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ABSTRACT

While some research argues that religious pluralism in the United States dampens conflict by promoting tolerance, other work documents persistent prejudice toward religious out-groups. We address this ambiguity by identifying a distinct cultural style that structures Americans' attitudes toward religious others: support for public religious expression (PRE). Using data from a recent nationally representative survey, we find a strong and consistent relationship between high support for PRE, negative attitudes toward religious out-groups, and generalized intolerance. Addressing the previously overlooked public aspects of religion and cultural membership in the United States has important implications for studies of civic inclusion.

The religious landscape of the United States is changing. Many Americans are questioning the teachings of formal religious organizations and switching to new faith communities or abandoning them altogether (Ammerman 2014; Hout and Fischer 2002, 2014; Sherkat 2014; Voas and Chaves 2016). Yet the implications of this changing religious landscape for cultural membership in American life are unclear, as research finds both increasing *tolerance* for difference and persistent *prejudice* toward specific religious out-groups in the American population (e.g., Bail 2012, 2014; Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann 2006; Edgell et al. 2016; Putnam and Campbell 2012; Schwadel and Garneau 2014; Twenge, Carter, and Campbell 2015; Wallace, Wright, and Hyde 2014; Wright et al. 2013). The divergence between these two sets of findings highlights a gap in social scientific knowledge about the relationship between religion and cultural exclusion in the United States.

In light of these trends, we revisit a fundamental question: When do religious commitments foster social inclusion, and when do they foster exclusion? Answering this requires a comparative investigation of the religious commitments that contribute to prejudicial attitudes toward specific religious out-groups and the religious commitments that contribute to tolerance for religious diversity in general. Prior work has identified multiple mechanisms through which religiosity associates with tolerance and prejudice (e.g., Djupe 2015; Eisenstein 2006, 2009; Kalkan, Layman, and Uslaner 2009; Merino 2010); as a whole, this research takes a belief-centered approach to religiosity. This approach needs refinement in view of the emerging consensus among scholars of religion and culture that beliefs alone are less useful in understanding social behavior than the way respondents synthesize their beliefs, identities, and practices within specific cultural contexts (e.g., Bean 2014; Brubaker 2015; Edgell 2012; Lichterman 2012; Winchester 2016). While traditional

survey research cannot always capture the practice-based aspects of this synthesis (Jerolmack and Khan 2014), one way to address this shortcoming is to diversify our measures of religiosity in surveys to capture substantive differences in the way that respondents express their religious commitments in social life.

Following this line of theory, our research expands on previous work on religion, tolerance, and prejudice by distinguishing *personal religious commitments*—the belief-centered measures of religiosity used in previous work—from a cultural style of religiosity that emphasizes *public religious expression* (PRE). A preference for public religious expression means that respondents expect religious beliefs to be an integral part of public life and political deliberation. We understand this as public religiosity, a logical counter-part and parallel concept to personal religiosity. By considering the effects of both private and public dimensions of religiosity on religious tolerance and prejudice, we help to resolve current confusion about how religious commitment shapes cultural membership in American life.

Using data from a 2014 nationally representative survey, our analysis finds two pat-terns. First, preferences for PRE have a significant and unique association with prejudicial attitudes toward religious out-groups. Second, preferences for PRE also have a significant association with intolerant attitudes toward out-groups *in general*, even after we control for a range of factors identified in prior research. Both of these relationships are stronger than those of private religiosity on these outcomes. These results help us understand the mechanisms that produce prejudice and intolerance and clarify how and why some religious out-groups remain "cultural others" (Kalkan et al. 2009) even as pluralism increases. In applying these distinctions to the study of religion and cultural exclusion, we address recent work calling for more comparative measures of prejudice and intoler-ance (e.g., Doan, Loehr, and Miller 2014) and an analytical distinction between private and public concerns about religion and secularism (e.g., Beard et al. 2013).

Public Religious Expression and Cultural Exclusion

Research on the cultural turn in the sociology of religion argues that scholars should move from a belief-centered approach to studying religiosity and instead focus on the ways that people assemble religious beliefs and practices to make sense of the practical realities of everyday life (Edgell 2012; Lichterman 2012; Riesebrodt 2010; Wilcox 2009). This entails moving from a perspective focused on subcultural or denominational identities (e.g., Smith 1998) to one focused on cultural styles of religious engagement. For example, recent research on religious social and political movements finds that denominations do not necessarily push uniform agendas from the pulpit. Instead, local religious cultures, lay leaders, and innovators in the religious field model different styles of religiosity that shape the ways that believers engage in public life (e.g., Bean 2014; Lichterman 2008; Markofski 2015). This theoretical perspective has two implications for studying the role of religion in public life: (1) scholars cannot use religious denominations or identifications alone as a proxy for determining substantive cultural beliefs, and (2) articulating distinct cultural styles of religiosity helps to identify empirical mechanisms through which religious experiences may shape other beliefs and social behaviors.

We identify and advance one cultural style of religiosity that is particularly relevant to research on prejudice and tolerance of social out-groups: a preference for public religious

expression (PRE). Support for public religious expression involves the expectation that religion should play a role in public life. There are multiple ways to measure this construct in different cultural contexts; for example, researchers could study the way that respondents "live their faith" in public through organizing and activism, and how these practices shape the way they understand and integrate religious beliefs into their everyday lives (e.g., Bean 2014). Survey research faces challenges when measuring the behavioral aspects of this synthesis (Jerolmack and Khan 2014), but it can measure and validate the extent to which respondents express different cultural repertoires (e.g., Perrin, Roos, and Gauchat 2014), and this is an essential first step to determining whether there are substantive differences between the private and public dimensions of Americans' religiosity. Here, we measure PRE as respondents' expectation that religion should be present in public life because it bestows qualities that foster good citizenship, leadership, and social relations. We ground this conceptualization in the unique historical context of religion and public life in the United States.

Private religious commitments in the United States have always had public implications. Americans have linked religiosity to public notions of social belonging and substantive citizenship since the early days of the republic. De Tocqueville's [1835] (2003) account of the public spirit engendered by religious belief and Weber's [1904] (2009) observations of Americans using church membership as evidence of creditworthiness illustrate these assumptions at work. Political elites use this long-standing association as part of a narrative that embraces religious Americans as trustworthy, but also casts religious outsiders as threats to the coherence and stability of the public sphere (Williams 1999, 2013; Wuthnow 2011). This trend was especially prominent during the Cold War era, as atheists and other religious outsiders faced public denigration through alleged ties to Communist organizations even as Catholic and Jewish Americans gained public acceptance (Herberg 1960; Hofstadter [1964] 1996; Stouffer 1955; Wuthnow 1988). If religion is embedded in founding narratives of nationhood as a source of political cohesion and power (Smith 2003), and Christianity is embedded in the history of the United States in particular (Heclo 2007; Williams and Demerath 1991), religiosity can be conflated with trustworthiness, the moral capacity for good citizenship, and national belonging (Caplow, Bahr, and Chadwick 1983; Gerteis 2011). Here, members of "cultural other" groups face exclusion based on the perception that they are rude, obnoxious, deviant, or otherwise unable to meet the demands of full engagement with civil society (Alexander and Smith 1993; Eliasoph 1998).

The expectation that religion is necessary for good citizenship is particularly prominent in the language of evangelical Protestantism (Emerson and Smith 2000). However, as political participation among the Protestant mainline and liberal Catholics has moved out of religious contexts and structures, alternative discourses of public religion have receded since the 1950s, leaving these evangelical-infused propositions as the most readily available, culturally salient ways for people of many denominational backgrounds to connect their faith with politics (Gorski 2017; Wuthnow 1988). As a result, we argue that PRE is a public-facing cultural style of religiosity that is present in, and operates alongside, many religious denominations. PRE is an instance of "selective deprivatization" in which some individuals learn that part of enacting their religiosity means sharing a concern that good citizens, good leaders, and good social policy will take religion into account in the public sphere (Bean 2014; Casanova 1994; Regnerus and Smith 1998).

Studies of Prejudice

We measure prejudice by examining how survey respondents evaluate specific others whose religious group memberships differ from their own (Allport 1954; Dovidio, Glick, and Rudman 2005). Though the specific groups most likely to be the targets of religious prejudice have changed over time (Herberg 1960), the structure of religious prejudice has been fairly stable. Religious prejudice focuses on members of groups that the dominant culture perceives as falling outside the Christian, or Judeo-Christian, cultural core of American society. Understanding how religion has historically been used to draw boundaries around a narrow vision of cultural belonging can help to illuminate the mechanisms behind contemporary cases of religious prejudice at work.

For example, Muslims face persistent and growing prejudice in both political discourse and everyday life in the United States (e.g., Bail 2014; Cainkar 2009; Kalkan et al. 2009; Wright et al. 2013). Correlates of prejudicial attitudes against Muslims include conservative political ideology, fear of threats to public safety, conservative theological beliefs, and a vision of the United States as a Christian nation, though the secular left is not immune from anti-Muslim attitudes, either (Echebarria-Echebe and Guede 2007; Imhoff and Recker 2012; Lee et al. 2009; Merino 2010; Rowatt, Franklin, and Cotton 2005; Roy 2007; Skitka et al. 2006). Kalkan et al. (2009) conceptualize these attitudes as a case of "cultural others"—a form of exclusion grounded in the assumption that Muslims are simply unable or unwilling to assimilate into American civic life.

A second example is persistent prejudice against nonreligious Americans, particularly atheists. Atheists face high levels of public distrust, report experiences with discrimination, and in some cases face differential treatment in the legal system and in hiring decisions (Cragun et al. 2012; Edgell et al. 2006; Volokh 2006; Wallace et al. 2014; Weber et al. 2012). Negative attitudes toward atheists are driven by both a sense of strong group boundaries defined by religious identities and by moral concerns about the implications of the demographic growth of nonreligious Americans (Altemeyer 2003; Edgell et al. 2016; Johnson, Rowatt, and LaBouff 2012; Yancey 2010). There is also evidence that anti-atheist attitudes fit into a broader cultural pattern of public opinion that understands religiosity as a condition of valuable civic participation in the first place (Edgell and Tranby 2010).

We do not suggest that Muslims and atheists experience prejudice in the same way. But these cases illustrate how the public expression of religious sentiments forms a common cultural mechanism for the prejudicial attitudes that some Americans exhibit toward these groups. In both cases, Kalkan et al. (2009) and Edgell et al. (2016, 2006) argue that public concerns about morality and citizenship are associated with negative attitudes toward the religious out-group in question. Nonconforming religious identities draw attention to a normative religious culture in which actors employ religiosity to develop compelling and coherent performances of cultural legitimacy (Alexander 2004; Alexander and Smith 1993; Stewart 2016). If concern for religion in public life is a common mechanism, we could observe similar patterns across other religious out-groups, even those who are not as strongly disliked by the dominant culture. Buddhists, Jews, spiritual but not religious Americans (SBNRs), and Mormons, for example, express religious and spiritual commitments in different styles, but do so in a way that the public considers less confrontational or more closely assimilated to American practices of religious engagement (Ammerman 2014, 2013; Besecke 2013; Wilson 2014). Thus, while atheists and Muslims are standout

cases of contemporary religious prejudice, a strong test of the relationship between PRE and prejudice should also include a range of religious and nonreligious minority groups.

Studies of Tolerance

We measure tolerance by respondents' willingness to extend civil liberties to groups of people culturally different from themselves (Stouffer 1955). There is considerable evidence that tolerance has increased over time (Finke and Harris 2012; Twenge et al. 2015). Today, Muslims, atheists, and members of other out-groups are formally free to enter the public sphere and contribute to civic life according to the terms of pluralism (Casanova 1994; Habermas 2008). Noting this trend, classic literature on civil religion argues that a diverse religious heritage promotes unity rather than division among the American population, and, as a result, religiosity is embedded in the banal sense of political and cultural belonging in the United States (Bellah [1965] 2005). Contemporary work on religion in public life also argues that civil religion can establish a robust, inclusionary public spirit that minimizes specific denominational and cultural divisions in favor of increased religious pluralism (Gorski 2011; Putnam and Campbell 2012). These authors argue that a shared respect for the importance of religion in public life increases tolerance for members of religious out-groups and suppresses prejudice against them. The result is a public where individuals can disagree about matters like religion, but where they are also generally *tolerant* of that disagreement and willing to support policies that maintain a robust public sphere supportive of religion in general (Olson and Li 2016). Investigating tolerance alongside prejudice allows us to evaluate whether negative attitudes toward specific groups might be tempered by a more general respect for democratic pluralism.

Studies assessing the relationship between religiosity and tolerance draw varied conclusions for two reasons. First, methodological issues in the selection of control variables matter a great deal. Work in political science and social psychology finds that the key correlates of intolerance are respondents' personal insecurity, skepticism about democratic values, and threat perception. Eisenstein (2006, 2009) and Gaddy (2003) demonstrate that controlling for these factors attenuates the role of religion in respondents' political intolerance. While early measures of intolerance emphasized content neutrality by asking whether respondents would support revoking civil liberties for groups they found generally problematic (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1979), content-controlled measures of intolerance that prime respondents to name their "least-liked" groups appear to resist religious effects as well (Djupe 2015; Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982). Moreover, prejudice itself influences tolerance.

Amid debate about these controls, research finds that measures of religiosity also matter a great deal. Religious beliefs and salience tend to outweigh behaviors and associate with lower tolerance, though certain denominational affiliations matter as well (see Eisenstein 2009 for a detailed review). For example, Froese, Bader, and Smith (2008) find a significant relationship between personal conceptualizations of God as a wrathful being and lower political tolerance. Here too, however, belief-centered measures alone may not be enough. Djupe (2015) argues that these traditional measures capture "vertical" adherence to religious authority, but elide the ways that religion shapes "horizontal" relationships with others in social life.

One way to capture how religion shapes these horizontal relationships with others is to introduce a distinction between personal religious beliefs and public religiosity. In using our measure of PRE alongside more traditional measures of belief, belonging, and behavior condensed into "private" religiosity, we introduce a potential new mechanism that may have a stronger relationship with tolerance net of the controls introduced by studies from political science and psychology.

Adjudicating Religious Prejudice and Tolerance

We want to understand how religious commitments shape both tolerance and prejudice; we consider these concepts as separate dependent variables. Below, we test two hypotheses about the effect of public religiosity on religiously based exclusion. The first hypothesis directly corresponds to the literature on religious prejudice:

Hypothesis 1: *Respondents with a higher preference for public religious expression will express higher prejudice toward minority religious groups.*

Current research finds an inconsistent relationship between religiosity and tolerance. Private religiosity associates with lower tolerance in some studies, but does not associate with tolerance in other work with particular control variables. Therefore, our second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: *Net of controls, respondents with a higher preference for public religious expression will express lower generalized tolerance toward groups they find problematic.*

H1 allows us to test the role of support for PRE in shaping specific attitudes about religious others. H2 allows us to test the role of support for PRE in shaping a general sense of intolerance. This combination of specific and generalized preferences provides a strong test of claims from both the cultural others and the civil religion literature outlined above. Our approach moves beyond the tension between studies of prejudice and tolerance to advance the literature on religion and political inclusion, while also bringing this debate into constructive dialogue with a broader body of research on belonging and exclusion in public opinion more generally.

Method

Data

We test our hypotheses with data from the American Mosaic Project (AMP)'s 2014 Boundaries in the American Mosaic (BAM) Survey, fielded with funding from the National Science Foundation ($N = 2,521$). The survey includes a unique and detailed set of questions to assess both attitudes toward religious out-groups and generalized tolerance, and it has been used in previous work assessing attitudes toward religious others and religion in public life (Edgell et al. 2016). Participants in this survey 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 (Baker et al. 2010; Callegaro and DiSogra 2008; Yeager et al. 2011). The particular BAM survey sample was drawn from panel members using a probability proportional to size (PPS) weighted sampling approach oversampled for African Americans and Hispanics. The response rate was 57.9 percent, a higher response rate than comparable national surveys (Holbrook, Krosnick, and Pfent 2008).

Primary Measures

Generalized Religious Prejudice

We measure respondents' attitudes about six religious out-groups, defined here as groups that take on either a religious or nonreligious identity that deviates from the majoritarian religious culture in the United States. We focus on out-groups because the concept encapsulates both religious minority groups (such as Muslims and Buddhists) and secular minority groups defined primarily by their deviation from dominant religious identifications (atheists and those who are "spiritual but not religious"). In using this term, we do not mean to equate the lived experiences of these groups, but rather to investigate general patterns in how Americans view those who deviate from Christianity.

Recent studies of prejudice argue that the concept is best measured multidimensionally (Doan et al. 2014). Accordingly, we capture prejudice using two sets of measures in which respondents were presented with a randomized list of out-groups. The first set measured social distance with the item wording, "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 chose one of four options for each out-group provided by the survey item: "Almost Completely Agree," "Mostly Agree," "Somewhat Agree," and "Not at All Agree." Other studies have used this measure as an indicator of cultural membership for various minority groups and anti-atheist prejudice in particular (Croll 2007; Edgell et al. 2006; Edgell et al. 2016; Edgell and Tranby 2010). The second measure captured more explicit, private prejudices and asked, "People can feel differently about their children marrying people from various backgrounds. Suppose your son or daughter wanted to marry someone from the different backgrounds listed here. Would you approve of this choice, disapprove of it, or wouldn't it make any difference at all one way or the other?"

Each of the social distance and intermarriage items asked respondents to evaluate Muslims, Jews, atheists, Buddhists, Mormons, and people who are spiritual but not religious (SBNR), among other social groups. We recoded response options for each religious out-group such that higher values indicated stronger distance or disapproval. By combining these groups, we capture a sense of *generalized* religious prejudice that reduces measurement error due to variation in any single item. First, we performed factor analysis to assess whether and how these measures should be combined. Analysis indicated that the best choice was to separate them into two groups for each prejudice measure.[1] A rotated solution using the social distance items yielded two factors (eigenvalues 1.51 and 1.41), with the first factor loading on disagreement with Muslims, atheists, and Buddhists and the second factor loading on disagreement with Jews, Mormons, and SBNRs. The intermarriage items each had three response categories, and a rotated solution

using a polychoric correlation matrix yielded a similar two-factor structure (eigenvalues 1.64 and 1.29). In this solution, Mormons were now grouped into the first factor with atheists, Buddhists, and Muslims, and the second factor loaded uniquely on Jews and SBNRs, with low cross-loading on atheists (.43) and Buddhists (.49). Our main prejudice models use scores for the first factor on each measure as the outcome variable to capture prejudice against religious out-groups that primarily fall outside of a Judeo-Christian cultural core, in line with previous empirical work on the structure of symbolic boundaries around religion and national identity (Edgell and Tranby 2010). After these models, we present a series of sensitivity analyses using the second factor scores and combined, mean-standardized scores measuring social distance and intermarriage attitudes toward all groups combined (Cronbach's alphas = .81 and .83, respectively).

Generalized Intolerance

We also assess respondents' willingness to withhold civil liberties from groups that they feel cause problems in American society. The BAM survey asked 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 four-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." We again coded these responses such that higher values reflect more intolerant views, and factor analysis yielded a single-factor solution (eigenvalue 1.69, loading on all items > .70). We use respondents' factor scores from this solution for our outcome measure of generalized intolerance.

Private Religiosity and Public Religious Expression

We use traditional survey items capturing respondents' religious salience ("How important is your religion to you?"), belief (belief in god and biblical literalism), and behavior (frequency of attendance at religious services). Our theoretical approach suggests that these three measures capture *private* religiosity, which is empirically related to, but conceptually distinct from, respondents' preferences for *public religious expression*. Our measure of PRE is based on four items that measure the symbolic-expressive dimensions of religion in public life: religion as a marker of good citizenship ("being religious is important for being a good American" and "being Christian is important for being a good American"), as a set of rules for living together ("society's rules should be based on God's laws"), and as a source of national leadership ("a President should have strong religious beliefs"). Each of these items used a four-point Likert-type scale of responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

It is possible that our indicators of private religiosity and PRE would be best considered as items that all measure religiosity itself, rather than two distinct constructs. To evaluate this possibility, we tested two confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) models. The first used one latent factor loading on all eight items. The second used two correlated latent factors, one loading on the private items and one on the public items (See Layman and Weaver 2016 for a similar approach). Modification indexes suggested that we correlate the error

terms for some private indicators (salience with biblical literalism and attendance) and some public indicators (religion and Christianity as conditions for being a good American). We did this in both models so that the only difference between the two is a one- or two-latent-factor structure. Fit statistics indicated that the two-factor model provided a much better fit to the data.[2]

Our main models in the analysis use factor scores for private religiosity and PRE, based on our two-factor CFA model. Private religiosity and PRE are highly correlated in this approach ($r = .93$) raising a possible problem with multicollinearity in our analysis. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) for our full models were high for private religiosity (ranging from 8.28 to 8.34) and PRE (ranging from 9.27 to 9.32), though still under the recommended threshold of 10 (Hair et al. 1995). Nevertheless, to address this problem we also created alternative measures of private religiosity and PRE with the same survey indicators using mean-standardized scales (Cronbach's alpha = .80 for private and 0.88 for PRE). These scales are each highly correlated with their respective factor scores (private $r = .96$, PRE $r = .97$), but they are less correlated with one another ($r = .73$). To confirm that multicollinearity is not a problem, we present a second set of sensitivity analyses using these mean standardized scales, which reduced VIFs to much more acceptable levels (private range = 2.46–2.49, PRE range = 2.88–2.91).

This measure for PRE employs question wordings that appear to align with the beliefs and traditions of evangelical Christianity. We treat it as a broader cultural style—a way of thinking about religion in public life that emerged from conservative Protestant traditions, but has since suffused into the broader moral culture of the United States (Ellingson 2007; Farrell 2015; Hunter 1991; Wuthnow 1988, 2011). To account for this conceptualization as a particular style, we control for Conservative Protestant denominational affiliation in our models. We also tested the scale measures of PRE across two sets of denominational measures: one using respondents' religious identifications and one using respondents' reported religious attendance and membership. One-way ANOVA tests found significant variation in PRE across seven denominational groups (Catholic, Jewish, Mainline Protestant, Black Protestant, Conservative Protestant, Other, and None) using both of these measures ($p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons also found significant differences across many of these denominational groups, not merely between Conservative Protestants and others alone, suggesting that PRE is not merely a proxy for denominational membership.

Analytic Approach

First, we use weighted least squares regression models for our factor measures of religious prejudice (social distance from atheists, Buddhists, and Muslims; intermarriage with atheists, Buddhists, Muslims, and Mormons) and general intolerance. All models use robust standard errors and the BAM survey's post-stratification weights according to Current Population Survey (CPS) benchmarks for the U.S. general population. We assess the bivariate relationship between private religiosity and public religious expression with each of these outcome measures, then test them together, and then progressively introduce demographic and ideological controls. After these analyses, we present two sets of sensitivity analyses to demonstrate the robustness of PRE as an independent predictor of both kinds of prejudice and intolerance. The first analysis uses our alternative measures of prejudice, including the second factor scores for each item (social distance from Jews,

Mormons, and SBNRs; intermarriage with Jews, SBNRs, atheists and Buddhists) and mean standardized scales for all groups combined on each item. The second analysis uses our alternative mean standardized scales for private religiosity and PRE with lower multicollinearity.

Our demographic controls include age (mean standardized), gender, race, ethnicity, political conservatism, a 19-point ordinal scale for household income, an ordinal measure of educational attainment (highest degree received), parental status, marital status, and region of residence. Many of these controls are associated with prejudice and tolerance in previous literature (Vogt 1997). We also introduce relevant ideological controls identified by the literature, including respondents' support of relevant democratic institutions, subjective sense of personal security, and group threat (Djupe 2015; Eisenstein 2009). These include Likert-type responses for whether respondents feel better off financially today than five years ago, whether they believe the American Dream will be alive for future generations, whether they are concerned about a lack of shared morality or public safety as serious social problems, whether they strongly emphasize the freedom of religion or the separation of church and state as important institutions, and whether they feel diversity in the United States is mostly a weakness or mostly a strength. All measures are summarized in Table 1.[3]

Results

Table 2 presents regression models for the factor scores of social distance—whether respondents felt atheists, Muslims, and Buddhists do not share their vision of American society. When treated separately, private religiosity and PRE both have a positive bivariate relationship with this measure of prejudice, but PRE provides an improved model fit. When we control for both in Model 3, however, PRE is a much stronger predictor of these prejudicial views, persisting in significance and magnitude. The positive relationship between PRE and prejudice also persists net of demographic and ideological controls, and the standardized betas indicate it has the strongest relationship of our other covariates. Conservative Protestants are also more likely to say these groups do not share their

Table 1. Summary of Measures.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Variable	Prop.
Prejudice: Shared Vision Scale	−0.01	0.75	−2.35	1.11	Gender (Female)	0.52
Prejudice: Intermarriage Scale	0.29	0.51	−1.01	1.18	Black, Hispanic, 2+ Race ID	0.33
Intolerance Scale	−0.01	0.89	−1.53	1.39	Parent	0.64
Private Religion Scale	−0.07	0.91	−2.02	1.23	Married	0.54
Public Religious Expression Scale	−0.06	0.81	−1.69	1.52	Conservative Protestant	0.24
Age (Mean Standardized)	−0.19	1.01	−1.91	2.60	*Highest Degree Completed*	
Income	11.87	4.50	1	19	High School	0.49
Liberal	3.86	1.52	1	7	Associate's	0.09
Finances Better (vs. Worse or Neutral)	0.06	0.80	−1	1	Bachelor's	0.17
American Dream	2.58	0.90	1	4	Master's or Ph.D.	0.12
Problem: Lack of Shared Morals	3.06	0.86	1	4	*Region of Residence*	
Problem: Public Safety	2.95	0.85	1	4	Northeast	0.18
Freedom of Religion	3.65	0.67	1	4	Midwest	0.21
Separation of Church and State	3.23	0.92	1	4	South	0.37
Diversity Primarily a Weakness	2.33	1.08	1	5	West	0.23

Source: Boundaries in the American Mosaic Survey 2014.
Notes: Descriptive statistics employ post-sampling and stratification weights in line with 2010 CPS benchmarks.

Table 2. Weighted least squares regression results: prejudice (does not share respondent's vision of society), 2014.

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
Private Religiosity	0.28***	(0.02)			-0.11	(0.06)	-0.09	(0.06)	-0.03	(0.06)
Public Religious Expression			0.35***	(0.02)	0.46***	(0.07)	0.35***	(0.07)	0.26***	(0.07)
Age (Standardized)							0.05*	(0.02)	0.06***	(0.02)
Gender (Female)							0.00	(0.04)	0.01	(0.03)
Black, Hispanic, 2+ Race ID							-0.05	(0.04)	-0.04	(0.04)
Parent							0.04	(0.04)	0.04	(0.04)
Married							0.06	(0.04)	0.04	(0.04)
Income							0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
Liberal							-0.05***	(0.01)	-0.02	(0.01)
Conservative Protestant							0.10*	(0.04)	0.10*	(0.04)
High School							0.07	(0.06)	0.10	(0.06)
Associate's							0.01	(0.08)	0.05	(0.08)
Bachelor's							-0.09	(0.07)	-0.03	(0.07)
Master's or Ph.D.							-0.06	(0.08)	0.04	(0.07)
Midwest[1]							-0.02	(0.06)	-0.01	(0.05)
South							0.08	(0.05)	0.09	(0.05)
West							-0.07	(0.05)	-0.04	(0.05)
Finances Better									0.00	(0.02)
American Dream									-0.06**	(0.02)
Moral Problems									0.09***	(0.03)
Safety Problems									-0.01	(0.02)
Freedom of Religion									-0.12***	(0.03)
Church/State Sep.									-0.02	(0.02)
Diversity a Weakness									0.08***	(0.02)
Constant	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.13	(0.11)	0.14	(0.18)
N	2,265		2,265		2,265		2,265		2,265	
F-test	208.06		268.97		135.13		23.78		24.01	
R^2	0.12		0.15		0.15		0.19		0.24	
BIC	4,836		4,754		4,755		4,758		4,663	

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; two-tailed tests.
Models employ sampling and post stratification weights in line with 2010 CPS benchmarks. [1]Region baseline: Northeast.

vision of American society, along with older respondents and those who are concerned about a lack of shared morality as a social problem and see diversity as a social weakness. On the other hand, optimism about the American dream and importance of the freedom of religion both associate with lower scores on this measure of prejudice.

In Table 3, a positive relationship between PRE and prejudice also holds for respondents' disapproval of their child marrying atheists, Muslims, Buddhists, and Mormons. Again, PRE alone provides a better bivariate model fit than private religiosity alone. Once we control for PRE and private religiosity together, the coefficient for private religiosity reverses such that respondents who are high in private religiosity, but low on PRE, are less likely to disapprove. This same pattern was present in the social distance models, though not statistically significant at conventional levels. Our other control variables generally mirror those in Table 2, with the addition of liberals and more highly educated respondents who are less likely to disapprove of intermarriage.

Our most surprising findings are presented in Table 4, where we again find a significant, divergent relationship between the two styles of religiosity and respondents' willingness to deny civil liberties to social groups that they find problematic. These findings are surprising because the measures of tolerance were *not* content specific—they neither invoked religiosity nor invited respondents to consider religious out-groups in particular. Here, Conservative Protestantism does not associate with generalized intolerance. Instead, private religiosity and PRE both associate with lower tolerance until we control for the two measures together. In Models 3, 4, and 5, private religiosity consistently and significantly associates with higher tolerance, while support for PRE consistently associates with higher generalized intolerance. As expected by the literature, support for freedom of religion associates with lower intolerance, while measures of threat such as concern for public safety and seeing diversity as a weakness associate with higher intolerance.

In sum, our primary findings indicate that both private and public measures of religiosity have a positive bivariate relationship with prejudice against specific religious out-groups and generalized intolerance. However, controlling for these measures together demonstrates a substantively different underlying pattern with better fitting models: these prejudicial and intolerant views are better predicted by respondents' propensity to see religion as an important part of *public* life than they are driven by personal religiosity. To be certain of this pattern, we have to evaluate whether it holds for different religious out-groups (particularly those who are *not* dramatically different from popular conceptualizations of Christianity) and whether it is an artifact of multicollinearity in our measures of religiosity. Figures 1 and 2 present the results from sensitivity analyses to evaluate these questions.

Figure 1 employs fully specified regression models (i.e., Model 5 in each of the tables), with different variations on our dependent variable for prejudice against religious out-groups. In addition to the measures discussed above, they include measures for social distance against Jews, Mormons, and SBNRs highlighted by factor analysis, measures for intermarriage disapproval for Jews, SBNRs, atheists, and Buddhists, as well as mean-standardized scales for all religious groups combined. In most cases, controlling for PRE renders private religiosity nonsignificant for these outcomes. However, PRE associates with both a higher tendency to disapprove of intermarriage on all measures and a *lower* tendency to say Jews, Mormons, and SBNRs do not share their vision of society. This suggests that PRE is the mechanism through which respondents express adherence to a Judeo-Christian cultural core

Table 3. Weighted least squares regression results: prejudice (disapproves of child marrying), 2014.

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
Private Religiosity	0.23***	(0.01)			-0.11**	(0.04)	-0.10**	(0.04)	-0.07*	(0.04)
Public Religious Expression			0.30***	(0.01)	0.41***	(0.04)	0.33***	(0.04)	0.29***	(0.04)
Age (Standardized)							0.02	(0.01)	0.02	(0.01)
Gender (Female)							0.00	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)
Black, Hispanic, 2+ Race ID							-0.09***	(0.02)	-0.08**	(0.03)
Parent							0.04	(0.03)	0.04	(0.03)
Married							0.03	(0.03)	0.02	(0.03)
Income							0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
Liberal							-0.04***	(0.01)	-0.03***	(0.01)
Conservative Protestant							0.15***	(0.03)	0.15***	(0.03)
High School							0.04	(0.04)	0.05	(0.04)
Associate's							0.00	(0.05)	0.02	(0.05)
Bachelor's							0.01	(0.05)	0.04	(0.04)
Master's or Ph.D.							0.07	(0.05)	0.10*	(0.05)
Midwest[1]							0.00	(0.03)	0.01	(0.03)
South							0.02	(0.03)	0.02	(0.03)
West							0.01	(0.03)	0.02	(0.03)
Finances Better									-0.01	(0.01)
American Dream									-0.03	(0.01)
Moral Problems									0.05**	(0.02)
Safety Problems									-0.01	(0.01)
Freedom of Religion									-0.05**	(0.02)
Church/State Sep.									0.00	(0.01)
Diversity a Weakness									0.03**	(0.01)
Constant	0.31***	(0.01)	0.31***	(0.01)	0.31***	(0.01)	0.39***	(0.07)	0.38***	(0.11)
N	2,285		2,285		2,285		2,285		2,285	
F-test	387.67		564.59		298.31		49.83		39.09	
R²	0.18		0.23		0.23		0.29		0.31	
BIC	2,955		2,805		2,797		2,744		2,731	

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; two-tailed tests.
Models employ sampling and post stratification weights in line with 2010 CPS benchmarks. [1]Region baseline: Northeast.

Table 4. Weighted least squares regression results: intolerance (willingness to limit civil liberties), 2014.

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se	b	se
Private Religiosity	0.21***	(0.03)			−0.26***	(0.08)	−0.23**	(0.08)	−0.15*	(0.07)
Public Religious Expression			0.29***	(0.03)	0.57***	(0.09)	0.44***	(0.09)	0.32***	(0.08)
Age (Standardized)							0.05	(0.03)	0.09***	(0.02)
Gender (Female)							0.04	(0.04)	0.05	(0.04)
Black, Hispanic, 2+ Race ID							−0.04	(0.05)	−0.04	(0.05)
Parent							0.08	(0.06)	0.08	(0.05)
Married							−0.01	(0.05)	−0.03	(0.05)
Income							−0.01	(0.01)	0.00	(0.01)
Liberal							−0.05**	(0.02)	−0.01	(0.02)
Conservative Protestant							−0.04	(0.05)	−0.03	(0.05)
High School							0.00	(0.08)	0.07	(0.07)
Associate's							−0.06	(0.10)	0.03	(0.09)
Bachelor's							−0.25**	(0.09)	−0.12	(0.08)
Master's or Ph.D.							−0.38***	(0.10)	−0.18*	(0.09)
Midwest[1]							−0.06	(0.07)	−0.03	(0.06)
South							0.05	(0.07)	0.06	(0.06)
West							−0.07	(0.07)	−0.03	(0.06)
Finances Better									0.04	(0.03)
American Dream									−0.03	(0.03)
Moral Problems									0.06	(0.03)
Safety Problems									0.06*	(0.03)
Freedom of Religion									−0.19***	(0.04)
Church/State Sep.									−0.04	(0.03)
Diversity a Weakness									0.19***	(0.02)
Constant	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.36*	(0.14)	0.12	(0.24)
N	2,274		2,274		2,274		2,274		2,274	
F-test	58.58		94.93		53.49		14.583		21.228	
R^2	0.05		0.07		0.08		0.13		0.24	
BIC	5,782		5,718		5,702		5,689		5,454	

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; two-tailed tests.
Models employ sampling and post stratification weights in line with 2010 CPS benchmarks.
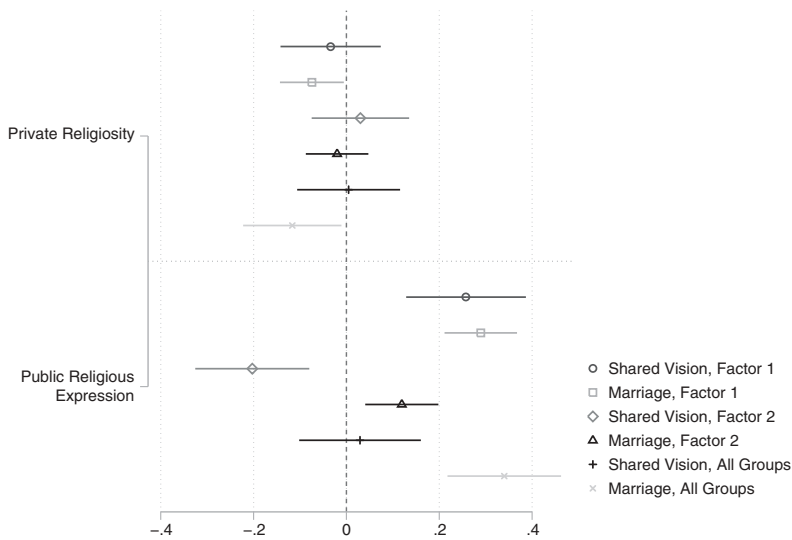[1]Region baseline: Northeast.

Figure 1. Sensitivity analysis for religious out-groups. Coefficient plot for ordinary least squares models including all control variables from Tables 2–4. **Shared Vision, Factor 1** indicates factor scores for Atheists, Muslims, and Buddhists as the outcome variable. **Shared Vision, Factor 2** includes Jews, Mormons, Spiritual but not Religious. **Marriage, Factor 1** includes Atheists, Muslims, Buddhists, and Mormons. **Marriage, Factor 2** includes Jews, and SBNRs, with some cross-loading on atheists and Buddhists. **All Groups** indicates mean standardized scores for all religious out-groups combined (Shared Vision alpha = .81, Marriage alpha = .83). Results indicate that PRE associates with higher prejudice toward all out-groups for intermarriage, but also *lower* prejudice toward Judeo-Christian out-groups on the shared visions measure of perceived social distance.

(Edgell and Tranby 2010)—it structures both opposition to distant religious out-groups and a feeling of affinity with more similar religious out-groups.

Figure 2 tests fully specified regression models using alternative measures of private religiosity and PRE composed of mean-standardized scales. These scales, based on Cronbach's alpha rather than factor scoring, had much more acceptable VIFs that suggested fewer problems with multicollinearity. Again, the strong positive relationship between PRE, prejudice, and interlace is robust to these model specifications, though the effect size is somewhat smaller for the intermarriage models.

Discussion

Our findings highlight a surprising insight about the relationship between religion, prejudice, and tolerance in the contemporary United States. Much of the field conceptualizes religiosity by the "3 Bs"—belief, belonging, and behavior—and the common understanding of religiosity in the United States tends to follow suit (Marshall 2002; Pearce and Denton 2011). We find that this conceptualization of private religiosity is not significantly associated with prejudicial views toward religious out-groups, net of controls. It is also significantly associated with higher tolerance toward groups respondents find problematic.
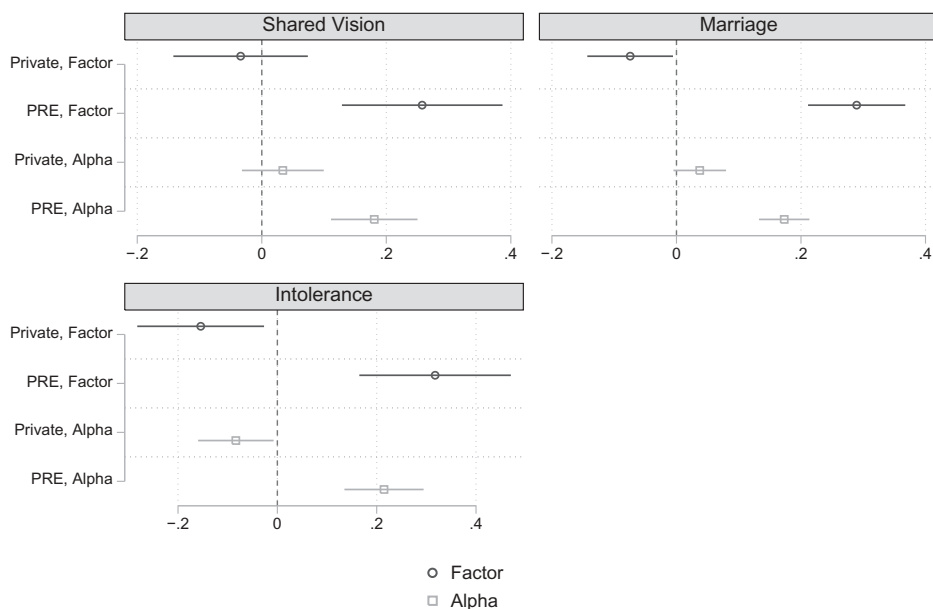
Figure 2. Sensitivity analysis for multicollinearity across religion measures. Coefficient plot for full ordinary least squares models from Tables 2–4 using alternative measures of private religiosity and public religious expression (PRE). Factor coefficients are identical to Tables 2 through 4. Alpha coefficients refer to mean standardized scales for private religiosity (alpha = .80) and PRE (alpha = .88). Alpha scales had a much lower correlation than factor scores ($r = .73$ vs $r = .93$), reducing the Variance Inflation Factors in these models from a range of 8.28 to 9.32 to a range of 2.46 to 2.91. Results indicate that the positive relationship between PRE, prejudice, and intolerance is robust to concerns with multicollinearity in the main models.

In this, we find support for prior research and the finding that religiosity is not a significant source of social exclusion.

However, we also find evidence for the importance of accounting for how respondents integrate their religious identities with their preferences for a religiously infused public sphere. Contrary to expectations from the literature on civil religion, we find that support for public religious expression is strongly and consistently associated with a distinct and relatively narrow vision of religious belonging in American society. Respondents with higher support for PRE are less likely to agree that atheists, Buddhists, and Muslims share their vision of society, more likely to agree that Mormons, Jews, and SBNRs share their vision of society, and more likely to disapprove of their child marrying someone from these six religious out-groups. They also express a stronger willingness to revoke civil liberties for groups with which they disagree.

These findings contribute to our understanding of religion and public life in the United States in three key ways. First, they show that cultural boundaries in public opinion are not neatly allocated along the religious/secular divide as it is commonly understood. Private religiosity does not associate with a culturally coherent pattern of prejudice and intolerance. Instead, it is preferences for *public* religious expression that have a stronger and more consistent relationship with prejudice and intolerance. This shows the importance of considering these two measures as analytically distinct constructs (e.g. see Randolph et al. 2013).

Second, our results only partially support the theoretical metanarrative of religious plural-ism enhancing tolerance in the United States. Literature on civil religion and tolerance posits that a favorable view of religion's public role and support for democratic norms can foster more tolerance for different groups (e.g., Bellah 2005). Our measure of political intolerance cannot capture the full range of outcomes implied in work like that of Putnam and Campbell (2012), and it is clear that religious tolerance has increased in the United States over the past 40 years (Twenge et al. 2015). Nonetheless, our measure of public religious expression illustrates how attitudes about religion in public life extend beyond simple preferences for a pluralistic society or the legal separation of church and state. Some Americans forge a style of religiosity that emphasizes a set of propositions about the importance of being religious for strong leadership, competent citizenship, and good public policy. These are formally non-denominational, but historically associated with the Protestant Christian tradition that has long dominated American political culture. We find that this style does not associate with a more tolerant environment or a more vigorous defense of civil liberties. In our results, private religiosity associates with higher tolerance, but public religious expression clearly associates with higher *intolerance*. It appears, therefore, that the theoretical framework used in studies finding positive associations between religiosity and tolerance elided the crucial, public dimension of religious commitment that we have identified here (Dillon 2010).

Finally, our methodological approach in this work aligns with a broader scholarly agenda that conceptualizes public opinion as a performative cultural style of political discourse in which sets of survey responses indicate broader "elective affinities" (DiMaggio 2014; Jost, Federico, and Napier 2009; Perrin and McFarland 2011; Vaisey 2014). It is important to note that we are not claiming that these significant relationships between public religious expres-sion, prejudice, and intolerance represent conscious beliefs on the part of respondents, and we cannot say whether these trends in attitudes lead to discriminatory behavior (Jerolmack and Khan 2014). Regarding this point, we can only rely on the work of other researchers who document religious discrimination in action through audit studies (e.g., Wallace et al. 2014; Wright et al. 2013), self-reporting (e.g., Cainkar 2009; Cragun et al. 2012), or ethnography (Bracey II and Moore 2017). The nature of our survey data also limits our control measures to sociological correlates of social-psychological phenomena identified by the tolerance literature, such as existential security.

In light of these limitations, our findings offer insight about the substantive cultural content that informs judgments about symbolic boundaries and political membership in American society (Edgell et al. 2006; Edgell and Tranby 2010; Smith 2003). The finding that respondents' expectations for public religious expression have a stronger relationship with prejudice and intolerance than do their private religious beliefs troubles models of public opinion that focus on the primacy of individual experiences in shaping political views. How Americans understand the way that religion ought to inform public life and what they think about religion as a necessary component of political leadership truly matter for understanding both intolerance and prejudice.

Conclusion

Do religious commitments foster social inclusion or exclusion? Scholars of religion and public life in the United States disagree about whether civil religion fosters tolerant social inclusion or prejudicial social exclusion, but, to a large extent, this is because those

working on prejudice toward specific out-groups and those studying general tolerance have talked past one another and relied on limited measures of religiosity. To answer this question, we focused on distinguishing Americans' preferences for public religious expression from their private religiosity. We found that cultural preferences for PRE have a stronger and more consistent relationship with prejudicial attitudes toward specific religious out-groups and intolerant views toward generalized out-groups.

This pushes us to understand the mechanisms underlying religious prejudice and tolerance in new ways. Our findings emphasize the *conditional* nature of religious tolerance in the United States, and they point to the fact that even universally worded endorsements of religion in the public sphere may be read by respondents, given a particular historical and interpretive context, as having a religiously particular Judeo-Christian content. The links between religious pluralism, religious tolerance, and public religious expression are clearly more complicated for groups that remain outside of the dominant religious and political culture of the United States. In such a context, endorsements of religion *in general* may not lead to *general* religious tolerance, but may still be exclusionary for specific religious and nonreligious minorities.

Notes

1. Full factor analysis results are available from the lead author upon request.
2. Full results are available from the lead author upon request. One-factor model: likelihood ratio 399.12, RMSEA .098, CFI .964, TLI .940, SRMR .028, CD .890. Two-factor model: likelihood ratio 233.08, RMSEA .076, CFI .979, TLI .964, SRMR .023, CD .959.
3. Models employ list-wise deletion for complete cases on all variables, with about 9 percent of cases missing in each model. We used a logistic regression model with flags for missing cases that did not identify any substantive relationships between missing cases on independent variables and our dependent variables.

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Notes on Contributors

Evan Stewart is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Minnesota (UMN). His research focuses on political and cultural sociology, with a particular interest in the political impact of religious change and the growing nonreligious population in the United States. His work has appeared in *Social Forces, Social Currents, Secularism and Nonreligion*, and the *Annual Review in the Sociology of Religion*. In pursing this research, he has worked as an Edelstein Fellow with the

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