

***Private Power or Public Power:
Pentecostalism, Base
Communities, and Gender****

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As the number of Latin American Pentecostals has grown, so have expectations and fears about their potential power. Most research has focused on how Pentecostals use their power in the public realm of politics and economics. Less attention has focused on their impact on power in the private realm of gender attitudes and roles.¹ This imbalance may reflect the common perception, noted elsewhere in this volume by Hannah Stewart-Gambino and Everett Wilson, of Pentecostalism's deep conservatism with respect to women's roles. This stereotype leads to the attendant assumption that Pentecostalism could not be a source of change or emancipation for women. Yet there are good reasons to examine the topic of women and Pentecostalism further.

First, most Pentecostal converts are women.² Thus, any study of the Pentecostal public sphere, political attitudes, and behavior is likely to be incomplete unless it considers the possible effects of gender. Moreover, for Latin American women – particularly poor women, who make up the majority of Pentecostals – private-sphere power may be at least as important materially and personally as public power. Second, Pentecostal conversion may be more likely to change private-sphere attitudes and behaviors than public ones. Religion and family, perhaps because both are associated with the private sphere, are intimately related in most contemporary religions, including Pentecostalism.³ Thus,

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religion's impact on gender relations may well be greater than on political beliefs. Third, although religion – especially a gender-conservative religious ideology such as Pentecostalism – has long been considered "the major cultural reinforcer of modern industrial patriarchy," growing evidence suggests that it cannot be so easily dismissed.⁴ Religions are not monolithic belief systems but multifaceted sets of often contradictory or conflicting symbols open to a range of interpretations. Even when official doctrine and organization discriminate against them, disempowered individuals can reconceptualize dominant ideologies to produce individual and collective values and strategies for survival and empowerment. Religions with quite conservative gender attitudes contain elements that women can and do utilize to combat subordination.

This chapter examines the ways in which Pentecostalism may affect women's gender attitudes and roles. It asks whether Pentecostalism fosters women's empowerment in either the public or the private sphere. It also contrasts Pentecostals' experiences with those of women in Catholic Christian base communities (*comunidades eclesiales de base*—CEBs), often considered the Pentecostals' opposites and competitors for the souls of the poor. The contrast is instructive, because it shows that although neither religious group sets out explicitly to change gender roles or attitudes, both actually do so, albeit in strikingly different ways. Few testable hypotheses about religion and gender have been advanced. Moreover, the evidence here comes not from a single systematic comparison but from studies of Pentecostals and CEBs throughout the region, some of which only tangentially address gender issues.⁶ As a result, the conclusions must be tentative. The analysis does, however, yield suggestive contrasts that can inform both theory and future empirical research.

Traditional Gender Systems and Pentecostal Mechanisms of Cultural Change

Before exploring how Pentecostalism might change individual worldviews and, particularly, attitudes toward gender, a brief summary of traditional gender ideologies will be useful. Such ideologies are never static, and gender roles and attitudes in the region are in considerable flux. The following therefore describes an ideal-type rather than an average contemporary experience.

Traditional Latin American gender ideology is highly patriarchal, legitimating male power over females generally and especially within families. It has traditionally divided the world into two spheres: the house (private) and the street (public).⁷ Men dominate both spheres. Ideally, men alone move in the public sphere of the street. Within the house, they have ultimate authority.

In the extreme version of this patriarchal ideology, submissive women are confined to the house, where their virtue can be safeguarded. Yet the home is also woman's sphere of power or, at least, influence. In her "proper sphere" she may

exercise considerable discretion and even authority, especially vis-a-vis her children. Women are often also considered the spiritual focus of the family, even if the authoritarian father is its legal lord. Many scholars claim that Catholic theology and popular religion have reinforced the concept of *marianismo*, an ideal of femininity modeled on the Virgin Mary, which identifies women's "natural" roles – virgin, wife, and mother – as wholly private.⁸ *Marianismo* denies women access to public power, even within the church. In compensation, women are offered a circumscribed, although often personally fulfilling, sphere of spiritual authority and action in the home.

This ideology produces a gendered division of labor in which men are responsible for wage earning and all public activities while women are responsible for family reproduction: cooking, cleaning, and child and health care. As a result, men's and women's self-interests and prestige spheres differ.⁹ Typically, female prestige depends upon the home and its care; it may be humble so long as it is clean, the children's clothes ragged so long as they are pressed. In a distorted version of patriarchal ideology often caricatured as *machismo*, men, in contrast, are expected to be tenuously attached to the home, their prestige dependent upon "manly" activities including drinking, gambling, and extramarital affairs. If a man chooses to remain within the family, patriarchal ideology dictates that he be its head; in the distorted patriarchy of *machismo*, however, men may prove their manliness by abandoning family responsibilities, undermining women's ability to fulfill their prescribed roles.

The ideal of a separation of spheres has always been unattainable for most social classes, including those most attracted to Pentecostal groups and CEBs, the rural and urban poor. In contemporary Latin America, moreover, the ideal is constantly eroding as women enter the paid labor force, gain education, and become visible in politics. Yet *marianismo* and a patriarchal model persist as ideology. This ideal and women's continuing underrepresentation in the public sphere constitute the background against which changes in gender attitudes and roles must initially be viewed.

Pentecostalism sets out to reinforce patriarchal gender norms, not to undermine them. Nonetheless, it may offer new ideas and roles that women can utilize to reinterpret gender norms and may even ultimately destabilize the prevailing hegemonic gender ideology.¹⁰ Religion can contribute to changing gender attitudes and roles in two ways. First, new doctrine or symbols that challenge prevailing cultural norms may alter converts' worldviews. Second, new organizational or participatory structures may draw women into leadership roles.

Religious Ideas and Gender

Edward Cleary has pointed to Pentecostals' pragmatic bent, and this is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the extraordinary degree of attention the churches give to family issues. They offer women very practical advice on how to

be better wives and mothers through special classes, campaigns, and publications. Pentecostal churches in Guatemala, for example, offer a women's magazine "designed 'to help women fulfill their God-given feminine destinies.'"¹¹ These churches devote so much of their time, preaching, and resources to the family, in fact, that Elizabeth Brusco describes them as having a "feminine ethos."¹² This ethos may attract women converts, who perceive Pentecostals as addressing issues that fall to women in the traditional gender-based division of labor."

It is thus not only the stereotype but also the real intent of most Pentecostal groups to promote conservative gender relations and morality. Anna Adams notes in this volume that some Pentecostals even enforce a strict segregation of the sexes at religious services or require women to follow strict dress codes, presumably in part to ensure their sexual purity. Control over women's sexuality is essential to patriarchal authority. Similarly, Pentecostals stress motherhood as women's appropriate "God-given" role, and most support a patriarchal family structure.¹⁴ Colombian Pentecostals, among others, cite Scripture in arguing that men should have authority over women.¹⁵ One Brazilian Pentecostal quotes from the New Testament: "When the woman doesn't want to submit to the order of the husband, that's the start of a fight, right? But if the woman is a true Christian, she is going to want to obey. For the Apostle Paul said: Women must obey their husbands. Like it or not, she has to obey."¹⁶ Within the Pentecostal family, the husband is officially the ultimate authority, and the wife is expected to be submissive.

Even if Pentecostals do intend to promote conservative gender values, however, it does not follow that all of Pentecostalism naturally reinforces patriarchy. The religious message is not entirely clear-cut: Pentecostal churches also leave an opening for defining women's domestic roles in a more egalitarian way. Colombian Pentecostal churches illustrate this ambiguity: Although most defend ultimate patriarchal authority, church educational materials also encourage more egalitarian relations within marriage.¹⁷ In addition, the religious community in some senses becomes the final arbiter for Pentecostal couples. Men are the nominal household heads, but both men and women must submit to the will of God, usually as interpreted by the church. The pastor and the church community can exercise considerable influence over domestic behavior, particularly through public prophetic denunciation. Women, then, can turn to a higher authority in the church in case of domestic disputes. The overarching authority of the church potentially equalizes male and female relationships.

Pentecostalism's scriptural notion of equality before Christ more directly contradicts female subordination. Pentecostals accept the "priesthood of all believers": Men and women may be called to preach and may do so with equal authority. As Cornelia Butler Flora suggests, this implies a public role for women in spreading the faith.¹⁸ The belief in women's equal religious potential provides grounds for enhanced status in both church and family.¹⁹ It also allows them to claim religious inspiration and justification for challenging male authority. Elaine J. Lawless has shown, for example, that North American women Pentecostal

preachers exploit the "tension between the God-given inferiority of women submissive to men and the belief in equality before God" to pursue independent, nontraditional paths.²⁰

Finally, Pentecostalism may implicitly subvert some popular assumptions of machismo and *marianismo*. Popular *marianismo* holds that women's greater religiosity and men's inherent waywardness lead to gender-specific paths to salvation. As Evelyn Stevens explains, women "know that male sinfulness dooms the entire sex to a prolonged stay in purgatory after death, and even the most diligent prayerfulness of loving female relatives can succeed in sparing them only a few millennia of torture."²¹ Women, with their greater moral ability, may be saved by their own piety, but religious salvation is seemingly marginal to male life, a byproduct of the piety of female relatives. In contrast, as Salvatore Cucchiari points out with respect to Sicilian Pentecostals, their "unisex criteria for redemption" – conversion and baptism in the Holy Spirit – undermine traditional gender assumptions.²² A single salvational code applies to all, and women "can compete with men and women alike in regard to the central prestige value of the community – sanctification – and achieve a validated success in that competition."²³

Although Pentecostalism's explicit gender code sets out to reinforce traditional, patriarchal values, its family norms are ambiguous in ways that could give women greater equality. Its implicit acceptance of the religious equality of men and women could also tend to equalize gender relations. Moreover, we must keep in mind that Pentecostal groups differ in their conservatism on gender norms. Anna Adams points out that Pentecostals distinguish among themselves according to the degree of strictness of women's segregation, dress codes, and so on. Cecilia Mariz and Maria das Dotes Campos Machado note the same tendency in Brazil, adding that individuals may choose a church partly for its strictness, with middle-class Pentecostal women preferring less rigorous standards than the poor. Thus the blanket stereotype of Pentecostals' gender conservatism needs to be modified to allow for its ambiguities within groups as well as differences across them.

New Forms of Religious Participation for Women

Pentecostalism also offers women unaccustomed opportunities for official and unofficial leadership and new roles in the religious community. Leadership roles within women's groups are especially common, perhaps as a result of women's predominance within many Pentecostal churches. Colombian Pentecostal churches, for example, encourage the formation of mothers' or women's clubs.²⁴ Women are also usually the leaders and primary participants in *cultos a domicilio*, worship services held in individual homes.²⁵ Many of these groups' activities – social welfare, prayer, church maintenance and cleaning – simply replicate women's domestic roles. They may nonetheless be a source of status within the church. Moreover, such groups may give women new skills, such as public speak-

ing or fund-raising, and enhance their sense of efficacy in bringing about change.²⁶

Yet single-sex groups can never offer women status on terms of equality with men. That requires opportunities for leadership in the church as a whole. And, indeed, Pentecostal groups have historically presented women nontraditional opportunities as teachers and preachers that "allow a greater status for women in the same fields of activity which grant status to men."²⁷ Their tradition of female evangelism includes the woman who brought Pentecostalism to Mexico.²⁸ Another woman, Aimee Semple McPherson, founded a major Pentecostal church, the Foursquare Gospel. Women pastors and even lay teachers gain both authority in a nontraditional role and skills useful in other public roles. Because their religious vocation legitimates – and for pastors may even necessitate – travel alone, for example, women with little experience beyond a neighborhood or village may learn how to function independently in a wider realm.²⁹

Women's access to such roles, however, continues to be significant but restricted. Men dominate in activities that require interpretation of the Word, and these are usually the official roles. Preaching, for example, may require only conversion and charisma, and so in some instances a woman can preach. In most churches she is considered incapable of scriptural authority, however, so she cannot be appointed a pastor. A growing number of Pentecostal churches seem to accept women pastors but still informally proscribe women's leadership above a certain level.³⁰ Women also lack access to administrative positions based on working one's way through the ranks, as some key ranks are closed to them.³¹ These restrictions reinforce patriarchal male dominance of religion. They also mean that religion does not open new career or income opportunities for Pentecostal women.³²

The Pentecostal emphasis on spiritual experience, however, opens up important although unofficial leadership roles for women. Even when women are excluded from official status as preachers, they can perform an important religious and ritual role by speaking in tongues, testifying, and other "Spirit-inspired" activities. Pentecostal women can attain leadership and status by becoming faith healers, for example." In these "Spirit-dominated" activities women and men are truly equal in their religious potential. Women may even generally be esteemed as more "in touch" with the spiritual side of religion.³⁴

Pentecostalism thus holds a potential for women to engage in nontraditional roles that confer status on both men and women equally, to take some leadership positions, and to participate actively in extradomestic activities. The legitimating context of religion may provide a bridge to expanding roles by offering leadership opportunities and skills, as well as a potential justification for greater equality for women in the form of new beliefs about women's worth and roles as Christians. Yet Pentecostalism's overall gender ideology or code is certainly ambiguous: women are equal only in circumscribed areas, and opportunities for equality are embedded in a framework that accepts and reinforces male superiority. This very

ambiguity, however, may make Pentecostalism "an effective crucible" for genderrole redefinition. The next section explores the ways in which women respond to this mixture of opportunity and traditionalism.

Public Power, Private Power, and Pentecostal Women

Women can reconceptualize gender roles in a number of ways, each of which may contribute to enhancing their independence and power. Studies of Pentecostalism in Latin American have generally emphasized its impact on the exercise of public-sphere power, but for poor women private power relations may have more immediate relevance. Thus we need to address two questions about Pentecostalism's impact on women: First, do women expand the definition of what roles are considered appropriate for them, demanding greater power in the traditionally male public sphere? Second, do they demand higher status within the private-sphere roles traditionally ascribed to them?

In looking at the extent to which women assume nontraditional roles, it may be useful to start with religious roles. Pentecostalism, as we have seen, certainly offers women new roles, including leadership roles, but to what extent do women take advantage of these opportunities?

Women are crucial to the maintenance and expansion of Pentecostal churches. They are active in the single-sex organizations and many devote considerable time to these groups, which may even take on "the lion's share of responsibility for the church."³⁵ In Colombia, women are also the key recruiters. For this reason, Pentecostal churches can be described as largely family- and neighborhoodbased.³⁶ Women's groups sometimes even produce vibrant new churches. In Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, for example, a 2,000-member Neo-Pentecostal church originated in a Presbyterian women's prayer circle that broke with the parent church to form its own organization.³⁷

Despite their critical role in maintaining, expanding, and founding Pentecostal churches, women do not seem to respond in large numbers to leadership opportunities outside of women-only groups. Some women act as pastors in the Foursquare Gospel churches in Colombia, usually serving jointly with their husbands.³⁸ Women are less prominent at the local level, however, than the policy and perceptions of the national Foursquare Gospel church leaders would suggest.³⁹ This church, at least, apparently offers more leadership roles to women than they actually utilize. Except for a few individual examples mentioned elsewhere in the literature, Pentecostal women generally do not seem to preach.⁴⁰

Women's leadership is probably most often unofficial, as in the example of faith healers cited previously. Regina Novaes notes that leadership of the Assembly of God community she studied in northeastern Brazil was divided between an official, male deacon and a woman who had no official role but was the recognized

spiritual co-leader of the congregation and much sought out for counsel and assistance.⁴¹ Although there is no evidence of a significant expansion of women's official religious leadership, there may be greater expansion of unofficial roles.

Information about whether Pentecostal women attempt to expand their roles in the nonreligious public sphere is sparse. Anecdotal and impressionistic evidence suggests that many Pentecostal women are employed outside the home.⁴² However, given the social class of converts, paid employment is an unreliable indicator of embrace of nontraditional roles, since the conquest of the "right" to work outside the home is meaningless to poor women, such as most Pentecostals, whose poverty forces them to work and who must compete in a very unequal job market for undesirable, low-paying jobs. Mariz and Machado argue, however, that Pentecostalism's "theology of prosperity" may at least encourage women to gain a sense of economic responsibility, especially if the male household head is a nonbeliever. Pentecostal women may have a religious motive for taking on more economic responsibility and may gain more control over economic resources as a result.

We also know relatively little about whether Pentecostal women take on new roles in traditionally male areas such as politics. No systematic evidence of political activism by Pentecostal women has emerged, although at least one major Pentecostal woman politician, Brazil's Benedita da Silva, has been elected to public office by a left-of-center party.⁴³ Evidence also suggests that women from Catholic and various Protestant denominations in Colombia have about the same level of political interest, suggesting that Pentecostalism at least does not further exclude them from this realm.⁴⁴

In contrast to the scant evidence of Pentecostal women's attempting to expand their religious, economic, or political roles, one clear theme emerges from the numerous portraits of Pentecostal life: Women do seek to improve their position within the domestic sphere. Researchers have often noted a particular long-term strategy that Pentecostal women adopt for stabilizing their households: They attempt to capture a larger share of male income for the sustenance of the family.⁴⁵ Goldin and Metz found that Guatemalan women Pentecostals generally focused in their conversion stories on the problems created by male family members' drinking.⁴⁶ Women converts frequently hope to convert their husbands as well in order to change their behavior.⁴⁷

Alternatively, women may join Pentecostal churches seeking a godly spouse with Pentecostalism's endorsed qualities of sobriety, frugality, and sexual fidelity. One young Chilean Pentecostal woman states:

All the men in my neighborhood are good for nothing. Growing up, I had a boyfriend, and he was the same as the others. All he wanted was to play around (*pololear*,) drink, and watch soccer. So I dumped him. The problem around here is, where do you go to find a man who takes life seriously? ... A friend told me about the church here in town.... I met a wonderful man. He never drinks, never smokes, he is polite, and he has a good job.⁴⁸

Gaining control of income spent on alcohol and in the male prestige sphere generally – through selection or conversion of a spouse – can be of considerable importance for working-class women. It may also give women more de facto authority and equality in family decisionmaking, in part because it harmonizes men's and women's expectations. Emilio Willems noted long ago that the asceticism and moral code expected of Pentecostal converts is actually quite consonant with the traditional behaviors and values assigned to women in Latin America. Male converts are essentially called upon to adopt female moral norms.⁴⁹ They must become more ascetic in their consumption patterns, renouncing spending on drink or women and bringing their spending into line with female preferences for spending on family consumption.⁵⁰

Successful conversion of husbands can thus give Pentecostal women a particular advantage in gaining control of household resources. Pentecostal communities and ministers can also exert considerable pressure on members' moral behavior and frequently do so in a way that brings men's behavior into line with women's expectations.⁵¹ Women often benefit when families submit their disputes to church authorities who endorse a "female" moral code. Even in the controversial area of birth control, when Colombian Protestant couples turn to church counseling services, counselors usually support the woman's desire for birth control over the man's objections.⁵² By reinforcing women's moral code and extending it to men, Pentecostal churches may open the way for attitudinal and behavioral changes that empower women, truly equalizing domestic roles. Brusco argues that conversion empowers Colombian women in their family relations.⁵³ Colombian Protestant families generally communicate more, and "women, particularly, benefit from this increase in status through inclusion."⁵⁴ Van den Eykel concludes that these familial patterns reinforce church teachings that make the man more responsible to the family and that this in turn facilitates communication and confidence between spouses. Although John Burdick is more cautious in interpreting women's acceptance of Pentecostalism's patriarchal worldview as empowering, most researchers see it as such.⁵⁵

Moreover, Pentecostal support for a patriarchal family does not imply total female submission. Women are not expected to submit to mistreatment. David Dixon describes the case of an abused wife who was taken in and protected by a small neighborhood church in a Chilean *población* (shantytown).⁵⁶ In theory, at least, women might also use a husband's ungodliness as a reason for divorce, as M. J., a woman interviewed by Mariz and Machado, apparently said. Similarly, Mariz and Machado note that Brazilian Pentecostal women often use the requirements of their religious calling to free themselves from oppressive obligations to their spouses or grown children.

Pentecostal women also reveal surprisingly egalitarian attitudes toward domestic roles. A survey comparing two Colombian Protestant denominations that promote substantial religious roles for women (Presbyterians and Foursquare Gospel) with denominations that do not revealed that the women from those two

denominations exhibited more autonomy and greater rejection of traditional gender stereotyping of family roles.⁵⁷ For example, only 7 percent of Presbyterian and Foursquare Gospel women said that women should be obedient to their husbands, in contrast to 36 percent of women from other denominations. Only 4 percent believed that home duties were exclusively the wife's in contrast to 27 percent of other religious women.⁵⁸ The rejection of traditional gender assumptions by all the respondents is itself notable, but the women from more inclusive churches still stand out. Pentecostalism may thus join North American Mormonism as a strongly patriarchal religion that nonetheless tends toward equality in adherents' actual domestic roles.⁵⁹

Pentecostalism is in many respects compatible with traditional hegemonic gender ideologies: It supports patriarchal family structures, the idea of God-given domestic roles for women, and the notion that only men may hold certain official religious roles. It promotes little expansion of women's traditional roles. What is more interesting, however, is that Pentecostal women do reconceptualize *men's* and, to a lesser extent, women's domestic roles.⁶⁰ At the same time, the new roles it opens to women in the religious sphere, the actual equalization of domestic roles it seems to foster, and the emphasis on religious equality are all potentially destabilizing to hegemonic ideologies of machismo and *marianismo*. Thus, we must distinguish carefully between what Pentecostalism sets out to do (reinforce male dominance) and what it actually does (equalize some male-female relationships). The opening that Pentecostalism provides for the empowerment of women is narrow, but it is an opening. Understanding of its significance may be facilitated by a comparison with the impact on gender relations of CEBs.

Public and Private Power in CEBs

Christian base communities are difficult to characterize because of their diversity, but it is helpful to recall that they developed in the wake of Vatican II and the birth of liberation theology. These two developments gave CEBs their distinctive characteristics: an emphasis on lay participation and formation, location among the poorer rural and urban classes, and for some groups – those in Brazil described in the research cited here – a liberationist orientation, including an emphasis on consciousness raising, social justice, and activism. Because both CEBs and Pentecostals seem to find their greatest adherence among the poor, the two are often painted as rivals. Given their difference in emphasis (Pentecostals on personal salvation, CEBs on social justice) they are also often portrayed as opposites.

Like the Pentecostals, CEBs did not set out to recruit women, nor did they, at least initially, view themselves as a vehicle for women's emancipation. Given women's predominance among the Catholic laity, however, it is not surprising that they have also proven to be the primary constituency of the CEBs. In terms

of numbers, CEBs, like Pentecostals, are women's religious organizations. What contributions, then, through ideas and organization, might CEBs make to empowering their women members?

Attitudes and Organizational Opportunities

In contrast to Pentecostalism's "feminine ethos," The CEBs' social-justice ethos tends to marginalize familial issues. CEBs have no equivalent of Pentecostal women's magazines or courses on mothering. Liberationist priests rarely mention domestic issues in their sermons, focusing instead on "large political and social issues" of interest in the class-based analysis of liberation theology.⁶¹ Private issues such as drugs, alcoholism, and unemployment naturally arise as CEB members discuss their lives in concrete terms. They generally interpret such problems not as moral or personal issues but in the context of the shared problems of working-class families – a context that tends to politicize them, focusing attention on social action rather than on family or personal change.⁶²

Although CEBs do not actively promote patriarchal gender ideology, they often reinforce it. In addition to simply neglecting family, liberationists initially subordinated gender to class as a source of oppression. When they began to consider how women, specifically, might fight oppression, they often stressed the "special roles" and "talents" springing from biological motherhood. As Sonia Alvarez notes, such "essentialist" interpretations of women's roles "do not question the socially constrictive, exclusive identification of women with maternity and the family."⁶³ CEB discourse on the family is still in flux, however, and at least some pastoral agents now actively promote greater equality of domestic roles.⁶⁴

Although their message on private-sphere roles and relations is mixed and subdued at best, CEBs do foster the idea of greater female participation in the *public* sphere. They promote a "unisexual" concept of the "conscientized Catholic." Base-community members who have participated in consciousness raising are expected to act for social justice in the public sphere. This undifferentiated appeal to believers to take up the social struggle, when it is made to a predominantly female laity, both requires and legitimates new social roles, particularly in politics.⁶⁵ It supports the idea that men and women should participate side by side in the same movements for land, justice, and so on.

CEBs thus often open new roles to women by promoting social movements through which they may participate in the public, political sphere. In addition, they open many of the same religious opportunities as Pentecostalism. CEBs promote single-sex groups such as mothers' clubs. Lay women can also lead mixed groups; male and female laity can conduct Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest and may be part of a ministerial team that can perform baptisms or marriages. Thus, like Pentecostal women, CEB members can play a significant role in worship, but along with many of their Protestant sisters they may not be ordained.

The symbolic and organizational opportunities for Pentecostal and CEB women are in some ways similar: An acceptance of some women's roles as "natural" combines with a new unisex standard that fosters equality, and women are offered new religious leadership roles. The key difference seems to be that Pentecostals do more to promote equality in the private and religious spheres while CEBs demand women's public-sphere participation as well as providing some opportunities to act on that demand. Perhaps as a consequence, CEB women seem more successful in pressing for public power than in pursuing private equality.

Public Power and Private Costs

CEB participants interviewed in Sao Paulo, Brazil, appear more likely to expand their definition of appropriate roles to include those in the public sphere than Pentecostals. The difference should not be overstated, because CEB members differ in the extent to which they adopt new roles and attitudes. Even in religion, however, the evidence suggests that CEB members may respond more enthusiastically than Pentecostals to the available opportunities to expand and reconceptualize roles, gaining new forms of power.

Like their Pentecostal counterparts, women in CEBs play a critical role in religious life. In addition to being instrumental in founding the groups, mothers' clubs – virtually identical in function to Pentecostal ones – often run CEBs on a day-to-day basis. Indeed, many people comment that "if the Mothers' Club closes its doors, the CEB will close."⁶⁶ CEB women are also heavily involved in religious activities in sex-integrated groups. Women often predominate in community councils, liturgy committees, and the important ministries. They generally lead the Sunday worship services. Many serve as community representatives to the diocese, although women's participation appears to drop dramatically below that level in both Brazil and Colombia.⁶⁷

Some women CEB leaders have recognized the limits on their roles and begun to push for a greater voice in the church. Many respondents complained that although they did most of the work they were denied access to decisionmaking roles above the community level. This sentiment appears to be widespread among women leaders throughout the archdiocese of *Sao Paulo*.⁶⁸ Since 1990, several women in one diocese of the city have experienced significant rifts with the bishop over what they perceive to be a disregard for their views and their work with women's groups.⁶⁹

CEBs appear to give women leaders, at least, a sense of empowerment in the religious sphere, perhaps as a result of their new opportunities for participation and status. They also appear to facilitate women's assumption of nonreligious, public roles.⁷⁰ Their impact has probably been negligible in the economic sphere, however. Just as for Pentecostal women, although many CEB women work outside the home, this is probably less an indication of emancipation than of neces-

sity. Only four of thirty Brazilian CEB members interviewed had decided to work largely for their own fulfillment⁷¹

In contrast, CEBs have had an impact on women's political roles. Most important, they have contributed to the emergence of women leaders involved in social movements and partisan politics.⁷² Forty percent of the women interviewed – twelve of thirty – have become politically active in an ongoing way. All the women claim that the CEBs have legitimated political discussion for them. The interviewees nearly unanimously claimed that they had had no interest in politics before joining the CEB. Women commonly said they had simply voted the way their husbands told them to. They claimed to have developed both interest in and knowledge of politics.⁷³

For many, the CEB was a revelatory experience, giving them practical skills and opening up a realm of possibilities for participation in the public arena that they had never even imagined. Taking on new roles, however, does not necessarily lead women to reassess their domestic roles. Some women simply justify incursions into politics as the moral or religious actions of mothers who of necessity are forced into the distasteful world of politics, thus neutralizing any challenge to their gender ideology. Even women leaders generally continue to accept their domestic roles as primary and to use the essentialist language of mothers' "special roles" to justify their actions.⁷⁴

At the same time, however, activist women also seem to be in a process of rethinking the balance between domestic and public roles. Many CEB women leaders believe in women's equality and right to participate. They reject a submissive attitude toward men as dehumanizing. They may even criticize the church because, as one woman said, "There's that idea, you must be submissive to the man, that was put in women's heads.... But it can't be that way. Because we have to be free, too; we have to be something."⁷⁵ The phenomenon of women's gaining greater confidence, authority, and an increasing conviction of their *right* to participate in religious and social life on equal terms seems to occur among women leaders in countries as diverse as Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and Peru.⁷⁶ Their husbands' roles and their husbands' perceptions of women's roles, however, often remain unchanged. When husbands are active, a tendency toward equality of domestic roles seems to follow.⁷⁷ The many husbands not active in the CEBs, however, have no motivation to reconceptualize their own gender roles or accept and support their wives' equality.

In contrast to most Pentecostal women, then, a significant minority of active women CEB members both expand their public roles and begin to believe in equality for women within and outside the home. However, CEB leaders' new roles often produce domestic conflict rather than harmony and equality. Ironically, then, although some women achieve greater status and authority in both religious and political realms through the CEBs, they do not generally do so in their domestic lives.

Religion, Gender, and Power: Implications for Research

Cecilia Mariz broadly summarizes the contrast between the CEBs and Pentecostal churches: Pentecostals bring men into the private sphere, while CEBs politicize women and bring them into the public sphere.⁷⁸ Both religions seem to offer women opportunities for equality, authority, and power but in different ways. Whereas Pentecostals may gain authority, status, and stability at home, many CEB women sacrifice domestic peace for more power in public – especially political – roles.

Comparison of Pentecostals and CEBs suggests several general conclusions about religion and women's power. First, in both cases one must distinguish between the manifest intention and latent effect of religion. Pentecostals actively promote an ideal that identifies women "naturally" and exclusively with the home and exalts the patriarchal family. CEBs less aggressively promote patriarchy but at least implicitly reinforce the notion of women's "natural" roles and domestic talents. Neither religion fundamentally questions a patriarchal order, yet each produces ideas and offers opportunities that women can and do take advantage of to gain greater power.

Second, Latin American women's experiences support the idea that ambiguity on gender ideology may be precisely what makes religion an "effective crucible" for change.⁷⁹ Mariz and Machado argue that Pentecostalism treads a middle ground between gender traditionalism and mainstream North American feminism; CEBs do as well, and this may be what makes both groups viable sources of at least incremental change. Both groups legitimate greater autonomy and individuation for women via their unisex standards, the CEBs calling for conscious Christian activism and the Pentecostals for subservience to God rather than family and religious evangelism. But neither requires women to reject their familial attachments, and by and large they do not. Perhaps no movement that directly challenges or subverts gender ideology could succeed as well, particularly among poor women, for whom financial independence and an abandonment of domestic roles are neither feasible nor desirable options. It is not clear yet, however, whether such changes will, as Salvatore Cucchiari predicts, ultimately "destabilize" the prevailing hegemonic gender ideology.⁸⁰

Third, a comparison of the two groups suggests the importance of looking at both men and women when considering religion's impact on women's empowerment. The Pentecostal strategy of women's empowerment in the home depends heavily on the successful conversion of male partners. The CEB experience, in which women's expansion of public power produces familial discord unless husbands are also active participants, reveals another aspect of the fragility of empowerment that depends on changing women's attitudes or roles without changing men's as well. One suspects that further research on Pentecostals will reveal similar conflicts where women's expansion of their religious roles is opposed by

nonbelieving spouses. It will be interesting to see whether Pentecostal women respond to these conflicts in much the same way as women in the CEBs.

Finally, the contrast between women's experiences and expansion of power in Pentecostal groups and CEBs suggests that just how a religion opens the possibility of gender equality may be crucially important to how women gain power. Both groups have some notion of religious equality between the sexes. As we have seen, however, Pentecostalism is more likely (at least until recently) to stress domestic equality and generally deemphasizes public activism for both men and women. CEBs, in contrast, have tended to ignore family issues and posit a unisex standard for Christian activism. This difference in emphasis appears to parallel the different ways in which women reconceptualize their roles, with Pentecostal women rethinking private life and CEB women rethinking the possibilities of public life.

Evidence regarding Pentecostalism's impact on women's lives remains scarce, however, and given the religion's growth and the large numbers of women attracted to it, the topic deserves continued attention. In particular, Pentecostalism's impact on women's status and well-being in the family deserves further analysis. An implicit debate has emerged over whether Pentecostalism's domestication of men truly enhances women's power in the home or whether Pentecostal women purchase greater male responsibility in the family through submission.⁸¹ More systematic attention should be paid to the specific ways in which Pentecostalism bolsters women's equality and status and the possible limitations on those changes.

In addition, in view of the diverse responses of Catholic women to the opportunities presented by CEBs, future studies of Pentecostal women would do well to ask whether there are not greater differences among them than have so far been suggested. The portrait of Pentecostal women that has emerged is much less differentiated than what we know of women in the CEBs. Yet Pentecostalism certainly offers women opportunities to reinterpret their roles in nontraditional ways. Lawless shows that North American Pentecostal women preachers utilize their religious calling to forge independent, nontraditional roles.⁸² Dixon's and Mariz and Machado's examples of Pentecostal women's challenging, separating from, or divorcing "ungodly" spouses suggest the potential of Pentecostalism for defining new limits of independence and submissiveness. Where are the women who take advantage of the opportunity to do so?

If nontraditional Pentecostal women exist, then a whole new line of research must be opened to find the variables that account for intragroup differences in response. Possibilities suggested by the CEBs include personal history, religious imagination, and perhaps socioeconomic factors.⁸³ As Mariz and Machado note, social class is almost certainly an important explanatory variable, and attention must also be paid to differences in local leadership and group structure.⁸⁴ If Pentecostals are more uniform than CEB members, this may suggest that conver-

sion religions produce more uniformity of belief than those that, like CEBs, are basically continuous with existing identities and belief systems.⁸⁵ Alternatively, analysis might focus on factors that might affect women's ability to challenge gender roles. For example, some evidence suggests that CEB members are more financially secure than Pentecostals and freer from problems such as alcoholism that undermine family stability.⁸⁶ Perhaps only women in secure financial and family situations can take advantage of opportunities to expand their roles, while others benefit most directly from greater control in the household.

Future research on Pentecostalism and gender must also address the direction of causality at work in these religious groups. Most research has suggested, at least implicitly, that religion influences the way people think about gender roles. It is also possible, however, that women join religious groups precisely because these confirm their preexisting beliefs about gender roles. Mariz and Machado's report of women's choosing a church partly in terms of the strictness of its gender code suggests the latter. Religious groups may still play an important role in consolidating and acting on these beliefs. Women in the CEBs, for example, sometimes claim that the church provided their first viable opportunity for political involvement. Nonetheless, causality remains an important theoretical issue.

Inevitably, as Pentecostalism is compared with traditional and CEB Catholicism, the question of which is "better" for women will be raised. Pentecostalism's contribution to women's domestic power may seem conservative compared with CEBs' "progressive" inclusion of women in the public sphere. Yet domestic equality may provide a strong basis for conquering new roles, while CEB women's public leadership now seems to be promoting a rethinking of equality in general. It may be that each is performing a necessary function, changing a particular bit of hegemonic gender ideology in such a way that women's empowerment in both realms can gradually be expanded for women of all religious denominations. Moreover, the two can be seen as similar in providing women greater motivation and legitimation for autonomy, individuation, and action outside their domestic roles without directly challenging those roles. This can be considered a feminist project, if not one in the mainstream of liberal feminism.

Latin American Pentecostalism and CEBs are provocative evidence that even ostensibly patriarchal religions do not always or only oppress women. They almost always contain at least some elements that women can seize and use for their own empowerment. The evidence to date suggests that Pentecostal women have been particularly successful in gaining power within the private realm. As their belief in their personal equality grows, they may yet expand their exercise of public power as well. Cornelia Butler Flora observed twenty years ago that Pentecostalism gave women the skills and confidence to work publicly for social change but denied the legitimacy of either men's or women's doing so.⁸⁷ Whether Pentecostal women now capitalize on their gains to move into the public sphere as their sisters in the CEBs have done may depend largely on whether their religion provides them a motive and justification for doing so.

NOTES

1. On Pentecostalism and women in Latin America, see John Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy: Women's Articulation of Domestic Conflict in Three Religions of Urban Brazil," *Sociological Analysis* 51, 2 (1990), pp. 153-170; Elizabeth Brusco, "The Reformation of Machismo: Asceticism and Masculinity Among Colombian Evangelicals," in Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll, eds., *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Leslie Gill, "'Like a Veil to Cover Them': Women and the Pentecostal Movement in La Paz," *American Ethnologist* 17, 4 (1990), pp. 708-721; and Myrna Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study of the Political and Social Activism of New Religious Groups in Colombia," Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1986. The earliest comparative work is Cornelia Butler Flora, "Pentecostal Women in Colombia: Religious Change and the Status of Working-Class Women," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 17, 4 (1975), pp. 411-424.

2. Elizabeth Brusco, "The Household Basis of Evangelical Religion and the Reformation of Machismo in Colombia," Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1986; Cecilia L. Mariz, "Religion and Coping with Poverty in Brazil," Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1989; Gill, "'Like a Veil.'"

3. Tim B. Heaton and Marie Cornwall, "Religious Group Variation in the Socio-economic Status and Family Behavior of Women," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28, 3 (1989), p. 285.

4. Sheila Briggs, "Women and Religion," in Beth B. Hess and Myra Marx Ferree, eds. *Analyzing Gender: A Handbook of Social Science Research* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1987), p. 408. Several works address this aspect of change tangentially. On women in Christian base communities, see Carol Ann Drogus, "Religion, Gender, and Political Culture: Attitudes and Participation in Brazilian Basic Christian Communities," Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991; John Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy." On Protestant women, see Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy"; Brusco, "The Household Basis"; Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study."

5. See, for example, Elaine J. Lawless, *God's Peculiar People: Women's Voices and Folk Tradition in a Pentecostal Church* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1988). See also Lawless, *Handmaidens of the Lord: Pentecostal Women Preachers and Traditional Religion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988).

6. The section on CEBs relies heavily on my own study of women in Sao Paulo, one of only a few to look explicitly and systematically at gender issues. This may bias the interpretation of CEBs, because Sao Paulo's CEBs are unusually liberationist and probably more likely than other such groups to encourage women's political activism. CEBs closer to traditional Catholic models are less likely to be a source of *new* ideas or roles for women. Since I focus on religious change and its impact on changing gender roles, the choice of Brazilian CEBs, precisely because they do depart from traditional Catholic models, seems warranted. I do include information from studies of CEBs in other countries to achieve a more balanced portrait.

7. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 149.

8. Evelyn P. Stevens, "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo in Latin America," in Ann Pescatello, ed., *Female and Male in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973); Maxine Molyneux, "Mobilization Without Emancipation? Women's Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua," *Feminist Studies* 11, 2 (1985),

pp. 227-254; and Shulamit Goldsmit and Ernest Sweeney, "The Church and Latin American Women in Their Struggle for Equality and Justice," *Thought* 63, 249 (1988), pp. 176-188. By "traditional Catholicism" I mean both preconciliar and popular Catholicism, that is, the official doctrine and instruction of the Catholic church prior to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the unofficial folk religion practiced by the urban and rural poor.

9. Brusco, "The Household Basis."

10. Salvatore Cucchiari, "Between Shame and Sanctification: Patriarchy and Its Transformation in Sicilian Pentecostalism," *American Ethnologist* 17, 4 (1990), p. 688.

11. David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 220.

12. She suggests that this emphasis may result from women's early involvement in directing the Pentecostal churches. Brusco, "The Household Basis."

13. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 218.

14. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 415.

15. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," p. 328.

16. Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy," p. 163.

17. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," pp. 327-328. 18. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 416.

19. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," p. 337; Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 92.

20. Lawless, *Handmaidens of the Lord*, pp. 145-146.

21. Stevens, "*Marianismo: The Other Face*," p. 95.

22. Cucchiari, "Between Shame and Sanctification," p. 703. 23. Ibid.

24. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 216.

25. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 212.

26. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 424.

27. Ibid, p. 418.

28. Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, p. 166.

29. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 418.

30. *Latin America Press* 25, 4 (1993), p. 2. As Mariz and Machado note in this volume, the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus began ordaining women pastors in 1993.

31. Frederick J. Conway, "Pentecostalism in Haiti: Healing and Hierarchy," in Stephen D. Glazier, ed., *Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case Studies from the Caribbean and Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980), pp. 21-22; Regina Novaes, *Os escolhidos de Deus: Pentecostals, trabalhadores e cidadania* (Sao Paulo: Marco Zero, 1985), p. 58, n. 17.

32. Mariz, "Religion and Coping," p. 148.

33. Conway, "Pentecostalism in Haiti," pp. 21-22.

34. Cucchiari, "Between Shame and Sanctification," p. 703. Cucchiari's study is based on a Sicilian case, but most studies of Latin American Pentecostals also describe women's participation in spirit experiences.

35. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 216; Rowan Ireland, *Kingdoms Come: Religion and Politics in Brazil* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991).

36. Brusco, "The Household Basis," p. 212.

37. Gabriele Kohpahl, "Facing the World with Spiritual Life: Neo-Pentecostalism in Guatemala," Master's thesis, University of California-Los Angeles, 1989.

38. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," p. 331.

39. Ibid., p. 232.
40. See Novaes, *Os escolhidos de Deus*, on leadership and Brusco, "The Household Basis," and Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*, on women active in gender-segregated groups. A network of Latin American women theologians and pastors now claims four hundred members, but it is unclear how many of these may be Pentecostals. *Latinamerica Press* 25, 4 (December 6, 1993), p. 2.
41. Novaes, *Os escolhidos de Deus*, p. 77.
42. Mariz, "Religion and Coping"; David E. Dixon, "Popular Culture, Popular Identity, and the Rise of Latin American Protestantism: Voices from Santiago Poblacional," Paper presented to the 17th International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Los Angeles, Calif., September 23-27, 1992.
43. June E. Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 203.
44. Specifically, there is little difference between women from Protestant denominations that support women's participation and women from Catholic and Protestant groups that do not. See Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study."
45. This argument is clearly and fully explicated in Brusco, "The Household Basis." Other research reaching the same conclusion includes Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy"; Lilitiana R. Goldin and Brent Metz, "An Expression of Cultural Change: Invisible Converts to Protestantism Among Highland Guatemala Mayas," *Ethnology* 30 (1991), pp. 325-338.
46. Goldin and Metz, "An Expression of Cultural Change;" p. 328.
47. Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy," p. 164.
48. Dixon, "Popular Culture, Popular Identity," pp. 20-21.
49. Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967).
50. Brusco, "The Household Basis," 200.
51. Novaes, *Os escolhidos de Deus*; Brusco, "The Household Basis"; Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy."
52. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," pp. 326-327.
53. Brusco, "The Household Basis." Perhaps the earliest study to strike this note, however, is Willems, *Followers of the New Faith*.
54. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study;" p. 337.
55. Willems, *Followers of the New Faith*; Brusco, "The Household Basis" and "The Reformation of Machismo"; Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study"; Gill, "Like a Veil." For non-Latin American examples that support this claim, see Cucchiari, "Between Shame and Sanctification" Charles W. Peek, George D. Lowe, and L. Susan Williams, "Gender and God's Word: Another Look at Religious Fundamentalism and Sexism," *Social Forces* 69, 4(1991), pp. 1205-1222.
56. Dixon, "Popular Culture, Popular Identity," p. 26.
57. Only the Foursquare Gospel is Pentecostal, but Van den Eykel does not suggest any evidence of a difference between the two groups. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study."
58. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," pp. 340-341.
59. Merlin B. Brinkerhoff and Marlene M. MacKie, "Religious Denominations' Impact upon Gender Attitudes: Some Methodological Implications," *Review of Religious Research* 25, 4 (1984), pp. 365-378.
60. Flora also notes that the reconceptualization of men's roles under Pentecostalism is clearer and more dramatic than that of women's. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," pp. 414-415.
61. Burdick, "Gossip and Secrecy," p. 160.

62. Mariz, "Religion and Coping."
63. Sonia Alvarez, "Women's Participation in the Brazilian 'People's Church': A Critical Appraisal," *Feminist Studies* 16, 2 (1990), p. 388. Male liberation theologians have begun to include women in the list of oppressed and to discuss sexism, but the essentially marxist basis of their analysis remains unchanged. In an effort to recognize women's rights within the church, however, Leonardo Boff argued that there is no decisive argument against the ordination of women. See Paul Sigmund, *Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy or Revolution?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 84.
64. Madeleine Adriance, "Daughters of Judith: Feminist Consciousness in Rural Base Communities in Brazil," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Raleigh, N.C., October 29-31, 1993.
65. Carol Ann Drogus, "Reconstructing the Feminine: Women in Sao Paulo's CEBs," *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* 71 (1990), pp. 63-74.
66. Carol Ann Drogus, *We Are Women Making History: Political Participation in Sao Paulo's CEBs*, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Latin America Discussion Paper 81 (1988).
67. Van den Eykel, "A Comparative Study," p. 317; Drogus, "Religion, Gender, and Political Culture."
68. This interpretation is based on unpublished transcripts of interviews conducted by Rede Mulher in 1984 and 1985. I am grateful for access to this material.
69. Carol Ann Drogus, "Popular Movements and the Limits of Political Mobilization at the Grassroots in Brazil," in Hannah Stewart-Gambino and Edward Cleary, eds., *Conflict and Competition: The Latin American Church in a Changing Environment* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p. 82.
70. Mariz, "Religion and Coping," pp. 195-196.
71. Drogus, "Religion, Gender, and Political Culture."
72. On political attitudes and activity specifically, see Drogus, "Religion, Gender, and Political Culture," chap. 7.
73. Ibid.
74. Drogus, "Reconstructing the Feminine."
75. Interview, Sao Paulo, August 4-8, 1986.
76. Catherine Ferguson, "The Poor in Politics: Social Change and Basic Church Communities in Santiago, Lima, and Mexico City," Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1990.
77. Adriance, "Daughters of Judith," p. 15.
78. Mariz, "Religion and Coping," p. 196.
79. Cucchiari, "Between Shame and Sanctification," p. 693.
80. Ibid., p. 688.
81. The sides of the debate are represented by Brusco, Willems, and Van den Eykel, on the one hand, and Burdick, on the other.
82. Lawless, *Handmaidens of the Lord*.
83. Drogus, "Religion, Gender, and Political Culture."
84. Daniel Levine has argued that in CEBs, differences can be accounted for by the attitudes of local pastoral workers and connections to larger church structures. Daniel H. Levine, *Popular Voices in Latin American Catholicism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Similarly, Pentecostal groups seem to be strongly shaped by local pastoral leaders, and there is some evidence that whether or not they are connected to a larger

church organization affects their theology, political attitudes, and so on. Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*.

85. Other hypotheses relating to the religious groups rather than the characteristics of members should also be investigated. Ireland, for example, suggests that different types of Pentecostal groups – established churches versus breakaway sects – have quite different potentials for political rebelliousness. Ireland, *Kingdoms Come*. Another hypothesis suggested by the available evidence is that the degree of women's predominance is a key. See Francis B. O'Connor, *Like Bread, Their Voices Rise: Global Women Challenge the Church* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria, 1993). Although both Pentecostals and CEBs are predominantly female, the Pentecostals generally appear to be more gender-balanced, and this difference may explain Pentecostal women's reluctance to challenge gender stereotypes.

86. Mariz, "Religion and Coping."

87. Flora, "Pentecostal Women," p. 424.