

Emotion, Religion, and Civic Engagement: A Multilevel Analysis of U.S. Congregations

Katie E. Corcoran*

West Virginia University

Past research on religion and civic engagement generally only examines one type of engagement and focuses on cognitive rather than emotional predictors. Extending Collins' interaction ritual theory, I investigate the relationship between experiencing emotional energy during religious services and participating in formal and informal congregational and noncongregational civic engagement. I hypothesize that individuals who report experiencing emotional energy during religious services will be more likely to engage in congregational volunteering. I also theorize competing hypotheses regarding the relationship between experiencing emotional energy during religious services and participating in noncongregational civic engagement. Using data from the 2001 U.S. Congregational Life Survey, I find support for some of my hypotheses. This study contributes to the literature by showing the importance of emotion for predicting both formal and informal forms of congregational and noncongregational civic engagement, thus moving beyond the literature's focus on formal civic engagement and cognitive explanations of it.

Key words: civic engagement; emotion; congregations; multilevel modeling.

INTRODUCTION

The positive relationship between religion and civic engagement is well established in the United States and cross-nationally (Park and Smith 2000; Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Ruiter and De Graaf 2006). Religious individuals are more likely to participate in both formal civic engagement, such as volunteering and charitable giving, and informal civic engagement (i.e., helping behaviors/neighborliness), such as caregiving, than the nonreligious (Bekkers

*Direct correspondence to Katie E. Corcoran, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, West Virginia University, PO Box 6326, Morgantown, WV 26506-6326. E-mail: kecorcoran@mail.wvu.edu.

and Wiepking 2011; Brooks 2006; Lam 2002; Lewis et al. 2013; Park and Smith 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Wilson and Musick 1997). Higher levels of religiosity are also typically associated with higher levels of civic engagement. These findings cannot be explained solely on the basis of religious individuals giving or volunteering more for religious causes as they also donate more money and time to nonreligious charitable causes as well (Brooks 2006; Nemeth and Luidens 2003; Putnam and Campbell 2010).

Current research moves beyond merely establishing this relationship and instead attempts to examine the effects of particular national and microstructural religious contexts (Borgonovi 2008; Lewis et al. 2013; Lim and MacGregor 2012; Ruiter and De Graaf 2006). Yet these studies still typically survey religious individuals independent of any organized religious context to which they may be involved. This is ironic, since religious service attendance, which necessitates involvement in a congregation, often has one of the strongest effects on civic engagement (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011; Lewis et al. 2013). Recent work has begun to address this by situating civic engagement within social and congregational contexts and examining direct and conditioning effects of congregational characteristics on congregational civic engagement (Corcoran 2015; Peifer 2010; Scheitle and Finke 2008). However, these studies tend to only investigate one formal type of civic engagement—religious giving—and thus the applicability of their findings to other forms of civic engagement are unknown (see Polson 2016 and Whitehead and Stroope 2015 for notable exceptions). In particular, the relationship between religion and informal civic engagement within congregational contexts has received little attention. The current study extends this line of inquiry by theorizing the relationship between religion and formal and informal congregational and noncongregational civic engagement.

While these recent studies are a vast improvement over prior research, they, like previous studies, implicitly argue that the relationship between religion and civic engagement is primarily cognitive (see Corcoran 2015, Peifer 2010, and Hill and Vaidyanathan 2011 for notable exceptions). Religion and congregations more specifically are thought to provide individuals with beliefs and values that facilitate pro-social behavior (Ellison 1992; Lam 2002; Loveland et al. 2005) as well as social networks that encourage these values, integrate individuals into their communities, sanction noncompliance, and provide information about and opportunities for civic engagement (Putnam 2000; Scheitle and Finke 2008; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). Likewise, religious behaviors, such as service attendance, contribute to civic engagement through strengthening these beliefs, facilitating the formation of these networks, and providing further channels for the dispersal of information regarding civic engagement opportunities (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011; Lam 2002; Lewis et al. 2013; Loveland et al. 2005). Thus, this research assumes that individuals are inclined to participate in civic behaviors due to value- or instrumentally rational cognitive motivations (Weber 1978 [1922]). As such, it neglects to consider emotional motivations for civic engagement. Neuroscience and psychological studies show that cognition and emotion

are not separate but are integrated in the brain (Izard 2009; Phelps 2006). This research emphasizes how emotion aids in decision making and can encourage pro-social behaviors including giving, volunteering, and cooperation (Akin et al. 2012; de Waal 2008). And yet, religion and civic engagement studies have not caught up with this new line of research.

This is ironic, since one of the founders of the sociological study of religion—Durkheim ([1912] 1965)—stressed the importance of emotion, a byproduct of collective rituals, for religious groups. Contemporary research also shows the importance of emotions for groups—positive group experiences generate positive emotions, which tend to lead to pro-group behavior as individuals attribute the emotions they experienced to the group (Collins 2004; Lawler et al. 2000). Collins' (2004) theory of interaction ritual chains, extends Durkheim's ([1912] 1965) original theory, by arguing that individuals come to value groups that provide them with positive socially derived emotions and as a result, are often willing to act on their behalf. In a recent study using Collins' (2004) theory, Corcoran (2015) found that experiencing positive emotions during religious services was positively associated with higher levels of congregational giving. But is this finding generalizable to other types of civic behaviors? The current study examines whether experiencing positive emotions during religious services is positively associated with congregational volunteering. While the extension of Collins' (2004) theory to congregational giving and volunteering is straightforward, it is unclear whether emotional religious services can facilitate civic engagement in ways that are unconnected to congregations. I theorize competing hypotheses regarding the relationship between experiencing positive emotions during religious services and participating in formal and informal noncongregational civic engagement, that is, civic engagement unrelated to one's congregation.

This study proceeds as follows. First, I review research on emotion and pro-social behaviors and derive predictions regarding the effect of positive emotion on congregational/noncongregational and formal/informal civic engagement. Second, I use data from the 2001 U.S. Congregational Life Survey to test the relationship between experiencing positive emotion during religious services and these outcomes. In doing so, this study contributes to the literature by predicting both formal *and* informal forms of congregational and noncongregational civic engagement using a measure of religious socially derived emotion, thus moving beyond the literature's focus on formal civic engagement and cognitive explanations of it. Third, I use multilevel regression models to test my hypotheses and find some support for them.

EMOTION, RELIGION, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Most studies of the relationship between religion and civic engagement emphasize cognitive explanations (i.e., instrumental or value rational). In terms of noncognitive explanations, Hill and Vaidyanathan's (2011) study is a notable

exception as it theorizes how congregations can instill a habit of giving in attendees. Another noncognitive predictor, emotion, has received little attention in research on religion and civic engagement and much of it focuses on religious giving specifically. Notably, [Smith et al. \(2008:110\)](#) and [Vaidyanathan and Snell \(2011\)](#) investigated guilt as a possible predictor of religious giving but found that it is not a strong predictor as many experience “comfortable guilt,” that is, some discomfort for not giving more but not enough to alter their giving. Looking instead at positive emotions, [Peifer \(2010\)](#) highlights how a sense of community increases religious giving. And yet, reviews of religious giving research do not mention positive emotion as a predictor ([Bekkers and Wiepking 2011](#)).

Looking at the broader civic engagement literature, there is research on the relationship between gender, emotional empathy, and pro-social behavior. This research suggests that women are typically socialized into female gender roles that tend to instill emotional empathy into them, which encourages helping and pro-social behaviors, such as civic engagement ([Beutel and Johnson 2004](#); [Karniol et al. 2003](#); [Wilson and Musick 1997](#); for a review of the literature, see [Eagly and Crowley 1986](#)). Also in the broader literature, studies have proposed that individuals who participate in civic engagement experience a “warm glow” (i.e., good feelings about themselves), which encourages continued civic engagement as individuals want to continue experiencing this positive emotion ([Akin et al. 2012](#); [Andreoni 1990](#); [Batson and Shaw 1991](#)). However, this research only addresses positive emotions derived from individual action and not those that are socially derived.

[Durkheim \(\[1912\] 1965\)](#) proposes that individuals become connected and committed to religious groups as a result of taking part in collective religious rituals that produce powerful shared emotional experiences or “collective effervescence.” This collective effervescence produces emotional energy (EE)—the socially derived emotion that individuals are left with when they leave the ritual ([Collins 2004](#)). That is, the emotional electricity and excitement generated by the group becomes stored in individuals who serve as a type of EE battery. [Collins \(2004\)](#) argues that interaction rituals—interactions involving at least two people—have the potential to produce EE, which individuals seek. EE is a fuzzy concept ([Rossel and Collins 2001](#)), but low levels capture negative emotions such as sadness or boredom, whereas high levels represent positive emotions such as enthusiasm, happiness, and joy. [Collins \(2004:39\)](#) further describes high levels as “a feeling of confidence, courage to take action, boldness in taking initiative.” Rituals that have bodily co-presence, barriers excluding outsiders, a mutual focus of attention, and a shared mood are more likely to produce high levels of EE ([Collins 2004](#)). When ritual participants are physically near each other, they begin to sense the bodily presence and moods of those around them. [Collins \(2004:34\)](#) refers to this as “bodily inter-orientation.” He states: “bodily presence makes it easier for human beings [...] to get into shared rhythm, caught up in each other’s motions and emotions” (64). In this way, ritual participants are more likely to be influenced by the emotions of other participants when they are physically near them.

Emotions can be unconsciously and automatically generated in individuals by observing others' emotional experiences (de Waal 2008). In this way, emotions are like contagions; they spread like viruses and bring individual emotions into alignment with those of the group (Barsade 2002; Collins 2004; Hareli and Rafaeli 2008; Hendriks and Vingerhoets 2006; Hennig-Thurau et al. 2006). When ritual participants are more similar to each other, they have an easier time matching the emotions of others (de Waal 2008), focusing on the same thing (i.e., mutual focus of attention) and experiencing a shared mood (Collins 2004). Homogeneity in participants is often a result of barriers excluding outsiders. When these ingredients are present at high levels, they produce collective effervescence, which, in turn, creates high levels of EE within participants (Collins 2004). Religious services are known for typically having all four ingredients and for creating powerful emotional experiences, though to varying degrees (Baker 2010; Corcoran 2015; Wellman et al. 2014; Wollschleger 2012). For example, Pentecostal and Black Protestant congregations are known for having more emotionally charged and enthusiastic religious services (Chaves 2004; Corcoran 2015; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990; Poloma 1989; Shelton and Emerson 2012).

Successful interaction rituals involve high levels of emotional and cognitive intersubjectivity (Collins 2004). Ritual participants feel connected to others in the group through the experience—focusing on the same thing, sharing the same mood, and having their bodies become in sync. This produces “group solidarity, a feeling of membership” (Collins 2004: 49). According to Lawler and Yoon (1996: 95), because participants obtain EE only after participating in an emotion-inducing interaction ritual, a necessarily collective experience, “the emotions experienced individually are interpreted by actors as coming from something they share” (Lawler and Yoon 1996: 95), that is, the EE is attributed to the group in which they experienced it. Individuals then come to value that group as the provider of EE and seek to contribute to its survival and vitality. They also come to internalize the group's values and symbols and feel moral when they behave on behalf of the group (Collins 2004). Testing these expectations in lab experiments, researchers have found that positive and more frequent interactions increase positive emotions (e.g., pleasure, satisfaction, interest, and excitement) which in turn increase commitment to the group, typically measured by willingness to make contributions to the group and to remain in the group (Lawler and Yoon 1993; Lawler et al. 1995). Further lab experiments tested whether positive emotions lead to relational/group cohesion (i.e., a feeling of group membership) and whether cohesion in turn leads to group commitment (i.e., contributions) (Lawler and Yoon 1996; Lawler, Thye and Yoon 2000). Lawler and Yoon (1996) and Lawler, Thye and Yoon (2000) found strong support for this theorized causal model.

In the context of congregations, individuals contribute through volunteering and financial contributions. Investigating the former, Corcoran (2015) found that experiencing positive emotions during religious services was positively associated with congregational giving. If this theoretical model holds, then EE should also increase congregational volunteering. Engaging in group-related activities is a

measure of commitment to the group (Stark and Finke 2000). When an individual engages in congregational volunteering, whether service to his/her congregation or as a part of the congregation's ministries to their community, the individual is helping to advance the mission of the congregation and contributing to the success of its ministries and programs. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Individuals who experience higher levels of EE during religious services at a congregation should have higher levels of congregational volunteering.

The underlying proposed mechanism connecting EE to congregational civic engagement is attributing it to the group and coming to value the group as a result (Corcoran 2015). Due to this, the connection between EE and noncongregational civic engagement is unspecified. I extend this argument and theorize two possible relationships between EE and noncongregational civic engagement. First, EE may be negatively associated with noncongregational civic engagement due to individuals focusing on the congregation instead of the community. Draper (2014) found that congregations with higher levels of positive emotional experiences during services have significantly higher levels of group solidarity—both in terms of feelings of belonging and commitment to group goals. Group solidarity may lead members to become more focused on their congregations. Past research has made similar arguments regarding intra-group social networks finding that they may insulate members from the outside world and cause them to focus on themselves rather than outsiders (Putnam 2000; Schwadel 2005; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). There is also the potential for there to be a crowding out effect—as individuals contribute more resources to their congregations, they may have fewer resources, both time and money, to donate to outside causes (Menchik and Weisbrod 1987; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). While Hill and Vaidyanathan (2011) did not find a crowding out effect for religious versus secular giving (i.e., those who gave more to religious causes also gave more to secular causes), Whitehead and Stroope (2015) did find evidence of crowding out in regards to civic engagement. Given this, I theorize the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Individuals who experience higher levels of EE during religious services at a congregation should have lower levels of noncongregational civic engagement.

On the other hand, EE may in fact be positively associated with noncongregational civic engagement, because congregations generally encourage altruism and prosocial behavior. Religions typically communicate “some form of selflessness and inherent value in helping others” often through religious or scriptural stories highlighting these virtues (Lewis et al. 2013). Since Draper (2014) found that positive collective emotional experiences lead to higher levels of commitment to congregational aims/goals, EE may lead individuals to more closely identify with their congregation and its philanthropic values. This suggests the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Individuals who experience higher levels of EE during religious services at a congregation should have higher levels of noncongregational civic engagement.

DATA

I use the 2001 U.S. Congregational Life Survey (USCLS) dataset,¹ which draws a random sample of U.S. congregations using hyper-network sampling. Respondents from the 2000 General Social Survey who identified attending a religious service in the past year were asked to provide the name of the congregation they attended. This created a sample of 1,214 congregations who were asked to participate in the USCLS. Of those congregations, 434 completed the study for a response rate of 34%.

Since the purpose of this study is not to provide estimates for congregational characteristics at the population level, the lower response rate is less of a concern as noted by [Thomas and Olson \(2010:625\)](#) “there are many reasons to think that” response rates “have less of an impact on one’s ability to correctly determine the direction of relationships between variables in a population, than they do on one’s ability to make accurate estimates of mean values for that population.” Consistent with [Thomas and Olson \(2010\)](#), this study seeks to estimate relationships among variables like other studies using the USCLS ([Corcoran 2015](#); [Polson 2016](#); [Scheitle and Finke 2008](#); [Whitehead 2010](#); [Whitehead and Stroope 2015](#)). While the response rate is certainly a limitation of this data, it is outweighed by the benefits of a dataset with multiple questions on the emotions experienced during religious services, which is extremely rare.

USCLS congregations are similar to congregations in the 1998 National Congregations Study—a nationally representative survey with an 80% response rate—in terms of standard demographic characteristics ([Hill and Olson 2009](#)). The USCLS includes an attendee survey given to all worship service attendees aged 15 or older on a weekend in April 2001 and a congregational survey completed by a leader of the congregation. I merged these datasets to create a multilevel dataset with attendees nested within congregations. I follow previous USCLS studies ([Corcoran 2015](#); [Scheitle and Finke 2008](#); [Whitehead 2010](#); [Whitehead and Stroope 2015](#)) by dropping respondents who are under the age of 18 and using list-wise deletion to handle missing data. This results in a final sample of 49,360 attendees within 309 congregations.

¹This dataset is used for two reasons. First, it is the only publicly available dataset that contains multiple measures of the emotions individuals experience during religious services. Second, using this dataset, even though it is dated, allows for comparison with other studies of civic engagement that use it ([Corcoran 2015](#); [Polson 2016](#); [Scheitle and Finke 2008](#); [Whitehead 2010](#); [Whitehead and Stroope 2015](#)).

Dependent Variable

I measure congregational volunteering based on whether congregants identified being involved in community service, social justice or advocacy activities connected to their congregation (1 = yes, 0 = no). To measure noncongregational formal civic engagement, I use the following three variables (1 = yes and 0 = no): whether congregants (1) participate in social service or charity groups *not* connected to their congregation, (2) participate in community service, social justice, or advocacy groups *not* connected to their congregation, and (3) have donated money to a charitable organization other than their congregation in the past 12 months. To measure informal civic engagement, I use the following four variables (1 = yes and 0 = no): in the past 12 months have you (1) loaned money to someone outside your family, (2) cared for someone outside your family who was very sick, (3) helped someone outside your family find a job, and (4) donated or prepared food for someone outside your family or congregation. The last of which is specifically informal noncongregational civic engagement, whereas the other measures may be connected to one's congregation. To parse out those who engaged in these activities through their congregation, I control for congregational volunteering in some models.

Independent Variables

The attendee survey asked five questions regarding how often attendees experienced the following during worship services at their congregation: (1) a sense of God's presence; (2) inspiration; (3) awe or mystery; (4) joy; and (5) spontaneity. For each of these questions, respondents were provided with the responses "rarely," "sometimes," "usually," and "always," which were coded from 0 = "rarely" up to 4 = "always." I combined these five questions into an additive EE index (Cronbach's alpha = 0.78). It is possible that those who experience low levels of EE in their congregations leave and are not included in the sample. Looking at the distribution of EE, there are still individuals at lower values (roughly 6% between 0 and 3). Thus, there are still sufficient numbers of people at the lower values of EE to test the hypotheses. Moreover, it is unclear how the hypotheses could be tested among individuals who do not attend services and thus, cannot experience EE during them. Since the congregations in the USCLS mirror those in nationally representative samples (Hill and Olson 2009), there is no reason to expect that those surveyed in the USCLS are different from those who attend religious services in the population.

Control Variables

I control for the following demographic variables: sex (1 = female), race (1 = white), income (logged family income in thousands of dollars), marital status (1 = married), education (1 = no formal education to 8 = graduate degree), age (in years). I also control for several measures of religiosity: biblical literalism (1 = believe the Bible is the actual word of God and should be interpreted literally, 0 = otherwise), small group participation (1 = is involved in prayer, discussion, or Bible study group, 0 = not involved), and religious service attendance

(1 = “This is my first time” up to 7 = “I attend more than once a week”). I include a measure of the exclusivity of beliefs, measured by respondents’ agreement with the statement “all the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth” (1 = “Strongly agree” up to 5 = “Strongly disagree”). Additionally, I control for intra-congregational close friendships (1 = little contact with members of the congregation up to 4 = most close friends are part of this congregation). I also include a control for a congregation’s commitment to civic engagement through an individual-level measure asking attendees whether their congregation offers any activities that reach out to the wider community. If they responded that their congregation does not offer such activities, their response was coded as 0 and 1 otherwise.

On the congregational-level, I control for the following variables in all models: aggregate small group participation (proportion of congregants who responded yes to the attendee question), congregation size logarithmically transformed (average attendance logged), and religious tradition. Religious tradition is measured by indicator variables where 1 represents whether a congregation is within a given religious tradition and 0 otherwise (Steensland et al.’s 2000). Because the individual-level race variable includes all nonwhite races in the 0 category, there is sufficient variation to include it and a binary indicator for Black Protestant congregations in the same models. I distinguish Pentecostal evangelical Protestant congregations from non-Pentecostal evangelical Protestant congregations as the former typically have more emotional religious services (Corcoran 2015). Non-Pentecostal evangelical Protestant congregations serve as the reference category. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for all the variables.

METHOD

As the dependent variables are all binary, I use hierarchical logistic regression models to account for the multilevel nature of the data. These models accurately estimate standard errors of clustered cases (i.e., attendees) within larger units (i.e., congregations), and permit the estimation of variables on all levels of analysis (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). I report both unstandardized and standardized coefficients. One method for estimating standardized coefficients for multilevel logistic regression is to standardize variables before estimating the models (Gelman 2008). While the conventional standardization method requires subtracting a variable’s mean and dividing by 1 standard deviation (SD), this “leads to systematic problems in interpretation” (Gelman 2008:2866). Gelman (2008:2867) notes that

“a binary variable with equal probabilities has mean 0.5 and standard deviation 0.5. The usual standardized predictor (scaled by one standard deviation) then takes on the values ± 1 , and a 1-unit difference on this transformed scale corresponds to a difference of 0.5 on the original variable (for example, a comparison between $x = 0.25$ and 0.75), which cannot be directly interpreted. To think about this another way, consider a regression with some binary predictors (for example, a male/female indicator) left intact, and some continuous predictors

(for example, height) scaled by dividing by one standard deviation. The coefficients for the binary predictors correspond to a comparison of $x = 0$ to $x = 1$, or two standard deviations."

Given this, variables should be subtracted from their means and divided by 2 SDs. This is preferable to the conventional method because it allows binary variables to remain on their interpretable scale and for all other variables to be standardized to be comparable to them. I follow [Gelman \(2008\)](#) and transform all nonbinary variables accordingly.

RESULTS

[Table 2](#) provides the percentage distribution for EE across four categories 0, low (1–5), medium (6–10), and high (11–15) and cross-tabulations for EE by relevant sociodemographic and religion variables. Looking at the distribution of EE, we can see that 0.41% of respondents have 0 EE with the majority of respondents reporting medium levels (57.76%). In terms of the cross-tabulations, females report high levels of EE (28%) more than males (19.49%). This may be because females are socialized to be more emotionally expressive than males ([Brody and Hall 2008](#)). A higher percentage of nonwhites report high EE (37%) compared to whites (22%). This may be because nonwhites are more likely to attend congregations with more emotionally expressive services, such as Black Protestant and Pentecostal congregations. Those who participate in small groups have a higher percentage of respondents reporting high EE (31.52%) compared with those who do not (22.84%) as do those who ascribe to biblical literalism (35%) compared with those who do not (21.56%). There appear to be small differences in reporting high EE among those with few friends in the congregation (around 21%) versus reporting more friends in the congregation (around 25%). Looking at attendance, 27% of those who attended services for the first time report high EE compared with 18.53% of those who attend services once a month and roughly 37% of those who attend services once a week or more, which is the highest percentage for any value of this variable. According to [Collins \(2004\)](#), those who experience high levels of EE should return to participate in more interaction rituals to continue experiencing it, so it makes sense that frequent attendees would have the highest levels of EE. First-time attendees likely have a higher percentage of high EE than those who attend once a month because they may be more influenced by the service as they are not yet accustomed to it (i.e., activities that are new are often more exciting). Finally, as would be expected, Black Protestant and Pentecostal evangelical congregations report the highest percentages of high EE (33.47% and 34.67%, respectively), which is consistent with both types of congregations being known for enthusiastic and emotionally expressive services ([Chaves 2004](#); [Corcoran 2015](#); [Lincoln and Mamiya 1990](#); [Poloma 1989](#); [Shelton and Emerson 2012](#)). These expected relationships with EE increase confidence in how EE is operationalized.

TABLE 1 Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Obs	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Individual-level outcomes					
Congregational volunteering	49,360	0.191		0	1
Noncongregational social service	49,360	0.288		0	1
Noncongregational advocacy	49,360	0.058		0	1
Noncongregational charitable giving	49,360	0.791		0	1
Loaned money	49,360	0.294		0	1
Cared for someone	49,360	0.206		0	1
Helped find a job	49,360	0.255		0	1
Donated food	49,360	0.523		0	1
Individual-level predictor					
Emotional energy (EE)	49,360	8.418	3.028	0	15
Individual-level controls					
White	49,360	0.822		0	1
Female	49,360	0.601		0	1
Age	49,360	48.801	15.348	18	100
Education	49,360	5.891	1.641	1	8
Married	49,360	0.594		0	1
Ln(income)	49,360	10.748	0.759	8.517	11.513
Congregational civic activities	49,360	0.94		0	1
Small group participation	49,360	0.204		0	1
Biblical literalism	49,360	0.223		0	1
Theological exclusivity	49,360	2.805	1.261	1	5
Friends in congregation	49,360	2.619	0.899	1	4
Attendance	49,360	5.748	1.068	1	7
Congregational-level controls					
Aggregate small group participation	309	0.278	0.126	0.019	0.79
Ln(congregation size)	309	5.876	1.099	2.398	8.594
Non-Pentecostal Evangelical	309	0.178		0	1
Mainline	309	0.437		0	1
Other	309	0.055		0	1
Catholic	309	0.265		0	1
Pentecostal	309	0.045		0	1
Black Protestant	309	0.019		0	1

To determine how much the dependent variables vary across congregations, I estimated null random-intercepts-only models for each of the dependent variables (results not shown, available upon request). The intra-class coefficients for each of the models are 0.088 for congregational volunteering, 0.062 for noncongregational social service, 0.091 for noncongregational advocacy, 0.092 for noncongregational charitable giving, 0.065 for loaned money, 0.011 for cared

TABLE 2 Cross-Tabulations with Emotional Energy, Percentages Shown

Variables	Zero	Low	Med	High	Total	Variables	Zero	Low	Med	High	Total
EE distribution	0.41	17.21	57.76	24.62	100%		EE				
	EE						Zero	Low	Med	High	Total
Gender						Small group participation	0.5	19.18	57.48	22.84	100%
Male	0.63	21.32	58.55	19.49	100%	No	0.09	9.52	58.87	31.52	100%
Female	0.27	14.47	57.24	28.02	100%	Yes					
Race						Biblical literalism					
Nonwhite	0.34	11.45	51.43	36.77	100%	No biblical literalism	0.47	19.41	58.56	21.56	100%
White	0.43	18.45	59.13	21.99	100%	Biblical literalism	0.21	9.55	54.99	35.25	100%
Congregational activities						Friends in congregation					
No congregational activities	0.71	18.51	55.37	25.41	100%	Little contact (1)	0.94	23.37	54.08	21.61	100%
Congregational activities	0.39	17.12	57.92	24.57	100%	Some friends (2)	0.45	20.63	57.8	21.12	100%
						Some close friends (3)	0.3	15.55	58.98	25.17	100%
Religious tradition						Most close friends (4)	0.16	17.21	57.76	24.62	100%
Catholic	0.53	18.48	55.58	25.4	100%						
Non-Pentecostal evangelical	0.23	13.79	61.37	24.6	100%	Attendance					
Mainline	0.28	16.85	61.42	21.46	100%	First time (1)	4.14	20.38	48.3	27.18	100%
Black Protestant	0.0	3.67	62.86	33.47	100%	Once a month (4)	1.09	26.96	53.42	18.53	100%
Pentecostal evangelical	0.2	7.59	57.54	34.67	100%	Once a week + (7)	0.08	8.45	54.83	36.64	100%
Other	0.25	17.89	53.05	28.81	100%						

for someone, 0.042 for helped someone find a job, and 0.029 for donated food. For formal forms of civic engagement, between 6.5% and 9.2% of the variance in the dependent variables is across congregations. For informal forms of civic engagement, between 1.1% and 6.5% of the variance in the dependent variables is between congregations. This means that congregational factors account for more of the variance in formal forms of civic engagement. Additionally, likelihood-ratio tests (LR) for all models indicate that the multilevel logistic models perform better than single-level logistic models and thus, the former should be used.

Table 3 presents the hierarchical logistic regression results predicting formal civic engagement—congregational volunteering and noncongregational social service, advocacy, and charitable giving. Looking at the demographic variables, individuals who are older, more educated, and have higher incomes are significantly more likely to engage in all forms of formal civic engagement. Females are significantly more likely to engage in congregational volunteering, noncongregational social service, and noncongregational charitable giving, but are significantly less likely to engage in noncongregational advocacy. The former results are consistent with the literature on gender and civic engagement in the U.S. showing that females tend to participate in more pro-social behaviors (Eagly and Crowley 1986; Wilson 2000). Whites are significantly more likely to engage in noncongregational social service and noncongregational charitable giving, but there are no significant differences between whites and nonwhites in their congregational volunteering and noncongregational advocacy. Individuals who report that their congregation offers civic activities are more likely to engage in formal civic engagement. Moving to the religion control variables, attendance is significantly and positively associated with the log odds of congregational volunteering but does not have a significant relationship with the log odds of noncongregational civic engagement. Consistent with prior studies, small group participation and having friends in one's congregation are significantly associated with an increase in the log odds of all four formal civic engagement variables (Corcoran 2015; Polson 2016; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). Biblical literalism is significantly and negatively associated with the log odds of formal civic engagement. Theological exclusivity has mixed relationships—it is negatively and significantly related to the log odds of congregational volunteering and noncongregational social service but is positively and significantly related to the log odds of noncongregational advocacy and charitable giving.

On the congregational-level, aggregate small group participation has a significant negative relationship with the log odds of all forms of formal civic engagement except advocacy. The size of a congregation is significantly and negatively related to the log odds of formal forms of volunteering, but not to noncongregational charitable giving. Compared to non-Pentecostal evangelical Protestant congregations, Black Protestant congregations exhibit significantly higher levels of congregational volunteering, noncongregational social service, and congregational advocacy. Mainline Protestant congregations have

TABLE 3 Hierarchical Logistic Regression Models Predicting Formal Civic Engagement:

Variables	Congregational volunteering			Noncongregational social service		
	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta
Intercept	-11.349***	0.534		-3.966***	0.253	
Level 1 (Individual)						
EE	0.053***	0.005	0.161	0.017***	0.004	0.050
White	-0.000	0.048	-0.000	0.139***	0.037	0.139
Female	0.120***	0.027	0.120	0.213***	0.022	0.213
Age	0.008***	0.001	0.126	0.008***	0.001	0.118
Education	0.092***	0.009	0.151	0.184***	0.007	0.303
Married	0.053	0.028	0.053	-0.140***	0.023	-0.140
Ln(income)	0.087***	0.022	0.066	0.105***	0.017	0.080
Congregational civic activities	4.494***	0.410	4.494	0.410***	0.051	0.410
Small group participation	0.982***	0.030	0.982	0.310***	0.028	0.310
Biblical literalism	-0.184***	0.037	-0.184	-0.219***	0.030	-0.219
Theological exclusivity	-0.054***	0.012	-0.068	-0.044***	0.010	-0.055
Friends in congregation	0.542***	0.018	0.488	0.252***	0.013	0.226
Attendance	0.456***	0.021	0.487	-0.015	0.011	-0.016
Level 2 (Congregation)						
Aggregate small group	-0.851**	0.294	-0.108	-0.562*	0.218	-0.071
Ln(congregational size)	-0.181***	0.034	-0.199	-0.089***	0.025	-0.097
Mainline	0.246**	0.089	0.246	0.177**	0.064	0.177
Other	0.779***	0.149	0.779	0.106	0.109	0.106
Catholic	-0.025	0.123	-0.025	-0.154	0.089	-0.154
Pentecostal	-0.185	0.167	-0.185	-0.266*	0.128	-0.266*
Black Protestant	0.528*	0.247	0.528	0.475*	0.190	0.475*
Variance Components	0.179			0.073		

Level 2 $N = 309$; Level 1 $N = 49,360$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed significance tests).

Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients and SEs Displayed

Variables	Noncongregational advocacy		Noncongregational charitable giving			
	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta
Intercept	-6.707***	0.467		-8.138***	0.257	
Level 1 (Individual)						
EE	0.019***	0.007	0.056	-0.007	0.004	-0.020
White	0.117	0.070	0.117	0.543***	0.037	0.543
Female	-0.165***	0.041	-0.165	0.307***	0.025	0.307
Age	0.010***	0.001	0.149	0.028***	0.001	0.423
Education	0.363***	0.016	0.596	0.183***	0.008	0.299
Married	-0.286***	0.043	-0.286	0.129***	0.026	0.129
Ln(income)	0.094**	0.034	0.072	0.568***	0.017	0.431
Congregational civic activities	0.443***	0.109	0.443	0.306***	0.047	0.306
Small group participation	0.341***	0.050	0.341	0.403***	0.037	0.403
Biblical literalism	-0.284***	0.063	-0.284	-0.228***	0.031	-0.228
Theological exclusivity	0.055**	0.018	0.069	0.072***	0.011	0.091
Friends in congregation	0.115***	0.025	0.104	0.079***	0.014	0.071
Attendance	-0.018	0.021	-0.019	0.006	0.011	0.006
Level 2 (Congregation)						
Aggregate small group	-0.570	0.350	-0.072	-1.153***	0.223	-0.146
Ln(congregational size)	-0.125**	0.038	-0.137	-0.015	0.024	-0.017
Mainline	0.189	0.105	0.189	0.243***	0.065	0.243
Other	0.816***	0.156	0.816	-0.017	0.114	-0.020
Catholic	0.262	0.140	0.262	0.062	0.088	0.062
Pentecostal	0.491*	0.199	0.491	0.164	0.117	0.164
Black Protestant	0.704*	0.310	0.704	0.214	0.186	0.214
Variance Components	0.119			0.052		

significantly higher levels of congregational volunteering, noncongregational social service, and noncongregational charitable giving.

Moving to the independent variable, EE is positively and significantly associated with congregational volunteering, which supports hypothesis 1. In terms of the standardized betas—standardized by subtracting the mean and dividing by 2 SDs (Gelman 2008)—the magnitude of the relationship is on par with that of biblical literalism and theological exclusivity two often cited predictors of civic engagement (Scheitle and Finke 2008; Stark and Finke 2000; Whitehead 2010; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). Conservative religious beliefs typically have weak to moderate relationships with civic engagement in these studies. EE is also positively and significantly associated with the log odds of noncongregational social service and advocacy, but is not significantly associated with the log odds of noncongregational charitable giving. Its standardized beta is on par with that of theological exclusivity. This provides some support for hypothesis 3, particularly in terms of noncongregational volunteering.

Table 4 displays the results predicting informal civic engagement. For many of the control variables, their results depend on the type of informal civic engagement. Individuals who are white, married, ascribe to theological exclusivity and attend church more frequently have significantly lower log odds of loaning money, caring for someone, and helping someone find a job, but have significantly higher log odds of donating food. Females have significantly lower log odds of loaning money and helping someone find a job but have significantly higher log odds of caring for someone and donating food. This is consistent with research showing that women are typically socialized into gender roles related to caring and helping behaviors but have less access to resources compared with men, which would likely make them less able to help someone find a job or to loan money (Wilson 2000; Wilson and Musick 1997). Reporting that one's congregation offers civic activities is not significantly related to the log odds of loaning money, caring for someone, or helping someone find a job, but is significantly and positively related to the log odds of donating food. While the donating food question said "for someone outside your family or congregation" it is possible that individuals heard about opportunities through their congregation. Congregational friends and small group participation are the only controls that have consistent significant positive relationships across all forms of informal civic engagement.

On the congregational-level, small group participation is positively related to the log odds of loaning money and helping someone find a job. Congregational size is negatively related to the log odds of loaning money and donating food. Compared to non-Pentecostal evangelical Protestant congregations, Black Protestant, Pentecostal, Catholic, and Other congregations have significantly higher log odds of loaning money.

Turning to the independent variables, EE is positively and significantly associated with the log odds of all four types of informal civic engagement. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is strongly supported when predicting informal noncongregational civic engagement. Looking at the standardized betas, for loaning money and

helping someone find a job, EE has the strongest magnitude compared with all the other individual-level religion variables. For cared for someone, EEs standardized beta is the second largest in magnitude for the individual-level religion variables after small group participation. For donated food, compared with the other individual-level religion variables, EEs standardized beta is the third largest following small group participation and friends in the congregation.

I estimated additional models to further check the robustness of the findings in which I controlled for congregational volunteering to ensure that the results are not due to civic engagement being connected to one's congregation (results not shown, but available upon request). Given Hill and Vaidyanathan's (2011) argument regarding how congregations can instill habits of giving, it could be the case that EE is associated with higher levels of congregational volunteering, which may in turn be associated with higher levels of noncongregational civic engagement. In these models, the findings remain the same except that the EE coefficient loses statistical significance when predicting advocacy. Thus, EE may be indirectly related to advocacy through its positive relationship with congregational volunteering.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, EE is positively associated with nearly all forms of formal and informal civic engagement. In terms of formal noncongregational civic engagement, EE's effect seems to be specific to volunteering as it is not significantly related to charitable giving. Since Corcoran (2015) found that EE positively affects congregational charitable giving, this suggests that there might be a crowding out effect for noncongregational charitable giving. These findings provide strong support for the utility of extending Collins' (2004) interaction ritual theory to civic engagement. EE generated during worship services is related to higher levels of in-group and out-group, formal and informal civic engagement.

Past research has overwhelmingly focused on religion and formal civic engagement—donating time and money to an organization—and, in doing so, has neglected to consider informal civic engagement, such as caring for a sick person. Of all the individual-level religion variables, EE had some of the strongest relationships with informal civic engagement, which suggests that it may be particularly important when predicting this type of civic engagement. Moreover, in this study, nearly all the sociodemographic variables had inconsistent relationships across the different forms of informal civic engagement and between informal and formal civic engagement. The results show that nonwhites are more likely to engage in loaning money, caring for someone, and helping someone find a job and those with lower incomes are more likely to care for someone. This contrasts with formal civic engagement where race is either not related to the outcomes or whites have higher levels, and income is consistently

TABLE 4 Hierarchical Logistic Regression Models Predicting Informal Civic Engagement:

Variables	Loaned money		Cared for someone			
	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta
Intercept	0.167	0.239		-1.797***	0.235	
Level 1 (Individual)						
EE	0.044***	0.004	0.134	0.069***	0.004	0.208
White	-0.350***	0.034	-0.350	-0.119**	0.036	-0.119
Female	-0.363***	0.022	-0.363	0.310***	0.024	0.310
Age	-0.026***	0.001	-0.400	0.003***	0.001	0.050
Education	-0.029***	0.007	-0.047	0.077***	0.008	0.126
Married	-0.548***	0.023	-0.548	-0.168***	0.025	-0.168
Ln(income)	0.099***	0.016	0.075	-0.090***	0.017	-0.068
Congregational civic activities	0.054	0.044	0.054	0.028	0.050	0.028
Small group participation	0.078**	0.029	0.078	0.278***	0.030	0.278
Biblical literalism	0.039	0.029	0.039	0.080**	0.031	0.080
Theological exclusivity	-0.024*	0.009	-0.030	-0.039***	0.010	-0.049
Friends in congregation	0.070***	0.012	0.063	0.211***	0.014	0.190
Attendance	-0.087***	0.010	-0.092	-0.041***	0.011	-0.044
Level 2 (Congregation)						
Aggregate small group	0.490*	0.214	0.062	0.064	0.186	0.008
Ln(congregational size)	-0.049*	0.024	-0.054	-0.035	0.020	-0.038
Mainline	0.075	0.064	0.075	0.063	0.054	0.063
Other	0.183***	0.108	0.183	0.168	0.091	0.168
Catholic	0.413***	0.087	0.413	0.136	0.073	0.136
Pentecostal	0.354**	0.116	0.354	0.165	0.10	0.165
Black Protestant	0.747***	0.182	0.747	0.202	0.166	0.202
Variance Components	0.064			0.023		

Level 2 $N = 309$; Level 1 $N = 49,360$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed significance tests).

Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients and SEs Displayed

Variables	Helped find a job		Donated food			
	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta	Unstandardized coefficient	SE	Standardized beta
Intercept	-3.666***	0.248		-4.832***	0.219	
Level 1 (Individual)						
EE	0.047***	0.004	0.141	0.030***	0.003	0.092
White	-0.477***	0.034	-0.477	0.250***	0.032	0.250
Female	-0.583***	0.022	-0.583	0.759***	0.020	0.759
Age	-0.025***	0.001	-0.385	0.001	0.001	0.020
Education	0.117***	0.008	0.192	0.087***	0.007	0.142
Married	-0.261***	0.024	-0.261	0.223***	0.021	0.223
Ln(income)	0.310***	0.018	0.236	0.224***	0.015	0.170
Congregational civic activities	0.010	0.046	0.010	0.203***	0.041	0.203
Small group participation	0.093**	0.030	0.093	0.367***	0.027	0.367
Biblical literalism	0.063*	0.030	0.063	-0.049	0.026	-0.049
Theological exclusivity	-0.043***	0.010	-0.055	0.019*	0.009	0.024
Friends in congregation	0.070***	0.013	0.063	0.203***	0.011	0.182
Attendance	-0.069***	0.010	-0.074	0.061***	0.010	0.065
Level 2 (Congregation)						
Aggregate small group	0.415*	0.206	0.052	-0.075	0.186	-0.009
Ln(congregational size)	0.040	0.023	0.043	-0.041***	0.020	-0.045
Mainline	0.042	0.062	0.042	0.120*	0.054	0.120
Other	0.281**	0.101	0.281	-0.038	0.093	-0.038
Catholic	0.191*	0.083	0.191	-0.012	0.074	-0.012
Pentecostal	0.185	0.113	0.185	-0.120	0.102	-0.120
Black Protestant	0.156	0.178	0.156	-0.123	0.168	-0.123
Variance Components	0.047			0.042		

related to higher levels of all forms of formal civic engagement. This is consistent with the broader literature showing that the types of civic engagement typically engaged in by racial and ethnic minorities, individuals with lower incomes, and women is often undercounted because it does not fit formal definitions (Martinez et al. 2011). As Martinez et al. (2011) note a focus on formal activities results in “the diminished visibility of many other activities and serves to exclude some groups and activities from the conversation on civic engagement” (26). Since the findings indicate that informal civic engagement may be more likely among certain sociodemographic groups, examining it is an important step toward fully understanding who engages in civic engagement.

While prior research often finds that attendance is a strong predictor of civic engagement (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011; Lewis et al. 2013), the current study finds that attendance is only significantly and positively related to congregational volunteering and donating food. In fact, the findings show that attendance is negatively related to loaning money, caring for someone, and helping someone find a job. In additional results (not shown), I estimated the models without EE and attendance exhibits the same relationships. Thus, the attendance results cannot be attributed to being net of EE. These different relationships may be because prior studies focus on formal civic engagement connected to congregations, rather than noncongregational formal and informal civic engagement controlling for whether the congregation offers civic engagement activities (as measured by individual reports). It might also be because prior studies include those who do not attend services at all and thus the effect of attendance on civic engagement may be more so capturing a difference between those who never attend and those who attend at any level. Because this study used congregational data, it only includes individuals who attend services to some degree. Given that an individual attends services, it may be the case that the frequency of such attendance does not matter for predicting formal civic engagement and may contribute to crowding out informal civic engagement. Also, EE taps the positive emotions individuals experience during religious services, which requires being present for them. In this way, the emotions one experiences during services may be more important than the frequency of attendance for explaining levels of civic engagement.

Past research has also emphasized religious beliefs as having weak to moderate positive relationships with civic engagement. In this study, the results are mixed depending on the type of civic engagement. Biblical literalism has significant negative relationships with all types of formal civic engagement, but has significant positive relationships with caring for someone and helping someone find a job. Theological exclusivity has negative and significant relationships with congregational volunteering, noncongregational social service, loaning money, caring for someone, and helping someone find a job, but has a positive and significant relationship with donating food. Future research is needed to further parse out the underlying mechanisms for these relationships. We know from past research that small group participation and having friends in one’s congregation have positive relationships with civic engagement (Corcoran 2015; Polson 2016; Whitehead

and Stroope 2015). Notably, EE joins these predictors in being the only other individual-level religion variable to have consistent positive relationships with all types of civic engagement with the exception of noncongregational charitable giving. Moreover, the magnitude of EE's relationship with formal civic engagement is consistent with that of theological exclusivity a commonly used measure of conservative religious belief (Scheitle and Finke 2008; Stark and Finke 2000; Whitehead 2010; Whitehead and Stroope 2015). While the magnitude of EE's association with formal civic engagement is weaker than that for informal forms, as Smith et al. (2008) note, if individuals give even a little bit more, overall, that leads to large sums of money (or products) donated, or in the case of volunteering, large numbers of volunteer hours. This means that when it comes to civic engagement even a small increase can make a real difference. Given this, future civic engagement research should consider the role of EE in addition to other frequently tested religion variables.

This study has some limitations. First, like other studies using the USCLS, this article cannot ascertain the causal direction of relationships due to the cross-sectional nature of the data. Despite this, findings from prior social psychological experiments strengthen confidence in the causal specification of the models. These studies found evidence for a positive causal relationship between positive group interactions and positive group-induced emotion, which was also found to be significantly and positively related to group commitment (Lawler and Yoon 1993, 1996; Lawler et al. 1995, 2000). Some of these studies also tested the underlying theorized mechanism between positive group-induced emotions and group commitment—group cohesion or a feeling of group membership—and found support for it (Lawler and Yoon 1996; Lawler et al. 2000). Additionally, while a longitudinal multilevel dataset of individuals within congregations would be ideal, it does not currently exist. Although it is possible that formal and informal civic engagement could affect individual levels of positive emotion creating a “warm glow” (Andreoni 1990), it is unclear why it would influence the feelings an individual experiences during religious services, such as awe. Still, it is possible that there is a feedback loop between EE and civic engagement, where each may mutually reinforce the other. Moreover, this study hypothesizes that the underlying mechanism connecting EE to civic engagement is feelings of group membership and coming to internalize the group's values, but does not test this mechanism. While the findings from Lawler and Yoon's (1996) and Lawler et al.'s (2000) experimental studies lend support to this theorized causal mechanism, additional longitudinal research is needed to further identify the causal direction(s) and relationships between EE, feelings of group membership/group value internalization, and civic engagement. Second, the EE index is only comprised of five positive emotions, and the dataset is from 2001. Individuals may experience other positive emotions during worship services that are not captured by this index. Currently, this is the only publicly available dataset that includes multiple measures of emotional experiences during worship services. Future surveys should incorporate additional types of emotions.

The results of this study identify important relationships between EE and formal/informal congregational/noncongregational civic engagement. Although past research has tended to only investigate one form of civic engagement at a time, this article highlights the need for studies to examine multiple forms as many of the religious control variables had diverse effects across different types of civic engagement. While prior studies primarily focused on cognitive predictors of civic engagement, this study highlights the importance of one type of noncognitive factor, emotion, in predicting civic engagement. It also shows the relevance of extending and testing Collins' (2004) interaction ritual theory in this domain. Extending past research finding a causal relationship between positive group interactions, positive group-induced emotions, and group commitment (Lawler and Yoon 1993, 1996; Lawler et al. 1995, 2000), this article provides evidence for the hypothesis that higher levels of EE, as measured by an additive index of positive emotions experienced during worship services, contribute to higher levels of formal and informal congregational and noncongregational civic engagement. Future research would benefit from considering how cognition and emotions affect formal and informal civic engagement more broadly.

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