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The Stakes of Symbolic Boundaries

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ABSTRACT
Sociological theories of symbolic boundaries (understandings of who belongs to in-groups and out-groups) and social boundaries (material stratification) argue both are related, but empirical analyses often focus on one or the other. Using survey data from 2014, we replicate and validate earlier research describing patterns in how Americans draw symbolic boundaries against a range of minority groups. We then go beyond this work by demonstrating a new link between boundary-drawing and attitudes about inequality and civil liberties with material implications. Drawing symbolic boundaries is not a benign practice; rather, it is associated with willingness to draw social boundaries that support material and political inequality.

KEYWORDS
Public opinion; culture; symbolic boundaries

Who is like me, and who is different? This is a question of symbolic boundaries, or how people define social membership. Boundary theorists argue these distinctions form the basis of a social hierarchy by justifying the unequal distribution of material and symbolic resources (Bourdieu 1984; Lamont 1992). Symbolic boundaries theory has produced two key empirical insights for scholars (Lamont and Molnar 2002). First, boundaries create group membership in culturally and historically specific ways by providing packages of assumptions about others. Elites – such as political leaders (e.g. Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; Martin and Desmond 2010; Smith 2003), fringe interest groups (e.g. Bail 2014), and social movements (e.g. DiMaggio 1997; Massengill 2008) – can create these packages, but they also diffuse into the general population as people accept some assumptions about collective identity and reject others (Delehanty, Edgell, and Stewart 2019; Edgell and Tranby 2010). Second, symbolic boundaries theorists argue that symbolic distinctions can codify into social boundaries, resulting in unequal access to material resources or political rights. Symbolic boundaries provide explanations and justifications for material inequality that can structure the implicit biases which inform discrimination and stratification (e.g. see Lamont 1992; Perry and Whitehead 2015). Both of these insights are especially important today, as social scientists work to understand the dynamics of group membership in an era of border walls and "Brexit."

The problem is that many accounts of inequality highlight gaps between symbolic and social boundaries, challenging the idea that symbolic boundaries necessarily codify into material inequality. For example, research on political toleration emphasizes that people can hold prejudicial attitudes without practicing discriminatory behavior (e.g. Eisenstein 2012; also see Jerolmack and Khan 2014). Others view symbolic boundaries as post-hoc

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rationalizations for inequality (e.g. Alwin and Tufis 2016; Gelman 2009). These critiques view symbolic and social boundaries as independent, where symbolic boundaries theory sees them as mutually constitutive.

These critiques emerge in part because the two bodies of literature in the symbolic boundaries tradition often talk past each other. Work on the *content* of symbolic boundaries often assumes that they will lead to inequality without investigating how this happens, while research on *the effects* of symbolic boundaries often assumes inequality results from uniform biases that have little variation across or within social contexts. Moving past this gap requires research that can observe the implicit association between packages of symbolic boundaries and attitudes about material or political inequality (e.g. Lizardo 2017). What are the "stakes" of holding symbolic boundaries? Are people with a strong, specific, and coherent sense of in-groups and out-groups willing to live with particular forms of inequality, and are they willing to deny political opportunities to others? When do individuals compartmentalize their collective identities and de-couple them from questions about inequality?

We argue that symbolic boundaries in the United States are culturally malleable based on respondents' social locations. Rather than a binary divide in who is "American" identified by research on the "culture wars" or affective polarization theories (e.g. Hunter 1991; Iyengar and Westwood 2014), we find evidence of three distinct cultural packages American identity; these align with attitudes toward material inequality, political opportunity, and tolerance of difference (Knight 2017). One class of respondents in our analysis is generally accepting of many kinds of social out-groups, and one of equal size is relatively less accepting, but a third group of about one in five Americans exhibits specific exclusionary views that associate with their general attitudes about political tolerance and inequality. In light of this pattern, we argue that the coherent packaging of symbolic boundaries is more closely related to attitudes about social boundaries than the overall strength of symbolic boundaries alone.

Our analysis replicates and extends research on symbolic boundaries using survey data from 2003 by Edgell and Tranby (2010), who found that Americans draw symbolic boundaries that exclude racial, religious, and other minorities in three distinct ways. First, our replication using data from 2014 supports Edgell and Tranby's (2010) finding of three distinct groups that appear stable over a decade of time: optimistic pluralists, critics of multiculturalism, and cultural preservationists. Second, we extend our analysis and show that these patterns of boundary work persist when we introduce additional minority groups and use a more robust statistical procedure for establishing these three styles of boundary-drawing. Third, we show that one of these styles aligns with respondents' generalized attitudes about political and material inequality. This provides evidence for a cultural process where the content of symbolic boundaries must be packaged in a particular way in order to be applied to social policy. Compared to respondents who generally are not as accepting of all out-groups (critics of multiculturalism), those who express a culturally distinct pattern of boundary drawing that excludes particular out-groups (cultural preservationists) express stronger disagreement with statements regarding general protections for civil liberties and redistributive social policies. It is not generalized distrust, but rather coherent, culturally specific patterns of boundaries excluding particular groups that has a stronger relationship with respondents' willingness to tolerate inequality.

The State of Boundary Studies

Research on symbolic boundaries follows a theoretical agenda set forth by Bourdieu (1984) and Lamont (1992), focusing on the role of symbolic distinctions in supporting social hierarchy. It is generally concerned with two topics: (1) the substantive content of symbolic boundaries that arise from classification struggles and (2) the link between symbolic boundaries and material social boundaries (Kato 2011; Lamont and Molnar 2002; Vila-Henninger 2015; Wimmer 2008).

The Content of Symbolic Boundaries

Work on the content of boundaries traces how and why social interaction produces shared understandings of in-groups or out-groups (e.g. Alexander 2003; Anderson 2006; Bail 2008; Durkheim 1964, Kato 2011; Lamont 1992; Wuthnow 1989). Some researchers have focused on the positive role of boundary drawing in fostering in-group identity formation, such as how different forms of cultural capital facilitate both the integration of social groups and the reinforcement of boundaries around existing groups (e.g. Brooke and Feld 2010; Croll 2007; Ghaziani 2011, 2014; Guenther 2014; Kato 2011; Lareau and Weininger 2003; Lizardo 2006; Stuber 2009; Sumerau and Cragun 2016). For example, some work identifies religion's role in structuring social acceptance in general (Adler 2012; Edgell 2012, Stewart, Edgell and Jack 2018 ; Bailey 2008; Bean 2014; McCormack 2013) or solidarity with other minorities in particular (Ecklund 2005). Other scholars focus on social exclusion, examining how symbolic boundary construction defines specific groups as outsiders, including immigrants (Bail 2008; Chiricos et al. 2014; Jaworksy 2013; Simonsen 2018), atheists (Edgell, Hartmann et al. 2016), groups based on gender or sexuality (Bean and Martinez 2014; Kane 2004; Schmutz 2009), and Muslims and other religious minorities (Bail 2014; Hughes 2016; Jung 2012; Silva 2017; Tavory 2010).

This research shows that the drawing of symbolic boundaries, while influenced by elites (Lamont 1992), is still a contested social process, leading to conflicting and evolving understandings of race, multiculturalism, citizenship, and social belonging (Coffé and Bolzendahl 2013; Fox and Guglielmo 2012; Hartmann 2015; Loveman and Muniz 2007; Mayrl and Saperstein 2013; Pickett et al. 2012; Qian and Lichter 2007; Spruyt, van der Noll, and Vandenbossche 2016). This suggests that boundary-drawing is not always uniform within a particular social context, but might vary depending on the agency of individuals' identities, interests, and social location as people take up some elite packages of boundaries (e.g. Delehanty, Edgell, and Stewart 2019) and reject others.

Edgell and Tranby (2010) synthesize this research by measuring attitudes about a wide range of racial, ethnic, and religious groups in the U.S. and by testing whether respondents have different approaches for drawing boundaries around these groups. Using cluster analysis on survey data about these groups, they find three distinct clusters of boundary-drawing responses: "optimistic pluralists," who tend to respond favorably to all groups; "critics of multiculturalism," who tend to express reserved and conditional acceptance of all groups; and "cultural preservationists," who express a distinct pattern of boundary-drawing responses that exclude only some groups. Cultural preservationists, who were about a quarter of the 2003 survey sample, draw symbolic boundaries excluding particular groups they perceive to violate a vision of American national identity rooted in a white,

Judeo-Christian cultural heritage, such as African Americans, recent immigrants, Muslims, atheists, and homosexuals (*cf.* Brooke and Feld 2010). Edgell and Tranby (2010) argue that these three groupings reveal two cultural fault lines – how Americans respond to increasing diversity and multiculturalism *in general*, and whether they embrace a Judeo-Christian cultural core.

While Edgell and Tranby (2010) assert that the patterns they find are based on a durable cultural tradition, we know that symbolic boundaries change over time as new out-groups become salient and defined as "others" by dominant group members. Muslim-Americans are one example (Bail 2014; Kalkan, Layman, and Uslaner 2009; Korteweg and Yurdakul 2009). Moreover, views of dominant or majority groups can also change over time. For example, many non-religious Americans have more negative views of religion since the emergence of the Christian right as a strong voice in politics (Djupe, Neiheisel, and Conger 2018; Hout and Fischer 2002, 2014; Putnam, Campbell 2012). In light of this work, our first research question is "Has anything changed in Americans' patterns of symbolic boundary construction since 2003?" We use survey data collected in 2014 to replicate and validate Edgell and Tranby's (2010) analysis and investigate whether the three groups that they find – optimistic pluralists, critics of multiculturalism, and cultural preservationists – are stable over time.

From Symbolic to Social Boundaries

A theoretical link between symbolic distinctions and social stratification motivates social scientific research on symbolic boundaries (Bourdieu 1984; Lamont 1992). Researchers are right to be skeptical of this link, as it is important to distinguish prejudicial attitudes from discriminatory behavior. Talk and action can be only loosely connected, or de-coupled entirely (Brown 2009; Jerolmack and Khan 2014).

However, a number of studies suggest that a link between symbolic and social boundaries does exist. Research on dual process cognition in culture (Lizardo 2017) demonstrates that respondents' deeply held political and religious identities structure their implicit cognition and evaluation of others and of social problems (e.g. Martin and Desmond 2010; Moore 2017; Okamoto and Ebert 2010). The implicit connection between symbolic boundaries and stratification is evident in cultural matching that results in hiring discrimination (e.g. Pager 2003; Pager, Bonikowski, and Western 2009; Parks-Yancy, DiTomaso, and Post 2009; Rivera 2012; Tilcsik 2011; Wallace, Wright, and Hyde 2014; Wright et al. 2013), interpersonal interactions and group dynamics (e.g. Becker and Edgell 1998; Bracey and Moore 2017 ; Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003; Moore 2017; Sharp 2009; Voyer 2013), and assumptions about moral worth in the design and implementation of social services (e.g. Best 2012; Gusfield 1984, 1986; Hartmann 2016; Soss, Fording and Schram 2011),

To address this body of work, we move beyond replicating Edgell and Tranby's (2010) study and extend their work with a second research question: "Are clusters of boundary-drawing practices significantly and substantively associated with respondents' attitudes about inequality in society?" Specifically, we investigate respondents' views on both material and political inequality, including policies that would alleviate economic inequality and willingness to provide civil liberties for members of groups which respondents identify as problematic. Attitudes about redistributive politics are not merely economic or instrumental – rather, people draw on moral boundaries in evaluating these policies (Goren 2004, 2013;

Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Malka et al. 2011; Steensland 2006). Attitudes about civil liberties provide a good baseline measure of respondents' tolerance that captures support for procedural democracy, which is distinct from prejudicial attitudes (Stewart et al. 2018). If there is no link between symbolic and social boundaries, respondents should sharply distinguish their attitudes about different groups from their respect for those groups' right to teach in public schools, hold demonstrations, or receive government benefits (Gorski et al. 2012; Olson and Li 2016; Putnam, Campbell2012; Stouffer 1955). Conversely, other work suggests that in specific cases, such as anti-foreigner sentiment, prejudicial attitudes driven by symbolic boundaries can influence intolerance toward out-groups (Chiricos et al. 2014; DeWaard 2015; Quillian 1995).

Linking Boundaries and Beliefs about Inequality

We approach symbolic boundaries as a way of packaging shared cultural affiliations and identities. We draw from research on ideology, which argues that elites and group spokespersons package outcomes and identities together (Massengill 2008), which confer assumptions about what the world is like (Martin and Desmond 2010), and demonstrate how members of social groups should conduct themselves in relation to others in public. Bean's (2014) work on the political mobilization of Evangelical identities is a good example of this approach. When respondents express their opinions on surveys, they may not simply list discrete policy preferences, but rather express their affinity for different social groups in a cultural performance of identity-work that produces distinct patterns in responses – even if respondents cannot consciously articulate the underlying assumptions that produce those patterns (Jost, Federico, and Napier 2009; Perrin and McFarland 2011; Perrin, Roos, and Gauchat 2014; Vaisey 2009).

These insights suggest that survey data can help us understand the connection between the symbolic boundaries that individuals package together to distinguish themselves from specific out-groups and their more general attitudes toward political participation and material inequality. We would expect these connections to be substantive and culturally contingent. That is, the *number* of social boundaries respondents draw and the *strength* of those boundaries both matter, but we also expect that substantive *combination of groups* defined as "not like me" also matters in shaping views of both material inequality and political participation. Respondents with the most specific, clear patterns of boundary-drawing should be most likely to reject egalitarian policies because those boundaries provide a substantive vision of who belongs in society and who does not by priming a sense of varying moral obligation to "insiders" and "outsiders" (Wuthnow 1989). Such a coherent vision provides ideological constraint that can order opinion formation more effectively than abstract, diffuse negative attitudes toward others in society. Attending to the implications of these substantive visions offers a way to generate hypotheses about *how* symbolic boundaries become social boundaries.

Next Steps

Our analysis addresses the gap between symbolic boundaries and perceptions of stratification by describing how Americans package symbolic boundaries and by linking these packages to their stated willingness to tolerate inequality. First, we investigate whether

broad patterns of boundary-drawing behavior are persistent by replicating Edgell and Tranby's (2010) approach using K-means cluster analysis on identical survey items from 2003 fielded in 2014. Second, we assess the whether those patterns are robust to the addition of new social potential out-groups, and we validate those clusters using a second analytical approach more in line with recent work in sociology and the underlying empirical structure of our data: Latent Class Analysis (LCA) (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; O'Brien and Noy 2015). Third, we investigate the stakes of these packages by providing original analysis to demonstrate that the classes identified by these methods associate with respondents' substantive attitudes about inequality in American society.

Lamont and Molnar (2002) note that the strongest symbolic boundaries are culturally *specific*, based on a substantive shared understanding of social belonging. In line with this theory, and with Edgell and Tranby (2010), we expect that optimistic pluralists – those who are generally accepting of most minority groups – will be more tolerant than critics of multiculturalism, who are generally skeptical of most minority groups. However, both optimistic pluralists and critics of multiculturalism express fairly diffuse styles of boundary-drawing behavior, regardless of whether they are accepting or skeptical of others. As a result, we would not expect them to be substantively different on more specific questions about alleviating inequality in society, such as whether they support funding welfare policies. Cultural preservationists, however, express a specific package of assumptions about belonging in American life, one that includes both disagreement with groups that appear to violate a Judeo-Christian cultural core and agreement with groups that appear to uphold that core. In line with a sociological theory of ideology as a performance of cultural affinities, we would expect respondents with a cultural preservationist style to be less likely to support civil liberties and redistributive policies than either the optimistic pluralists or the critics of multiculturalism.

H1: Critics of Multiculturalism will express more intolerant views of groups with whom they disagree than will Optimistic Pluralists.

H2: Cultural Preservationists will express more intolerant views of groups with whom they disagree than will Critics of Multiculturalism.

H3. Cultural Preservationists will express stronger disagreement with policies that would alleviate inequality than will both Critics of Multiculturalism and Optimistic Pluralists.

Data

We use the 2014 Boundaries in the American Mosaic (BAM) survey, a follow-up to the 2003 American Mosaic Project data used by Edgell and Tranby (2010). The BAM survey was fielded with funding from the National Science Foundation. Participants were recruited through the GfK Group's KnowledgePanel, a probability-based online panel consisting of approximately 50,000 non-institutionalized adult members. KnowledgePanel recruitment is based on a patented combination of Address Based Sampling (ABS) and Random Digit Dial (RDD) sampling, which assures that multiple

sequential samples drawn from this rotating panel membership will each reliably represent the U.S. population (Callegaro and DiSogra 2008; Yeager et al.2011). The BAM survey sample was drawn from panel members using a probability proportional to size (PPS) weighted sampling approach that oversampled for African Americans and Hispanics. The response rate was 57.9%, a higher response rate than average comparable national surveys for a final N of 2,521 (Holbrook, Krosnick, and Pfent 2007).

Measures

Our core measures are summarized in Table 1. To measure symbolic boundaries, the 2014 BAM data presented respondents with the following question: "Here is a list of different groups of people who live in this country. For each one, please indicate how much you think people in this group agree with YOUR vision of American society." Respondents were then presented with a list of fifteen groups in random order and provided with the response options "almost completely agree," "mostly agree," "somewhat agree," and "not at all agree" for each group. To replicate the 2003 American Mosaic Survey employed by Edgell and Tranby (2010), this block included African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, immigrants, White Americans, Jews, Muslims, conservative Christians, atheists, and homosexuals. To supplement these items, the 2014 block also added welfare recipients, people who are mostly spiritual (but not religious), Buddhists, the wealthiest Americans, and Mormons.

After estimating an LCA model from these shared visions questions, we test the relationship between respondents' predicated class membership and their attitudes about inequality in society along three dimensions. To capture intolerance, we use a mean-standardized scale measure (α = 0.82) of three survey items based on the following question: "There may be groups that each of us think cause problems in our society. Thinking about the groups you believe are most likely to cause problems, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements." Respondents then indicated on a 4 point Likert-type scale including "strongly" and "somewhat" agree and "strongly" and "somewhat" disagree whether they thought members of these groups "should be allowed to hold demonstrations in your community," "should be permitted to teach in public schools," and "should have access to most government programs or benefits." Higher values for this variable represent stronger disagreement with these statements, and thus stronger intolerance for difference.

To measure support for policies that would alleviate inequality in society, we use a second mean-standardized scale (α = .81) of five survey items. Respondents were presented with the prompt: "Here is a list of different government funded programs in the U.S. For each, please indicate if the government should fully fund or not fund that program." Respondents were then provided with a list of five programs to which they could respond that the government should "fully fund," "fund at reduced levels," or "not fund at all." This scale is composed of attitudes about social security and medicare, food stamps, welfare, education, and the Affordable Care Act, coded such that higher values indicate a stronger preference to reduce or defund these programs.

Finally, we measure more specific support for policies that would reduce racial inequality with a third standardized scale (α = 0.84). This scale included four point Likert-type scales measuring agreement with affirmative action ("African Americans should receive special consideration in job hiring and school admissions"), redistributive policies

("African Americans should get economic assistance from the government"), and charitable aid ("Charities and other non-profit organizations should do more to help African Americans"). Responses on this measure were also coded such that higher values represent stronger disagreement with these policies.

If these styles of boundary drawing are indeed unique cultural constructs, they should also be fairly distinct from other demographic and ideological indicators. We employ two blocks of demographic and ideological control variables in our models of class membership and attitudes about inequality to test for this. Demographic controls include standard measures of age, race, gender, parental status, marital status, educational attainment, income, and whether the respondent lives in the south. Ideological controls include standard seven-point scales for liberal political ideology and Democratic party identification, whether respondents believe their financial situation is better or worse than it was five years ago, as well as three items about core American values. These final three items asked respondents how important they thought a shared sense of moral values, equal treatment for all, and valuing racial diversity were for the United States as a whole. We include these final items to assess whether boundary-drawing behaviors covary with other substantive understandings of American national identity.

Analytic Approach

Our replication begins by conducting *K*-means cluster analysis to replicate the Edgell and Tranby's (2010:183–184; Everett *et al.* 2001) approach, using all of the available shared visions items in the 2014 BAM data. As we move to our validation, we add measures about additional groups in this process, and we impose the assumption of a three-cluster

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Shared Visions Items (4 Point Likert Scale)			Demographic and Ideological Controls				
	Mean	Std. Dev.				Mean	Std. Dev.
African Americans	2.67	0.85	Age (continuous)			46.97	17.02
Hispanics/Latinos	2.70	0.83	Income (19 pt scale)			11.87	4.50
Asian Americans	2.70	0.82	Liberal (7pt scale)			3.86	1.52
Recent Immigrants	2.89	0.85	Democrat (7pt scale)			4.27	2.05
White Americans	2.41	0.84	Religious Salience (4pt scale)			3.02	1.10
Jews	2.67	0.86	Shared morals (4pt scale)			1.54	0.72
Muslims	3.26	0.80	Equal treatment (4pt scale)			1.31	0.61
Conservative Christians	2.73	0.99	Racial diversity (4pt scale)			1.59	0.78
Atheists	3.08	0.94	Female	0.52	Better off	0.36	
Homosexuals	2.85	0.93	Parent	0.64	Worse off	0.29	
Welfare Recipients	3.04	0.85	Married	0.54	Catholic	0.21	
Spiritual, but not religious	2.54	0.82	Lives in South	0.37	Evangelical	0.30	
Buddhists	2.98	0.87	High school	0.49	Black	0.12	
The Wealthiest Americans	3.03	0.90	Associates	0.09	Hispanic	0.15	
Mormons	3.00	0.88	Bachelors	0.17	Other	0.06	
			Masters/PhD	0.12	2+ Races	0.01	
Attitudes About Inequality (Mean Standardized)							
Disagreement w/Civil Liberties (3 items, α = 0.82)						−0.01	0.87
Disagreement w/Safety Net (5 items, α = 0.81)						0.05	0.77
Disagreement w/Affirmative Action (3 items, α = 0.84)						0.04	0.87

Source: 2014 Boundaries in the American Mosaic Survey
Note: Descriptive statistics are weighted to known population benchmarks based on the 2010 ACS

solution in order to see whether the results produce a substantively similar arrangement of responses in each cluster.

The K-means approach treats each measure as a continuous variable and focuses on the distance from the mean on each measure. The disadvantage of this approach is that it does not treat the boundary items as the ordinal indicators that they are, but instead treats a one-point difference between "strongly" and "mostly" agree the same as a one-point difference between "not at all" and "only somewhat" agree. Using this approach alone thus risks missing the substantive difference between these categorical distinctions. Edgell and Tranby (2010:184, footnote 7) report that they were able to produce substantively similar clusters with Latent Class Analysis (LCA), a method that can account for discrete response options to each survey item as it identifies unobserved latent classifications that explain relationships between these discrete values (McCutcheon 1987; Nylund, Asparouhov, and Muthén 2007). This approach allows us to account for both the strength of boundaries and the substantive difference between choosing the most exclusionary category and choosing a lower degree of acceptance. In that way, it is similar to other approaches that use multiple binary outcome variables to measure symbolic boundaries (Vila-Henninger 2015); however, rather than splitting attitudes about each out-group into multiple outcomes for each individual respondent, we cluster attitudes across respondents. LCA is also now a more common methodological approach for identifying substantive styles of survey responses (e.g. Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; O'Brien and Noy 2015).

We use Stata's LCA Plugin (Stephanie et al. 2015) to identify whether similar latent classes of boundary-drawing emerge in the 2014 data. To test these authors' original conclusions, we generated two-class, three-class, and four-class models using these measures, and chose the three-class model for a balance of theoretical and statistical reasons (Nylund, Asparouhov, and Muthén 2007). Theoretically, the three-class model mirrors Edgell and Tranby's original schema of optimistic pluralists, critics of multiculturalism, and cultural preservationists, and therefore allows us to see whether response patterns in the 2014 data with new measures follow the same schema. Statistically, the three-class model showed a dramatic reduction in the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) over the two-class model, indicating a much better fit. The four-class model showed a slight improvement in model fit, but exhibited redundancies in class assignment.

LCA produces a set of probabilities that each respondent will belong to each latent class, and there are a number of ways to test the relationship between these probabilities of class membership and other outcome measures (Bakk, Tekle, and Vermunt 2013; Clark and Bengt 2009). Most of these methods employ a correction for errors in class assignment, often using weights based on these errors (Bakk, Tekle, and Vermunt 2013). Our data already employ the BAM survey's baseline and post-stratification sampling weights in the LCA model. Class assignment also exhibited very low error, with an entropy statistic of .90. Clark and Muthén (2009) demonstrate that under these conditions, when entropy is greater than .8, analysis can simply use a measure that assigns respondents to their most likely class from these probabilities. Therefore, we use the LCA Plugin's "Best Index" measure of class assignment as a nominal indicator of class membership.

After presenting the LCA results, we use this nominal indicator in two sets of original analyses to highlight a new association between boundary-drawing and attitudes toward inequality. First, we demonstrate the demographic characteristics of respondents in each

class. Second, we use class membership as an independent variable, along with demographic and ideological controls, in three weighted least squares regression models for each of our scale measures of disagreement with safety net policies, generalized intolerance, and disagreement with solutions to racial inequality. All models are weighted with post stratification weights to known population benchmarks form the 2010 American Community Survey.[1]

Results

Replication

Table 2 presents the results of *K*-means cluster analysis in both Edgell and Tranby's (2010) and the 2014 BAM survey data. The results are remarkably similar and suggest that the three cluster model has held consistently over the past decade. Critics of Multiculturalism tend to express more reserved agreement with all groups, with the modal response on most items as "somewhat agree" (response 3). In the 2014 data, Critics have also become more critical, with most expressing explicit disagreement with Muslims, atheists, wealthy Americans, and Mormons. Some of this change is due to observed shifts in attitudes toward salient cultural out-groups over the last decade (e.g. Edgell et al. 2016; Bail 2014; Hawley 2015), and some is due to a change in survey methodology from telephone administration in the original AMP data to the online administration in the BAM data, which could have led to a reduction in social desirability bias (see Edgell et al. 2016 for a discussion of these changes and measurement reliability). Optimistic Pluralists continue to express acceptance of most groups, with 2 (mostly agree) as the modal response category for everyone except the very wealthy. Finally, Cultural Preservationists maintain their culturally specific vision of American belonging. They continue to express reservations about atheists, Muslims, and, to a lesser extent, African

Table 2. K-Means clustering replication.

	Critics of Multiculturalism				Optimistic Pluralist				Cultural Preservationist			
	2003		2014		2003		2014		2003		2014	
	Mean	Mode	Mean	Mode	Mean	Mode	Mean	Mode	Mean	Mode	Mean	Mode
African Americans	2.90	3	3.08	3	1.80	2	1.95	2	2.40	3	2.54	3
Hispanics	3.00	3	3.16	3	1.90	2	1.92	2	2.30	3	2.55	3
Asian Americans	3.10	3	3.27	3	1.80	2	1.95	2	2.10	2	2.50	2.5
Recent Immigrants	3.10	3	3.35	3	2.00	2	2.09	2	2.40	3	2.87	3
White Americans	2.70	3	2.96	3	1.90	2	2.00	2	1.80	2	1.98	2
Jewish	3.00	3	3.27	3	1.80	2	1.96	2	2.20	2	2.37	2
Muslim	3.40	3	3.57	4	2.30	2	2.44	2	3.10	3	3.53	4
Conservative Christians	2.90	3	3.31	3	2.50	2	2.58	2	1.90	2	1.96	2
Atheists	3.40	3	3.42	4	2.30	2	2.21	2	3.60	4	3.57	4
Homosexuals	3.20	3	3.22	3	1.80	2	1.96	2	3.20	3	3.17	3
Welfare Recipients	–	–	3.36	3	–	–	2.32	2	–	–	3.20	3
Spiritual, but not Religious	–	–	2.98	3	–	–	1.90	2	–	–	2.46	2
Buddhists	–	–	3.41	3	–	–	2.09	2	–	–	3.19	3
Wealthy Americans	–	–	3.55	4	–	–	2.64	3	–	–	2.63	3
Mormons	–	–	3.52	4	–	–	2.42	2	–	–	2.65	3
N	901 (44%)		1,051 (44%)		628 (30%)		673 (28%)		529 (26%)		680 (28%)	

Source: 2003 clusters reported in Edgell and Tranby (2010). 2014 clusters derived from the Boundaries in the American Mosaic Survey.

Note: The Shared Visions item wording is, "How much do you think people in this group agree with your vision of American society?" Response categories: 1 almost completely agree, 2 mostly agree, 3 somewhat agree, 4 not at all agree

Americans, Hispanics, recent immigrants, homosexuals, welfare recipients, Buddhists, Mormons, and the very rich. On the other hand, they express stronger agreement with white Americans, Jews, conservative Christians, and spiritual Americans. The proportion of respondents in each cluster has also remained stable – critics are the largest group at 44% of the sample, followed by pluralists (28%) and preservationists (28%).

Validation

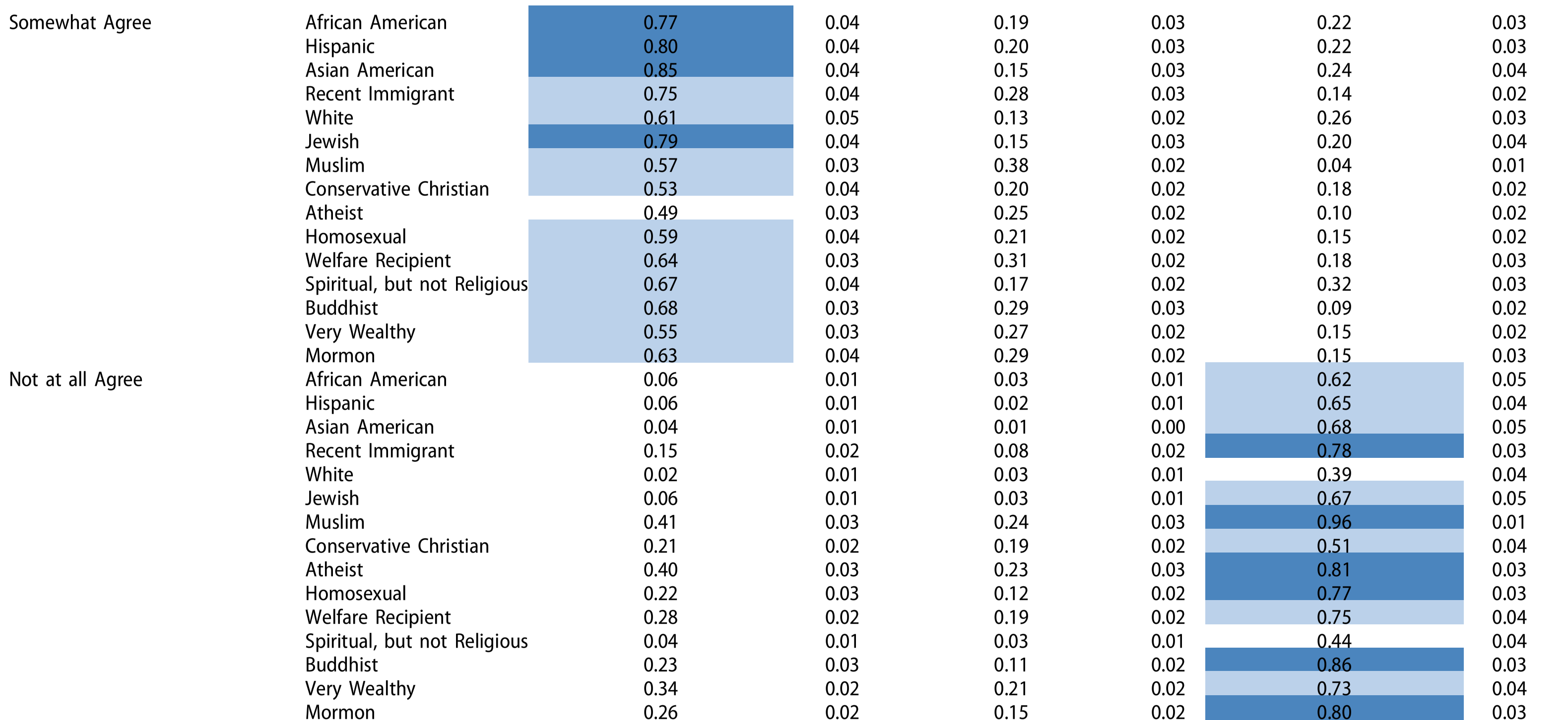
While *K*-means produces very similar results, we also need to test the robustness of this class structure with a method that can properly handle ordinal response items. Table 3 presents the results of LCA analysis using all fifteen groups in the 2014 BAM survey data. Rows represent response options about each group, sorted according to acceptance, while columns designate the three classes. Cells contain the probability of giving each type of response, given membership in a particular class, and the standard error for that probability. For example, a respondent who belongs to the Cultural Preservationist class has a 96% probability (SE = .01) of saying that Muslims do "not at all agree" with their vision of American society while a member of the Optimistic Pluralist class has only a 24% probability (SE = .03) of giving the same response. If there were no relationship between class membership and responses on these items, and responses were randomly distributed, we would expect about a 25% probability at each response level for each group in each class. To facilitate interpretation, response cells with more than a 50% posterior probability are lightly shaded, and cells with a greater than 75% probability have a darker shade.

These results add nuance to the original class structure proposed by Edgell and Tranby (2010), but they also demonstrate that this structure is consistent and robust. First, no classes are particularly likely to report that they think many groups "almost completely agree" with their vision of society, suggesting that at least some boundary drawing behavior is widely prevalent in the sample as a whole. Response probabilities at the highest level of acceptance for all groups range from one to four percent for Critics of Multiculturalism and six to twenty-two percent for Optimistic Pluralists. While Cultural Preservationists tend to mirror Critics at this level, they have elevated response probabilities for saying White Americans (13%) and Conservative Christians (14%) almost completely agree with their vision of American society. Second, Optimistic Pluralists are most likely to select the "mostly agree" option, while Critics of Multiculturalism lean very heavily toward the "somewhat agree" option for every group. Finally, Cultural Preservationists are much more likely to articulate specific disagreement with groups in general, and they are especially likely to express this disagreement with recent immigrants, Muslims, atheists, homosexuals, welfare recipients, Buddhists, and Mormons (posterior probabilities > .75 in all of these cases). Preservationists also have elevated probabilities of *acceptance* for whites (pr(mostly agree) = .22, pr(almost completely agree) = .13) and conservative Christians (pr(mostly agree) = .18, pr(almost completely agree) = .14) relative to other social out-groups. In other words, they express both stronger symbolic boundaries overall and a more coherent and culturally specific pattern of boundary formation that includes assumptions about both social inclusion and social exclusion.

The biggest difference in the LCA models is the gamma statistic, which indicates the proportion of the sample that would fall into each class. LCA classifies more respondents

Table 3. LCA results.

		Critics of Multiculturalism		Optimistic Pluralists		Cultural Preservationists	
		38%		41%		21%	
	Gamma	Rho	SE	Rho	SE	Rho	SE
Almost Completely Agree	African American	0.01	0.00	0.16	0.02	0.06	0.01
	Hispanic	0.01	0.00	0.15	0.02	0.05	0.01
	Asian American	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.02	0.03	0.01
	Recent Immigrant	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.02	0.02	0.01
	White	0.04	0.01	0.22	0.02	0.13	0.02
	Jewish	0.01	0.01	0.16	0.02	0.05	0.01
	Muslim	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.00	0.00
	Conservative Christian	0.04	0.02	0.19	0.02	0.14	0.02
	Atheist	0.01	0.01	0.13	0.02	0.03	0.01
	Homosexual	0.02	0.01	0.15	0.02	0.04	0.01
	Welfare Recipient	0.01	0.00	0.10	0.01	0.01	0.01
	Spiritual, but not Religious	0.02	0.01	0.17	0.02	0.07	0.02
	Buddhist	0.01	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.01	0.00
	Very Wealthy	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.02	0.03	0.01
	Mormon	0.01	0.01	0.11	0.02	0.02	0.01
Mostly Agree	African American	0.16	0.03	0.62	0.03	0.10	0.02
	Hispanic	0.14	0.03	0.63	0.03	0.09	0.02
	Asian American	0.12	0.04	0.69	0.02	0.05	0.02
	Recent Immigrant	0.09	0.03	0.52	0.02	0.06	0.02
	White	0.34	0.04	0.62	0.02	0.22	0.03
	Jewish	0.14	0.03	0.66	0.03	0.08	0.02
	Muslim	0.02	0.01	0.32	0.03	0.01	0.00
	Conservative Christian	0.21	0.03	0.42	0.02	0.18	0.03
	Atheist	0.10	0.02	0.38	0.03	0.06	0.02
	Homosexual	0.16	0.02	0.52	0.03	0.05	0.01
	Welfare Recipient	0.07	0.02	0.40	0.03	0.06	0.01
	Spiritual, but not Religious	0.27	0.04	0.63	0.02	0.18	0.03
	Buddhist	0.08	0.02	0.48	0.03	0.04	0.02
	Very Wealthy	0.11	0.03	0.40	0.02	0.09	0.02
	Mormon	0.09	0.03	0.45	0.02	0.04	0.01



Somewhat Agree	African American	0.77	0.04	0.19	0.03	0.22	0.03
	Hispanic	0.80	0.04	0.20	0.03	0.22	0.03
	Asian American	0.85	0.04	0.15	0.03	0.24	0.04
	Recent Immigrant	0.75	0.04	0.28	0.03	0.14	0.02
	White	0.61	0.05	0.13	0.02	0.26	0.03
	Jewish	0.79	0.04	0.15	0.03	0.20	0.04
	Muslim	0.57	0.03	0.38	0.02	0.04	0.01
	Conservative Christian	0.53	0.04	0.20	0.02	0.18	0.02
	Atheist	0.49	0.03	0.25	0.02	0.10	0.02
	Homosexual	0.59	0.04	0.21	0.02	0.15	0.02
	Welfare Recipient	0.64	0.03	0.31	0.02	0.18	0.03
	Spiritual, but not Religious	0.67	0.04	0.17	0.02	0.32	0.03
	Buddhist	0.68	0.03	0.29	0.03	0.09	0.02
	Very Wealthy	0.55	0.03	0.27	0.02	0.15	0.02
	Mormon	0.63	0.04	0.29	0.02	0.15	0.03
Not at all Agree	African American	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.62	0.05
	Hispanic	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.65	0.04
	Asian American	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.68	0.05
	Recent Immigrant	0.15	0.02	0.08	0.02	0.78	0.03
	White	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.39	0.04
	Jewish	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.67	0.05
	Muslim	0.41	0.03	0.24	0.03	0.96	0.01
	Conservative Christian	0.21	0.02	0.19	0.02	0.51	0.04
	Atheist	0.40	0.03	0.23	0.03	0.81	0.03
	Homosexual	0.22	0.03	0.12	0.02	0.77	0.03
	Welfare Recipient	0.28	0.02	0.19	0.02	0.75	0.04
	Spiritual, but not Religious	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.44	0.04
	Buddhist	0.23	0.03	0.11	0.02	0.86	0.03
	Very Wealthy	0.34	0.02	0.21	0.02	0.73	0.04
	Mormon	0.26	0.02	0.15	0.02	0.80	0.03

Note: Cells are shaded according to each class' response item probability. Light Blue: Pr > .50 Dark Blue: Pr>.75

into the Optimistic Pluralist class (41% of the sample) than the Cultural Preservationist class (21%) or the Critics of Multiculturalism (38%). In contrast, *K*-means classifies Optimists and Preservationists as equal in size (28% of the sample for each). As discussed above, treating the measures as discrete indicators finds that some respondents who express lower trust of strongly stigmatized groups, such as Muslims and Atheists, nonetheless generally fit the profile of Optimistic Pluralists for most out-groups. *K*-means clustering misses this pattern by treating all differences in response categories as substantively equivalent. This pattern makes theoretical sense, given the widespread prevalence of anti-Muslim and anti-atheist attitudes in American society (Edgell et al. 2016; Bail 2014). Again, Optimistic Pluralists are not necessarily accepting of every single out-group unconditionally, but they are on the whole more likely to report agreement with more groups than Critics or Preservationists.

Boundary Packages & Attitudes About Inequality

Table 4 provides demographic profiles for each of the LCA-generated classes, along with tests for significant differences. The most significant and substantive differences are in income, education, race, civic values, and religious denomination, and these differences primarily

Table 4. Demographic profiles of latent classes.

	Critics of Multiculturalism	Optimistic Pluralists	Cultural Preservationists	Sig.
Age	50.72	50.78	48.54	F(2,2439) = 3.5*
Female	0.51	0.48	0.53	F(2,2439) = 1.33
Parent	0.7	0.69	0.7	F(2,2422) = 0.3
Married	0.59	0.59	0.53	F(2,2439) = 2.9
Income	12.07	12.32	10.42	F(2,2439) = 34.0***
Lives in South	0.36	0.35	0.46	F(2,2439) = 8.9***
Less than HS	0.11	0.1	0.14	F(2,2439) = 2.8
High School	0.48	0.44	0.62	F(2,2439) = 20.96***
Associates	0.09	0.1	0.07	F(2, 2439) = .99
Bachelors	0.19	0.2	0.11	F(2,2439) = 10.2***
Masters/PhD	0.13	0.16	0.06	F(2,2439) = 15.8***
Liberal	3.93	3.93	3.74	F(2,2409) = 3.23*
Democrat	4.44	4.4	4.37	F(2,2439) = 0.8
White	0.65	0.64	0.52	F(2,2439) = 14.2***
Black	0.16	0.14	0.25	F(2,2439) = 16.5***
Other, non-Hispanic	0.02	0.03	0.02	F(2,2439) = 1.1
Hispanic	0.16	0.17	0.19	F(2,2439) = 1.3
2+ Races	0.01	0.02	0.01	F(2,2439) = 2.2
Shared Morality[a]	1.52	1.47	1.59	F(2,2439) = 4.7**
Equal Treatment[a]	1.28	1.23	1.42	F(2,2439) = 16.4***
Racial Diversity[a]	1.54	1.49	1.73	F(2,2439) = 16.6***
Finances Better	0.37	0.36	0.32	F(2,2403) = 1.3
Finances Worse	0.26	0.28	0.32	F(2,2403) = 2.9
About the Same	0.38	0.36	0.37	F(2,2403) = 0.4
Other Religion (baseline)	0.48	0.47	0.43	F(2,2417) = 1.8
Catholic	0.23	0.26	0.16	F(2,2417) = 8.7***
Evangelical	0.29	0.27	0.41	F(2,2417) = 14.9***
Relig. Salience	3.04	3.1	3.15	F(2,2426) = 1.8
Relig. Attendance	3.45	3.52	3.62	F(2,2423) = 1.0

Note: Descriptive statistics employ the BAM survey's sampling and post-stratification weights.

[a]Responses are coded such that higher values indicate stronger disagreement that items represent important core ideals in American life.

distinguish Cultural Preservationists from the other classes. Cultural Preservationists self-report lower household income, and a higher proportion of this group reports only having completed a high school degree instead of a Bachelor's or higher. Fewer Preservationists identify as Catholic, and more as Evangelical, than those in the other two classes.

The Preservationist class has a higher proportion of Black respondents than the other classes (25% vs 16% of Critics and 14% of Pluralists), though all three classes are still predominantly white. This pattern is in part due to the historical centrality of the church to Black communities, in some cases as a "semi-involuntary" institution, that we would expect to provide a strong and coherent sense of Christian in-group preference in contrast to non-Christian out-groups (Ellison and Sherkat 1995; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Supplementary analyses (available on request) indicate that white members of the Preservationist class associate African-Americans with a variety of social problems; for white Preservationists, race and religion intersect to shape the way they draw symbolic boundaries (*cf.* Jones 2016). African-American Preservationists, on the other hand, do not draw the same associations, suggesting that religion is the primary basis for drawing boundaries that exclude groups they perceive as violating the Judeo-Christian cultural core.

Preservationists are less likely to emphasize equal treatment under the law as an important feature of American life, and they are more likely to disagree that valuing racial diversity is an important aspect of American life.[2] Most other demographic differences are either non-significant (such as gender, parental status, party identification, and subjective financial wellbeing), or not substantively large (e.g. the significant difference in age captures about a four year gap). In sum, these results suggest that boundary-drawing behavior is orthogonal to many determinants of social location and is, therefore, possibly contingent on cultural factors, such as perceived threats and framing effects, which are not captured by this model.

Finally, Table 5 presents the results from linear regression models testing the relationship between class membership and attitudes about inequality in society. We use critics of multiculturalism as the baseline class. First, we find strong support for hypotheses one and two regarding intolerance. Net of controls, membership in the Cultural Preservationist class, relative to the Critics of Multiculturalism class, associates with a .19 standard deviation increase in disagreement on the civil liberties scale. Membership in the Optimistic Pluralist class, on the other hand, associates with a .07 standard deviation decrease in disagreement on this scale. As we expected, these Optimistic Pluralists express stronger agreement that groups with whom they disagree should be allowed to teach, while Critics and Preservationists are progressively less likely to agree. The betas also indicate that these are some of the strongest effects in the model, comparable in magnitude to college completion, political views, and respondents' emphasis on racial diversity as an important factor in American society.

On specific policy attitudes about alleviating inequality, however, hypothesis three reflects our expectation that only the Cultural Preservationists should be significantly different from both Critics and Pluralists, as Cultural Preservationists express the most specific package of boundary-drawing assumptions. The second and third models in Table 5 provide support for this hypothesis. Optimistic Pluralists and Critics of Multiculturalism are not significantly different in their attitudes about funding the social safety net or supporting strategies to alleviate racial inequality; however, Preservationists express significantly and substantively stronger preferences to defund social safety net

Table 5. Regression results for policy outcomes.

	Disagreement w/Civil Liberties				Disagreement w/Social Safety Net				Disagreement w/Affirmative Action			
	Coef		RSE	Beta	Coef		RSE	Beta	Coef		RSE	Beta
Preservationist	0.42	***	0.06	0.19	0.23	***	0.05	0.12	0.11		0.06	0.05
Pluralist	−0.12	**	0.04	−0.07	0.00		0.04	0.00	−0.06		0.04	−0.04
Age	0.01	***	0.00	0.10	0.00		0.00	−0.05	0.00		0.00	0.03
Female	0.07		0.04	0.04	−0.06		0.04	−0.04	−0.02		0.04	−0.01
Parent	0.09		0.05	0.05	−0.01		0.04	0.00	0.14	**	0.05	0.08
Married	−0.02		0.05	−0.01	0.05		0.04	0.03	−0.03		0.05	−0.02
Income	0.00		0.01	−0.01	0.01		0.00	0.05	0.02	**	0.01	0.09
Lives in South	0.08		0.04	0.04	0.01		0.04	0.01	0.08		0.04	0.04
High School	−0.02		0.07	−0.01	−0.07		0.07	−0.05	0.21	**	0.08	0.12
Associates	−0.03		0.09	−0.01	−0.03		0.08	−0.01	0.16		0.09	0.05
Bachelors	−0.25	**	0.09	−0.11	−0.09		0.07	−0.04	0.07		0.09	0.03
Masters/PhD	−0.37	***	0.09	−0.14	−0.20	*	0.08	−0.09	−0.12		0.09	−0.04
Liberal	−0.04	*	0.02	−0.07	−0.11	***	0.02	−0.22	−0.07	***	0.02	−0.13
Democrat	−0.02		0.01	−0.06	−0.07	***	0.01	−0.19	−0.06	***	0.01	−0.14
Black	0.08		0.08	0.03	0.07		0.06	0.03	−0.51	***	0.08	−0.18
Other, non-Hispanic	−0.02		0.12	−0.01	0.26	*	0.12	0.08	0.04		0.11	0.01
Hispanic	−0.04		0.07	−0.02	0.07		0.06	0.03	−0.20	**	0.07	−0.08
2+ Races	−0.30		0.15	−0.04	0.09		0.13	0.01	−0.20		0.14	−0.03
Shared Morality[1]	−0.09	*	0.04	−0.07	−0.01		0.03	−0.01	−0.12	***	0.03	−0.10
Equal Treatment[1]	0.05		0.04	0.03	0.22	***	0.04	0.17	0.01		0.04	0.01
Racial Diversity[1]	0.16	***	0.03	0.15	0.13	***	0.03	0.13	0.14	***	0.03	0.13
Finances Better	0.03		0.05	0.02	0.00		0.04	0.00	0.14	**	0.05	0.08
Finances Worse	0.02		0.05	0.01	0.01		0.04	0.01	0.08		0.05	0.04
Catholic	0.13	*	0.05	0.06	−0.06		0.05	−0.03	−0.02		0.05	−0.01
Evangelical	0.10		0.06	0.05	−0.09		0.05	−0.05	−0.11		0.06	−0.06
Relig. Salience	−0.03		0.01	−0.06	0.01		0.01	0.03	−0.01		0.01	−0.02
Relig. Attendance	0.08	**	0.03	0.10	−0.03		0.03	−0.04	−0.06	*	0.03	−0.08
Constant	−0.41	*	0.19	.	0.37	*	0.17	.	0.27		0.19	.
N	2318				2328				2307			
F	16.57				25.12				18.70			
R2	0.20				0.28				0.22			

Note: Critics of Multiculturalism serve as the baseline class.

programs (β = .12, p < .001). They also express stronger disagreement with efforts to alleviate racial inequality, though this relationship is not significant at conventional levels (p < .07).[3]

Control variables behave as expected in these models, and, in particular, the ideological questions tapping respondents' emphasis on shared morality, equality, and diversity in society highlight the extent to which boundary-drawing styles are distinct from other ideological concerns. Many of these items have significant relationships with our outcome measures independently of class membership. Net of these controls, however, these models indicate that the culturally specific package of boundaries presented by Cultural Preservationists (rather than the diffuse packages of boundaries presented by Pluralists and Critics) has a relationship of sizable magnitude with generalized attitudes about political tolerance and policies intended to alleviate inequality.

Discussion and Conclusion

Taken together, these results support three key conclusions. First, our replication and validation suggest Americans' patterns of boundary-drawing attitudes about social groups are persistent and stable over time. As Edgell and Tranby (2010:197) first demonstrated,

there are three substantive visions of American society that are not based on differences in shared values, but rather are based on how people evaluate group differences. Optimistic pluralists tend to express conditional agreement with most social groups, critics of multiculturalism express greater skepticism of most groups, and cultural preservationists tailor their vision of similarities and differences to groups that uphold a distinct "Judeo-Christian" core identity. This complicates earlier "culture wars" accounts of the fault lines that create cultural division in American life; not only are there groups who respond differently to American identity claims centered around a Judeo-Christian cultural core, there are also groups that respond very differently to the more general increase in diversity and multiculturalism in American society. Our results, using both their original method and an alternative approach with new data about more groups, provide strong support for this theoretical account about how Americans draw boundaries based on imagined similarities and differences with particular kinds of others.

Second, these results show that the substantive content and packaging of boundary-drawing styles matters (Knight 2017). Cultural Preservationists present a specific cultural package of symbolic boundaries that differs from the more diffuse acceptance of Optimistic Pluralists and skepticism of Critics of Multiculturalism. This distinct cultural package includes both perceived differences (with racial and religious minority groups) and perceived similarities (with whites and Conservative Christians). Our demographic analysis suggests that people with different socialization experiences in education, civic values, and religion adopt the Cultural Preservationist package, but also that this package is not related to other sociodemographic factors such as gender and age, and is therefore contingent on other cultural factors, such as the framing efforts of elites.

Third, we find real stakes to these symbolic boundary styles – they do not merely represent personal preferences about social out-groups. The cultural preservationist package of symbolic boundaries not only defines specific insider and outsider groups, it also associates with willingness to tolerate material and political inequality. Net of typical ideological controls, boundary-drawing styles significantly associate with measures of respondents' generalized tolerance for groups with whom they disagree; moreover, the cultural preservationist group exhibits significantly stronger disagreement with policies that could alleviate inequality in society. These relationships provide potential evidence for a linking mechanism between respondents' visions of who belongs in American life and more general attitudes about the tangible outcomes of an inclusive and equitable society. While a wealth of previous work demonstrates variation in these visions of social belonging, and other studies demonstrate the ways that symbolic boundaries can codify into social boundaries, here we demonstrate that attitudinal measures representing *specific* symbolic and social boundaries are related to other measures representing *general* attitudes about inequality and tolerance that capture support for social and political inclusion (or exclusion).

Edgell and Tranby (2010) set out to answer the question of whether styles of boundary-drawing vary in the American context; is there one "imagined American" or are there many? They found that some Americans are generally tolerant of a broad array of social groups, and some are somewhat skeptical of anyone who is racially or religiously different. They also found that about a third of Americans draw boundaries based on a specific desire to preserve a Judeo-Christian cultural core. They argued that while many Americans respond to diversity in general, those who embrace the value of and identify

with a historically dominant (Jones 2016) Judeo-Christian cultural basis for American identity draw strong boundaries that exclude groups perceived to threaten that vision (*cf.* Smith 1998); moreover, white Americans who embrace this style of boundary-making also view African-Americans as outsiders. Their analysis went beyond looking at the content of boundaries (a preference for a Christian cultural heritage, an embracing or rejecting of diversity as a value) and examined the link between boundary content and the inclusion or exclusion of specific out-groups in American society.

We build on this research to show that the content of the symbolic boundaries that Americans draw is linked not only to differential tolerance of specific racial, religious, and other minority groups, but it is also connected to more general preferences for policies that redistribute material resources to address inequality, and to willingness to grant civil liberties to unpopular groups. How Americans evaluate the fairness and appropriateness of both material and political inequality is not driven by a general, diffuse tolerance or intolerance, but to particular cultural styles that fuse meaningful identities, policy preferences, and views of out-groups into deeply salient and ideologically coherent packages.

This insight has relevance not only for those who study symbolic boundaries, but also for scholarship on tolerance, inequality, and participatory democracy because it suggests that it is not enough to examine how religious beliefs, racial attitudes, or individual identities shape behavior or policy preferences. Rather, we must attend to the cultural work (Becker 1998) in specific contexts that weaves together identity commitments, specific attitudes and beliefs, and views of particular social groups into an overall style or package of commitments. Future research focusing on intersectionality as the overlapping of different systems of inequality and oppression can benefit from the theoretical and methodological implications of thinking about packages of attitudes, such as the way that for whites, distinctly Christian religious concepts associate with anti-black affect and opposition to interracial marriage, shaping understandings of the causes of and solutions to African-American inequality (Frost and Edgell 2017; Johnson, Rowatt, and LaBouff 2010; Perry and Whitehead 2015; *cf.* Jones 2016). In the United States today, there are three different imagined Americas, and which vision becomes instantiated into social policy and widespread practice is going to matter for shaping both political and material outcomes for a wide range of Americans.

Notes

1. Our analysis accounts for missing data in the following ways. Survey completion on the fifteen shared vision items was quite consistent, with less than 4% of cases missing on any single item, and 95% of respondents completing all 15 items successfully. Stephanie et al.'s (2015) Stata LCA plugin allows for the presence of missing data in its estimation of latent classes by reducing its estimates to the observed categorical items for each respondent, allowing analysis to include 97% of the original survey sample (2,442 respondents, with 79 dropped for non-response on any of the items). Our regression models use list wise deletion for non-response on our key outcome scales, which vary from 214 missing cases (for disagreement with Affirmative Action) to 193 cases (disagreement with social safety net). These 8% of missing cases in each model are primarily due to non-response on the outcome variable, as these models primarily employ demographic variables as covariates.
2. Subgroup analysis indicates that this relationship holds for both White respondents alone ($F = 9.32$, $p < .001$) and Black respondents alone ($F = 4.76$, $p < .001$).

3. Supplementary analysis interacting class assignment and race shows that White cultural preservationists express stronger disagreement with efforts to alleviate racial inequality (p = .058), while Black respondents are not significantly more or less likely to express disagreement with these efforts. The interaction term in this analysis was not statistically significant either, suggesting that the relationship between cultural preservationist class membership and attitudes toward affirmative action is not robust for either group, but more likely to be the case for white respondents.

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