Membership without Social Citizenship? Deservingness & Redistribution as Grounds for Equality

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Abstract: Western societies have experienced a broadening of inclusive membership, whether we consider legal, interpersonal, or cultural membership. Concurrently, we have witnessed increased tensions around social citizenship, notably harsher judgments or boundaries over who "deserves" public assistance. Some have argued these phenomena are linked, with expanded, more diverse membership corroding solidarity and redistribution. We maintain that such a conclusion is premature and, especially, unsatisfactory: it fails to detail the processes – at multiple levels of analysis – behind tensions over membership and social citizenship. This essay draws on normative political theory, social psychology, cultural sociology, and political studies to build a layered explanatory framework that highlights the importance of individual feelings of group identity and threat for people's beliefs and actions; the significance of broader cultural repertoires and notions of national solidarity as a source and product of framing contests; and the diverse ways elites, power, and institutions affect notions of membership and deservingness.

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This essay explores processes by which a broadening of legal, social, and cultural membership in Western societies appears to be accompanied by a reduction in the social rights of citizenship, in part due to harsher judgments concerning the deservingness of low-income populations. As more diverse groups are extended formal national membership, fewer individuals appear deserving of social rights, such as welfare redistribution. Why is this the case? Some explain this decline in solidarity as a simple, even mechanical response to growing diversity. We offer alternative approaches to understanding these tensions and consider pathways for promoting inclusive membership and broad social rights. We do so by drawing on the analytical

tools of four distinct fields that are rarely in dialogue, proposing that positive social change may emerge from 1) solidarity, explored by normative political theorists; 2) group identity and distributive justice, a focus for social psychologists; 3) boundary-drawing and destigmatization, as analyzed by cultural sociologists; and 4) contestation and social movements, studied by political sociologists and political scientists. Sociologist T. H. Marshall famously distinguished three dimensions of citizenship – civic, political, and social – with corresponding types of formal rights pertaining to legal inclusion, political participation, and economic redistribution (social rights), respectively.[1] He argued that modern societies are characterized by a progressive extension of these rights to a larger number of individuals. Marshall predicted that this extension would go hand in hand with greater economic integration of all citizens, and that the decades bookending World War II would see "the subordination of market price to social justice" by "recognizing in principle the right of the citizen to a minimum standard of civilized living."[2]

Contrary to Marshall's expectations, we provide some evidence that the broadening of legal, interpersonal, or even cultural membership has not gone uniformly hand in hand with a broadening of the distribution of welfare resources, in part due to a rigidification of moral boundaries based on perceptions of deservingness.

On the side of broadened inclusion, we consider membership in three analytically distinct ways: legal membership (as defined by citizenship law or formal rules about who has access to rights); social or interpersonal membership (referring to social distance via networks of friendship and romantic relationships); and cultural membership (who is viewed as a valuable member of society, as expressed in intergroup attitudes, school textbooks, popular media, and public representations of the nation). By all three measures, people previously thought to be "others" – racial, sexual, and religious minorities and immigrants – are more likely today to have access to legal citizenship, to marry someone from the majority group, and to be perceived as valuable and as belonging to the nation than in the 1950s.

In contrast, we see increased tensions around social citizenship over this period. Contestation plays out in different ways. In some societies, increasingly harsh judgments about who deserves public help distinguish the "deserving" poor from others. According to this logic, one must demonstrate cultural membership or moral blamelessness to access resources, rather than receive public assistance as a formal right extended to anyone in the national community. Other societies appear to embrace welfare chauvinism: the historical beneficiaries of redistribution continue to enjoy generous assistance, but newer groups, such as immigrants, are excluded. In still other societies, the provision of social benefits has become decentralized, which accompanies a decline in a sense of mutual obligation toward low-income groups.

What processes of social change lie behind these tensions, and what factors may mitigate them? One prominent analysis links expanded membership but restricted social citizenship to demographic diversity: it is posited as corrosive for social capital, redistribution, and/or solidarity.[3] We find such a conclusion premature, given very mixed evidence.[4] Moreover, such an answer is analytically unsatisfactory. It does not get at the possible processes behind the tensions over membership and social citizenship, tensions that we believe must be captured by a multilevel analysis. We begin to do this by combining insights about solidarity,

group identity, destigmatization, and social movements that draw on normative political theory, social psychology, cultural sociology, and political sociology/political science.

In aiming to bridge levels of analysis, we view these insights as complementary, each highlighting a dimension of inequality. The macrolevel concerns formal law and public policy that determine membership, whether through legal rights or bureaucratic rules governing access to education, social assistance, medical care, and so forth. The microlevel captures on-the-ground experiences of membership based on interpersonal interactions and intersubjective meaning-making. The mesolevel is conceptualized as scripts of worth, available cultural repertoires, and practices institutionalized by organizations.[5] Mesolevel institutions from schools to workplaces establish rules, procedures, and norms that generate and communicate membership, and mediate the relationship between individuals and the state.[6] Each level interacts and exercises reciprocal influence.

The literatures on which we draw share an emphasis on boundary-drawing, a process by which we categorize others as worthy, valuable, or legitimate along dimensions of morality and deservingness. Such symbolic boundaries, ones that distinguish insiders and outsiders, can be accompanied by reinforcing consequential social boundaries, as manifested by laws and institutional rules.[7] At the same time, stigmatized individuals and groups can resist and struggle for recognition in opposition to dominant groups that justify opportunity-hoarding via moral criteria.[8] These literatures vary, however, in how they understand boundary-drawing, including in where they locate the process. This then leads to different views on how to ensure inclusive membership and social solidarity. Some accounts focus on national-level dynamics, tracking deservingness judgments as manifest in membership in national welfare states. In this view, prospects for a more equal society depend on national-level inclusion. In other accounts, boundary-drawing emerges from dynamic psychological processes responsive to localized situational cues or to the contingencies of particular activities, workplaces, social networks, and political coalitions; and appeals to local cultural scripts or, alternatively, to cultural repertoires that transcend the "nation" (such as human rights). Another view focuses instead on power and political contestation, with the prospects for a more equal society depending in part on the outcome of such struggles. In what follows, we lay out membership and social citizenship tensions, grapple with a set of multilevel, multidisciplinary explanatory approaches, and consider future prospects.

One of the striking successes of the last half-century is the struggle against exclusionary definitions of national membership. This is reflected in the trajectories of both legal and sociocultural inclusion across Western democracies, which show a rejection of the idea that national membership is based on or limited to an ascribed ethnic background.

With respect to legal membership, the formal rules for acquiring citizenship or nationality have become more open.[9] A common way of describing this shift is as a move from ethnic to civic conceptions of nationhood. The former defines membership in terms of blood or ancestry, with attendant affiliation to a cultural or ethnic community. The latter defines membership by residence on a state's territory with attendant loyalty to a political community. Under an ethnic model, ethnic Germans living for generations in Poland still had the right to German citizenship, even as ethnic Turks born and raised

in Germany were effectively denied it.[10] Under the civic model, immigrants can acquire citizenship through a straightforward naturalization process and their children can acquire automatic citizenship through birth in the country's territory.

Over the past fifty years, the ethnic definition of nationhood has been significantly delegitimized in the Western world. Today, virtually all Western countries accept that citizenship should be available via naturalization to those who have settled permanently in the country. This logic extends to children of immigrants. They are assumed to be part of the national community by their birth and presence in the country. Thus, in their survey of citizenship laws in eighteen West European countries from the 1980s to 2008, political scientist Maarten Vink and law scholar Gerard-René de Groot find a trend toward broader territorial birth-based citizenship, and somewhat facilitated naturalization, among countries previously holding strong descent-based citizenship rules.[11] Political scientists Marc Howard and Sara Goodman's Citizenship Policy Index yields similar results: tracking the fifteen longstanding EU countries from 1980 to 2016, they have found a general opening of formal citizenship, although the trend has stalled since 2008 (see Figure 1).[12]

The diffusion of the civic model has made national membership more diverse. For instance, once German national membership became available to long-settled ethnic minorities, a multiplicity of ways of "being German" took root, one of which is to be a German of Turkish ethnicity and Muslim faith. Shifts to a more pluralistic conception of national identity are also reflected in diversity policy. Political scientist Keith Banting and philosopher Will Kymlicka have measured eight types of multicultural policies across twenty-one Western

nations at three time points (1980, 2000, and 2010) as indicators of "some level of public recognition and support for minorities to express their distinct identities and practices." Contrary to perceptions of a retreat from multiculturalism, they find that cultural diversity policies have largely expanded across countries and over time.[13]

Beyond formal policies, there are also changes in public perceptions of cultural membership: that is, who is viewed as belonging. Examining twentieth-century American opinion polls, sociologists Claude Fischer and Michael Hout have documented declining "social distance" articulated by white Americans vis-à-vis ethnoracial or religious minorities. Americans across time are more willing to have someone from a minority group be a citizen of the country, a coworker, a friend, or even a family member, with the most significant change happening in the 1970s and 1980s.[14] Changes in stated opinion are also somewhat reflected in behavior, such as by increased intermarriage.[15]
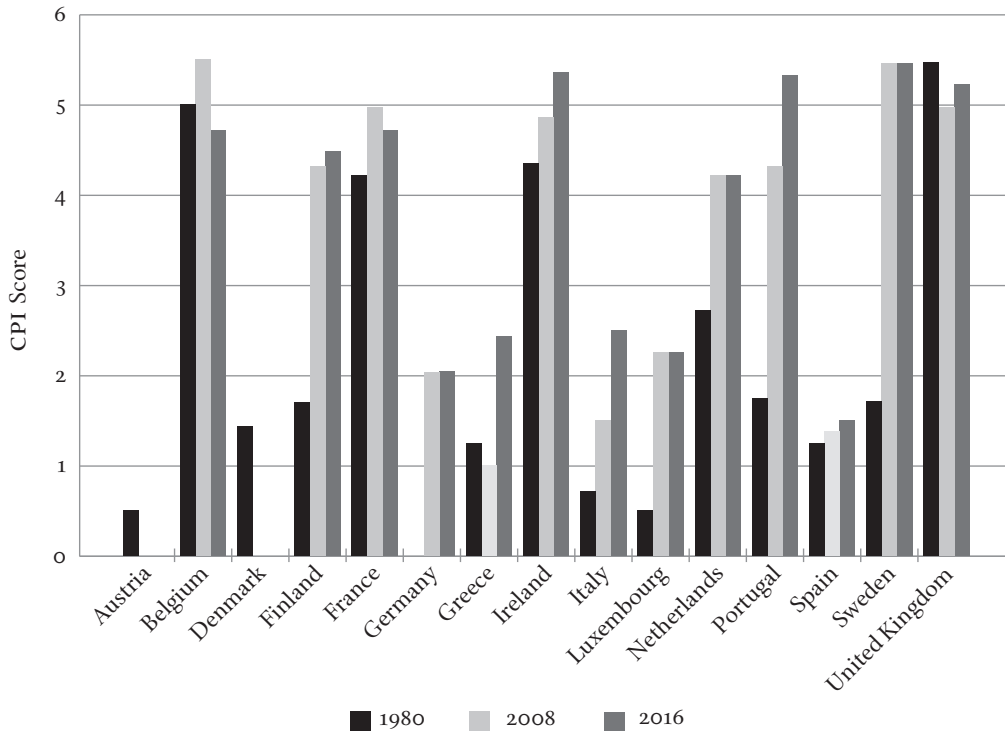
Another indicator of cultural membership is the global spread of multicultural education in school textbooks (see Table 1). Such texts expose students "to a depiction of their own societies as ones filled with validated diversity along many dimensions."[16] In the United States, scholars document how legislation and organizations in higher education and the corporate world have institutionalized criteria of selection and promotion that favor various diversities.[17] These changes result in representations of societal life that emphasize a broadened definition of cultural membership in terms of gender and sexuality and ethnoreligious and racial identity.

Whether viewed as formal citizenship and government policy, social attitudes and interaction, or cultural representation, membership has become more

Figure 1
Changes in the Citizenship Policy Index between 1980, 2008, and 2016

Note: Where there is no bar, a CPI score of zero is recorded for that year. Source: Marc Morjé Howard and Sara Wallace Goodman, "The Politics of Citizenship and Belonging in Europe," in *Debating Immigration*, 2nd ed., ed. Carol M. Swain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

inclusive across Western democracies, although with varied speed and extent and including moments of backlash. Ideas of civic and pluralistic nationhood are now part of "world culture." The postwar period has witnessed the "rise of global models of nationally organized progress and justice" that articulate the appropriate goals of state action, such as economic development and individual rights, while delegitimizing older goals, such as the pursuit of divine missions or racial and religious purity.[18] These global models provide the cultural frameworks within which state elites establish the "modern" and progressive credentials of their country. The transition to civic and pluralistic

conceptions of national membership is now arguably part of world culture.

These ideas do not penetrate equally across social strata.[19] Over one-third of citizens in most OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) countries – including the United States – believe that someone must share the dominant religion to be truly a member of the nation, and over two-thirds believe that one must be born in the country to be "truly" American (or French, or Austrian, and so on; see Table 2). While recent data suggest that the importance of birthplace may be declining for countries that have experienced high immigration in the last three decades, support

Table 1

Textbook Depictions of Discrimination and Group Rights over Time

Groups Experiencing Discrimination	1950–1974	1975–1994	1995–2010
Women	0.12	0.15	0.34****
Other Minorities	0.13	0.25***	0.33*
Immigrants and Refugees	0.06	0.19****	0.28**
Workers	0.21	0.27	0.24
Indigenous	0.10	0.22***	0.21
Children	0.06	0.06	0.20****
Gays/Lesbians	0.01	0.02	0.04*
Groups Bearing Rights	**1950–1974**	**1975–1994**	**1995–2010**
Women	0.14	0.16	0.32****
Other Minorities	0.08	0.15*	0.23**
Immigrants and Refugees	0.05	0.06	0.13*
Workers	0.19	0.24	0.22
Indigenous	0.03	0.07	0.09
Children	0.09	0.09	0.19***
Gays/Lesbians	0.01	0.01	0.03*
Humans (Human Rights)	0.26	0.32	0.45***

Note: **** $p < .001$, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$; two-tailed tests. "Human rights" refers to rights that are de-picted as being owed to people because of their membership in the human race. Source: Luke Terra and Patricia Bromley, "The Globalization of Multicultural Education in Social Science Textbooks," *Multicultural Perspectives* 14 (3) (2012): 136–143; analyzing 548 secondary social science textbooks–history, civics, social studies, and geog-raphy–from ninety-three countries published from 1950 to 2010.

for exclusionary conceptions of nation-hood has been relatively stable over the past twenty years (see Table 3). This helps to explain why there is a significant pool of support for populist parties seeking to "take back" the nation. In particular, the American National Election Survey reveals an increase in xenophobia since 2016.[20] It remains to be seen whether this trend will persist moving forward.

We turn now to social citizenship, which refers to the responsibilities that the state has to its citizens, including "the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security."[21] Whereas national mem-bership has expanded, the segment of the population seen as deserving of redistrib-utive support has arguably shrunk, at least in some Western countries, although the empirical evidence is less clear-cut here than for expanding national membership.

Public attitudes toward the welfare state are complex. Examining the British Social Attitudes Survey from 1986 to 2009, the data show, at first glance, resilient support for redistribution. British respondents express strong support for the idea that the state has an obligation to redistrib-ute income from the better-off to the less-well-off, and this commitment has not changed significantly over the last twenty-five years.[22] This finding is consistent with other studies showing stability in support

Table 2
"To Be Truly [National Identity], How Important Is It to Be a [Religion]?"

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Country	Percent Saying "Very Important" or "Fairly Important"			
	1995	2003	2013	2016
Australia	31.5	36.9		29.0
Austria	54.2	53.1		
Bulgaria	71.1	76.2		
Canada	24.5	54.0		34.0
Czech Republic	22.2	29.3	28.6	
Denmark		33.2	23.9	
Finland		23.0	21.0	
France		17.5	18.5	23.0
East Germany	21.7	13.3	13.3	
West Germany	33.8	37.1	29.4	
Hungary	35.9	43.2	46.5	66.0
Ireland	54.4	57.8	31.4	
Israel (Arabs)		23.7	5.8	
Israel (Jews)		84.1	69.0	
Japan	26.5	25.4	20.9	
Latvia	35.4	22.5	25.1	
The Netherlands	7.3	13.1		24.0
New Zealand	30.2	37.4		
Norway	21.4	20.3	20.2	
Philippines	82.9	84.4	85.9	
Poland	52.7	74.8		71.0
Portugal		65.6	36.3	
Russia	39.7	58.3	73.6	
Slovakia	27.0	49.7	54.1	
Slovenia	33.8	32.5	22.8	
South Korea		41.0	46.3	
Spain	46.7	44.0	33.9	19.0
Sweden	17.4	17.2	10.4	17.0
Switzerland		39.3	30.7	
Taiwan		26.1	19.8	
United Kingdom	35.5	34.8	31.1	37.0
United States	53.7	65.8	45.8	51.0
Average across Countries	36.8	39.7	35.8	37.1

Note: The 2016 Pew Research data are for respondents reporting "very important" or "somewhat important." For 1995, 2003, and 2013, the average includes data for the sixteen countries with data for each wave. Source: International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1995–National Identity I*, ZA2880 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 1995); International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 2003–National Identity II*, ZA3910 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2003); International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 2013–National Identity III*, ZA5950 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2013); and Bruce Stokes, "What It Takes to Truly Be 'One of Us'" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2017).

Table 3
"To Be Truly [National Identity], How Important Is It to Have Been Born Here?"

Country	Percent Saying "Very Important" or "Fairly Important"			
	1995	2003	2013	2016
Australia	55.7	58.8		31.0
Austria	72.2	75.3		
Bulgaria	87.6	89.9		
Canada	45.4	75.1		43.0
Czech Republic	69.4	78.5	83.8	
Denmark		67.5	58.9	
Finland		69.2	59.3	
France		61.1	64.4	47.0
East Germany	56.5	65.6	62.5	
West Germany	50.7	57.4	55.1	
Hungary	67.9	71.2	81.6	81.0
Ireland	85.9	84.7	80.4	
Japan	68.5	76.5	69.3	77.0
Latvia	66.3	71.2	70.1	
The Netherlands	52.1	49.2		42.0
New Zealand	69.4	76.9		
Norway	62.2	64.8	60.4	
Philippines	96.4	95.6	96.0	
Poland	81.5	87.8		80.0
Portugal		90.8	74.3	
Russia	72.2	84.9	87.4	
Slovakia	65.3	60.2	84.7	
Slovenia	69.1	68.3	56.4	
South Korea		80.5	82.2	
Spain	78.0	88.4	72.8	58.0
Sweden	50.4	48.2	41.0	20.0
Switzerland		52.0	52.9	
Taiwan		66.1	61.2	
United Kingdom	78.5	73.4	77.5	56.0
United States	68.8	77.4	65.5	55.0
Average across Countries	**69.1**	**72.9**	**71.5**	**53.6**

Note: The 2016 Pew Research data are for respondents reporting "very important" or "somewhat important." For 1995, 2003, and 2013, the average includes data for the sixteen countries with data for each wave. Source: International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1995 – National Identity I*, ZA2880 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 1995); International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 2003 – National Identity II*, ZA3910 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2003); International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 2013 – National Identity III*, ZA5950 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2013); and Bruce Stokes, "What It Takes to Truly Be 'One of Us'" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2017).

for redistribution in most Western countries for the past forty years.[23]

However, when the British surveys ask about support for redistribution to particular groups of welfare beneficiaries, nuances emerge. The perception that some beneficiaries are untrustworthy and undeserving has grown markedly.[24] Other European data have found that deservingness judgments are becoming more harsh toward single mothers, the unemployed, the disabled, and immigrants, but not, significantly, toward the elderly or the sick.[25] Thus, beneath the apparent stability in supporting the welfare state, there has been a decline in solidarity toward particular groups of recipients.

Similar trends have been observed in the United States. While social distance has decreased and mixed-race partnerships have increased, blacks continue to be seen by many as responsible for their own disadvantaged status. For example, the percentage of whites who believe that blacks just need to try harder to succeed increased from 70 percent in the 1970s to approximately 80 percent by the mid-1980s.[26] The passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) in 1996 is often interpreted as reflecting, and further fueling, a view of the poor as undeserving. Psychiatrist Helena Hansen and colleagues have argued that these policy changes forced the poor to rely on psychiatric diagnoses to justify disability benefits, thereby stigmatizing poverty as a "permanent medical pathology."[27] The PRWORA also excluded various categories of noncitizens from benefits, shifting the boundaries of social citizenship from territorial residence to a narrower determination of legal status. For the American working class, self-reliance, laziness, and responsibility gained centrality in framing the mora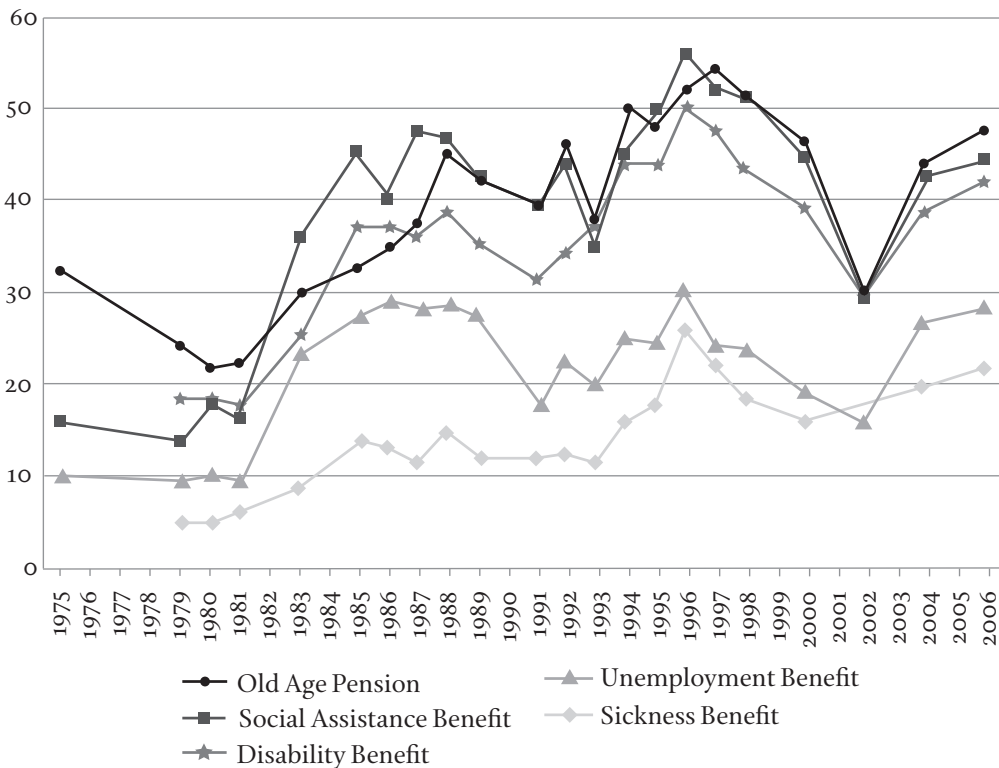l stigmatization of the poor, and especially of poor blacks.[28] To this day, Americans remain approving of the rich, especially if they maintain conditions for creating wealth for all.[29] The basic American structure of moral class boundaries continues to condemn "the lower half" and to validate the "people above."[30]

This sort of "responsibilization" may be one effect of the global turn toward neoliberalism, which emphasizes the privatization of risk, market competitiveness, and a definition of cultural membership grounded in entrepreneurialism.[31] Consistent with such an argument, in France, survey data from 1983 to 2003 show that the proportion of French residents who think that welfare may lead the poor to be satisfied with their situation and consequently not want to work increased from 23 to 53 percent. The number of those who think that the poor receive too many resources from the state also rose from 25 percent in 1992 to 54 percent in 2012.[32]

Unfortunately, we do not have comparable long-term data from most other advanced economies. Crossnational surveys only started to ask about responsibility for disadvantage in 1987, well into the neoliberal era, and the questions are not sufficiently specific to get at deservingness judgments.[33] One country with long-term data on deservingness judgments, the Netherlands, appears to present a contrast to the United States and Great Britain. The Cultural Changes in the Netherlands survey asked deservingness questions about specific beneficiary groups between 1975 and 2006.[34] Survey responses show some hardening in deservingness judgments for various beneficiaries between 1995 and 2002, but this is sandwiched between periods in which attitudes became more solidaristic; the overall thirty-year trend line is positive, not negative (see Figure 2). Thus, the trend toward more exclusionary deservingness judgments does not appear to be universal.

Figure 2
The Percentage of People Who Believe That Recipients of Benefits Are Deserving of More, 1975–2006

Source: Marjolein Jeene, Wim van Oorschot, and Wilfred Uunk, "The Dynamics of Welfare Opinions in Changing Economic, Institutional and Political Contexts: An Empirical Analysis of Dutch Deservingness Opinions, 1975–2006," *Social Indicators Research* 115 (2) (2014): 731–749.

Still, considering crossnational International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) data over a shorter time period, we can identify three tendencies. First, there is relative stability in citizens' beliefs regarding the deservingness of the sick and elderly.[35] Second, we find a decrease in sympathy for the unemployed: the ISSP data show a fairly consistent crossnational decline in support for the unemployed across the five waves (1985, 1990, 1996, 2006, and 2016) among sixteen of the twenty-four countries (see Table 4). And third, we see a greater likelihood to attribute societal success to hard work: that is, to see inequality in terms of the accomplishment of deserving individuals, as opposed to more structural explanations.[36] The evidence thus remains incomplete, but it does appear that people in many Western countries are more likely to say that members of particular low-income groups are responsible for their own fate, and so disavow obligations of solidarity toward them.

Of course, deservingness judgments are not the only factor that affects attitudes about the welfare state. Political scientist Charlotte Cavaillé has argued that since the less-well-off have a strong self-interest in supporting the welfare state, they will continue to do so, even if they

Table 4
"Do You Think the Government Has a Responsibility to Provide a Decent Standard of Living
for the Unemployed?"

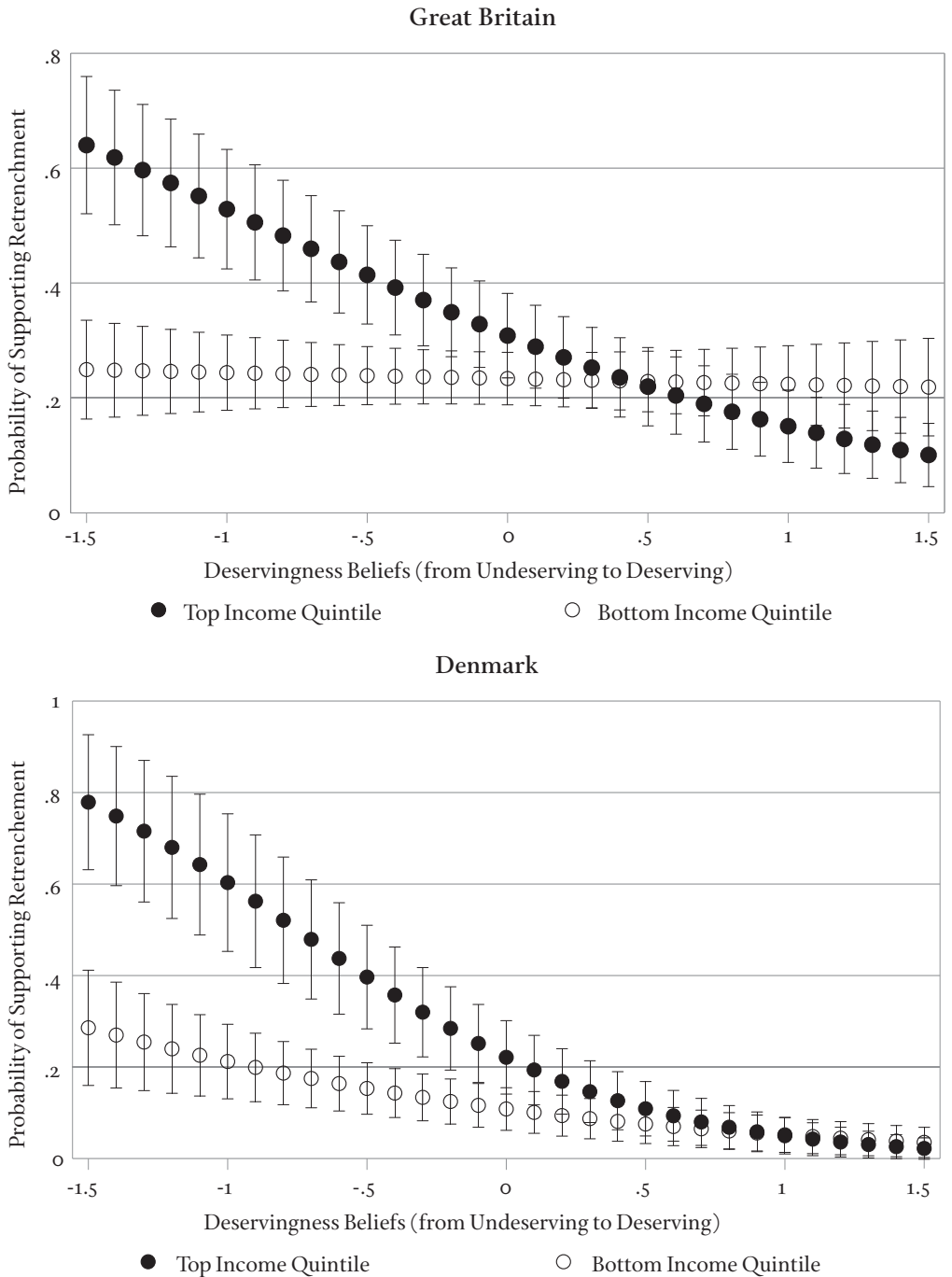| Country	Percent Saying Either "Definitely" or "Probably"				
	1985	1990	1996	2006	2016
Australia	59.0	55.7	65.2	57.3	55.2
Canada			65.5	63.1	
Czech Republic			44.7	48.4	48.2
France			80.9	70.2	70.2
East Germany		94.1	91.6	79.7	70.2
West Germany	85.4	78.4	80.4	66.7	72.9
Hungary		72.3	62.8	69.2	73.1
Ireland		90.6	91.5	81.8	
Israel		62.1	62.5	65.3	65.8
Palestine			85.5	60.3	
Italy	84.8	77.8	75.1		
Japan			73.0	56.5	53.4
Latvia			82.6	64.9	63.3
New Zealand			63.5	49.2	62.7
Norway		90.6	92.7	88.5	89.3
Philippines			72.5	79.3	
Poland			81.2	81.6	
Russia			80.6	68.2	75.0
Slovenia			86.4	82.8	80.0
Spain			93.9	92.8	96.2
Sweden			90.3	83.4	76.4
Switzerland			71.6	67.0	72.5
United Kingdom	85.6	80.1	78.7	57.3	60.2
United States	50.3	52.9	47.7	52.0	56.6
Average across Countries	73.0	75.5	75.9	68.9	69.0

Source: International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 1985/1990/1996/2006 Cumulation–Role of Government I–IV*, ZA4747 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2008); and International Social Survey Programme, *ISSP 2016–Role of Government V*, ZA6900 (Köln: GESIS, Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, 2018).

become increasingly harsh in their de-servingness judgments toward (other) recipients.[37] But she has suggested that harsher deservingness judgments are likely to erode support for the welfare state among the well-off, and evidence from Great Britain and Denmark seems to bear this out (see Figure 3). If she is correct, the political impact of shifts in deservingness judgments may have been blunted due to subgroup variations in opinion.

We have evidence that over the past fifty years, definitions of *membership*

Figure 3
Predicted Support for a Decrease in Spending and Taxes:
Top versus Bottom Income Quintiles in Great Britain and Denmark

Great Britain

Denmark

Source: Charlotte Cavaillé, "Deservingness, Self-Interest and the Welfare State: Why Some Care More about Deservingness Than Others," LIS Working Paper Series No. 652 (Luxembourg: Luxembourg Income Study Cross-National Data Center, 2015).

have become more pluralistic and inclusive, but judgments about *social citizenship* (welfare redistribution) have become more restrictive or more fraught. These two trends are not universal or linear; they vary in strength across different countries, and across public opinion and public policy. Still, we believe that these tensions are relevant for a politics of equality, and that the prospects for a more equal and inclusive society depend in part on whether we can sustain the move toward inclusive national membership while avoiding the potential for exclusionary and stigmatizing deservingness judgments.

We draw from four disciplinary perspectives to make sense of these two trends, highlighting micro-, meso-, and macroprocesses.

From the perspective of normative political theory, these trends can be understood through the lens of *solidarity*, which in turn implicates people's *sense of justice*. Here, we first describe these concepts, and then show how they can shed light on our two trends.

Political theory is a field of normative inquiry: its aim is not to explain how things are, but rather to identify how things ought to be. It is also an exercise in "practical reason": it is supposed to give us reasons for action. And, if political theory is to be action-guiding rather than idle fantasy, its conclusions about what ought to be must be feasible. Political theory is about "realistic utopias," in political philosopher John Rawls's phrase, and so must be consistent with what we know about human capacities to act justly.[38] There is little point in elaborating a vision of justice if people are unable to recognize the legitimate claims of others, or moderate the pursuit of their own self-interest to help the disadvantaged. Hobbes aside, most political theorists have assumed that people do indeed have the capacity for a sense of justice. In Rawls's

terms, people are not just "rational" in the sense of efficiently pursuing their personal good, but also "reasonable" in the sense of acknowledging the legitimate claims of others. A more egalitarian society requires that the advantaged – the strong, the fortunate, the talented – moderate their claims and forgo opportunities to exploit their power and privileges. A sense of justice can motivate the advantaged to accept these constraints in the pursuit of their self-interest.

Political theorists typically distinguish two dimensions of this sense of justice, which we might call *universal humanitarianism* and *bounded solidarity*. Universal humanitarianism is a direct response to the suffering of others, whoever and wherever they are. We can be moved to provide aid to famines in distant societies, or to provide emergency health care for tourists who fall ill, whether or not they are members of our society. Some people even protect members of other species from harm. These humanitarian responses do not depend on shared membership in a bounded community.

Other obligations, however, are tied to membership, and hence to bounded solidarity. Most political theorists include the welfare state in this category. The welfare state is not just a humanitarian impulse to relieve suffering. The welfare state, in the robust form endorsed by progressives, has historically been rooted in an *ethic of social membership*. Social justice is about the mutual obligations we have to one another as members of a shared society; it rests on some image of a decent, good, or just society that belongs to all of its members, and of the sort of egalitarian relations that should characterize it. We might say that justice among members is egalitarian, not just humanitarian.

If this is correct, it raises two questions. How are the boundaries of social

membership determined: that is, how do we determine who can claim the benefits of bounded solidarity in addition to universal humanitarianism? And what does the ethic of membership require: that is, what do we owe our comembers in regards to social rights and redistribution?

On the first question, most political theorists assume that the primary basis for bounded solidarity is the nation. There is no logical necessity for this. Throughout history, a wide range of social units have played this role, some below the nation (such as kin groups) and some above (such as global religions). But over the past two hundred years, the nation-state has become the primary focus for bounded solidarity. And many political theorists argue that nationhood is a particularly powerful basis for solidarity, since nationhood is often defined as a community of shared fate. To inculcate a sense of shared nationhood among citizens – as modern nation-states seek to do – is in part to inculcate a sense of mutual obligation, including redistributive obligations.[39]

While nationhood remains the primary basis for bounded solidarity, the evidence discussed previously suggests that definitions of national membership are changing. In the past, ideas of nationhood were culturally assimilationist and racially exclusionary. More recently, the boundaries of membership have expanded to incorporate previously excluded ethnic, racial, and religious groups. In principle, this entails an obligation to reconstruct social relations on a more egalitarian basis. If someone is a member of society, then society belongs to them as much as to anyone else, and the common institutions that govern the society should be as responsive to their interests and perspectives as to anyone else's. Unfortunately, this expansion in national membership has not been accompanied by feelings of mutual obligation, at least in relation to social rights. Access to welfare resources has eroded, or at least become more conditional on deservingness judgments, which in effect means it is not really a right of membership at all, but rather something stigmatized groups need to earn in the face of suspicions about their need or effort.

As a result, a wider range of people can now claim national membership, but the sense of bounded solidarity triggered by inclusion within the national "we" is blunted by stigmatizing deservingness judgments toward the poor and racialized minorities. Recognition of membership calls on us to care for and share the fate of our conationals, but deservingness judgments allow us to disengage morally from the fate of our fellow citizens.

Many political theorists despair about the rise of moralistic deservingness judgments, and some seek a conception of bounded solidarity that preempts questions of deservingness. However, this may not be possible. It is not enough, in making membership-based claims, to say that one is human or has urgent interests: that is the logic of humanitarianism. Rather, membership-based claims require individuals to have certain types of social relationships and affiliations. Someone is part of the national "we" because she has made a life here, complies with its social norms, shares in the burdens of social cooperation, participates in its institutionalized forms of reciprocity and risk-pooling, shows concern for its collective well-being and collective future, and contributes in ways that suit her capacities. It is these membership-based attitudes and behaviors that justify distinguishing solidaristic obligations to comembers from humanitarian obligations to tourists or foreigners.

This suggests that the demands of bounded solidarity prompt certain types of deservingness judgments. Some

commentators suggest that deserving-ness judgments reflect the triumph of neoliberal tropes about self-reliance over bounded solidarities, but in fact, bound-ed solidarity generates its own logic of de-servingness. Our solidaristic obligations to comembers depend on the assumption that they have a depth of commitment to and engagement in our society that non-members do not have. And this, arguably, is what many deservingness judgments track. Surveys suggest that deservingness judgments are composed of five dimen-sions, four of which we highlight here.[40] The first – *control*, or the extent to which someone's disadvantage was under their voluntary control – may indeed reflect neoliberal ideas of individual responsi-bility. Three other dimensions, however, seem to reflect perceptions of social com-mitment. These three dimensions are: *attitude* (the extent to which recipients are seen as accepting benefits in the spirit of civic friendship); *reciprocity* (the extent to which recipients are seen as likely to help other members when it is their turn to do so); and *identity* (the extent to which re-cipients are seen as belonging to a shared society).[41] While much of the literature on deservingness focuses on the control dimension – and hence on perceptions of laziness or work ethic – the evidence sug-gests that perceptions of social commit-ment are equally powerful.[42]

The salience of these criteria should not be surprising if, as Marshall argued, the welfare state is rooted in a "sense of community membership." Judgments of identity, attitude, and reciprocity ask whether someone displays the attitudes and behaviors that distinguish members from nonmembers (or conversely, wheth-er someone has renounced the respon-sibilities of membership and shown no commitment to society and its future).

This suggests that the problem is not that citizens make deservingness judgments – this may be characteristic of any bounded solidarity – but that they make these judgments in biased ways.[43] All too often, citizens privilege those who belong and contribute in the same way that they do, while discounting the co-operation and affiliation of those who differ from them. Inherited conceptions of membership have been defined by and for historically dominant groups, in ways that valorize their specific modes of being and belonging. This suggests that the route to a more equal society re-quires challenging biased perceptions of the (non)contribution and (non)affilia-tion of people with disabilities, the poor, or immigrants, just as feminism chal-lenged biased perceptions of women's contributions.

In short, struggles for a more equal so-ciety require attending to bounded sol-idarity, which rests on an ethic of mem-bership, which in turn rests on expec-tations of belonging, contribution, and allegiance that underpin deservingness judgments. Insofar as these expectations are biased, a crucial political task is to de-velop new narratives of national mem-bership that recognize a wider range of legitimate modes of being, participation, contribution, and affiliation.

This may sound overly theoretical, but the real-world politics of equality argu-ably fit this diagnosis. Claims to equali-ty are rarely articulated solely in the lan-guage of shared humanity, but rather stake claims to belonging and member-ship. Equality-seeking groups typically want to be recognized, not just as fully human, but as fully American or fully French. They want to be recognized as belonging here and as participating in and contributing to a shared society.[44] Claims to membership and contribution are often central to people's sense of mor-al worth, and to the way they understand the claims they can make on others.

How then can we challenge biased perceptions of belonging? Ideas of multiculturalism might help. Multiculturalism is often understood as simply a feel-good celebration of diversity. Within political theory, however, multiculturalism does not simply celebrate diverse identities, but recognizes them as modes of participating in and contributing to the national society, and hence as valid ways of expressing an ethic of membership. A solidarity-promoting multiculturalism starts from the premise that one way to be a proud and loyal Canadian is to be a proud Greek-Canadian or gay-Canadian or Crip-Canadian, and that the activities of one's group are understood as forms of belonging and investing in society.[45] The political task of multiculturalism, in part, is to provide opportunities for differences to be visibly manifested in spaces that mark them as manifestations of civic friendship, engagement, contribution, and allegiance. In this way, a politics of recognition aimed at affirming cultural membership is intimately linked to the politics of redistribution aimed at social citizenship.

The specifics of what this would require vary from group to group, in part because the stigmas and prejudices that discount people's membership and contribution vary from group to group. But by confronting the sources of the majority's biased deservingness judgments and creating opportunities for minorities to exhibit their adherence to an ethic of membership, we might combine inclusive definitions of nationhood with social citizenship.

From a social-psychological perspective, a movement toward more inclusive national membership may result in harsher deservingness judgments for some but not others, and only in certain contexts. Social psychologists take a contingency approach: understanding responses, such as beliefs about what others deserve, result from individual differences that vary depending on the situation and context.

At an individual level, people form conceptions of their own and others' social identities that can be nested. Superordinate groups can consist of multiple subgroups. Thus, for instance, while we may all be Canadians, there are also English-Canadians, Chinese-Canadians, and so on. Notably, despite a conscious recognition that a variety of ethnic subgroups are citizens, people may hold different associations at an automatic or implicit level.[46] There is empirical evidence that Americans – of multiple ethnicities – associate "American" with the category "White" more quickly than with "Black," "Latino," or "Asian."[47] Thus, an acknowledgment of the legal membership of diverse ethnic groups may not necessarily align with an implicit categorization of who is truly one of "us." Such categorization processes are highly consequential: people have a strong tendency to ascribe more positive characteristics to, place greater trust in, and allocate more outcomes to ingroup than outgroup members.[48]

The process of demarcating boundaries between us and them is strongly determined by situational and contextual threat cues. At the most basic level, people's experience of fear can lead them to more readily designate others as outgroup members.[49] Perceiving a difficult economic context and intergroup competition can cause a rise in people's social dominance orientation (SDO), which is a general preference for group-based hierarchy, and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), which involves an authoritarian desire to punish outgroups seen as deviant.[50] In turn, SDO and RWA predict prejudice toward immigrants because they are seen to be threats and toward the poor because they are assumed

to be ethnic minorities who are responsible for their fate.[51] An international survey found that the more cultural and economic threat respondents felt, the more they excluded those without common ancestry or birthplace from national identity.[52]

For some, the opening of civil, social, and cultural membership can act as a source of threat. For those who strongly identify with a subgroup (such as white Americans), an emphasis solely on a superordinate identity (such as "we are all Americans") threatens their distinctive identity.[53] The integration of former outgroups can be viewed as a form of cultural or identity threat (they are not really "one of us"), social threat (they are pushing to be included where they do not belong), or economic threat ("reverse discrimination harms me"). Thus, ethnic outgroup members seen as pushing for inclusion could be met with backlash consisting of sharper ingroup-outgroup boundaries and meager outgroup resource allocations.[54] These processes can be manipulated by political elites.[55] Thus, fear of outsiders can be used to bolster ingroup identities and to maintain political power.[56]

Framings of citizenship can affect these psychological processes and deservingness judgments. In countries where an ethnic model of citizenship is widely endorsed, people with a stronger national identification hold more negative attitudes toward immigrants, including the belief that the government spends too much money on them.[57] The same relation does not hold in countries where an ethnic model of citizenship is less strong. Thus, restrictive grounds for citizenship narrow conceptions of the ingroup and lead to less generosity. On the flip side, civic framings of citizenship create opportunities for inclusion. When Canadians are primed to think of Canada as including native-born people

and immigrants, attitudes toward immigrants become more positive.[58] However, the same priming does not affect German participants' attitudes toward immigrants.[59] Presumably, Canadians and Germans still differ in the malleability of their beliefs that immigrants belong to the ingroup due to differences in policy history or popular or elite discourse that employ civic (or multicultural) frames of nationality. Notably, when people are induced to consider how immigrants and the national group do not share a moral community, they show less ethical obligation for the welfare and interests of people with a different religion, ethnicity, and beliefs, and they are more supportive of social policies that restrict outcomes for immigrants.[60]

Unlike political theorists' conception of deservingness judgments, which require civic participation and reciprocity, for social psychologists, deservingness judgments are often tied to the distributive justice principle of equity. Outcomes are equitable if, as a target's inputs (such as abilities, traits, effort, and so on) increase, so do outcomes (such as money or jobs), in relation to a relevant comparison other.[61] In an ideal world, when using the equity principle, it would be possible to: identify appropriate inputs, measure these inputs accurately, and weigh these inputs appropriately. However, such judgments are prone to a variety of biases.[62]

People tend to evaluate whether outcome allocations are fair in ways that favor themselves and their ingroups at the expense of outgroups.[63] They will place more weight on inputs that favor ingroups over outgroups, while stereotypes of outgroups bias assessments of their competence and worth.[64] Both explicit and implicit prejudices affect judgments of others' deservingness and, consequently, allocation decisions.[65] Indeed,

people who more strongly believe that society is a properly operating meritocracy engage in more prejudice, stereotyping, and harsh deservingness judgments of disadvantaged group members, such as women or ethnic minorities.[66] These biases are ostensibly made on the basis of merit and, as such, people can discriminate against outgroup members without necessarily appearing prejudiced.

Political sociologists may consider the psychological processes and judgments of normal people to be unimportant if they fail to influence public policy. However, such a view ignores the importance of such judgments for people's daily affect, thought, and behavior: Whom to hire, fire, or promote? What is someone's worth? Who are desirable neighbors and friends? Such responses in turn affect marginalized group members' feelings of belongingness, experiences of discrimination, livelihoods, well-being, and health.[67]

So how can psychological processes that lead to harsh deservingness judgments be mitigated? Moreover, if societal shifts toward greater inclusion create, for some, a feeling of threat that exacerbates these processes, what might bring about greater equality and inclusion?

First, macrolevel interventions that promote a multicultural yet united national identity could lead people to be less biased in their application of the equity principle as ethnic and other minorities come to be classified as prototypical ingroup members. Second, mesolevel interventions should increase diversity in institutions such as workplaces, schools, and universities. According to the contact hypothesis, if people have the opportunity to interact with outgroup members in contexts in which they have equal status and shared goals that they work on interdependently, prejudice will be reduced.[68] Through opportunities for sustained interaction, stereotypes can be challenged, friendships built, anxieties lessened, and superordinate identities formed.[69] This should reduce opposition to inclusion based on biases or perceived threat.[70] Further, when social relations are more proximate and marked by similarity, liking, or long-term interactions, we see a stronger preference for equality or need-based allocations than equity-based allocations.[71] Thus, judgments of deservingness could be bypassed altogether.

These interventions may, in the short term, be met with resistance, but they all draw on an understanding of how to shape people's social, economic, political, and cultural contexts so that social-psychological processes may lead, over time, to more inclusive conceptions of "us" deserving greater equality.

From a boundary perspective, the tensions between more inclusive national membership and exclusionary or tiered social citizenship are not surprising. This is because a boundary approach distinguishes between symbolic and social boundaries. Symbolic boundaries refer to the evaluative distinctions made between groups of people (class, ethnoracial, religious, and gender groups, including the poor, immigrants, and others) or through practices (such as cultural consumption, expressions of masculinity, or national sentiments). Social boundaries refer to patterns of associations as manifested in degrees of separation and proximity between groups (through intermarriage, homophily in friendship, spatial segregation, and so on).[72] Both are bases for opportunity-hoarding and closure, including access to social rights (welfare resources).[73] As such, recognition and distribution are distinct but interconnected dimensions of inequality. Recognition is about extending cultural

membership to the widest segments of the population, defining the largest number as worthy. But how this can be achieved depends on cultural processes that are different from mechanisms of the distribution of resources.[74]

A boundary approach considers the salience of boundaries, how they interact, their characteristics and properties (such as whether they are crossable, bright, or blurred), the processes of their transformation, and how cultural producers (such as politicians and journalists) make some boundaries more visible than others.[75] For instance, Michèle Lamont and colleagues analyzed the electoral speeches of Donald Trump in his 2016 presidential campaign and demonstrated how the candidate's negative and positive references to various polarizing groups (the poor, LGBTQ, illegal and legal immigrants, Muslims, and others) resonated with some of the symbolic boundaries drawn by white working-class men twenty years ago, thus helping to validate their sense of dignity and bolstering their claim of superior relative positioning.[76] A primary focus of the boundary approach is to understand how cultural membership (worthiness) is extended to various groups. This framework has been applied to cases such as the construction of the public sphere in Norway, the everyday cosmopolitanism of British blue-collar workers, how the French army excludes Muslims, the destigmatization of Turks in Germany, how noise serves as a marker of ethnic boundaries in Israel, and more.

While there is a great deal of variation in social-psychological approaches to identity, these typically focus on ingroup/outgroup dynamics at the intra-individual or interpersonal levels. The opposition between us and them is often said to result from evolution (in the form of tribalism) and to be a standard feature of human psychology. In contrast, a boundary approach explicitly frames boundaries as highly variable and tied to varying degrees of groupness.[77] Degrees of groupness result from pathways involving 1) us/them self-identification and group categorization experienced at the individual level; 2) widely available narratives about the deservingness of groups and about the institutionalization of criteria of worth (not only moral, but also cultural and socioeconomic); 3) social boundaries, or the degree of separation and proximity between groups; and 4) other background factors pertaining to the institutional and legal context, the extent of inequality, and more.[78]

The boundary approach locates individuals in multidimensional environments, with time, spatial, network, and organizational dynamics. Individual positions are defined relationally (through fields dynamics) and entail experiences of relative group position or group competition. Also, while social psychologists consider how micro-situations (such as levels of interdependence) influence identity, the boundary approach is concerned with how boundary patterns change over time as well as cultural and social structuring factors, such as the taken-for-grantedness of scripts.

An important focal point is understanding stigmatization and destigmatization processes. For instance, how have groups that were formally stigmatized, such as people living with HIV/AIDS, come to be more included as compared with groups that remain stigmatized, such as the obese? Michèle Lamont and colleagues Caitlin Daniel and Matthew Clair show that the transformation of the relative inclusion of the former group involved the collaboration of knowledge producers (medical, policy, legal, and social science experts) and advocates and moral entrepreneurs (social movements leaders).[79] They mobilized widely available cultural

resources, such as the ideology of equality, to build bridges with social movements, and progressively legitimized and diffused shared cultural scripts defining the destigmatized group as rational (capable of self-control) or deserving (in terms of merit, morality, self-reliance, or other criteria). The role of the media and journalists is also important, as well as organizations that institutionalize practices reinforcing equality between groups (corporations, higher education, politics, and so on). The symbolic boundaries toward such groups (such as feelings of social distance and dislike) weaken, at the same time that individuals come to experience weaker social boundaries (through legal change and access to resources, for instance).

Power struggles around status order are central to the transformation of these social and symbolic boundaries, as illustrated in countless histories of the women's and civil rights movements. The latter require the progressive construction of groups as having agency and a modicum of cultural coherence and shared identity. Such transformations are often described in terms of available cultural/cognitive repertoires, and intergroup and organizational dynamics, which make some individual prejudices/stereotypes more or less likely. The emphasis is typically not on the immediate (proximate) situation but on mesolevel changes, even if "carried" by individuals.[80] While these frames may be contested and fought over, an agreement builds around them to the point at which they become progressively taken for granted and new collective identities consolidate, converging with the social mobilization approach described below.[81]

In this view, exclusion of the poor depends not only on shared views about their deservingness, but also on the decline in scripts about collective respon-sibility toward the needy, and a decline of social solidarity more generally.[82] To understand these changes, one considers not only how the poor are stigmatized morally, but also broader cultural changes: the rise of market fundamentalism and individualism, shared views about what defines a polity and what are the shared responsibilities that bind comembers, and so on.[83] Such cultural changes can be studied empirically through process-tracing, which requires considering not only which groups get most excluded (illegal immigrants, the poor, Muslims) and how this varies across national contexts, but also what factors make boundaries become more or less permeable or porous.[84] For example, sociologist Andreas Wimmer gives an account for changes in boundaries, focusing on 1) the political salience of ethnic boundaries; 2) social closure and exclusion along ethnic lines; 3) cultural differentiation between groups; and 4) stability over time.[85]

An advantage of the boundary approach is that it does not predefine what arguments ground the beliefs of ordinary people concerning similarities and differences between us and them, whether that we are all worthy as "children of God," human beings, consumers, citizens, or conationals. The salience of arguments is studied empirically and is generally found to vary across populations. This contrasts with sociologists Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thevenot's work on *cités*, which predefines orders of justification that are used across types of situations.[86] Their approach specifies criteria based on types of logic of legitimation found in the political philosophy literature (such as criteria of industrial efficiency, market rationality, civic bonds, "domestic" proximity, and so on). The boundary approach instead proceeds inductively to document the relative salience of arguments about worth, and to account

for patterns in reference to macrosocial changes, such as the diffusion of neoliberal arguments concerning who is worthy (such as the association of worth with financial success and self-reliance).

What does the boundary approach suggest concerning how to extend cultural membership to the largest number? Institutions and cultural repertoires play a crucial role in providing shared scripts about the positive and negative definition of groups. Laws and policies are central to conveying such messages. For instance, the adoption of same-sex marriage legislation in thirty-two American states led to a 7 percent decline in suicide attempts among LGBTQ-identified high school students.[87] Moreover, various groups of knowledge and cultural producers (journalists, social scientists, medical, legal, and policy experts, and artists in the performing and visual arts) contribute to shaping shared representations of groups. By studying how destigmatization has operated in the past through process-tracing, it is possible to better understand how such professional groups can contribute to social change, especially when collaborating with social movement activists and religious and political organizations concerned with social inclusion. Such groups may be particularly well equipped to amplify the impact of transnational cultural repertoires, such as human rights and neoliberal frames, that influence who can be included among those worthy of protection and solidarity, and under what conditions.

Our interest in deservingness judgments is animated by a normative concern over socioeconomic inequality, a concern that we believe should be addressed by some degree of government action rather than just private charity. What then drives state action? So far, we have considered normative ideals, cognitive schema, and cultural scripts. The ideals, schema, and scripts in people's minds may be consequential if we believe that public opinion has a direct influence on the provision of social benefits and enactment of policies that enhance social citizenship. However, public opinion can be divided, and political decisions invariably entail much more than aggregated public opinion. Here we direct attention to an analysis of power and political institutions: who or what shapes laws and institutional processes, how, and for what reasons? These questions draw attention to political conflict and the institutionalization of "winning" outcomes.

Public opinion may matter. In democracies, we presume that public opinion – based on notions of solidarity, ingroup affinities, and symbolic boundaries, as detailed above – has an impact on social policy through the electoral process. Public opinion could also provide guidance to nonelected officials, including administrators and judges, shaping their decisions. But a "democratic" politics is not necessarily inclusive, as can be seen in Donald Trump's election to the U.S. presidency or the success of far-right parties across Europe. Considering the tensions between broadening membership and restricting social citizenship, lack of inclusion may flow from biases in the public's assessments of contribution, exclusionary views of prototypical members, or stigmatization of certain groups. Greater inclusion would thus require shifting the hearts and minds of the public.

Yet it is not clear that public opinion drives political decision-making or administrative rule-making when it comes to allocating rights, resources, and recognition. Some researchers argue that narrow subsets of the population or particular interest groups dominate policy-making, including on issues of solidarity or equality. Who has the right to vote, and

who actually casts a ballot? In general, voters tend to skew richer, whiter, and older than the general population. As political scientist Kay Schlozman and colleagues have concluded, studying political engagement in the United States, "those who are not affluent and well-educated are less likely to take part politically and are even less likely to be represented by the activity of organized interests."[88] The apportionment of seats in the legislative body might favor rural interests over urban ones.[89]

Imbalances in who has a voice might grow after the votes are counted. Once elected and faced with crafting policy, politicians may listen more to the views of rich constituents or business interests that can fund their next campaign, or who share their backgrounds and worldviews. Public policy scholar Martin Gilens has argued that in the United States, when the policy preferences of low- or middle-income Americans diverge from those of the affluent, policy outcomes are more likely to align with the preferences of the well-off and rarely reflect the wishes of the less advantaged.[90] The implications for our puzzle may be that inclusive formal membership is pushed by businesses that benefit from immigration or tapping talented minorities and educated women, but these same businesses do not support redistribution. Those who would favor redistribution have few resources to fight for such policies. In this scenario, expanding membership, twinned with harsh deservingness judgments, reflects the relative power of groups in a political system.

An implication of such an analysis is that the norms and cultural views of elites matter more for the institutionalization of inclusion and equality than broad-based feelings of solidarity among the public. Earlier, we noted that elites embedded in more cosmopolitan world cultures may push inclusive membership further than some members of the public want. Economic or ideological elites may also advance harsher deservingness judgments than many in the public support, in part out of belief in meritocracy. Research on elite education suggests that many elites believe in merit and ignore their own structural privileges, partly because this offers a positive story about how their position derives from their own talents and abilities.[91] If ascriptive discrimination has been eliminated in formal law and policy, the thinking goes, then residual inequality must be based on individual achievement. Elites may thus support expanded political, social, and cultural membership, but put up less of a fight over social redistribution or affirmative action.

If elites have political, economic, or moral power, then they – and the institutions they direct and the laws that they pass and enforce – can produce or reinforce symbolic and social boundaries. Laws, for instance, carry a moral weight that can reconstitute notions of deservingness. This can work in inclusive or exclusionary ways. U.S. welfare reform legislation in 1996 strengthened the idea that social benefits should only go to citizens by excluding various classes of noncitizens from access. Conversely, California's decision to charge undocumented residents the same tuition fees as other California residents at public colleges and universities reduced stigma for "illegal" students and drew a more inclusive "Californian" membership circle.[92] Depending on who has the levers of power, laws, rules, and resources can shape inclusionary or exclusionary dynamics in a top-down direction. This shapes notions of solidarity among the public and can spur claims-making by excluded groups.

Institutions can also affect membership and social citizenship by channeling

the ebb and flow of claims-making. Social spending data suggest a paradox: there is not much evidence that countries are spending less on social policies, even if voters want to spend less money on certain types of people. One possible reason is that governments have "veto points" in which organized collective interests can exert pressure to stop policy changes. Political actors can appeal to the executive branch to stop the legislative branch's actions, or push one legislative chamber to block another, as when lobbyists turn their attention from the House of Representatives to the U.S. Senate. In federal systems, organized groups – from business interests to social justice movements – can pit levels of government against each other.

Attention to veto points and institutions raises important questions about whether the legislative, executive, or judicial branches are more open to inclusive membership or expansive social citizenship. For instance, in most liberal democracies, citizens can challenge proposed policy in the courts. The decision by the Trump administration to bar people from certain Muslim-majority countries from entry, including settled permanent residents, was halted by court injunction, modified, and then further fought through the court system. This can be read as a battle over the boundaries of membership. In the United States, courts have historically deferred to the other branches of government when it comes to regulating migrants' entry into the United States, even as U.S. courts have also expanded membership at various times to racial or sexual minorities. Courts also tend to be more likely to protect "negative" rights related to antidiscrimination measures, which may advance inclusive membership, than to enforce "positive" rights to social benefits, leaving the contours of social citizenship

more open to the ebbs and flows of legislative decision-making.

More generally, a focus on politics and power draws our attention to contestation and change. Our earlier discussion of normative ideas, cognitive schema, and cultural scripts is relatively silent on the question of how social change occurs. How do people make claims to membership or advance social citizenship? How do political institutions shape who is heard and has power? Drawing on our earlier discussion, in battles over the direction and purpose of state action, normative narratives can matter. In the language of social movement scholars, these are battles around "framing" an issue, which involves "the struggle over the production of mobilizing" and "counter-mobilizing ideas."[93] Such ideas identify what is wrong and why, and what needs to be done. As other political actors articulate different frames, framing contests are carried out in legislatures, courtrooms, and the media on issues ranging from sexual harassment to immigration.[94] Framing contests provide a bridge between attention to power and institutions, on one hand, and notions of solidarity, judgment, and cultural scripts, on the other.

Still, the success of a political movement almost never turns on only the resonance of an idea. One must pay attention to the resources deployed by different political actors, be they financial, human, or organizational, and the "political opportunity structure" of institutions that constrain or channel action. If we consider the iconic twentieth-century movement for full membership of the U.S. black civil rights movement, the ideals of racial equality as articulated by charismatic leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. clearly mattered. But so did black churches as mobilizing structures for direct protest, the tactics of nonviolence used by demonstrators, the

role of legal activism, the human and financial resources provided by white supporters of the movement, and the context of the Cold War, which influenced the domestic calculations of the White House in the face of continued congressional opposition to voting rights or racial equality legislation.

Thus, a political sociology of membership demands attention to multiple levels of analysis, from public opinion and voting behavior to the actions of collective groups and analysis of institutions. It directs attention to identifying who advances inclusive or exclusive views of membership and how much power they have to diffuse these ideas and embed them in policy. Consider, for instance, noncitizen permanent residents' access to social benefits. In the mid-1990s, some scholars claimed that civil, political, and social rights were increasingly given to residents based on universal humanity, a "cosmopolitan" view grounded in residence within a liberal, democratic state. Universal personhood norms and human rights were held by lawyers, judges, and other elite actors who institutionalized these views in international or regional bodies such as the European Court of Justice or within the domestic judiciary, an institution somewhat insulated from the countervailing public opinion pressures faced by politicians.[95] Yet, as immigration, citizenship, and migrants' rights became increasingly politicized in the twenty-first century, political entrepreneurs in far-right or even center-right parties adopted exclusionary membership ideals and appealed to voters on that basis. Many such parties gained significant electoral ground. In both cases, membership narratives matter, but in radically distinct ways.

Some pessimists argue that the only clear route to more inclusive membership and robust social citizenship is old-fashioned power politics. For example, in some countries, immigrants over time will gain enough voting clout to muscle their way into the welfare state, even in the face of xenophobia. But the willingness of states to grant citizenship to immigrants depends in part on perceptions of their membership and contribution, so it is not clear that this route avoids the need to confront deservingness judgments. A simple "politics and power" approach risks reducing the social world to clashing resources, and outcomes to one group's mastery of the institutions that determine policy and enforce it through laws. We believe that power matters, but so does paying attention to normative claims and cultural scripts, which adds an important ideational and cultural element. A successful politics of inclusive solidarity requires rewriting cultural narratives of membership and belonging alongside the exercise of political muscle.

One response to the tensions between membership and social citizenship is to articulate an ethic of solidarity and contribution that is genuinely multicultural. But while this approach provides an objective to which we can aspire, it is silent on the means required to enact it. Here, social psychology helps us to identify mechanisms by which ideas about status or meritocracy are enacted in particular contexts. Existing research suggests that more expansive, plural membership views should come with more generous deservingness judgments. To the extent that we do not see this, at the collective level, we must consider the impact of threat perceptions in reinforcing exclusionary ingroup boundaries. From a boundary approach, those wishing to advance inclusionary membership and social citizenship must destigmatize groups such as the poor and immigrants, redefining symbolic boundaries.

But how do we enact social change? Clearly this can occur from the bottom-up: changing norms of interaction among people at a local level can be diffused through social movements, and then enshrined in law or policy, thanks to changing cultural norms or the electoral pressures of public opinion. But just as clearly, this can also be a more elite-driven process, involving top-down restructuring of norms, cultural scripts, and social interaction patterns (such as through the influence of knowledge-workers, the media, or affirmative action policies). Many progressive changes to advance equality have led rather than followed public opinion, from views on interracial marriage to the extension of public resources to undocumented immigrants.

The accounts we elaborate differ somewhat in identifying who serves as a vector of change, and the processes by which symbolic boundaries of the ingroup shift. A power-and-politics approach is attentive to who has financial and political power, and the people and institutions that define and interpret legislation. A boundary approach points to the ideational work of knowledge producers and mesolevel organizational infrastructures that affect how we interact at work, at school, and in our leisure time. Both believe that social movements matter, but neither offers magic formulas for how they can be successful.

In all of this, there are framing contests. Thus, while cultural repertoires matter, multiple narratives of merit or blame, deservingness or stigma, coexist and vary across place and subgroup. These narratives can be in strong competition. How do we understand which ideas "win"? This is an important agenda for future scholarship. From a power-and-politics view, researchers must pay attention to resources, political opportunity structures, and the "rules of the game" shaping decisions about law and policy. Once enacted, policies generate new cultural schema. What we know from social psychology suggests that people strongly desire a positive self-image and react negatively to perceived threats to their status or interests; inclusive narratives must be framed so as to reduce threat and mitigate ingroup/outgroup distinctions. How much of this foundation is laid by routine interactions in workplaces and neighborhoods, and how much of this can be shifted by political entrepreneurs or social movement advocates? Given the current politically fraught moment, as populist narratives of exclusion challenge alternative narratives of inclusive membership, the challenge has never been greater.

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ENDNOTES

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[2] Ibid., 68, 69. According to Marshall, by the 1950s, Britain had incorporated "social rights in the status of citizenship and thus creating a universal right to real income which is not proportionate to the market value of the claimant." Ibid., 47. He acknowledged that the inherent inequalities of the market created "status differences," but argued that these are compatible with democratic citizenship "provided they do not cut too deep, but occur within a population united in a single civilization ; and provided they are not an expression of hereditary privilege." Ibid., 75–76.

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