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RESEARCH NOTE

Clergy Working Outside of Congregations, 1976–2018

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Abstract
Changes in the American religious landscape have affected the professional religious labor force in the United States. These changes may be leading clergy to work for multiple congregations (Robbins and Francis in J Empir Theol 27(2):261–280, 2014), in multiple occupations (Chang, in: Carroll (ed) Pulpit & pew: research on pastoral leadership, Duke Divinity School, Durham, 2004), and/or to seek out clergy work outside of congregations (Chang and Bompadre in J Sci Study Relig 38(3):398–410, 1999). Focusing on the latter, this study addresses the research questions: What are the patterns and demographics of non-congregational clergy and how have these patterns changed over time? Using national-level data, we present the first large-scale mapping of clergy working outside of congregations over the past 42 years. We observe that non-congregational clergy are more likely to be women, live in cities, and have an advanced degree. Moreover, clergy in non-traditional types of family structure are more likely to find clergy work outside of congregations compared to clergy living in a nuclear family. We suggest several factors that might account for these differences.

Keywords Clergy · Congregations · Religious labor market · Precarious work

The American religious landscape is changing as growing numbers of people, especially under the age of 30, claim no religious affiliation (Cooperman et al. 2015; Hout 2017; Kosmin and Keysar 2009) and congregations continue to decline (Chaves and Anderson 2014; Anderson et al. 2008; Brauer 2017). The profile of individuals in training for religious leadership is also shifting as some seminaries

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and theological schools—especially mainline Protestant ones—are closing or merging with others in light of declining enrollments (Wheeler and Ruger 2013).

These changes have led some scholars and religious leaders to suggest that clergy work is becoming more precarious. This instability has been linked with the growing clergy income disadvantage compared to similarly-educated Americans (Hudnut-Beumler 2007; McMillan and Price 2003; Schleifer and Chaves 2016) as well as larger numbers of clergy choosing (or being forced into) bi-vocational work (Vaters 2017; Wheeler 2014; Perry and Schleifer 2019). Scholars have highlighted how the content of clergy work has shifted in response to these labor force changes with some clergy working for several smaller congregations, looking for clergy positions outside of congregations, and/or combining work inside and outside of religious settings (Chang and Bompadre 1999). While some studies describe clergy who work for multiple congregations (Chang 2004; Francis et al. 2013; Robbins and Francis 2014), we know far less about national-level trends in clergy working outside of congregations.

Using large-scale national labor market data, we ask: What are the national-level patterns and demographics of clergy working outside of congregations and how have these patterns changed over time? Focusing on individuals who report "clergy" as their primary occupation, we describe—for the first time—trends in the number of clergy who work inside and outside of religious organizations using Current Population Survey (CPS) data collected by the National Bureau of Labor Statistics. Building on historical and qualitative work that describes non-congregational clergy working in the military, federal prisons, healthcare organizations, veteran's administration, and other settings (Sullivan 2014; Dubler 2013; Loveland 2014; Cadge 2012; Boddie and Funk 2012; Ferguson 2015), we view this article as the first large-scale quantitative descriptive overview of this important and potentially emergent form of religious work. In the following, we briefly outline some of the previous research in this area before describing our findings.

Background

Current estimates suggest there are half a million clergy working in the United States.[1] While most likely work in congregations, historically some clergy have worked in non-congregational settings and this continues to this day (Holst and Kurtz 1973; Gerkin 1997; Sullivan 2014). Some of these non-congregational clergy are chaplains while others work in socials service, education, and a range of other settings. Despite a long history of clergy working outside of congregations, we do not know much about how this form of religious work fits within the larger religious labor market. Data limitations have prevented researchers from mapping trends and demographic patterns among non-congregational clergy as well as formally comparing these clergy to clergy working in congregations. Before we begin to address this

[1] See: http://hirr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast_facts.html#numclergy.

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gap in our knowledge, we outline some of the research on non-congregational clergy and chaplains to contextualize our analyses.

Chaplaincy is the type of non-congregational clergy work that has received the most attention from researchers. This form of religious work likely emerged in the Middle Ages in Europe and has taken multiple forms since that time. Winnifred Sullivan describes chaplains in the United States as, "strangely necessary figure[s], religiously and legally speaking, in negotiating the public life of religion today (2014; p. x). Modern day chaplains are religious professionals from a range of religious backgrounds who work in institutions ranging from the military, to prisons, to airports, to social movements. Precisely how many clergy work as chaplains is not fully known, but current estimates suggest as many as 6000 people are employed as chaplains by the federal government in the military, federal prisons, and the Veterans Administration, and 10,000 are employed by healthcare organizations (Sullivan 2014).

Research about chaplains has been largely historical and qualitative, emphasizing what they do, how their work has changed over time, and how this work varies across different occupational sectors and intersects with laws about religion. Two-thirds of American hospitals have chaplains who support patients, families, and staff through conversation, rituals, and connections to resources beyond the hospital (Cadge et al. 2008; Cadge 2012; Massey et al. 2015). Research about military chaplaincy has focused on how these religious professionals negotiate the persistent (and shifting) tensions around religious diversity within these settings (Hansen 2012; Stahl 2017). Other studies have also explored how chaplains experience their work, finding that much of this type of religious labor is improvisational and varies by individual and the context in which chaplains work (Paget and McCormack 2006; Swift et al. 2015; Egan 2016).

There is some debate among scholars and religious leaders about whether positions for clergy outside of congregations—including chaplaincy—are considered a lower status form of clergy work within the religious labor market. While this sentiment is often unspoken, Zikmund et al. suggested that the church leaders they interviewed often "assume that these [non-congregational clergy] are clergy who start out in parish ministry but, after a few years, leave employment in local congregation because *they cannot do the job or do not value the job*" (1998: 117 [empahsis added]). Other studies suggest that clergy viewed positions outside of congregations as roles for colleagues who do not fit easily within the hierarchy of religious organizations for reasons of gender (Zikmund et al. 1998), sexuality (Hancocks et al. 2008), ideology (Hoge and Wenger 2005), or other factors. Folk wisdom suggests that non-congregational clergy positions are also a way women have accommodated to the demands of clergy work and childrearing or as a way that clergy couples have found two positions in the same geography (Zikmund et al. 1998). Interestingly, in spite of these assumptions, Schleifer and Chaves found that non-congregational clergy earn around "19% more than their peers working in churches" (2016: 146), suggesting this type of clergy work may lead to more financial stability compared to more traditional congregational jobs.

Quantitative data about clergy who work outside of congregations is limited because of the lack of national survey data that collects information about where clergy work. Some research focuses on supply and demand factors, such as seminary

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graduation rates and clergy job openings, viewing non-congregational work as an answer to over-supply in the clergy labor market (Chang 2004; Chang and Bompadre 1999). Other research on clergy compensation acknowledges that non-congregational clergy may be compensated differently relative to congregational clergy (Schleifer and Chaves 2016), but that this process may be gendered. For example, Schleifer and Miller found that while male non-congregational clergy experience an income advantage, female non-congregational clergy do not (2018: 403).

The relatively small number of studies on non-congregational clergy makes it difficult to assess the role these individuals occupy in the American religious labor force. With stark declines in religious service attendance, particularly among younger cohorts (Schwadel 2010), more and more Americans may be interacting with religious professional only outside of the congregational setting. We aim here to describe the demographic composition of individuals who chose or are sorted into this type of clergy work and how these patterns have changed over time. While this study is necessarily exploratory, our findings have implications for those who are studying and theorizing about the changing structure of religious work within the United States.

Data and Methods

Data

We use data from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) from 1976 to 2018.[2] The CPS is collected by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and has been widely used to study income inequality in the United States (Schwartz 2010; Burkhauser et al. 2011; Moller et al. 2009; Lemieux 2006; Mouw and Kalleberg 2010). Some recent studies have taken advantage the large CPS sample to map trends in clergy compensation and demographics over time (Schleifer and Chaves 2016; McMillan and Price 2003; Schleifer and Miller 2018; Perry and Schleifer 2019), and we follow these approaches to focus on clergy working inside and outside of congregations.

The CPS collects information about respondents' occupation that allows us to isolate a cross-section of America clergy from 1976 to 2018. The CPS asks, "What kind of work do you do, that is, what is your occupation?" and the answers to this are categorized into the Census occupational coding schemes that have included a distinct category for clergy.[3] Following the US Census, the CPS has changed occupational coding systems: for example, before 1983 the CPS used the 1970 census occupation codes (*Clergy* = 086) while after 2011 they used the 2010 census occupational codes (*Clergy* = 2040). We harmonize these different coding schemes to

[2] These CPS data were downloaded from the Integrated Public Use Microdata series (IPUMS), CPS database at the Minnesota Population Center (Flood et al. 2017).

[3] For more information, see: http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/questionnaires/Labor%20Force.pdf and https://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/ocsm/comA176.Htm.

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isolate Clergy from 1976 to 2018. The CPS provides information on about 8956 clergy over a 42-year time-period. About 200 clergy are interviewed each year and, to our knowledge, this represents the largest nationally representative, publicly available dataset on American clergy.

Dependent Variable: Non-congregational Clergy

The CPS also collects information about the industry where respondents work. One of the industry codes is "religious organizations"[4] and most clergy (about 94%) report working in this industry. The rest tend to work in medical, educational, and non-profit/welfare sectors. Following the work of Schleifer and colleagues, we identify those working in "religious organizations" as a proxy for congregational clergy (Schleifer and Chaves 2016; Schleifer and Miller 2018; Perry and Schleifer 2019). This measure is not perfect, but it does allow us to separate clergy who work in religious settings from clergy working elsewhere. Given the scarcity of survey data on non-congregation clergy and the fact that most of the non-congregational clergy in this sample work in the medical, educational, and non-profit sectors, we proceed given this data limitation.

Independent Variables

The CPS collects wide a variety of information that allows us to profile the demographic and geographical distribution of clergy over time. Women may be over represented among non-congregational clergy (Schleifer and Miller 2018) and we create a binary indicator for *female* to capture gender differences. Family composition may affect selection into non-congregation clergy positions, so we create dummy variables for respondents who are currently *married* and who have *children living in household* to capture any differences. To account for regional differences, we create dummy variables for those who live in a *city* and those living in the *Northeast*, *Midwest*, and *West*, with those in the South as the reference group.

One of our main interests is exploring how patterns in non-congregational clergy have changed over time. While the CPS is a large dataset, some of the years captured here have a very small number of non-congregational clergy. To maximize the number of non-congregational clergy captured in each time point, we combine 3 years of CPS data at a time (Mouw and Kalleberg 2010; Kim and Sakamoto 2008). The result is that our *year of survey* measure includes a series of 3-year grouping that spans from 1980–1982 to 2016–2018. To account for all of our survey years, the

[4] Religious organizations are defined as: "Establishments of religious organizations operated for worship, religious training or study, government or administration of an organized religion, or for promotion of religious activities. Other establishments maintained by religious organizations, such as educational institutions, hospitals, publishing houses, reading rooms, social services, and secondhand stores, are classified according to their primary activity" (https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.display?id=219&tab=description). Here, we have harmonized the census industry codes across our time series. Because the CPS is a labor force dataset, they do not capture occupational information about military members and we therefore cannot account for clergy who work as military chaplains.

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first time-grouping includes 4-years (1976–1979). This measure ranges from 0 (1976–1979) to 13 (2016–2018) and allows us to track trends in clergy working outside of congregation over time without concerns over the relatively low number of non-congregational clergy captured in some of the CPS survey years.

While clergy are a highly educated group (around 77% have a college degree or higher), there may be important relationships between clergy education and the settings in which they work. The CPS collects information on respondent's education and we use this to create an indicator variable for respondents who have completed an *advanced college degree*.[5] We also include an indicator for those clergy who work less than 35 h in the typical week (*Part-time*). To account for any potential racial difference, we create two indicator variables for *black* and for *other race* individuals, with white respondents as the reference category. *Age* is a continuous variable that runs from 18 to 90 and we include this measure to account for any potential relationship between age and non-congregational clergy work.

A major limitation of these CPS data is the lack of information about the religious backgrounds of these clergy. This has implications for the availability and the industry in which clergy might find non-congregational work. Following Schleifer and Chaves (2016), we create a proxy for Catholic clergy using some of the information that is available in the CPS. Building upon estimates that suggest that 90 to 95% of male Protestant clergy are married and because of formal rules within the Catholic church limiting women's access to clergy positions and male priests from marrying, Schleifer and Chaves (2016) argue that unmarried male clergy with no children are a reasonable proxy for *Catholic clergy*. This measure is not perfect and does not capture any potential Protestant denominational variation in where clergy are working. However, we know of no other datasets that allow for the series of important investigations that we pursue here. Because our measure of Catholic clergy risks collinearity with some of our family characteristic measures, we do not include this variable in all of our analyses.

Additional Descriptive Variables

The CPS also collects a series of variables that are of descriptive interest in understanding non-congregational clergy. One factor that may vary across clergy working inside and outside of congregations is how these clergy are compensated (Schleifer and Chaves 2016) and we include some descriptive information about the income differences for these different types of clergy work. The CPS collects information about the pre-tax yearly income that we have standardized to 2018 dollars and adjusted to account for the free housing that some clergy receive as a benefit (Schleifer and Chaves 2016).[6]

[5] Prior to 1992, the CPS collected total years of education completed and to maintain consistency, we recode those with 17 or more years as having an advanced degree.

[6] To avoid inflating clergy income, we exclude individuals with imputed income values (including everyone from 1994 to 1995 due to lack of information on income imputation) and, following the "rule of thumb" (Burkhauser et al. 2009), we replace all top-coded income values with 1.4 times that value. In 1996 replaced the CPS top-code values with several different group mean values and we changed these

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Another descriptive piece of information we include is whether or not clergy hold multiple jobs. To account for this, we use information from the CPS-March: an annual component of the CPS that collects additional information about whether responents "reported working more than one job/business (including part-time, evening or weekend work) in the last week?"[7] The responses to this questions were yes (coded 1) and no (coded 0) and we use this information to focus on clergy with *dual careers*.[8] We also include descriptive information about the amount of time (in years) clergy have worked at there current job. This information comes from the CPS-Job Tenure Supplement (CPS-JTS), which was collected in January or Febuary every 2 years since 1996. We merge CPS-JTS into our main CPS sample using a similar procedure to that of our CPS-March merge (see footnote 7). The CPS-JTS collects information about how long respondents have worked in their current job and we code this information into a continous variable that runs from "less than 1 year" (coded 0) to "32 years or more" (coded 32).[9] The information on job tenure and dual career clergy was only collected since 1996 and was not asked of all clergy in our full sample. Therefore, we do not include this information in our regression models.

The final variables we use to describe non-congregational clergy look at the industries where non-congregational clergy work. We found clergy working in 120 different industries across 6 different industry-coding systems. To make this manageable, we create four broad industry codes: *Medical Sectors*, *Educational Sectors*, *Non-profit Sectors*, and *Other Sectors*. For example, from the 1990s Census industry code, those working in 'Hospitals', 'Nursing/Personal Care Facilities', 'Health Services', and 'Residential care facilities' were coded in the medical sector. The educational sector for the 1990 coding system included 'Elementary/Secondary Education', 'College and University', and 'Educational Services'.

Footnote 6 (continued)

back to a single group mean so that we can consistently apply the rule of thumb across our entire time-series. 12 clergy (about 0.1%) report top-coded income amounts. To account for clergy who receive congregational housing, we follow Schleifer and Chaves (2016) by adjusting these clergy's income by yearly average proportion of income American's directed toward housing costs from the Consumer Expenditure Survey.

[7] Respondents of the CPS are interviewed for four consecutive months and some of these respondents are interviewed in the CPS-March as well as the annual social and economic supplement of the CPS (CPS-ASES). This allows us to merge the dual career information into our analytical CPS dataset for comparison. In order to make sure our merge procedure matched the same individuals to one another, we used the matching algorithm proposed by Madrian and Lefgren (1999, 2000) that matches individuals using household ID, race, gender, age, marital status, and relationship to head of household to merge respondents from the CPS-March and the CPS-ASEC. Madrian and Lefgren provide the STATA code for implementing their algorithm at: http://www.nber.org/data/cps_match.htm.

[8] The CPS-March asks respondents a follow up question about how many jobs they worked in over the previous week. Among our clergy sample, on 33 individuals report working more than 2 jobs and we collapse these individuals into those who more than one job.

[9] Starting in 2012, the CPS-JTS topcoded this variable. It is unclear from the documentation whether this top code was at "32 year or more" or "35 years or more." For consistency across all years, we recode all information with a topcode for those working "32 years or more".

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Modeling Strategy

For our regression analyses, we use a logistic regression model to predict which clergy are working outside of congregations that takes the following form:

$$\ln\left(\frac{\hat{p}}{(1-\hat{p})}\right) = \beta_0 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_1(\boldsymbol{IndependentVars.}) + \beta_2(Year) + \boldsymbol{\beta}_3(\boldsymbol{Interactions})$$

where $\hat{p}$ is the probability of being a non-congregational clergy person, ***IndependentVars***. is a vector of our independent variables with the accompanying $\boldsymbol{\beta}_1$ vector of coefficients. Because we are interested in change over time, we include the *Year* variable and β_2 captures the general time trends. The ***Interactions*** vector includes several interactions between our independent variables with the $\boldsymbol{\beta}_3$ vector capturing the coefficients for these interaction terms. There is very little missing data for our analytical sample (the *part-time* measure has 3% missing and *living in a city* 4% missing) and we use a listwise deletion of missing data for our analyses.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive mean values for all the covariates for congregational and non-congregational clergy along with a two-sample t-tests to determine whether the differences we observe across these two groups are statistically meaningful. From our analyses of the full sample of these clergy, we can observe that a statistically greater proportion of non-congregational clergy are females, live in a city, hold an advanced degree, are black, and engage in multiple careers compared to congregational clergy. We also observe that these non-congregational clergy are less likely to be married, have children in their home, be engaged in full-time work, and, on average, have 3 year shorter tenures in their current occupation. From this comparison, we see no statistical difference between these clergy groups in average or median income.

To determine descriptively whether these two clergy groups have changed over our time series, we compare the mean values across these covariates from the first half (1976–1997) and the second half (1998–2018) of our survey. The important trends that we observe here are declines in the proportion of non-congregational clergy who are Catholic, decreases in the proportion of non-congregational clergy who report being self-employed, and the ageing of those clergy who report working outside of congregational settings. We also observe that congregational clergy see slight, but significant, increases in their average and median income across these two-time points while non-congregational clergy see slight decreases in their average and median income, though these changes for the latter do not achieve statistical significance here. We also observe significant increases in the proportion of non-congregational clergy working in the health sector along with a significant decrease in the proportion working in the welfare and non-profit

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Table 1 Summary statistics and equality tests for congregational and non-congregational clergy across covariates

	Full sample			First half of sample 1976–1997			Second half of sample 1998–2018			*T* test differences across time[b]	
	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.
Female	12%	29%	***	08%	23%	***	15%	32%	***	***	**
City	71%	80%	***	64%	74%	***	72%	81%	**	***	*
Bachelor's deg.	22%	18%	ns	16%	13%	ns	26%	21%	ns	***	*
Advanced deg.	55%	65%	***	58%	73%	**	52%	61%	**	***	*
Catholic	12%	13%	ns	14%	18%	*	11%	10%	ns	***	***
White	87%	83%	ns	91%	92%	ns	85%	79%	ns	***	***
Black	09%	13%	*	07%	08%	ns	09%	16%	*	***	*
Other race	04%	04%	ns	02%	01%	ns	06%	05%	ns	***	**
Married	81%	68%	***	80%	60%	***	81%	72%	***	**	**
Child in home	52%	40%	***	54%	40%	**	50%	40%	***	**	ns
Full-time worker	88%	83%	***	91%	87%	**	86%	80%	**	***	ns
Self employed	03%	04%	ns	07%	05%	ns	<1%	04%	***	***	ns
South	44%	38%	*	42%	38%	ns	46%	39%	**	ns	ns
Northeast	15%	18%	ns	17%	20%	ns	14%	18%	*	***	ns
Midwest	25%	27%	*	27%	32%	*	24%	25%	ns	ns	ns
West	16%	16%	ns	14%	11%	*	17%	19%	ns	***	**
Age	48.12	50.53	***	46.41	46.64	ns	49.43	52.55	***	***	***
Mean income	$47,505	$46,435	ns	$45,687	$48,140	ns	$48,813	$45,571	*	***	ns
Median income[c]	$44,596	$44,159	ns	$42,360	$46,888	ns	$45,922	$43,122	ns	***	ns
Non-cong. sector											
Health	–	53%	–	–	43%	–	–	58%	–	–	**
Education	–	15%	–	–	20%	–	–	12%	–	–	ns
Welfare/non-profit	–	08%	–	–	12%	–	–	06%	–	–	**
Other sectors	–	24%	–	–	24%	–	–	24%	–	–	ns

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Table 1 (continued)

	Full sample			First half of sample 1976–1997			Second half of sample 1998–2018			*T* test differences across time[b]	
	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.	T-test diff.[a]	Cong.	Non-cong.
Dual career[d]	08%	14%	**	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Job tenure[e]	9.38	5.90	*	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
N	8434 (94%)	522 (6%)		3736 (95%)	192 (5%)		4698 (93%)	330 (7%)			

Source: Current population survey—annual social and economic supplement, 1976–2018

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$, *ns* not significantly different

[a] A two-sample *t*-test was preformed to determine significant mean differences between congregational and non-congregational clergy

[b] A two-sample *t*-test was preformed to determine significant mean differences between the years before 1998 and the years after 1998 for congregational and non-congregational clergy respectively

[c] Significant differences determined with a bivariate quartile regress for individuals in the median percentile

[d] Information collected every year in the CPS March from 1996

[e] Information collected bi-annually in the CPS-JTS from 1996

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sectors. The proportion of non-congregational clergy working in the educational sector has also decreased, but these changes are not statistically significant.

We also perform a series of logistic regression models to determine whether these patterns hold when we control for additional factors. Table 2 present the results from our models. From Model 1, we see that when controlling for other factors non-congregational clergy still have a greater probability of being female, living in a city, and hold an advanced degree and show a lower log-odds of being married and working part time relative to congregational clergy. To determine whether some of these patterns we observe in Model 1 change over time, Models 2–4 includes a series of interactions with time. From Model 2 we observe different trends in working in a non-congregational setting across geographical regions. To make these differences clearer, we plot the predicted probability of working in a non-congregational setting for each region over time. These trends are plotted in the 1st row of Fig. 1. Here, we can see that the proportion of non-congregational clergy has been increasing for those living in the northeast and west. In 1976, 4% and 3% of clergy in these areas worked outside of congregations, and by 2018 this proportion had increased to around 8%. By contrast, the proportion of clergy working outside of congregations in the south and mid-west has remained relatively stable at around 6% for each of these regions over the past 42 years.

Model 3 shows that the over-representation of female clergy in non-congregational positions has remained relatively stable across these 42 years. Model 4, however, shows that there are very different trends across family structure in terms of non-congregational clergy work. The second row of Fig. 1 plots these differences. In 1976, single clergy were overrepresented in non-congregational clergy positions but by the end of our time frame this was no longer the case. We also observe here that non-parent clergy are increasingly finding work outside of congregations relative to clergy with children in their home. Model 5 further decomposes these effects and we plot the predicted probabilities from this regression in row 3 of Fig. 1. Among male clergy, we observe that, when averaged over time, single male clergy with children are over represented among non-congregational clergy. Whether this is due to the greater potential flexibility of this type of clergy job or that these clergy are not aligned with more traditional nuclear family structures, there does appear to be some sorting of these male clergy into these non-congregational positions. Among female clergy, we observe similar patterns with female clergy outside of "traditional family structures" more likely to work outside of congregations compared to those who are married and/or married with children.

To further decompose these effects, we ran additional models that focused on whether the pattern of family structure on non-congregational clergy work changed over time.[10] Figure 2 plots these trends. Here, we can see that single male clergy with children show a shrinking probability of working outside of congregations across these 42 years. Moreover, those male clergy who are married with no children are beginning to look more like single male clergy in terms of their probability

[10] This model uses an interaction between our gender, marriage, parenthood, and year of survey variables. This model is available upon request.

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Table 2 Logistic regression on non-congregational clergy

Main effect	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6[a]		Model 7[a]	
	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)
Female	0.983***	(.11)	0.977***	(.11)	1.231***	(.25)	0.994***	(.11)	1.034***	(.19)				
Catholic											−0.564*	(.26)	−0.255	(.34)
Married	−0.417***	(.12)	−0.433***	(.12)	−0.417***	(.12)	−0.964***	(.25)	−0.276	(.16)	−0.831***	(.22)	−0.828***	(.22)
Child in home	−0.089	(.11)	−0.099	(.11)	−0.082	(.11)	0.389	(.24)	0.937*	(.37)	−0.138	(.14)	−0.140	(.14)
Northeast	0.102	(.14)	−0.543	(.29)	0.104	(.14)	0.094	(.14)	0.115	(.14)	0.081	(.16)	0.071	(.16)
Mid-west	0.238*	(.12)	0.116	(.23)	0.236*	(.12)	0.236*	(.12)	0.252*	(.12)	0.189	(.14)	0.190	(.14)
West	0.023	(.14)	−0.878**	(.34)	0.022	(.14)	0.017	(.14)	0.026	(.14)	−0.078	(.16)	−0.082	(.16)
Survey year$_{3\text{ year interval}}$	0.018	(.01)	−0.018	(.02)	0.025	(.01)	−0.005	(.02)	0.017	(.01)	0.027	(.01)	0.035*	(.02)
Interactions														
Northeast × year			0.087*	(.03)										
Mid-west × year			0.016	(.03)										
West × year			0.112**	(.04)										
Female × year					−0.030	(.03)								
Marriage × year							0.071*	(.03)						
Parent × year							−0.060*	(.03)						
Female × married									−0.098	(.28)				
Female × parent									−0.933	(.50)				
Married × parent									−1.142**	(.39)				
Female × parried × parent									1.029	(.57)				
Catholic × year													−0.050	(.04)
Controls														
Advanced degree	0.327***	(.10)	0.334***	(.10)	0.331***	(.10)	0.322**	(.10)	0.331***	(.10)	0.381**	(.12)	0.379**	(.12)
Part time	−0.284*	(.13)	−0.271*	(.13)	−0.290*	(.13)	−0.295*	(.13)	−0.268*	(.13)	−0.300	(.17)	−0.305	(.17)
Black	0.195	(.15)	0.204	(.15)	0.196	(.15)	0.183	(.15)	0.168	(.15)	0.102	(.19)	0.106	(.19)

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Table 2 (continued)

Main effect	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6[a]		Model 7[a]	
	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)	β	(*SE*)
Other race	−0.361	(.26)	−0.425	(.26)	−0.371	(.26)	−0.361	(.26)	−0.382	(.26)	−0.584	(.32)	−0.573	(.32)
Urban	0.474***	(.11)	0.499***	(.11)	0.472***	(.11)	0.479***	(.11)	0.477***	(.11)	0.392**	(.13)	0.385**	(.13)
Age	0.008*	(.00)	0.008*	(.00)	0.009*	(.00)	0.008*	(.00)	0.007	(.00)	0.007	(.00)	0.007	(.00)
N	8956												7807	
AIC	3801		3792		3801		3797		3801		2888		2889	
BIC	3900		3913		3908		3911		3929		2986		2993	

Coefficients presented in log-odds; standard errors in parentheses; *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$

[a]Models exclude all female clergy to focus on Catholics

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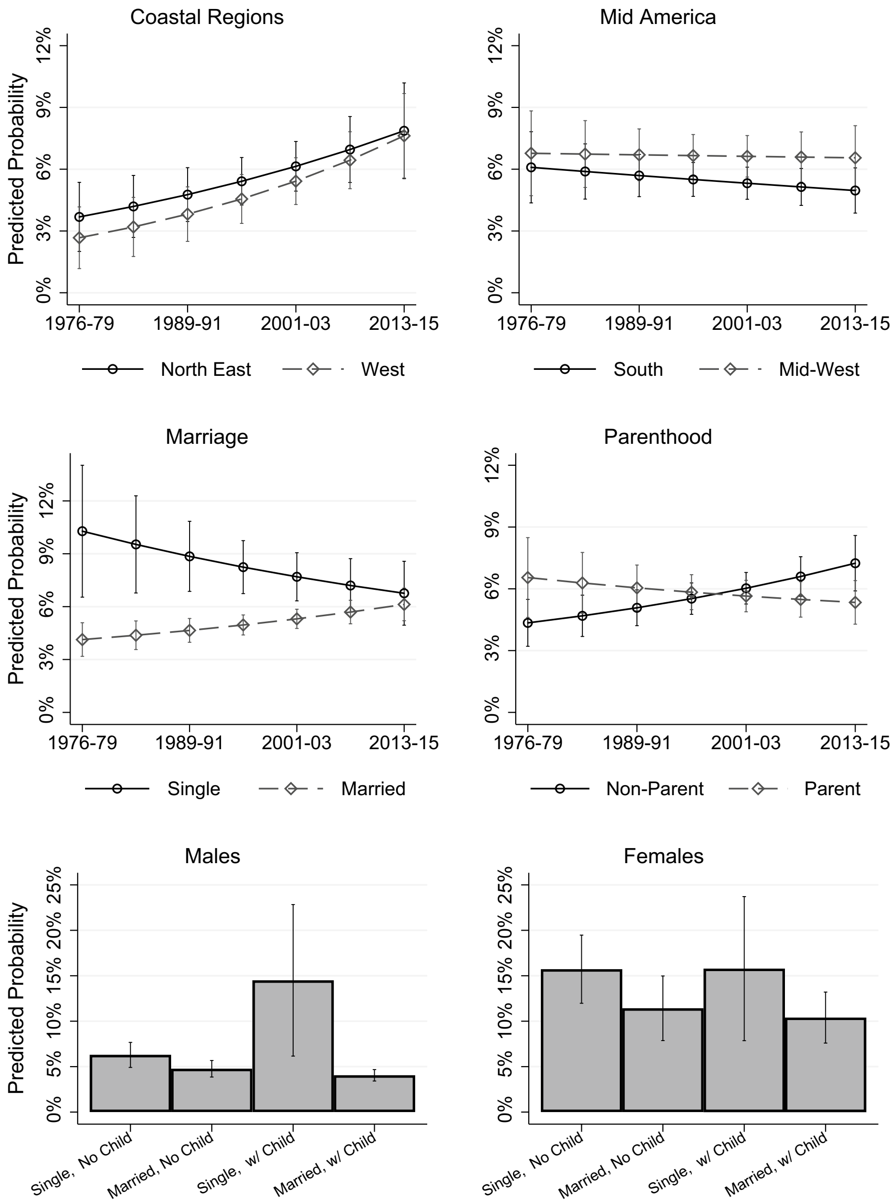

Fig. 1 Trends in clergy working outside of congregations by different covariates. *Note*: Three Year Aggregate Trends lines. *Source*: Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey, 1976–2018

of working outside of congregations. Among female clergy, those who are single with children or married with no children are increasingly working outside of congregations, while those married with children are far less likely to be working

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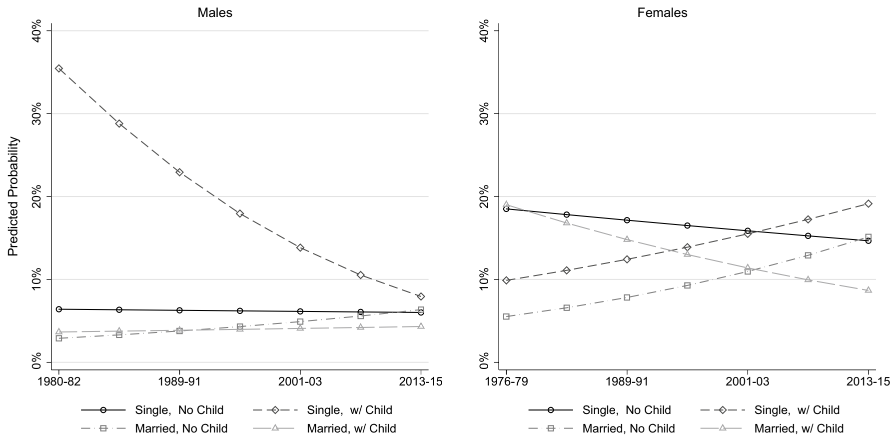

Fig. 2 Trends by gender and family composition of clergy working outside of congregations. *Note*: Three Year Aggregate Trends lines. *Source*: Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey, 1976–2018

outside of congregations across these 42 years. Single female clergy with no children are fairly stable in their probability of engaging in non-congregational work. While these trends are suggestive, we are hesitant to over interpret here due to the small numbers of clergy in some family configurations.

Our final set of analyses focus on the Catholic clergy in our sample. For our purposes here, we exclude all female clergy because females are not allowed to hold positions as Catholic priests. Model 6 presents the average differences and model 7 decomposes the time trend by Catholic clergy. Catholic clergy show a lower log-odds of being non-congregational clergy relative to male non-Catholic clergy and, when decomposed by time, we do observe that non-Catholic clergy show a positive trend of working outside of congregations.

Discussion and Conclusion

The clergy labor market has shifted in recent years in response to demographic and cultural shifts within the American religious landscape (Cooperman et al. 2015; Hout 2017; Kosmin and Keysar 2009; Anderson et al. 2008; Brauer 2017; Chaves and Anderson 2014). These changes have led to a potential increase in the precariousness of clergy work (Carroll 2006; Chaves 2004) as exemplified by the growing clergy income disadvantage (Schleifer and Chaves 2016) as well as the growth in multi-career clergy among those who may be structurally disadvantage within the religious labor force such as women, unmarried clergy, and those living in more secular regions of the US (Perry and Schleifer 2019). Building upon this clergy labor market literature, our analyses make use of national representative data to examine trends and patterns in clergy who worked outside of congregational settings in the past 42 years. Overall, we find that a greater proportion of clergy who work outside

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of congregations are female, live in a city, and hold an advanced degree while a lower proportion are current married and working part-time relative to clergy who work in congregations.

In addition to the general patterns, we also capture some interesting time trends in clergy working outside of religious organizations. We were surprised to find that the overall trend suggests that the proportion of clergy working outside of congregations has remained relatively stable across our time series (Model 1, Survey Year coefficient: 0.018, $p = 0.15$). In order to test whether this general lack of growth in non-congregational clergy over time is a function of how we treat time here, we ran additional models that treat time as a 2-year interval and a single year interval and found similar results.[11] Despite the general trend, after we decompose the effects of time across some covariates we uncover some interesting changes in the composition of those working non-congregational settings. In particular, we see an increasing proportion of non-congregational clergy in the northeast and western regions of the US. This is aligned with findings that suggest that these regions are also experiencing growths in the number of dual-career clergy (Perry and Schleifer 2019). It may be that the relatively high cost of living in these regions of the country are driving clergy to seek out better paying non-congregational work and/or work in multiple careers. Additional, when compared to the American south or mid-west, these regions may be less religiously active and therefore have a lower demand within the congregational clergy labor market. Either way, future research needs to be attentive to the trends in these non-traditional (and perhaps more precarious) forms of clergy work when theorizing about religious labor market processes.

We also observe that clergy who do not have children are more likely to be working in non-congregational settings, though there is a convergence between married and single clergy in terms of their chances of working outside of congregations. Finally, while a stable proportion of Catholic clergy have worked outside of congregations across the past 42 years, there has been a meaningful increase in the proportion of male non-Catholic clergy working in these settings.

Perhaps the most interest trend we uncover in our analyses is how family composition structures which clergy choose or are sorted into work outside of congregational settings. Single male clergy with children are almost three time more likely to work outside of congregations compared to male clergy with other types of family composition. For female clergy, being single increases the predicted probability of working outside of congregations. However, in terms of change over time we observe a decreasing proportion of female clergy who are married and have children working outside of congregations, but for female clergy who are married without children or who are single with children, the clergy work outside of the congregational setting appears to be occupational landing spot for these religious professionals. Whether these clergy sort into these positions because of the stability and structure they provide or because these non-nuclear family structures do not fit easily within the hierarchy of religious organizations (Zikmund et al. 1998; Hancocks et al. 2008; Hoge and Wenger 2005) remains an empirical question for future research

[11] Models available upon request.

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with more focused data. The national labor market patterns we uncover here are certainly suggestive of one or more of these mechanisms shaping where clergy are working in the US.

There are several limitations to our study that warrant discussion. While we believe that our dataset represents the best currently available sample of non-congregational clergy to use for tracing out national level labor market patterns in clergy work, CPS is primarily a labor force survey and does not capture any detailed information about the size of the congregation and the denomination in which these clergy are working. This problem is exacerbated by the different requirements across denominations for being ordained a clergy person. For example, in some mainline Protestant denominations like the ELCA or PCUSA, becoming ordained and staying on the ordained registry can be difficult. Some denominations assist clergy in finding employment while others do not. Lack of information about the religious background of these clergy is a major limitation of this paper. While these data allow us to focus on the national level patterns and trends in non-congregational clergy work, this contribution must be balanced against the loss of the fine-grained detail governing the processes we explore here.

Overall, these analyses remind sociologists that clergy work outside of congregations and raise broader questions about how that has and may continue to change along with shifts in America's religious demography. While these patterns of non-congregational clergy work may not be the largest challenge facing the clergy profession in the twenty-first century, our findings here point to the need to continue to explore the different types of available clergy work as non-congregational options may speak to the ways that traditional forms of clergy labor maybe growing more precarious.

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