizations. With respect to the marginal effect, the probability of being a member of a secular organization is 0.12 for wives in homogamous conservative unions and 0.06 lower for conservative wives married to non-conservative husbands, relative to wives in homogamous non-conservative unions. The $t$ test of cross-equation differences shows that the difference between husbands' and wives' secular voluntary group membership is significant ($p\backslash$ .01).

Additional analyses (not shown) reveal that education is responsible for differences in husbands' secular involvement. As indicated in Table 2, husbands in homogamous conservative marriages reported lower levels of education than those in homogamous non-conservative marriages. Hence, husbands in homogamous conservative unions are less likely to belong to secular voluntary associations

**Table 3** Seemingly unrelated probit regression of voluntary association membership classified by theological beliefs: unstandardized regression coefficients and tests of cross-equation differences (N = 3938 couples)

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
| Theological homogamy[a] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Both = RC | −.18** | −.33*** | .01 | −.32*** | ** | .89*** | .86*** | .34*** | .21** | |
| | (.06) | (.06) | (.08) | (.07) | | (.06) | (.06) | (.08) | (.08) | |
| Only wife = RC | −.19* | −.22** | −.02 | −.17* | | .40*** | .45*** | .27** | .20* | |
| | (.08) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | | (.07) | (.07) | (.09) | (.09) | |
| Only husband = RC | −.11 | −.02 | .06 | .05 | | .59*** | .46*** | .35*** | .15 | |
| | (.09) | (.08) | (.09) | (.09) | | (.08) | (.08) | (.10) | (.09) | |
| Covariates[b] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's religious service attendance | | | .02 | −.02 | | | | .22*** | .06*** | *** |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Wife's religious service attendance | | | .01 | .08*** | *** | | | .06*** | .25*** | *** |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Husband's education | | | .08*** | .05*** | | | | .05*** | .03* | |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Wife's education | | | .03* | .08*** | * | | | .04* | .06*** | |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.02) | |
| Couple's income (in $10,000s, logged) | | | .73*** | .32** | * | | | .15 | −.00 | |
| | | | (.12) | (.11) | | | | (.11) | (.12) | |
| Husband works full-time | | | .09 | .02 | | | | .11 | .11 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | (.09) | (.08) | |

Table 3 continued

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
| Husband works part-time | | | .02 | .05 | | | | | .04 | .12 | |
| | | | (.12) | (.11) | | | | | (.12) | (.13) | |
| Wife works full-time | | | .06 | .07 | | | | | .22** | .07 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | | (.09) | (.08) | |
| Wife works part-time | | | .12 | .05 | | | | | .14 | −.01 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.07) | | | | | (.08) | (.08) | |
| Husband's gender egalitarianism | | | .07 | .03 | | | | | −.02 | −.04 | |
| | | | (.04) | (.03) | | | | | (.04) | (.04) | |
| Wife's gender egalitarianism | | | .05 | .07* | | | | | −.06 | .01 | |
| | | | (.03) | (.03) | | | | | (.03) | (.04) | |
| Wife's proportion of couple income | | | −.35* | .21 | ** | | | | −.25 | −.04 | |
| | | | (.14) | (.14) | | | | | (.15) | (.15) | |
| Husband's hours of housework (logged) | | | .18* | .07 | | | | | .25** | .02 | * |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | | (.09) | (.09) | |
| Wife's hours of housework (logged) | | | .12 | .13 | | | | | −.08 | .28* | ** |
| | | | (.10) | (.10) | | | | | (.11) | (.11) | |
| Marital duration | −.01*** | −.00* | .00 | .00 | | | .01*** | .01*** | .01** | .01*** | |
| | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | | | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | |
| Number of children age 0–18 | .02 | .03 | .00 | .02 | | | .08*** | .12*** | .02 | .04 | |
| | (.02) | (.02) | (.03) | (.02) | | | (.02) | (.02) | (.03) | (.03) | |
| Presence of preschool children | −.04 | −.13 | .02 | −.07 | | | .04 | −.08 | .11 | −.04 | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.07) | | | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | |

**Table 3** continued

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | |
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Non-white | -.33*** | -.42*** | -.08 | -.26*** | | -.15* | -.17* | -.04 | -.16 | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | |
| South | -.03 | .02 | -.01 | .06 | | -.01 | .01 | .10 | .13* | |
| | (.05) | (.05) | (.06) | (.06) | | (.05) | (.05) | (.06) | (.06) | |
| Constant | .91*** | .52*** | -2.91*** | -2.92*** | | -.59*** | -.64*** | -3.09*** | -3.30*** | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.30) | (.29) | | (.06) | (.07) | (.32) | (.32) | |
| Log pseudo-likelihood | -5388.29 | | -4964.98 | | | -5358.84 | | -4188.24 | | |
| Rho (q) | .30 | | .18 | | | .57 | | .29 | | |
| Chi square | 85.78 | | 27.55 | | | 354.15 | | 61.16 | | |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

RC religious conservative

* $p \backslash$ .05; ** $p \backslash$ .01; *** $p \backslash$ .001 (two-tailed tests)

[a] Omitted category is Neither = RC. [b] Omitted categories are Husband not working, Wife not working, No preschool children in home, White, and non-South

because they have lower educational attainment than that of husbands in non-conservative marriages.

Some of the covariates are significantly associated with voluntary association membership. Wives' religious service attendance is positively associated with their own membership in secular voluntary organizations ($b = .08$, $p\backslash$ .001), whereas husbands' religious service attendance is not associated with their membership in secular voluntary organizations. Each spouse's education is related to an increased likelihood of each other's secular membership. In addition, couples' income is positively associated with husbands' and wives' membership in secular voluntary groups ($b = .73$, $p\backslash$ .001 and $b = .32$, $p\backslash$ .01, respectively). As expected, wives' gender egalitarianism is associated with an increased likelihood of their own membership in secular voluntary associations ($b = .07$, $p\backslash$ .05). Wives' contribution to couples' income is negatively associated with husbands' membership in secular voluntary organizations ($b = -.35$, $p\backslash$ .05), but not to their own membership in secular organizations. Contrary to expectations, husbands' hours of housework are positively associated with their own secular involvement ($b = .18$, $p\backslash$ .05). Finally, the positive rho (q) value of 0.30 (Model 1) and 0.18 (Model 2) indicates that residuals in the equation of husbands' voluntary association membership and in the equation of wives' voluntary association membership are positively correlated to each other, which confirms that couples share unobserved predictors of voluntary group membership.

Turning to religious group membership, Model 3 shows that wives and husbands in homogamous conservative unions are more likely to belong to church-affiliated associations than those in homogamous non-conservative unions. In addition, wives and husbands in mixed-faith couples are also more likely to belong to church-affiliated associations than those in non-conservative unions. Model 4 presents results controlling for all covariates. Unlike the results of secular membership, husbands in homogamous conservative unions are still more likely to be a member of religious voluntary groups. Although the introduction of covariates renders wives' religious group membership nonsignificant in mixed-faith couples whose husbands are conservative, wives in homogamous conservative couples still remain more likely to belong to religious voluntary associations than wives in homogamous non-conservative couples. Marginal effects indicate that the probability of being a member of religious voluntary organizations is 0.13 and 0.08 higher for husbands in homogamous conservative unions and wives in homogamous conservative unions, respectively, relative to those in homogamous non-conservative unions.

For religious group membership, cross-spouse effects are observed for religious service attendance: Spouses' religious attendance is positively associated with each other's membership in religious voluntary groups. Unlike the results of secular involvement, a couple's income is not related to religious voluntary membership. Interestingly, husbands whose wives work full time are more likely to be a member of religious voluntary organizations than those husbands whose wives do not work ($b = .22$, $p\backslash$ .01). Unlike the results of secular involvement, wives' relative income is not negatively associated with husbands' religious group membership. Spouses' hours of housework are positively associated with their own membership in religious voluntary groups, but no cross-spouse effects are observed. The positive

**Table 4** Seemingly unrelated probit regression of voluntary association membership classified by denominational affiliations: unstandardized regression coefficients and tests of cross-equation differences ($N = 3938$ couples)

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | |
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Denominational homogamy[a] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Both = RC | -.17** | -.22*** | -.06 | -.17* | | .54*** | .58*** | .34*** | .34*** | |
| | (.06) | (.06) | (.07) | (.06) | | (.06) | (.06) | (.07) | (.07) | |
| Only wife = RC | -.24* | -.28** | -.06 | -.17 | | -.15 | .14 | .13 | .30** | |
| | (.09) | (.09) | (.10) | (.10) | | (.09) | (.09) | (.11) | (.11) | |
| Only husband = RC | -.15 | -.27* | .01 | -.11 | | -.05 | -.11 | .24* | .21 | |
| | (.12) | (.11) | (.12) | (.11) | | (.11) | (.11) | (.12) | (.12) | |
| Covariates[b] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Husband's religious service attendance | | | .02 | -.02 | * | | | .23*** | .07*** | *** |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Wife's religious service attendance | | | .01 | .08*** | ** | | | .07*** | .25*** | *** |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Husband's education | | | .08*** | .05*** | | | | .05*** | .03* | |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.01) | |
| Wife's education | | | .03* | .08*** | * | | | .03* | .06*** | |
| | | | (.01) | (.01) | | | | (.01) | (.02) | |
| Couple's income (in $10,000s, logged) | | | .72*** | .33** | * | | | .13 | .01 | |
| | | | (.12) | (.11) | | | | (.11) | (.12) | |
| Husband works full-time | | | .09 | .02 | | | | .11 | .10 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | (.09) | (.08) | |

**Table 4** continued

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
| Husband works part-time | | | .02 | .05 | | | | .05 | .13 | |
| | | | (.12) | (.11) | | | | (.12) | (.13) | |
| Wife works full-time | | | .07 | .08 | | | | .22* | .06 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | (.09) | (.08) | |
| Wife works part-time | | | .12 | .06 | | | | .13 | −.01 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.07) | | | | (.08) | (.08) | |
| Husband's gender egalitarianism | | | .06 | .03 | | | | −.04 | −.05 | |
| | | | (.04) | (.03) | | | | (.04) | (.04) | |
| Wife's gender egalitarianism | | | .05 | .09** | | | | −.06 | .01 | |
| | | | (.03) | (.03) | | | | (.03) | (.03) | |
| Wife's proportion of couple income | | | −.35* | .20 | ** | | | −.23 | −.03 | |
| | | | (.14) | (.14) | | | | (.15) | (.15) | |
| Husband's hours of housework (logged) | | | .19* | .08 | | | | .24** | .01 | |
| | | | (.08) | (.08) | | | | (.09) | (.09) | |
| Wife's hours of housework (logged) | | | .12 | .14 | | | | −.08 | .28* | ** |
| | | | (.10) | (.10) | | | | (.11) | (.11) | |
| Marital duration | −.01*** | −.01** | .00 | .00 | | .01*** | .01*** | .01** | .01*** | |
| | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | (.00) | |
| Number of children age 0–18 | .01 | .02 | .00 | .02 | | .09*** | .13*** | .02 | .04 | |
| | (.02) | (.02) | (.03) | (.02) | | (.02) | (.02) | (.03) | (.03) | |
| Presence of preschool children | −.04 | −.13* | .02 | −.07 | | .04 | −.07 | .10 | −.05 | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.07) | | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | |

**Table 4** continued

| | Secular association membership | | | | | Religious association membership | | | | |
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | $H_{coef} = W_{coef}$ |
| | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-white | -.35*** | -.45*** | -.08 | -.27*** | | -.00 | -.04 | -.02 | -.15 | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | | (.07) | (.07) | (.08) | (.08) | |
| South | -.03 | .00 | .01 | .04 | | .08 | .08 | .10 | .10 | |
| | (.06) | (.05) | (.06) | (.06) | | (.05) | (.05) | (.06) | (.06) | |
| Constant | .91*** | .53*** | -2.86*** | -3.02*** | | -.47*** | -.56*** | -2.92*** | -3.32*** | |
| | (.07) | (.07) | (.30) | (.29) | | (.07) | (.07) | (.32) | (.31) | |
| Log pseudo-likelihood | -5395.56 | | -4977.32 | | | -5470.15 | | -4177.23 | | |
| Rho (q) | .30 | | .18 | | | .60 | | .29 | | |
| Chi square | 84.75 | | 26.78 | | | 401.27 | | 59.09 | | |

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*RC* religious conservative

* $p \setminus .05$; ** $p \setminus .01$; *** $p \setminus .001$ (two-tailed tests)

[a] Omitted category is Neither = RC. [b] Omitted categories are Husband not working, Wife not working, No preschool children in home, White, and non-South

rho (q) value of 0.57 (Model 1) and 0.29 (Model 2) indicates that residuals in the equation of husbands' voluntary association membership and in the equation of wives' voluntary association membership are positively correlated to each other.

Table 4 reports the results of models of voluntary association membership classifying couples by denominational affiliation. To conserve space, I report only the key differences in secular and religious voluntary group membership in the full model. Regarding secular group membership, the results are largely parallel to those I obtained for theological homogamy: Whereas husbands' membership differences in secular associations between homogamous conservative and non-conservative unions are fully explained by confounders, wives in homogamous conservative unions are still less likely to belong to secular organizations than those in homogamous non-conservative unions. For religious group membership, the results for the difference between homogamous conservative and non-conservative couples are almost identical to previous models for theological beliefs. The only difference is that husbands in mixed-faith unions whose wives are conservative are not different from those husbands in homogamous non-conservative unions.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The relationship between religious conservatism and voluntary association membership has been examined both at the individual and at the aggregate level, but not at the dyadic level. By integrating the literature on the religion-family link into the literature on the religion-voluntary group membership link, the present study investigated the role of religious homogamy in promoting social insularity of religiously conservative married couples. Three major findings emerge from the analysis.

First, unsurprisingly, conservative religious homogamy promotes religious group membership for both husbands and wives. This result is consistent with previous research demonstrating stronger communal bonds embedded in conservative Protestant congregations (Scheitle and Adamczyk 2009; Schwadel 2005; Stark and Glock 1968). Unlike previous work, however, the present study sheds some light on the role of marital homogamy in couples' religious involvement. One obvious reason for this is that a shared nomos between couples promotes a joint lifestyle, which is also shared with like-minded coreligionists (Kalmijn and Bernasco 2001). Because religious conservatives are highly embedded in friendship networks within the church (Rhodes 2012), conservative couples in same-faith unions appear to have stronger marriage–community ties than non-conservative couples in same-faith unions, which reinforces involvement in their own groups.

Second, more importantly, the relationship between conservative religious homogamy and secular group involvement is gendered: Conservative religious homogamy reduces the likelihood of secular group membership for wives only. The relationship between conservative religious homogamy and husbands' secular involvement disappears when potential confounders such as education are taken into account. This result suggests that religiously conservative men are less likely to be involved in secular voluntary groups due to lower human capital attainment rather

than to conservative religious homogamy itself. To be sure, this finding should not be interpreted as a causal mediation effect because of a possible selection bias. That is, it is possible that men with less education are more likely to join conservative churches and more likely to marry within their own church group.

Why, then, does conservative religious homogamy lower the odds of secular involvement for wives? One potential mechanism for this association is, as mentioned earlier, time spent on congregational or family-related obligations and activities. Because conservative religious groups provide a "total social environment" in which networks of friends, families, and neighbors are densely connected to each other (McPherson et al. 2001: 426), it may be that wives in unions in which both spouses attend conservative churches have little time left for secular involvement. For example, wives might spend most of their time homeschooling their children, transporting them to a local Scout troop, and volunteering for church. Indeed, one study found that the amount of time evangelical Protestants commit to their congregational activities is negatively associated with political participation (Campbell 2004). Although the author did not examine whether the relationship is stronger for women, this finding warrants further exploration of gender differences involving the negative influence that time spent in religious activities has on time spent on nonreligious activities due to marked gender specialization in households (Ellison and Bartkowski 2002) and in churches (Hoffmann and Bartkowski 2008).

Relatedly, another potential reason for gender differences in secular involvement may be that women are more strongly influenced by religious homophily than are men (Brashears 2008). This also implies that women in homogamous conservative unions may have a stronger emotional attachment to their group (Paxton and Moody 2003). Because women are also more likely than men to exchange emotional support with friends (Liebler and Sandefur 2002), it is possible that wives' friendship networks might explain why women in homogamous conservative unions are less likely to belong to secular voluntary associations. In Putnam's (2000) metaphor, too much bonding social capital among church friends might crowd out involvement in secular voluntary associations. With network data, future research may identify network mechanisms underlying this relationship.

A final noteworthy finding is that some of each spouse's characteristics are associated with the likelihood of the other spouse's membership in voluntary associations—a cross-spouse effect observed in studies of voting (Straits 1990), political participation (Burns et al. 1997; Meyer and Lobao 2003), voluntary association participation (Kingston and Nock 1992; Wilson et al. 1987), and volunteering (Brown and Zhang 2013; Kim and Dew 2015; Rotolo and Wilson 2006). Specifically, each spouse's level of education is associated with an increased likelihood of the other spouse's membership in both secular and religious groups (*cf.* Meyer and Lobao 2003), while each spouse's religious attendance is associated with an increased likelihood of the other spouse's membership in church-related groups (*cf.* Wilson et al. 1987). I also found that the wife's greater proportion of the couple's income is associated with a decreased likelihood of the husband's membership in secular organizations. Additional analyses (not shown) indicate that husbands whose wives contribute more than 60 % of the couple's income are less likely to belong to secular organizations than husbands who are sole providers.

These findings suggest that women's economic independence may inhibit their husbands' membership in secular voluntary organizations.

As with any study using a secondary data source, this study has limitations. First, although religious conservatism is measured based on two widely used classification schemes (i.e., theological beliefs and denominational affiliations), and the key results from these two schemes largely mirror each other, each of them has its own limitations. As previous studies have already addressed (e.g., Ellison and Bartkowski 2002: 979), NSFH's Protestant denominations are a catch-all category, making it impossible to distinguish theologically liberal and conservative individuals within a denomination. Second, conservative religious beliefs measured here may not best capture the theological orientation that encourages social insularity. Other measures such as exclusivist soteriology (Hempel and Bartkowski 2008) may help us better understand the relationship between religious beliefs and social insularity as it may promote parochial sociality.

Another limitation is that the NSFH data are over 20 years old; thus, the results of this study may not represent current patterns of associational life among religious conservative couples. Especially, evangelical groups have been undergoing drastic changes in recent years, setting themselves apart from fundamentalists and Pentecostals in terms of educational attainment (Beyerlein 2004) and social concerns such as poverty, racial reconciliation, environmentalism, and international aid (see chapters in Steensland and Goff 2014). In light of the growing accumulation of human, social, and cultural capital of this particular conservative Protestant group (Lindsay 2008), future research should attempt to verify the results with recent data to determine whether evangelicals who advocate the theology of "engaged orthodoxy" are more engaged in secular voluntary associations compared to their conservative brethren (Smith 1998).

Finally, because respondents were not asked specifically about whether the voluntary associations to which they belong are secular or religious, I cannot rule out the possibility that voluntary groups treated as secular here may be church related. A women's quilting group, for example, might be recognized as a hobby group, but it is possible that respondents might identify it as a church-related group if the majority of members are those from church. Related to this limitation, although half of all voluntary organization memberships are related, to some degree, to religious institutions (Putnam 2000: 66), there is no finer-grained measure distinguishing truly secular from religious voluntary associations. This has been an issue since Gaede (1976: 210) raised it, but there has been no development of a new measure. Future research would benefit from such a measure to better capture the dynamics of social insularity across religious communities.

Despite these limitations, this study adds to the growing literature on religion, family, and voluntary associational life (e.g., Kim and Wilcox 2013), which highlights the importance of the interplay of religion and family for understanding social insularity. To my knowledge, it is the first to evaluate the role that religious homogamy plays in encouraging secular disengagement for married couples. A high degree of homogamy among religiously conservative unions appears to serve as a micro foundation for religious homophily, which may encourage social insularity. This study finds gender differences in the secular association membership for

religious conservative couples. Conservative religious homogamy decreases the likelihood of belonging to a secular voluntary association for wives, but not husbands. It appears that husbands in homogamous conservative marriages bridge alone with secular Americans.

## Appendix: Conservative Denominations

Baptist, Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Assembly of God (or Assemblies of God), Christian and Missionary Alliance, Christian Congregation, Christian Reformed Church of North America (Christian Reformed), Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Scientist), Church of God—Anderson, IN, Church of God—Cleveland, TN, Church of God (no affiliation specified), Church of God in Christ, Church of the Nazarene, Church of Christ, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical Free Church, Full Gospel Fellowship, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (Foursquare Gospel), Jehovah's Witness, Mennonite Church, Pentecostal, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Reorganized Mormon), Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists, Wesleyan, All other members of Pietist Family, All other members of Holiness Family, All other members of Pentecostal Family, All other members of European Free Church Family (Mennonites, Amish, Brethren, Quakers), All other members of the Christian Church, Churches of Christ subfamily—Restoration, All members of Independence Fundamentalist Family, All other members of Adventist Family, All other members of Latter-day Saint Family, "Christian," "Born again Christian," and "Charismatic."

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