•Women are both less risk averse and more religious than men •More religious people are also more risk averse

risk behaviors?



behaviors

## **Previous Literature**

- One reason for the relationship could be that religion acts as insurance

# The Interaction of Risk Preferences, Religiosity, and Gender in **Explaining Health Risk Behaviors**

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are run as appropriate

religious denominations

## Results are Robust to Alternative

Specifications Results are qualitatively the same when logit and probit

Relationship between religiosity and drinking is much stronger among religious denominations that discourage alcohol use; other relationships are similar across

# Conclusion

## Conclusion

•Gender, risk tolerance, and religiosity have strong and independent relationships with 3 health risk behaviors: smoking, drinking, and lacking health insurance

•Gender differences are not explained by risk preferences or religiosity—what does explain them?

•Gender differences in overconfidence? •People are overconfident in general, but men more so than women (Barber and Odean, 2001)

•Gender differences in emotional response to risk?

•Can divide decision making into "deliberative" system vs "affective" system—the affective response to risk may be different for men and women

•Supports idea that relationship between religiosity and behaviors is causal rather than correlational

•All three factors must be included in models whenever possible

## *Contact*

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