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"ANYTHING BUT HEAVY METAL": SYMBOLIC EXCLUSION AND MUSICAL DISLIKES*

Bethany Bryson

Princeton University

I provide quantitative evidence of a cultural phenomenon. Using data on musical dislikes from the 1993 General Social Survey, I link literatures on taste, racism, and democratic liberalism by showing that people use cultural taste to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and categories of people they dislike. Contrary to Bourdieu's (1984) prediction, musical exclusiveness decreases with education. Also, political tolerance is associated with musical tolerance, even controlling for educational attainment, and racism increases the probability of disliking genres whose fans are disproportionately non-White. Tolerant musical taste, however, is found to have a specific pattern of exclusiveness: Those genres whose fans have the least education—gospel, country, rap, and heavy metal—are also those most likely to be rejected by the musically tolerant. Broad familiarity with music genres is also significantly related to education. I suggest, therefore, that cultural tolerance constitutes multicultural capital as it is unevenly distributed in the population and evidences class-based exclusion.

Research on cultural taste assumes that patterns of taste reflect and influence social structure and economic inequality. Taste is theorized to act as a basis for exclusion (Weber [1968] 1978; Parkin 1979; Bourdieu 1984; Lamont and Lareau 1988) in which one group prevents other groups from gaining access to valuable resources, such as educational credentials (Milner 1972; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; DiMaggio 1982), business contacts (Kanter 1977), or marital

partners (Kalmijn 1994). According to theorists of elite culture, high-status individuals see other cultural forms as crude (Bourdieu 1984), vulgar (Veblen [1889] 1953), or dishonorable (Weber [1968] 1978). These theorists suggest that as occupational prestige increases, so does the cultivation of cultural "distinction"—a process involving rejection of other, nonelite, cultural patterns. Despite the centrality of negative cultural evaluations in these theories, survey researchers have studied taste only as cultural preference. To the extent that the failure to hold a particular cultural preference is not the same as disliking the item, the methodological convention of studying preferences has prevented us from testing a central assumption in the field of culture and inequality: Do high-status people actually *dislike* low-status culture?

Another important body of sociological literature posits that education increases tolerance of political and religious nonconformity (Adorno et al. 1950; Stouffer 1955; Davis 1975; Nunn, Crockett, and Williams 1978; Lipset 1981), racial integration (Greeley and Sheatsley 1971; Hyman and Wright 1979), and many normative violations (Davis 1982). Although Adorno, Stouffer, Davis, and others focus on cultural, ideological, and reli-

* Direct all correspondence to Bethany Bryson, 2-N-1 Green Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544 (bbryson@princeton.edu). Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association (Los Angeles 1994) and of the Southern Sociological Society (Atlanta 1995). I owe special thanks to Paul DiMaggio and Michèle Lamont as well as to Courtney Bender, Frank Dobbin, Timothy Dowd, Richard Peterson, Michael Relish, Bruce Western, Charles Willie, and four ASR reviewers for their careful readings and insightful comments on earlier drafts. Thanks also go to members of the GSS Culture Module Workshop at Princeton University whose discussion and support helped this paper take shape. [Reviewers acknowledged by the author are Diane L. Barthel, Joseph Kotarba, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and Deena Weinstein. —Ed.]

gious differences, they argue that these differences reflect political rather than cultural orientations. The sociology of culture has not considered the implications of these findings for theories of status.

I show how research on racism and democratic liberalism can generate fruitful research questions for the study of cultural taste and social inequality by means of a single linking proposition: *Individuals use cultural taste to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and categories of people they dislike.* To test the resulting hypotheses, I use the number of music genres respondents dislike—rather than prefer—as a measure of cultural *exclusion*.

The first survey data on cultural dislikes are available from the 1993 General Social Survey, which used Likert scaling for a set of questions on musical taste. First, I use these data to test the proposition that high-status people are more culturally exclusive than other people. Next, I test whether democratic liberalism is associated with decreased exclusiveness in musical taste. Third, I test my hypothesis that negative attitudes toward African Americans shape dislikes in musical taste. And finally, I identify the exclusionary boundaries of "broad taste."

BACKGROUND

Music as a Symbolic Resource

Music has long been considered an important part of social life. Its symbolic and ritual powers are used to explain both social cohesion and cultural resistance (Willis 1977; Hebdige 1979; Rose 1994). Furthermore, music is an important cultural and communicative medium. For instance, Cerulo (1995) describes how national anthems represent identity and communicate a nation's position in the world system. Likewise, Weinstein (1991) demonstrates that heavy metal music generates community and solidarity among fans while sending an unmistakable message to its detractors.

Music contains a complex set of dimensions, sounds, lyrics, visual cues, social relations, and physical acts. (DeNora 1991; Dowd 1992). Music also permits many levels of engagement, from humming to oneself to screaming above the music with 30,000

fans. Given its symbolic and social potency, it is no wonder that music is such an important part of human society, that nearly every nation has an anthem, that most religious ceremonies involve music, and that singing is so frequently a part of political rallies. The importance of music to group identity and social differentiation, then, suggests that musical taste provides a good test for questions about symbolic boundaries. Therefore, I use musical taste to examine a more general theory of cultural exclusion.

High-Status Exclusiveness

Most sociologists of culture agree that some forms of cultural consumption serve as markers of social status (Weber [1968] 1978). For instance, knowledge of fine arts, literature, and upper-class etiquette signals wealth and prestige. Such knowledge may also serve as a passkey for entrance into elite social life. Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) calls this passkey *cultural capital* because it is cultural knowledge that can be translated into real economic gains, for example, by allowing access to elite social networks and clubs where business deals often are made (Kanter 1977).

By restricting access to resources, social status can be translated into market position and political status. This process can be seen as the result of two interrelated levels of exclusion. First, *social exclusion* is a process of social selection that is based on a previously determined set of cultural criteria and is exercised by people with high levels of income, education, and occupational prestige (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). Social exclusion occurs at the level of social relations and is the sort of "social closure" that Weber ([1968] 1978: 342, 933, 935) addresses as the monopolization of resources and inclusion in social intercourse.

The second level, *symbolic exclusion*, is the source of those "previously determined cultural criteria." Whereas social exclusion refers to the monopolization of human interactions, symbolic exclusion depicts the subjective process that orders those social interactions—taste. This process, then, is a form of "boundary-work" (Gieryn 1983; Lamont 1992) that continuously recreates the positive, negative, and neutral attitudes toward

cultural cues and that define these cues as more or less acceptable in various situations. The present study focuses on symbolic exclusion. The analytical distinction between social exclusion and symbolic exclusion highlights an important empirical difference between behavior and attitudes. Note, however, that symbolic systems are social and that social exclusion can occur without physical interaction.

Music is one type of cue that can be used to construct symbolic boundaries between groups or individuals. Therefore, I analyze *musical exclusion* as a type of symbolic exclusion and operationalize it as dislike for various music genres. I use the terms *musical tolerance* or *cultural tolerance* to refer to the absence of dislike for a cultural cue or music genre. Musical tolerance, then, is operationalized as the complement of musical exclusiveness—not its opposite.¹

The crux of symbolic exclusion is dislike, and according to Bourdieu, the exercise of dislike and exclusion is more important to high-status individuals than to others:

Tastes (i.e., manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. It is no accident that, when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes. In matters of taste more than anywhere else, all determination is negation; and tastes are perhaps first and foremost distastes. . . . The most intolerable thing for those who regard themselves as the possessors of legitimate ["highbrow"] culture is the sacrilegious reuniting of tastes which taste dictates shall be separated (Bourdieu 1984:56–57).

For Bourdieu, the relationship between the symbolic level and the social level is reciprocal (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). While

¹ Sullivan, Pierson, and Marcus (1979) propose an "alternative conception" of tolerance in which dislike is a prerequisite of tolerance. However, I use measures based on Stouffer (1955) that do not include the dislike requirement. In symbolic exclusion, there is no point beyond dislike (though dislike may vary in intensity). Thus, cultural/musical tolerance refers only to the absence of dislike. Furthermore, the concept of "indifference" challenges the binary opposition of "inclusion" and "exclusion." Here, tolerance is the complement of exclusiveness because it includes its opposite, inclusiveness, plus a residual category, indifference.

they shape each other, other material and subjective factors intervene to prevent the two levels from being perfectly aligned.² Symbolic exclusion and social exclusion are assumed to work in a manner similar to another pair of terms more familiar to American sociologists—prejudice and discrimination.

Bourdieu's (1984) main exposition on what I have called "symbolic exclusion" argues that knowledge about fine arts is a status cue while popular taste is rejected. "The higher the level of education, the greater is the proportion of respondents who, when asked whether a series of objects would make beautiful photographs, refuse the ordinary objects of popular admiration . . . as 'vulgar' or 'ugly'" (Bourdieu 1984:35). Bourdieu's perspective, then, expects high-status individuals to be the most culturally exclusive. That is, they distinguish themselves with an exclusive culture that rejects the cultural patterns and tastes of other groups.

Educated Tolerance

When the well-documented finding that education increases political tolerance (Adorno et al. 1950; Stouffer 1955; Davis 1975; Nunn, Crockett, and Williams 1978; Lipset 1981) is extended to cultural tolerance, the predicted effect of education is the opposite of that expected by theories of high-status exclusiveness.

To the extent that political tolerance is a belief that civil liberties should be extended to nonconformist groups (Stouffer 1955), political intolerance is a measure of symbolic exclusion. That is, political tolerance refers to the willingness to include specified groups within the boundary of "citizen"—or "us" as opposed to "them" (Gamson 1995). In the realm of public opinion, then, the term "political tolerance" can be seen as a general reluctance to symbolically exclude nonconformists from the category "citizen."

To link these two literatures, I propose that dislike of social groups is associated with dislike of music genres. My specific expect-

² For simplicity, I have omitted an important mediating variable in my description of Bourdieu's theory. See discussions of *habitus* in Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977).

tations are twofold. First, political intolerance—the general tendency to exclude social groups symbolically—should be positively related to musical exclusiveness—the general tendency to exclude music genres symbolically. Second, because I see both political intolerance and musical exclusiveness as forms of symbolic exclusion, contra Bourdieu's prediction, I expect education to reduce musical exclusiveness, just as it reduces political intolerance, and income and occupational prestige are expected to have little or no effect on musical exclusiveness when the impact of education is held constant (Davis 1975).

Symbolic Racism

Kinder and Sears (1981) propose a two-stage description of racism and public opinion. Termed *symbolic racism*, the model suggests, first, that racism shapes cultural (value) orientations and, second, that racism and the resulting set of orientations together may explain public opinion about interracial issues. Whites' stereotypes about African Americans, which can be considered symbolic exclusion, may be good predictors of Whites' discomfort with residential integration, which can be considered an estimate of social exclusion (Farley et al. 1994).

I provide a theoretical foundation and an empirical test for the relationship between racism and cultural orientations that has been named *symbolic racism*. Here, "stereotypes" are understood as symbolic boundaries between social groups that reinforce simple dislike. These "stereotypes" or cultural differentiations are, furthermore, extended from the realm of values (usually relating to work, family, and economics) to the field of musical taste. Thus, racism is expected to predict dislike for the types of music that are disproportionately liked by Hispanic Americans or African Americans.

Patterned Tolerance

Recent research on political tolerance raises new questions about the reason for and universality of education's liberalizing effect (Phelan et al. 1995). Jackman and Muha (1984) critique the earlier assertions of Stouffer (1955), Davis (1975) and others that

education increases democratic liberalism through simple enlightenment. Jackman and Muha claim that highly educated people have only a superficial commitment to the rhetoric of democratic liberalism, and oppose real social changes if the changes threaten their status. Jackman and Muha show that the strong effects of education on abstract beliefs about the importance of racial equality are not present for attitudes about concrete actions intended to foster racial inequality. Their work suggests that the political tolerance displayed by educated respondents is, in fact, only a carefully cultivated status symbol.

In a new formulation of the superficial ideology explanation, Schuman and Bobo (1988) show that opposition to neighborhood racial integration may be based on perceived class differences between Whites and African Americans rather than a lack of commitment to racial equality. In abstract form and when the class status of an African American family is at least equal to that of the respondent, racial integration is approved, but in concrete form, respondents often see residential integration as the entrance of lower-class families into middle-class neighborhoods. Thus, respondents displayed a commitment to democratic liberalism with respect to racial integration but continued to resist class integration.

If my proposition that dislike of a social group is evidenced by dislike of that group's perceived culture is correct, Schuman and Bobo's (1988) findings suggest that the apparently tolerant tastes of educated respondents may mask a systematic dislike of music genres whose audiences have lower than average levels of education. This prediction has important implications for our understanding of the wide-ranging tastes of highly educated cultural "omnivores" (Peterson 1992; Peterson and Simkus 1992; Peterson and Kern 1996, in this ASR issue). That is, rather than being indiscriminately broad, omnivorous taste may include high-status types of music that are popular among non-Whites, especially "world music" (Peterson 1990) genres like reggae and Latin music, while excluding low-status genres like gospel and country regardless of their association with race or ethnicity. (See DiMaggio and Peterson 1975 for a discussion of country

music's status and audience.) Identifying boundaries around broad taste would allow us to more confidently interpret Peterson and Kern's (1996) findings as a specific pattern of taste, rather than as evidence against the existence of high-status culture (Halle 1993).

A tendency for patterns of broad taste to exclude low-status genres would suggest that cultural breadth, or tolerance, could itself be a source of cultural capital. Unlike the refined form of cultural capital that Bourdieu (1984) documented in France, however, this contemporary American emphasis on breadth and tolerance would be more accurately described as *multicultural capital*—the social prestige afforded by familiarity with a range of cultural styles that is both broad and predictably exclusive.³ I add the term "multi" to "cultural capital" in order to specify a content of cultural capital, not to modify its meaning. That is, multicultural capital should not be included in a list of "types" of capital (e.g., social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital). However, the term could be used in an as yet nonexistent list of types of *cultural capital* (e.g., multicultural capital, high-cultural capital, counter-cultural capital, technocultural capital, etc.). (See Lamont 1992 and Erikson 1991 for work in this direction.)

This specific pattern of broad taste can be considered a form of cultural capital to the extent that it meets three criteria (Lamont and Lareau 1988). First, cultural tolerance and openness are widely recognized as symbols of social status among upper-middle-class Americans (Lamont 1992), and that recognition is evident, though less pervasive, in the working class (Lamont forthcoming). Second, familiarity with this cultural style must, nevertheless, be at least somewhat restricted. Using Bourdieu's (1984, chap. 8) methodology, then, the frequency of "don't know" responses to questions about musical taste is expected to decrease with education. The third characteristic of cultural capital is that it can serve as the basis of social exclusion. In this case, the potential for exclusion would

be evidenced by a class-based distribution of cultural tolerance, on one hand, and a predictable pattern of symbolic exclusion (more dislike of low-status genres), on the other.

HYPOTHESES

High Status Exclusiveness

H₁: People with high levels of education, income, and occupational prestige dislike more types of music than do people with low levels of education, income, and prestige.

Educated Tolerance

H₂: People with high levels of education dislike fewer types of music than do people with medium and low education, controlling for income and occupational prestige.

H₃: People who are reluctant to extend civil liberties to stigmatized groups dislike more types of music than do people with more tolerant political attitudes.

Symbolic Racism

H₄: Whites who have high racism scores dislike the types of music that are disproportionately liked by people of color more than do people who report less racist attitudes.

Patterned Tolerance

H₅: People who dislike few music genres will dislike those types of music that are liked by people with low levels of education more than other types of music, when education is controlled.

H₆: People who have high levels of education are less likely to report that they are unfamiliar with any music genre.

MEASURES

Dependent Variables

The General Social Survey (GSS) is a nearly annual survey of noninstitutionalized adults in the United States conducted by the National Opinion Research Center using a stratified random sampling method. The 1993 GSS

³ "Multiculturalism" in Canada refers to a government policy on intercultural relations. In the United States, however, the word invokes a celebration of cultural difference and is historically associated with "cultural pluralism" and "diversity" (Feuer 1991). I use the more general meaning.

includes a set of questions about culture, including musical tastes as well as leisure activities and values (Davis and Smith 1993; Marsden and Swingle 1994). These new data make information on musical *dislikes* available for the first time. Like other surveys of taste and participation in the arts, this survey presented respondents with a list of musical categories, but rather than having them choose their favorite or mark all they like, the GSS asked all 1,606 respondents to evaluate each of 18 music genres on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "like very much" to "dislike very much" (see Table 3). Using these data, I derive a measure of musical exclusiveness by counting the "dislike" and "dislike very much" responses given by each respondent. This method highlights the interesting responses and avoids the flattening effect of averages. If a respondent gave pop music a 1 and classical music a 5, the average score would be 3—the same as a response of 3 for each genre. By counting only negative responses, the exclusiveness of the score is preserved. "Don't know" responses are treated as missing and those respondents are eliminated from the analysis, leaving 912 valid cases. The exclusiveness scale has a mean of 5.78 and a standard deviation of 3.76, with a possible range of 0 to 18.

To test the effects of racism on musical taste, I divide the exclusiveness scale into two subscales to separate the genres that might be perceived as "belonging to" or representing racial or ethnic minorities. One scale is a count of the "dislike" responses to the six genres that are disproportionately liked by Black or Hispanic respondents with a significance level of $p < .001$.⁴ The remaining 12 genres form the other scale. *In no case* was the percentage of non-Hispanic Whites who reported liking a particular genre less than 60 percent. For example, only 26 percent of rap music "fans" are Black (compared to 11 percent in the sample) and 9 percent are Hispanic American (compared to 4

percent of the sample). Eighteen percent of gospel music fans are Black, while that number is 16 percent for each of reggae, blues, and jazz. Thirteen percent of Latin music fans are Hispanic.

Intergroup Affect

The political intolerance scale is based on a count of intolerant responses to 15 dichotomous questions on the respondent's willingness to allow a person from five different groups to (1) "make a speech in your community," (2) "teach in a college or university," and (3) have a book in "your public library." The hypothetical person in each of these five groups is described one who (a) is "against churches and religion," (b) "believes that Blacks are genetically inferior," (c) "admits he is a Communist," (d) "advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country," and (e) "admits he is a homosexual." These questions are based on Stouffer's (1955) scale, but they are asked of only two-thirds of the sample. The scale ranges from 0 to 15, has a mean of 5.24, a standard deviation of 4.72, and an alpha (measuring reliability) of .9163.

I create the racism scale by collecting all the 1993 GSS questions about racial attitudes. Next, I remove questions with extremely small variances and compose a list that maximizes valid responses. (To form a scale, all items must be asked of the same set of respondents, yet most of the racism questions are asked only of certain portions of the sample.) Finally, the responses (all dichotomous) are coded in the same direction, and factor analysis (available on request from the author) suggested the removal of one item. The remaining questions are: (1) "Would you yourself have any objection to sending your children to a school where more than half of the children are Black?" (2) "In general, do you favor or oppose the busing of Black and White school children from one school district to another?" (3) "On average Blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than White people. Do you think these differences are . . . mainly due to discrimination?" (4) ". . . because most Blacks don't have the chance for education that it takes to rise out of poverty?" (5) ". . . because most Blacks just don't have the motivation or will power

⁴ While I use the term "African American" in my theoretical discussion, 34 of the 137 respondents coded as "Black" based on skin color list a primary ethnic identity other than African or American. ("Black" is not a coded option on this question.) Most of these report either a West Indian or Native American Indian family origin.

to pull themselves up out of poverty?" The racism scale has a range of 0 to 5, a mean of 2.65, a standard deviation of 1.56, and an alpha of .54.

ANALYSIS

Education and Symbolic Exclusion

Socioeconomic status. Table 1 reports standardized coefficients from three OLS regressions in which musical exclusiveness is the dependent variable. The first model estimates the effects of education (in years), household income (per capita), and occupational prestige on the number of music genres disliked, thus testing Hypotheses 1 and 2. Standardized coefficients permit direct comparisons between variables. The SES Model supports extending the political tolerance literature to cultural taste (Hypothesis 2) in that education significantly and strongly *decreases* musical exclusiveness just as education has been found to decrease political intolerance. Not only do the coefficients for income and occupational prestige fail to reach significance, as Hypothesis 2 predicts, but they are near 0 when education is controlled. I reject the hypothesis based on Bourdieu's theory of high-status exclusiveness (Hypothesis 1). Thus, education is not associated with increased cultural exclusiveness.

The small and nonsignificant effect of income on exclusiveness parallels Davis's (1975, 1982) findings on political tolerance and provides evidence that musical taste can be modeled in much the same way as political opinion and tolerance. Furthermore, DiMaggio (1987) suggests that weak effects of income can be interpreted as evidence that patterns of taste are based on (educational) group formation (Collins 1979) rather than conspicuous consumption as Veblen ([1899] 1953) theorized.

Education, family income, and occupational prestige together explain only 10 percent of the variance in musical exclusiveness, although socioeconomic status is probably the factor cited most often by sociologists explaining taste. Nevertheless, education *does* significantly reduce musical dislikes, thus supporting the first *educated tolerance* hypothesis (Hypothesis 2) but not the *high-status exclusiveness* hypothesis (Hypothesis 1).

Table 1. Standardized OLS Coefficients from the Regression on the Number of Music Genres Disliked on Measures of Socioeconomic Status, Group Identities, and Political Intolerance: General Social Survey, 1993

Independent Variable	SES Model	Demographic Model	Political Intolerance Model
Education	-.322***	-.246***	-.151**
Household income per capita	-.037	-.054	-.009
Occupational prestige	.016	-.006	-.022
Female	—	-.083*	-.095*
Age	—	.140***	.110*
Black	—	.029	.049
Hispanic	—	-.029	.031
Other race	—	.005	.053
Conservative Protestant	—	.059	.066
No religion	—	-.012	.024
Southern	—	.097**	.121**
Political intolerance	—	—	.164***
Constant	10.920	8.507	6.516
R ²	.107	.151	.169
Adjusted R ²	.104	.139	.148
Number of cases	787	756	503

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

Other group identities. If musical taste aids social group formation, the correlation between education and other group identities could account for some of the observed effect of education on musical exclusiveness.⁵ Therefore, the demographic model in Table 1 adds a set of standard demographic control variables to the previous model. Results indicate that gender, age, and regional identities also affect musical exclusiveness. Being

⁵ The effects of group membership on musical taste probably vary according to the importance a respondent places on that identity. Accurate information on the salience of these demographic characteristics, though unavailable in this data set, would facilitate the theoretical shift from understanding "race" as a social-structural position to viewing it as an ethnic identity, and probably would increase the validity of these models.

older, southern, or male increases musical dislikes, controlling for education.

While some of education's effect is reduced by gender, age, and regional identity, the effect of education remains strong and significant. Thus, the *educated tolerance* hypothesis (Hypothesis 2) is not explained entirely by demographic group membership and continues to receive support.

Political intolerance. The political intolerance model reports a strong positive association between musical exclusiveness and the political intolerance measure added at this stage. Thus, the model supports Hypothesis 3 and provides evidence that political intolerance and cultural dislike may be two forms of the same phenomenon—group-based symbolic exclusion. That is, the tendency to draw negative boundaries in the arena of symbolic political exclusion is associated with a tendency to draw negative boundaries in cultural taste. Results also indicate that democratic liberalism is, in part, a mediating variable between age and education, on one hand, and musical exclusiveness, on the other. This can be seen in the reduction in the coefficients for age and education when political intolerance is included in the model.

Controlling for political intolerance reduces the positive effect of age on musical exclusiveness. Some of the remaining effect may be attributed to increasing breadth in musical taste across successive generations, a cohort effect rather than an effect of age occurring within each cohort (Peterson and Kern 1996). These cohort differences, however, should not be disregarded because cultural conflict and group conflict are related. At least where musical tolerance is concerned, the differences between age groups are stronger than racial or religious differences and nearly as strong as educational differences. This result points to the importance of remaining sensitive to societal cleavages other than class (Wilson 1970; DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson 1996). Educational stratification is important, but not to the exclusion of other differences.

The political intolerance model also shows that the tendency for southerners and men to dislike many types of music is *not* due to greater political intolerance. The coefficients for "female" and "southern" remain significant and do not weaken when political intolerance

Table 2. Standardized OLS Coefficients from the Regression of the Number of Music Genres Disliked on Racism and Demographic Variables: General Social Survey, 1993

Independent Variable	Dislike of Rap, Reggae, Blues/R&B, Jazz, Gospel, and Latin Music ^a	Dislike of the 12 Remaining Genres
Racism score	.130**	.080
Education	-.175***	-.242***
Household income per capita	-.037	-.065
Occupational prestige	-.020	.005
Female	-.057	-.070
Age	.163***	.126**
Black	-.132***	.042
Hispanic	-.058	-.029
Other race	-.017	.047
Conservative Protestant	.063	.048
No religion	.057	.024
Southern	.024	.069
Constant	2.415***	7.860
R ²	.145	.147
Adjusted R ²	.129	.130
Number of cases	644	605

p* < .05 *p* < .01 ****p* < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Genres disproportionately liked by Hispanic or Black respondents.

is included in the model, suggesting that the differing taste patterns of southerners and men may be attributed to group identity rather than class-based intolerance.

If musical tolerance is a high-status marker, these results are consistent with previous research that finds that women have higher levels of high culture consumption than do men (DiMaggio 1982) and less appreciation of heavy metal music, a genre associated with low SES (Weinstein 1991). Together, these patterns suggest that women do, indeed, invest more in high-status culture than do men (Veblen [1899] 1953; Johnson 1994).

Racism and Musical Taste

Table 2 presents coefficients for the separate exclusiveness scales for genres that are disproportionately liked by Hispanic or Black

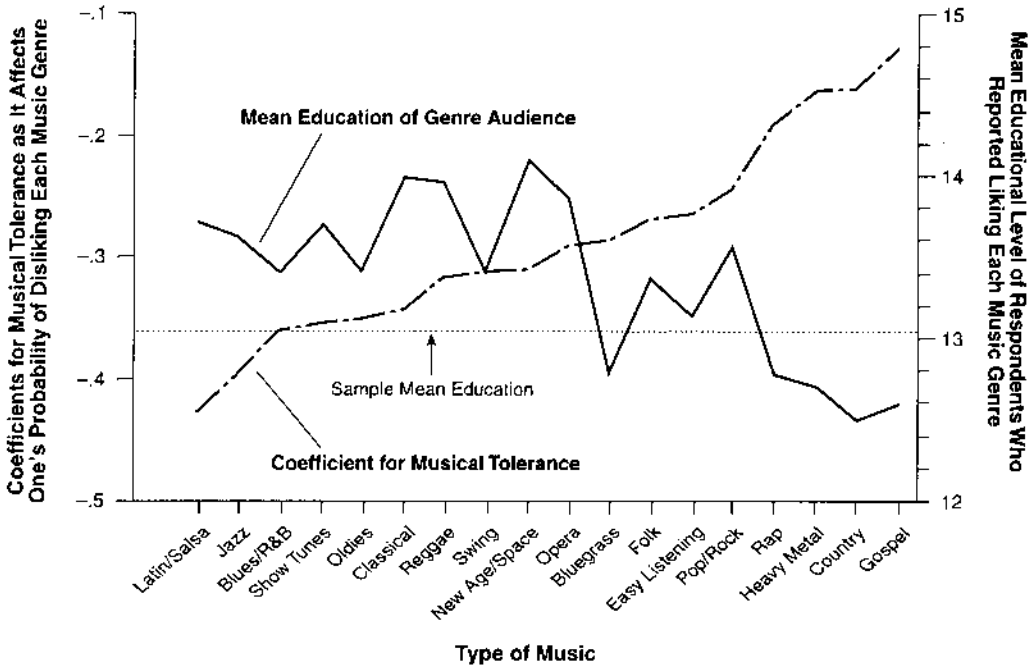


Figure 1. The Effect of Being Musically Tolerant on Disliking Each Music Genre Compared to the Educational Composition of Genre Audiences

Note: Coefficients represent the effects of being musically tolerant (number of genres not disliked, excluding the one involved in the dependent variable) from logistic regression equations where disliking each genre is the dependent variable and education is controlled. All coefficients are significant at $p < .0001$.

respondents and for the 12 remaining genres. Using the same set of demographic controls, I test the effect of racism on the number of dislikes for each set of genres. Racism significantly increases dislike for genres in the first group (rap, reggae, blues/rhythm and blues, jazz, gospel, and Latin music). Dislike for the 12 remaining genres, however, is not significantly affected by racism.

Note that racism does not *fully* explain distaste for rap, reggae, blues/rhythm and blues, jazz, gospel, and Latin music. Even with control variables included, that model explains only 13 percent of the variance—the same amount explained in the model for the remaining genres. Furthermore, cross-tabulation (not shown) reveals that 48.5 percent of respondents who scored 0 on the racism scale still reported disliking rap music, and 17.2 percent of respondents who had the highest racism score did not report disliking rap music. While this number is significantly lower than the overall percentage disliking rap music (32.0 percent), it demonstrates that musi-

cal taste is only partly explained by intergroup affect. Nonetheless, even controlling for other possible group identities like religion, age, and education, racism is significantly associated with increased dislike for music genres disproportionately liked by Black or Hispanic respondents (Table 2). Thus, intergroup conflict is evident in patterns of musical taste, and results support the *symbolic racism* hypothesis (Hypothesis 4).

Patterned Tolerance

The boundaries of musical tolerance. I examine the first *patterned tolerance* hypothesis (Hypothesis 5), that omnivorous tastes are shaped by perceptions of class and the musical content of class culture, by assessing the effect of being musically tolerant on the probability of disliking each type of music. I (logistically) regress the (log of the) odds of disliking each genre on the number of genres *not* disliked, excluding the dependent variable. Thus, the tolerance score is the

Table 3. Frequency Distributions for Attitude toward 18 Music Genres: General Social Survey, 1993

Attitude	Music Genre					
	Latin/Salsa	Jazz	Blues/ R&B	Show Tunes	Oldies	Classical/ Chamber
(1) Like very much	85	254	221	235	405	281
(2) Like it	325	540	669	562	688	478
(3) Mixed feelings	416	393	367	369	213	371
(4) Dislike it	403	297	220	281	172	263
(5) Dislike very much	144	69	61	68	77	136
(M) Don't know much about it	221	38	56	77	41	66
(M) No answer	12	15	12	14	10	11
Mean	3.14	2.61	2.50	2.59	2.25	2.67
	Reggae	Swing/ Big Band	New Age/ Space	Opera	Bluegrass	Folk
(1) Like very much	84	269	48	73	145	130
(2) Like it	362	588	186	257	562	553
(3) Mixed feelings	340	290	269	359	411	472
(4) Dislike it	297	230	429	515	255	274
(5) Dislike very much	217	53	368	306	59	87
(M) Don't know much about it	295	164	292	83	163	78
(M) No answer	11	12	14	13	11	12
Mean	3.15	2.45	3.68	3.48	2.67	2.76
	Easy Listening	Pop/ Contemporary Rock	Rap	Heavy Metal	Country/ Western	Gospel
(1) Like very much	251	206	44	48	385	356
(2) Like it	698	645	159	123	592	571
(3) Mixed feelings	323	296	284	189	364	364
(4) Dislike it	200	245	433	400	167	197
(5) Dislike very much	49	152	614	766	66	71
(M) Don't know much about it	72	50	61	70	22	35
(M) No answer	13	12	11	10	10	12
Mean	2.41	2.67	3.92	4.12	2.32	2.39

reverse of the exclusiveness score minus the dependent variable. The only other independent variable in these equations is years of education. The resulting coefficients represent the effect of being musically tolerant on disliking each type of music, controlling for education. While all the coefficients are negative (being generally tolerant decreases one's chances of disliking any one type of music), I examine the pattern by ranking genres according to the size of their coefficient for musical tolerance. Next, I plot the coefficients and the mean educational level of respondents who reported liking that genre.

Figure 1 depicts the relationship between musical tolerance and the mean educational level of respondents who reported liking each type of music—hereafter referred to as genre audiences. Because genres are ranked by the size of their musical tolerance coefficient, the genres on the left (Latin music, jazz, and blues) are those least often disliked by tolerant respondents, while the genres on the right (rap, heavy metal, country, and gospel) are those more often disliked by tolerant respondents than are the rest of the genres.

While having broad musical taste significantly decreases one's probability of disliking all types of music, the pattern in Figure 1

is clear: The middle group of genres have audiences of varying educational levels, but the right end of the spectrum reveals a strong relationship between musical exclusion and audience education for musically tolerant respondents. The types of music most often disliked by tolerant respondents are consistently the genres whose audiences are the least educated. Thus, with respect to educational attainment, *exclusion of low-status music genres is stronger than identification with high-status genres.*

Comparing Figure 1 to the mean responses to each type of music in presented in Table 3, another pattern emerges. In the full sample, heavy metal is the most disliked genre—hence, the popular response to requests for musical selections, “Anything but heavy metal.” Rap is a close second.⁶ It is not surprising, then, that tolerant respondents follow the rest of the population in excluding rap and heavy metal music more than most other genres. *What is surprising is that country and gospel music are two of the three most favored genres among the general population, while they are the two genres most likely to be rejected by tolerant respondents!*

Furthermore, the three music genres tolerant respondents are least likely to reject—Latin music, jazz, and blues/rhythm and blues—are disproportionately favored by Black or Hispanic respondents. Of the three other genres that are disproportionately liked by non-Whites, two of them—rap and gospel music—appear on the other end of the tolerance spectrum: They are two of the four genres most disliked by tolerant respondents. Although reggae music lies closer to the center, genres with disproportionately non-White audiences are largely polarized on the spectrum of tolerant dislikes.

In sum, education and political tolerance are associated with decreased overall musical exclusiveness, but tolerant musical taste is patterned in a specific way. The *patterned tolerance* hypothesis (Hypothesis 5) is supported by the finding that, while most of the least excluded genres have significant non-White audiences, the four types of music

with the least educated audiences (rap, heavy metal, country, and gospel) are the four genres most likely to be rejected by tolerant respondents.⁷ Broad patterns of taste, then, tend to exclude low-status genres more than other types of music.

Multicultural capital. While broad taste is associated with high levels of education, Figure 1 demonstrates that it also excludes low-status genres more than other types of music. Together these two findings suggest that familiarity with a wide range of cultural styles may serve as a sort of (multi)cultural capital because this tolerance is systematically exclusive and unevenly distributed across educational levels. In a final analysis (not shown), I briefly test whether the breadth of *familiarity* also increases with education. If (bounded) cultural breadth can serve as a source of status, I would expect the incidence of “don’t know” responses to decrease with education, and it does. The correlation between education and the number of “don’t know” responses is $-.15$ ($p < .01$). Furthermore, the average education of respondents who gave at least one “don’t know” response is 12.6 years—significantly lower ($p < .0001$) than that of respondents who gave no “don’t know” responses (13.4 years).

Thus, both *patterned tolerance* hypotheses (Hypotheses 5 and 6) receive support, suggesting that the broad musical taste and knowledge evidenced by more educated respondents may constitute a multicultural capital with clear patterned boundaries that exclude low-status cultural styles.

CONCLUSION

Summary. I seek to resolve the contradiction between two widely accepted theories of culture by highlighting the neglected notion of cultural *exclusion* or dislike. The first perspective posits that people with high social status are the most culturally exclusive and intolerant. The second perspective claims that education increases tolerance, openness, and cultural acceptance. If the most highly educated Americans were ever the most cul-

⁶ See Rose 1994 and Weinstein 1991, respectively, on reasons for the particular dislike of rap and heavy metal music, and see Binder 1993 for both.

⁷ The mean education of the rap audience is 12.76 years, .03 years less than that of the bluegrass audience.

turally exclusive, this clearly is not the case today.

By analyzing dislikes of 18 types of music, I show that education significantly decreases exclusiveness in musical taste. Thus, the *high-status exclusion* hypothesis (Hypothesis 1) does not accurately describe the distribution of musical taste in the contemporary United States: Respondents with high levels of education reported more tolerant musical taste than those with less education. This supports the first *educated tolerance* hypothesis (Hypothesis 2).

Furthermore, I show that cultural exclusiveness is associated with political intolerance (Hypothesis 3) and that negative attitudes toward social groups result in negative attitudes toward the types of music associated with that group (Hypothesis 4). These findings not only demonstrate that some theories of political tolerance may be extended to cultural attitudes, they also show that patterns of taste are related to group conflict. However, I do not assume that rising levels of education will decrease cultural exclusiveness, as Stouffer (1955) did when he predicted that rising education would obliterate political intolerance. Instead, I draw on recent developments in the study of political tolerance to scrutinize musical tolerance.

I find that highly educated people in the United States are more musically tolerant, but not indiscriminately so. I provide evidence of class-based exclusion in that the genres most disliked by tolerant people are those appreciated by people with the lowest levels of education. Therefore, I suggest that *cultural tolerance should not be conceptualized as an indiscriminate tendency to be nonexclusive, but as a reordering of group boundaries that trades race for class*. If a person with average taste were injected with a serum to encourage broad taste, the first three genres that would disappear from that person's list of dislikes (Latin music, jazz, and blues/rhythm and blues) are significantly associated with non-dominant racial or ethnic groups, while the types of music that are most likely to remain on that person's list of musical dislikes (rap, heavy metal, country, and gospel music) are the four most strongly associated with low education. Furthermore, two of those four most excluded genres—gospel and rap—lie at the intersection of race and education.

Their fans tend to be Black and have less education than the general population.⁸

Together with the finding that less educated people more frequently reported being unfamiliar with one or more of the 18 genres, results show that cultural breadth has become a high-status signal that excludes low-status cultural cues and is unevenly distributed by education in the United States. Therefore, I suggest that the phenomenon be understood as *multicultural capital*.

Limitations. With this large data set, I have demonstrated a connection between intergroup affect and musical taste. However, the proportion of variance explained is relatively modest. Therefore, I do not argue that musical dislike is *only* a tool of symbolic exclusion. Cultural taste may also be shaped by the extent to which a particular work or genre resonates with the cultural orientations of its listeners (Griswold 1992). This can cause taste for the genre to be patterned by social location that, in turn, would reinforce the tendency for the genre to appeal to one group more than others. Also, symbolic exclusion treats cultural cues as "tools" (Swidler 1986), but music can be *used* in other ways as well. Anderson (1990), for example, shows how young African American men use rap music (at high volumes) to gain control of public spaces.

A second limitation of this study is that these data cannot tell us what respondents have in mind when they think of each genre. One of the categories, for instance, is labeled "new age/space music." While 18.2 percent of the respondents reported that they didn't know much about the genre, we cannot tell how the remaining respondents understand the category. Are they thinking of Vangelis and music with an electronic sound from the early 1980s (such as the themes from *Star Wars* and *Chariots of Fire*), or music like that of the group Enigma (whose eerie sound and sometimes disturbing lyrics won a spot in the movie *Sliver*), or are they thinking of the "new age" music produced by artists on the

⁸ See Binder (1993) for an analysis of how dislike for heavy metal and rap music has been cultivated in the popular press. Her comparison of rap and heavy metal is particularly useful for understanding the way race and class intersect in the framing of musical exclusion.

Windham Hill label? (These nearly qualify as "easy listening.") I assume that respondents would not agree about the type of artists belonging in each category. Therefore, although the lack of a clear understanding of what these musical categories mean to respondents is regrettable, it makes the fact that significant patterns emerge even more striking.

As with most survey data on opinions and attitudes, the GSS imposes cultural categories on respondents (Marsden and Swingle 1994). The bias introduced by this method may be unimportant when "real world" choices are constrained ("For whom do you plan to vote in the upcoming election?"), but an important task in the sociology of culture is to *discover* salient cultural categories rather than assume them. The list used by the GSS vaguely resembles the major categories of music used by popular music distributors, but we cannot be sure how the results would differ if the list were altered. If, for example, it contained six varieties of "rock," the tendency to be musically exclusive might be largely driven by the factors that determine attitudes toward the larger category—rock. The validity of the measure could have been greatly improved if a prior study had determined the most common categories of musical classification.

Finally, it is unclear whether the inconsistency between my findings and Bourdieu's (1984) are due to differences in time, national culture, or methodology. Peterson and Kern (1996) show that the status value of cultural breadth has increased over time in the United States, but Lamont (1992) finds that upper-middle-class Americans are much more reluctant than their French counterparts to draw class boundaries on the basis of cultural taste. Likewise, Weil (1985) finds that the effect of education on anti-Semitism is not constant cross-nationally. In either case, Bourdieu (1984) does not provide much evidence that educated respondents were more *or less* exclusive because, with one exception, he does not ask them about their distastes. His finding that the upper classes have more knowledge about and appreciation for high culture does not contradict the concept of a tolerance line. In fact, support of multiculturalism is positively associated with—rather than opposed

to—an appreciation for traditional high culture (DiMaggio and Bryson 1995). Cross-national research is needed to separate theoretical generalities from local strategies of symbolic exclusion.

Contributions. By exploring the connections between literatures on cultural taste, political tolerance, and racism, this analysis contributes to each field. In the political tolerance literature, I address the central question of why there is a relationship between education and democratic liberalism. Researchers have suggested that political tolerance in the United States may be part of an official culture learned through the educational system (Weil 1985; Phelan et al. 1995), but no one had explored the application of status culture theories to this problem. By conceptualizing political intolerance as a set of symbolic boundaries, I separate intergroup affect from beliefs about civil rights. Sullivan et al.'s (1979:792) suggestion that political tolerance is not related to education when tolerance presumes dislike might be better understood if the importance of the negative relationship between *dislike* and education is considered. It is not the sophisticated understandings of democratic liberalism that vary, as Jackman and Muha (1984) suggest, but the dislike of cultural (and presumably political) "otherness."

This study also contributes to our understanding of racism by lending support to Schuman and Bobo's (1988) finding that educated respondents resist racial integration only when it means class integration. The correlation between race and class is an important feature of modern industrialized societies. The relationship creates substantial room for ideological confusion and provides an opportunity to study how two types of symbolic boundaries interact. Therefore, research into strategies of self-definition and symbolic exclusion may be crucial to an understanding of class and ethnic relations as well as of the way these cultural categories interact (Lamont forthcoming).

I also find that class is not the only important basis of cultural exclusion—musical dislikes parallel racial group conflict as well. This finding challenges Bourdieu's (1984) description of taste as rooted in class and caused by varying levels of freedom from necessity. The underlying notion that one's

experiences shape cultural taste can be applied more broadly, but the way this process shapes other group boundaries remains to be specified.

Finally, this analysis shows how Bourdieu's (1984) theory of high-status cultural exclusiveness may still be useful despite strong evidence that patterns of cultural appreciation in the contemporary United States are inconsistent with his description of cultural capital's *content* (Peterson and Simkus 1992; Halle 1993). Increasing tolerance has undoubtedly made high-status culture more open to racial and ethnic cultural differences. However, tolerance itself may separate high-status culture from other group cultures. This *tolerance line* recreates the pattern of high-status (cosmopolitan) culture in opposition to non-high-status (group-based) culture. Thus, it provides a new criterion of cultural exclusion.

Further developments in multicultural capital require further study on at least four conceptual levels. First, research on other *objects of taste* should test the assumption that multicultural capital operates in other cultural arenas. Second, as tolerance can be considered a *principle of taste* that organizes multicultural capital, ideology and taste could be linked more specifically at this level. As an ideology, tolerance is an essential element of democratic liberalism with a fascinating boundary—one cannot defend tolerance without suppressing intolerance. Further speculation into the complexities of democratic liberalism and status culture requires further research, as will questions of why there are identifiable types of cultural capital and struggles over their definition (e.g., curriculum debates in higher education).

This study also omits a third level, *expressions of taste*. Holt (1995) shows how the objects one consumes or appreciates are less distinguishing than the way they are engaged or understood. The possibility of a common set of interpretive tools is consistent with DiMaggio's (1991) distinction between general and specific forms of cultural capital, but the relationship between the two is still unknown.

Finally, cultural sociology needs more empirical research on the *effects of taste*. Like many others, this study assumes an association between attitudes and behavior. How-

ever, we do not really know how people use taste in their everyday lives.

At all these levels, research on the universal and the particular in cultural taste promises to make sense of the contradiction between increasing social inequality and what appears to be a flattening cultural hierarchy. In this study, focusing on cultural dislike has allowed me to make a crucial distinction between *difference* (a prerequisite of preference) and *inequality* (a matter of exclusion). That is, to the extent that symbolic boundaries are used as a basis of social exclusion, study of the politics of taste is essential to our understanding of the subtle forces at work in power relationships and the reproduction of the social structure.

Bethany Bryson is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Sociology at Princeton University. Her dissertation also addresses cultural conflict and social inequality, using faculty interviews to place literary canonical debates in a stratified institutional context. Findings from her ongoing research on opinion polarization with John Evans and Paul DiMaggio will appear in the American Journal of Sociology (1996, vol. 102, pp. 690-755).

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