The SAGE Handbook of
Cultural Sociology
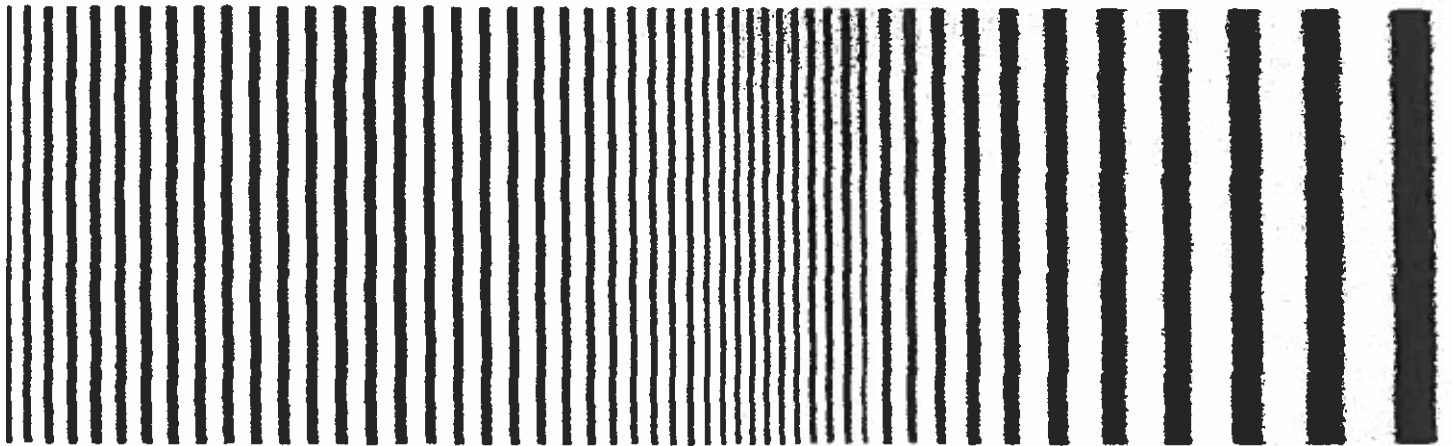
Edited by

David Inglis and
Anna-Mari Almila

⑤SAGE reference
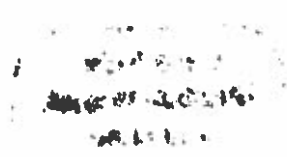
Symbolic Boundaries

Bethany Bryson

Symbolic boundaries are cultural delineations of some sort that are understood to constitute the limit or perimeter of an entity or idea or the distinction between two such entities/ideas. A symbolic boundary may be symbolic itself, or it could be marked by symbols (such as status symbols). Symbolic boundaries can also be produced by social actions for cultural reasons; they can take their shape from organizations or institutional patterns, or they can even be bound with physical markers, such as a river, a wall, or a fence. Physical and even natural contours can be symbolic when imbued with meaning. In addition, our understanding of symbolic boundaries includes more than the simple circle but also the multiple 'internal distinctions of classification systems and even complex temporal, spatial, and visual cognitive distinctions' (Lamont, Pendergrass, and Pachucki, 2015: 850).

INTRODUCTION

The definition above is based on a 'big tent' approach to symbolic boundaries, which has been my experience with the term since the early 1990s. My analysis of the field-building work that Michèle Lamont has devoted to symbolic boundaries over the years shows that she has often done the hard work for us of thinking creatively about how the many threads of research on symbolic boundaries are connected to one another.[1] It was a process of reaching out, connecting, and adding fuel. As Lamont would eventually say, 'I would suggest that from the start there was a major tension in the importation of Bourdieu to the United States, between what we could term the "orthodox" and the "heterodox" take on his work. From the onset, I located myself firmly in the heterodox camp' (Lamont, 2012: 230). Heterodoxy would inform much of what became of symbolic boundaries in the next two decades: growth and creativity.

There are always challenges to imposing heterodoxy in any field, however. Trying to build cumulative knowledge without a core foundation on which to build is never easy (Bryson, 2005). This is one reason that some scholars draw *clear* distinctions between, for example, symbolic boundaries and classification structures or between symbolic boundaries and performativity (in producing gender differences), excising pieces from the term symbolic boundaries as much as possible so that the thing remaining will have a smaller definition. I am still a fan of heterodoxy, however. It is the state of the field, and the field is healthy, vibrant and growing.

What I plan to offer, then, is a description of the field, organized by a heterodox list of boundary characteristics. It will be a list that I cannot claim to be exhaustive, and so it is a list to which I hope future scholars will add. At least, that is my challenge. In offering this list of boundary characteristics, I hope to provide some of the theoretical foundation upon which more general claims might be made or tested. At the same time, it might serve as one view of the mechanistic terrain that one might take into account in the early stages of research design, for example. Finally, I am hoping that this perspective on mapping the terrain is at least useful in that it is a view not readily available from the research databases and search engines, so while the number of works I am able to reference is limited, at least the classification system might be of some use.

HISTORY

In classical theory, Durkheim's influence on symbolic boundaries is felt most strongly both through direct inspiration and by way of the scholars he inspired. In the symbolic boundaries literature, he is generally cited for his work in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (2008 [1912]), where a single social and religious boundary marks the difference between the sacred and the profane – between members of society and outcasts. In this book, Durkheim discusses the moral order, which is more a common system of meaning than a religious leader with a stick, but being on the wrong side of a moral boundary can still imply grave power issues. Nevertheless, this book has led symbolic boundaries scholars to see Durkheim as a theorist of collective effervescence, rather than someone who could help us think about inequality. But Durkheim did theorize larger chunks of inequality in *The Division of Labour* both as binaries and as classification systems. Again, our memories tend to focus on the role of divided labour on social cohesion, but Durkheim did not forget the classification system below and he made clear symbolic claims about the relationship between occupational categories and social groups within.

> The division of labor ... determines the relations of friendship ... [T]he moral effect that it produces, and its true function is to create two or more persons feeling a solidarity ... its aim is to cause coherence among friends *and to stamp them with its seal.'* (1933 [1983]: 56, emphasis mine)

Durkheim had a direct influence on some of the precursors to symbolic boundaries research in sociology – people who, like Durkheim, studied binary boundaries around social groups, largely based on moral order and issues of crime and deviance. Kai Erickson, most famously published *Wayward Puritans* (1966), a study of the symbolic boundary drawn by the Puritan witch trials in the 17th-century Massachusetts Bay Colony. Erickson, spent most of his career studying symbolic boundaries and even used the term several times in a paper he co-authored with Robert Dentler (1959). Although the term 'symbolic boundaries' did not catch on, the idea certainly did and thrived in the deviance literature, where books like Howard Becker's *Outsiders* and Goffman's *Stigma* (1986 [1963]) are still hot commodities with the booksellers.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas might be our most significant conduit of Durkheimian boundary theory at the moment, however. She lures us in by explicitly using the term 'symbolic boundaries' (1972) and by swiftly advancing Durkheim's work in her 1966 book, *Purity and Danger.* There, she asks what happens when a person or object is unclassified in a given boundary system or doesn't fit with any of the options. She argues that this is the definition of dirt (matter out of place). For example, rice on a plate is food, but rice on the floor is dirt. And to highlight failures to classify in social situations, people who are difficult to classify by race or gender pose difficulties for their conversation partners. Depending on the nation and the situation, the difficulties may be socially awkward, legally challenging, or even life threatening (see e.g. Meadow, 2010; Spade, 2011; Zylan, 2011). Douglas goes on to discuss the likely responses to classification problems, such as eliminating the problematic matter by death or banishment, correcting them so that they fit within a category, stigmatizing them, marking them as dangerous, or deifying their difference. Finally, Douglas published a short collection of essays in 1986 called *How Institutions Think.* That book, especially the introduction, laid much groundwork for the methods that connect organizational boundaries (and research) to symbolic and even social boundaries.

Weber also gave us some very clear, if not lengthy, writing on social class and on the way group boundaries can preserve resources in a small section of *Economy and Society* (1978 [1922]) devoted to the relationship between class and status, where he simply argues that people are born into social locations that determine their life chances. We then work to preserve them through 'social closure' to exclude outsiders gaining access to our resources. This fits nicely with Durkheim's

view above. Weber also offers endless pages of analysis on ethnic group contact, but that has been less influential outside his important role in helping to define ethnicity (and to some extent race) for the discipline (Morning, 2005). Weber's work has, however, been influential in studies that draw on the importance of bureaucracies (see 'Classification Systems' below) and rationalization processes. For example, Espeland and Stevens (1998) demonstrate that the commensuration process is not merely rationalization, but also a delineation of things that can be compared to each other and excluded things that cannot be compared, evaluated, or included. In a later work, Espeland and Sauder (2007) demonstrate how ranking systems construct symbolic boundaries and affect social behaviour through self-fulfilling prophecies and commensuration.

Historically it is Weber and Marx (more so, and especially through other theorists such as Veblen, Gramsci, Bourdieu, and Foucault) who played the larger role in sealing our ability to fuse cultural analyses of social inequality through the study of symbolic boundaries; but for the next few decades, the scholars who used boundaries or neighbouring ideas would not be making the boundaries themselves the stars of the show.

Moreover, the influences of Marx and Weber on symbolic boundaries (not to mention several theoretical issues) come to us primarily through the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984 [1979]) is probably the most important theoretical piece for contemporary scholars of symbolic boundaries, as well as those who study social inequality. He synthesizes Marx and Weber, includes micro–macro links, and gives the reader a fairly complete picture of how things work in his model; but, following the title, one will see that there is a special emphasis on social class differentiation. But underneath all this grand theorizing is a survey of the people of Paris.

The empirical piece running through this book adds a level of richness to the text that has contributed to its rapid adoption as a source of research hypotheses among empirical scholars (Lamont, 2012). Moreover, the US audience had already been primed for the arrival of the translation of *Distinction* by a very popular review of two previous books of Bourdieu's by DiMaggio (1979). From here, a crescendo of events put Bourdieu on the path to fame in the United States. DiMaggio got to work testing several of Bourdieu's claims in orderly succession. In 1982 he demonstrated an empirical effect of cultural capital on school grades, laying a red carpet for the translation of *Distinction* to be released in 1984 (DiMaggio, 1982). One year later, DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) upped the ante, showing a positive effect of cultural capital on educational attainment and marital selection.

Drawing on the rich treasure trove of theoretical claims about culture, power, social class, and other forms of inequality to be found in *Distinction*, an initial bloom of research grounded in *Distinction* was devoted almost exclusively to questions of class and culture. In 1988, Lamont and Lareau published a paper that critically engaged Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital in *Sociological Theory*, giving us all more strings to pull on, as did Lamont's first big empirical study of symbolic boundaries among upper-class men in the US and France, *Money, Morals, and Manners* (1992).

By this point the bug had begun to spread and Lamont was elected chair of the American Sociological Association Culture Section in the 1994–1995 academic year. Her primary legacy from that term was the institution of a set of research networks that concentrate the interests of cultural sociologist and help make face-to-face network ties. In a section that was rapidly expanding from an intimate group of scholars with shared interests to what would become the largest section in the ASA with over 1000 members, Lamont devised a plan to create 'research networks' of free association within the section. There is no particular expectation for them, but most maintain email lists, a few host a roundtable event of some sort at ASA, and there is an occasional mini-conference. The Symbolic Boundaries Research Network, which I have co-ordinated since inception, meets regularly at an ASA roundtable, and maintains an email list (brysonbp@jmu.edu). The network sponsored an online conference in 2003, and we have published two online working papers series editions. But of most historical importance was the conscious development of the field that occurred during a 1995 Symbolic Boundaries Research Network mini conference hosted by Mark Jacobs at George Mason University (near Washington, DC, USA) and organized in tandem with Ann Swidler and the Meaning and Measurement Network. Of particular note are efforts to identify and develop theoretical and methodological interests, and organizational strategies intended to encourage a 'ground-up' production of ideas: in keeping with the heterodoxy principle, workshop topics for the conference were determined by participants, not organizers.

After this point the primary challenge for symbolic boundaries research was structural. Most of the people first involved in symbolic boundaries research – whose work would later be considered foundational – were all located inside the culture section, and so largely studied

cultural objects and meanings. As a result, our first flourishes centred around the relationship between music, art, fashion, and social class (e.g. Bryson, 1996; Crane, 1987; Erickson, 1996; Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996). By the time we turn the corner into the 21st century, however, research on race and gender has become more cultural, and a greater number of scholars are beginning to articulate their questions as matters of social construction and cultural processes. In 2002, Lamont and Molnár (2002) published an influential Annual Review paper that demonstrates how symbolic boundaries are central to the study of society by pointing to similarities between the boundaries found in a variety of institutions, topics, and realms of activity. They also provide directions for the study of those boundaries and their properties. As a result, more new research is making connections between the (constantly developing) symbolic boundaries literature and other literatures that have been with us all along.

An important example, especially for scholars of race and ethnicity is Frederick Douglass (1881), who spent most of his career studying 'the color line', and made important contributions to the sociological corpus in so doing. W.E.B. DuBois (1903) took his analysis of that line to a new level with his ideas of the 'veil' and 'double consciousness'. The idea that boundaries do not look (or operate) the same way from the inside as they do from the outside is an important concept (possibly related to inclusion and exclusion, above) that can and should be extended to other fields. In addition, Edward Said's Orientalism (2003 [1994]) has also been influential in describing post-colonial cultural representations as a series of binary boundaries experienced differently from each side: east vs. west, familiar vs. exotic, insiders vs. outsiders/others, etc.

We also had a quantitative bloom around 2000. Although Pierre Bourdieu, Richard Peterson, Paul DiMaggio, John Mohr, and myself, just to name a few, had already begun testing cultural questions with quantitative data, the idea was slow to catch on, mostly because of the placement of people training students in culture and methods. That is, programmes specializing in culture did not invest in quantitative methods and vice versa. Happily, scholarly generations are short, and that is about how long it took for a new generation of students to start proving us all wrong.

The study of gender, likewise started out with pioneering work both in the theory of gender boundaries (Gerson and Peiss, 1985) and insightful ethnographic studies from prolific, generous and inspirational scholars like Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (e.g. 1989; 1992) and Kathleen Gerson (e.g. Gerson, 1993; Jacobs and Gerson,

2004). *Gender Play*, Barrie Thorne's (1993) ground-breaking ethnography of children doing gender, provides strong evidence that many of the sex characteristics that had previously been attributed to genetics, because they influenced children at such a young age, were, in fact, imposed by school practices or even produced by children themselves. The book served as a turning point in gender studies and sociology, and it is an inspiring study in boundaries as well.

The idea that biological gender is a social production, and thus a social and symbolic boundary in need of study, slowly gained popularity through the years under the guises of sex/gender and queer theory. In 1990, Joan Acker showed how the boundaries of gender are institutionalized in organizations, Gamson expressed his fear of the movement in 1995, and Lorber (e.g. 1999) has been explaining the concept for some time. Rene Almeling's (2011) book *Sex Cells*, which uncovers the way egg and sperm donation organizations assign gender characteristics to reproductive cells and the people who produce them, is another empirical feather in the hat for how we socially construct biological sex (Fausto-Sterling, 2012; Martin, 1991). In all, the impressive and expansive cross-disciplinary scholarship I describe above (and will highlight below) is great news for the body of symbolic boundaries research. It shows that the field is strong and flourishing.

BOUNDARY CHARACTERISTICS

Below I will discuss nine characteristics of symbolic boundaries evident in the research, and the many different ways that scholars have used and meant the term symbolic boundary. This is only a first step in providing a theoretical description of the field, however, as I do not have the space to analyse the entirety of the vast and impressive symbolic boundaries literature. This list is admittedly not exhaustive, nor are the categories mutually exclusive, but I hope it will be an exciting beginning in thinking about some of the areas of cumulative work we have amassed as well as our breadth and our opportunities for creativity and growth.

It is important to note, at the outset, that there is a fair amount of research that only uses the term boundary or 'symbolic boundary' once or twice, descriptively, without giving much thought to the theoretical or methodological power that they *could* be harnessing to analyse the phenomenon they just described as bounded. That is fine, of course. I only hope that the following analysis helps

to make some of the literature more accessible if desired. What follows is divided into three main groups: 'System Issues', 'Symbols', and 'Social Action' (social boundaries). 'System Issues' cover large-scale boundary characteristics including: binaries, systems, and the question of symbolic versus social boundaries. Under 'Symbols', I cover 'symbols on boundaries', such as boundary and status markers, 'bounded meanings', and the 'meaning of concrete boundaries'. Finally under Social Action, I cover three different topics. The first is boundary work. The second is performance, ritual, and dramaturgy, while the third is inclusive versus exclusive boundaries. Finally, I end with some promising misfits that take us in new directions for the future. The end is a good place to start.

System Issues

Binaries

Binary boundaries are the quintessential form of symbolic boundary, such as a circle, dough-nut, or dividing line. Alone, a binary boundary would take the form of Durkheim's (2008 [1912]): sacred-profane dichotomy, or the fairy tale divide between: masculine and feminine. Jeffrey Swindle (2014), for example, catalogues the terms that have been used to place societies into binary categories such as 'developing' and 'developed' or even 'savage' and 'civilized'. The words have changed a bit over time, as have the allocation of specific nations to one side or the other, but the binary division remains the same.

The study of binaries assumes that there will be two sides, but not that they will be equal. At the very least, there is likely to be an inside and an outside or a high road and a low. In fact, Tilly (1998) has argued that a vast network of binary processes of inequality lie beneath all the power structures we are accustomed to observing. And Mario Small wrote, in collaboration with David Harding and Michèle Lamont (Small et al., 2010: 17) that together mul-tiple 'symbolic boundaries constitute a system of classification that defines a hierarchy of groups and the similarities and difference between them'. Likewise, Wagner-Pacifici's (2000) definition of symbolic boundaries included in the opening of this piece, argued that individual boundaries mark the divisions in classification systems – a whole host of simple decisions added together.

Even in contemporary gender theory, there is a sense in which gender is considered one big binary thing, but there are also calls to complicate the way we describe that image. To the extent that gender

is a dividing line for societies, cultural sociologists have moved from cataloguing gender differences to recognizing the ways in which this boundary is also an organizing principle for social systems and organizations (Acker, 1988; Bourdieu, 1979; Lorber, 2006; Salzinger, 2003).

But while gender scholars are abandoning the binary approach, whiteness studies scholars have found some use for the binary model because it allows them to highlight the boundary work that whites do relative to other races and to highlight whites' confusion about their own racial identity (Hale, 1998; Hughey, 2012; Shirley, 2010; Warren and Twine, 1997). The whiteness perspective also allows for a certain amount of traction on the power dynamic, which no one could argue is equivalent across racial groups in any nation, but race is a classification system, and so re-coding the categories of analysis comes at some cost in the form of gathering critics who worry that a group of people studying themselves might wander away with the research question (and the TV remote – as a chunk of this literature is devoted to documenting the unbearable taste-culture of whiteness), which is why we have the critics. The more angles we have on these problems, the better.

Classification Systems

Questions of classification were central to Bourdieu's discussion of boundary work, but have also been addressed by Schwartz (1981) and DiMaggio (1987). These studies have been foundational in our field, and were especially important for demonstrating the relationship between cultural systems and other social and organizational systems – connections that made the sociology of culture relevant and interesting to the rest of the discipline. This foundation in grounded classification informs work such as Reyes' (2015) ethnographic study of two universities, and connects the organizational boundaries of the schools to the cultural boundaries and activities of Latino student organizations, therein. Similarly, Saperstein and Penner (2010) studied racial classification inside prisons. This fascinating paper uses classification to demonstrate that *crime commits race*. Lena and Peterson (2008) tracked the classification of music over time, a question that Roy (2014) is currently taking up, asking why we organize music into genres instead of some other classification system.

Biologists have also generated an entire classification system for plants and animals with fascinating boundaries, and these have been fruitful targets of study for social theorists as well. The class that separates mammals from reptiles, for example, draws on the presence of mammary glands, and the reason for that choice, according to

Marks (2000) is that a political battle was brewing in the 1750s over the importance of breastfeeding. If not for that, we might think of ourselves as special for having hair or not laying eggs.

Scientific taxonomies also ripped Pluto from our planetary system (Jenness, 2008), while economic classifications silently lump and sort us into categories that deem us more and less worthy to fully participate in the economy (Fourcade and Healy, 2013; Zelizer, 1994). But the former scholars are not the only ones who noticed the market's role in generating boundaries, even Parsons devoted much of *Economy and Society* (Parsons and Smelser, 1956) and *The Structure of Social Action* (1968) to analysing the boundaries of economic activity.

Classification methods that show careful attention to the symbolic boundaries in effect between each category are especially applicable to rapidly shifting categorical identities, as is the case for racial classification in the United States today. This literature is rich and vast. It reaches from macro-level studies of unexpected shifts in census categories such as the whitening of Puerto Ricans in the first half of the 20th century (Loveman and Muniz, 2007). While Puerto Ricans were seeking whiteness, however, whites seemed to be fleeing that category, as whiteness studies would predict. The number of Native Americans tripled in the latter half of the 20th century (Nagel, 1995), and, using ethnographic research, Hughey (2007; 2012) found that both white supremacists and white antiracists seek 'meaningful' racial identities, usually accomplished by generating a classification system grounded in essentialist (i.e. racist) distinctions.

At the organizational level, Hannan et al. (2007) even have a theory for predicting the emergence of organizational categories and the forms they contain, such as 'hospital' or 'electrician'. In addition, Hsu (2006) addresses a classification problem involving simultaneous membership in two groups. Her data (film genres) are not all that different from human racial identities: in theory, it should be easy and perhaps even beneficial to claim dual membership, but the real-world experience is far less accepting. Hsu's movie audiences are not delighted by the double-voiced abilities of dual-classified films. Instead, they went seeking one genre (say romance) and were confused if not annoyed by the material intended to lure fans of the other genre (action-adventure material, for example). In both cases, the audience is key in conveying legitimacy to new categories or for the classification of products.

Symbolic Versus Social

Lamont's 2002 definition of symbolic boundaries is quite broad, whereas social boundaries are much narrower: '*Symbolic* boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space ... *Social* boundaries are objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and nonmaterial) and social opportunities' (Lamont and Molnár, 2002: 169, emphasis mine). We will not limit ourselves to this definition, of course, but it is theoretically and conceptually rich. There is much worth exploring therein.

There is a large contingent of symbolic boundaries researchers who examine symbols that serve as boundary markers. These can range from the esoteric 'self-actualization' (Lamont, 1992) to very specific status markers, involving, not just music genres, but artists, pieces, brands, choices, and fit. One way to study symbols is to study the way they are used to mark the boundaries of other social categories, such as race (Appelrouth and Kelly, 2013; Schwartzman, 2007) or social class (Bryson, 1996; Coulangeon, 2005).

Finally, I would like to point out that boundaries scholars do not often consciously theorize the relationship between their boundaries system and other systems of meaning that might be in play at the same time. In many cases, there are likely to be multiple reinforcing systems (see e.g. Bryson, 2005; Davis, 2014; Spade, 2011), other systems of meaning might meet resistance and contradiction from their environment. Bourdieu was especially good at connecting the various layers in a system, and Bourdeusian research focusing on culture and inequality such as Lamont (1992), and the work in Lamont and Fournier (1992) laid important groundwork for rich multi-system analysis. When considering the relationship among various systems of meaning, this is also a good place to theorize institutionalization (Zucker, 1977) and intersectionality, that is, interlocking systems of oppression (Collins, 2000; Dill, 1994).

In sum, then, the quest for the symbolic might be a search for specific boundary markers, or a whole classification system built on as few as two symbols, but no upper limit is known for the number of such boundary markers or the complexity classification systems. In fact a simple society's meaning system might even revolve around a single sacred symbol, such as Durkheim's purity. Lamont and Molnár (2002) suggested more leeway in this category than this list would imply. I hope to see some great new additions to this in the future, but here is a starter for conversation, theory and research design.

Symbols

Symbols on Boundaries

Lamont's seminal work *Money Morals and Manners* (1992), which is best consumed with significant foreshadowing from Lamont and Lareau (1988), launched the initial salvo in symbolic boundaries research in the current era. Taken-for-granted today, the method and overall research design for the book was considered revolutionary at the time. Elegant in its ability to leverage qualitative and comparative methods to address issues that had been long-held assumptions in the social sciences, it 'merely' involved asking respondents (in four cities and two countries) how they judged people above and below them, thus eliciting the specific criteria and symbols that guard each boundary. Coding and analysis were more onerous, of course, not that the long interview is a simple task. At any rate, this book, and the cultural-capital-style theories that hang around as its awkward cousins, are the reasons we often default to searching for symbols that mark boundaries.

Since that time, symbolic boundaries scholars have offered several variations on this theme. For example, Abigail Saguy's (2013) book, *What's Wrong with Fat?* chronicles the way that debates over the meaning of fat bodies have moved the relevant boundary away from the symbol of individual bodies. Instead, the various claims-makers appeal to different *master frames and analogies* (health vs. civil rights, illness, racial group, etc.) that flip the symbolic field, shifting focus from bodies onto these new symbols of political debate (e.g., health vs. civil rights) and use different analogies to argue that fatness is akin to, say cancer (an illness), or, in contrast, to race, gender, disability or sexual orientation (a trait against which people discriminate). It is a way of drawing symbolic boundaries around groups of issues, as opposed to between individual people.

In race and gender studies, it's not unusual for theorists to conceptualize people (usually women's bodies and/or the bodies of people of colour) as the symbols that mark key boundaries, which are also important sites of power and likely intersections between both boundaries and power (Collins, 2000; Dill, 1994). For example, Pei-Chia Lan (2003) shows how the sexual control of women's bodies marks the boundary between colonizer and colonized for migrant women in Taiwan that, of course, simultaneously intersects with gender and gender domination. The meaning and value of all related categories, such as reproductive labour, are also multiplied outward for all related groups. Central to these critical and feminist approaches such as Lan's are the simultaneous actions of human boundaries as social and symbolic because bodies have shapes, colours, and sexual and labour re/productive possibilities, all of which might be controlled and/or imbued with meanings.

In another variation, Gretchen Purser (2009) shows how two competing groups of Latino day labourers, who are all-male, nevertheless use gender (masculinity) as the primary boundary marker that they draw against each other. This is a common finding of our usually binary gender system. Single-gender groups often use specific boundary markers to guard their own gender boundaries without requiring the presence of people from a relational category (Pascoe, 2011).

Bounded Meanings

Eviatar Zerubavel's (1991) *The Fine Line* directly addresses the boundaries of meaning and conceptualizes meaning in such a way that a whole meaning system could be a very complex classification system. Zerubavel and his methods are exceptionally skilful at illuminating unexpected elements of our meanings system, and for that reason, his work continues to delight and influence generations of scholars, many of whom also incorporate a traditional symbolic boundaries approach, which, in this case, would mostly imply making connections between the observed meaning system and some other social system or portion thereof (see e.g. Aneesh, 2010; Cherry, 2010; Friese, 2010).

Drawing inspiration from Zerubavel, I applied Lamont's (1992) methods to meaning, rather than people and interviewed English professors about their definition of a word (multiculturalism) for my 2005 book, *Making Multiculturalism* (Bryson, 2005). I was then able to make connections between localized meanings and the governance structures inside English departments. This approach of applying the social method to meaning has become increasingly popular (e.g. Ajrouch, 2004; DeSoucey, 2010; Hughey, 2012; Ollivier, 2006; Saguy, 2013), and also follows a call from Lamont (2000) to do just that.

The Meaning of Concrete Boundaries

I hope to open some space here for something that does not have an identity of its own, but we all trip over to some extent. That is the cultural problem of physical boundaries. I am hoping for some recognition that no wall or mountain can successfully contain its human contents unless there is a system of meaning in place that tells us we never want to go mounting hiking or we'd rather die in a flood than scale the wall, or

whatever is necessary to keep us inside. In most of our research, I think this chunk of culture goes unexamined, and sometimes leaves our cultural analysis disconnected from the material world.

One beautiful example of how to study concrete barriers successfully is the work of Christina Nippert-Eng (1996). For her 1996 book, she studied how people separate their work and home lives. Work and home are already separated, physically speaking, and yet we know that, especially for engaged parents, the question of the work–home divide is an enormous problem. When Nippert-Eng interviewed her respondents, she asked to see their calendars, telephone books, and key chains to see whether home and work were separated or merged. She used similar tricks for her 2010 study of privacy to discover which boundaries provide privacy and which do not (Nippert-Eng, 2010). Similarly, Hila Lifshitz-Assaf (2015) studies the boundaries of innovation in a NASA experiment in which Research and Development professionals posted their innovations on an open platform. Although they quickly generated an important scientific breakthrough, participants reported problems such as professional identity where existing boundaries did not fit the new structure.

In another example of structures working right under our noses, Alexander Davis (2014) explores the paradox of a quintessentially concrete phenomenon in the paradox of gender-segregated restrooms. As gender-neutral facilities have become more common he asks why gender segregation in the washroom remains so persistent, even as our other social spaces become more integrated, and if there is really a compelling reason to keep them separate, then why is there now such a strong trend in the other direction? Gender-segregated bathrooms are not mountains, but they might be the closest thing to universal concrete boundaries in our workplaces and public spaces. The upheaval there is no small thing.

Social Action

Boundary Work

Gieryn's research on boundary work began on a separate track from the symbolic boundaries line of study (as did many relevant inspirations), but the intersection of these two lines of research has been especially beneficial and inspirational for thinking about how social actors make boundaries happen in the real world. His description of the boundary-work process is most succinctly summarized in a 1983 paper (Gieryn, 1983), but it is evident in a wide range of interesting applications throughout his work. Much of Gieryn's research

was already cultural, and symbolic boundaries researchers found it useful for helping devise research on Weber's (1978 [1922]) social closure and to fill in some of the details on the function of Bourdieu's (1984 [1979]) cultural capital and social exclusion.

In some fields, boundary work is called identity work, and can operate on an individual or a group level. For example, Matthew Ezzell (2012) studied a group of men facing a masculinity problem in that they had been assigned to a drug treatment programme and had to take orders from all manner of staff and join in with whatever group activity was assigned. Ezzell found that the men responded through a strategy of 'compensatory manhood acts' (based on Schrock and Schwalbe, 2009) that involved masculine aggression, female subordination, challenging other men, and control of emotions. Most seriously, this form of identity work manages to further female subordination, even from within the confines of their captivity.

Performance, Ritual, and Dramaturgy

Ritual and dramaturgical forms of boundary work can be quite different things, but I can at least put them in the same fuzzy category. For example, some rituals literally happen on stage, as when religious performances, such as Christmas pageants, occur every year in schools. These are examples of ritual dramaturgy, but we expect other performances to be spontaneously rendered, especially on surprise occasions and most seriously when they are public, such as surprise wedding proposals. Davis et al. (2014), studied gender 'performances' on reality makeover television shows. Given the scripted nature of reality television, combined with the heightened importance of gender performances on such programmes (not to mention generally), they show that this kind of performance is more exaggerated than an everyday gender performance.

Performances tend to clear out space between what Zerubavel (1991) called 'islands of meaning', or bounded categories, rather than walking or marking boundaries. One might also think of these as 'fat boundaries'. Having a handbag will not make anyone a girl (and two X chromosomes are not really enough, either). One must perform far from the masculine boundary in order to be convincing as a girl or woman, and performance does not just mean walking with (or without) a swish. It includes all the clothing, hair, colour, body sculpting, diets, steroids, and surgical methods of hyper-gendering the body that many people engage in (Pitts, 2005), adding up to the message that biological sex is *real*. That universal gender

boundary is commonly called 'the gender binary' (see e.g. Gagné and Tewksbury, 1999).

Inclusive and Exclusive

Although we are strongly influenced by Weber's sense of social closure (that is, exclusive boundaries), inclusive boundaries are also possible (DiTomaso, 2014). For example, boundaries could work in a more Durkheimian manner where the primary idea is to bring a community together under a unifying sense of itself. Even Weberian-style boundaries would tilt towards inclusion if they operated in a more life-like manner. That is, the most elite clubs do not spend a lot of time excluding the working class. They handle that problem by being invisible to most outsiders. The boundaries are hidden, and the entrance would be even more elusive.

The strategies that the super-rich use to prevent others from trying to join them also include cultivating a genuine affection for otherwise distasteful status markers (like Kelly Green Pants). Bourdieu (1984 [1979]) discussed the process and Diana Crane furthered the discussion in *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde* (1987). But simply stated, it is the reason soaring sopranos make opera the quintessential status marker of highbrow music, regardless of how many omnivore genres are required to go with it. One might argue that such strategies still constitute methods of exclusion, and they do, but they centre on methods of drawing members to the centre and hiding boundaries, rather than hosting skirmishes at the boundary.

The condition of drawing members to the centre brings attention to the fact that boundaries can occur when things *are not* happening, when there is a gap in human interaction, for example, network theorists might draw a dot for each person and a line for each relationship between two people. A mass of dots and lines is a network, but the space around them is often theorized as a boundary (see e.g. McPherson et al.'s (1992) use of the boundary concept). In addition, while those of us whose main interest was in social status studied the boundaries of memberships that basically amounted to identities, social network researchers noticed important changes in our real-world memberships, finding that our networks are smaller than they were in the mid-1980s – we especially have fewer non-kin confidants, and fewer friends made through voluntary associations. Our friends are more likely to share our level of education, indicating some social closure there, but today's social networks are more racially diverse. The sad story, however, is happening in the land outside the boundaries of social networks in a space that much of symbolic boundaries theorizing forgets

to follow. McPherson et al. (2006) found that the number of people with no friends had increased from 10 to 25 per cent between 1985 and 2004.

Although there are studies of single exclusions in the form of excommunication or (more seriously) shunning (Gingrich and Lightman, 2006), sociologists are uniquely positioned to answer questions about why single people find themselves catapulted from any type of boundary, en masse. One possibility suggested by the authors is that families are forgoing external ties because they are buried in housework, and this might especially account for men's declining social networks (Sigle-Rushton, 2010). Lizardo (2006) also used network analysis to identify boundaries and found that highbrow cultural taste contributes to strong ties and network closure (and boundaries in the form of empty space, or no social ties) compared to popular culture, which is associated with weak ties and more disperse networks.

Bourdieu used yet another visual quantitative method called Multi-Dimensional Scaling to plot cultural products in a space described by status, looking for clusters of products, gaps (boundaries) between them, and patterns according to status. Michèle Ollivier (2006) has done this with popular music genres, and Kim and White (2010) used the method to test the 'Panethnicity Hypothesis' on residential segregation and found some affinity among Black, White (white ethnic), and Latino residents, while Asian neighbourhoods had firmer boundaries. Edgell and Tranby (2010) used a variation of this technique called Cluster Analysis to address questions of moral order, asking 2000 US respondents whether (and which) other people shared their views of 'America'. Using a related method, Bail (2008) applied fuzzy set analysis to compare the configurations of symbolic boundaries against immigrants in 21 European countries.

Finally, another variation on this theme is the question of whether a given population is polarized on one or various moral issues or opinion questions. Researchers, beginning with DiMaggio et al. (1996) have approached the question using a variety of methods, all looking for a gap in the data to indicate polarization. The latest dispatch from the field (as of this writing) comes from Mäs et al. (2013), who report that having possible fault lines between demographic groups in, for example, a workplace atmosphere might increase polarization at first, but over time 'crisscrossing actors' who could bridge the gap, ultimately build stronger connections over the weak structure than a group that did not have such a gap in the first place. This is a great example of a place where attending to boundary processes leads naturally to questions of social change.

NEW DIRECTIONS

One question we might address is when and under what conditions do people break out of boundaries. Laura Rogers (2014) demonstrates that people with breast cancer often break out of the very powerful pink ribbon support-group movement in order to salvage a sense of self from illness and grief by constructing themselves as lucky compared to the people in the support groups from whom they withdraw – on the grounds that contact with so much illness would make them feel worse. McCoy and Scarborough's (2014) study of ironic consumption is especially useful here because it can help us study (methodologically) cases that might have a certain amount of empirical similarity and also understand or theorize that behaviour. That is one person might have an upper-middle-class consumption profile with the exception of one or two 'guilty pleasure' items or 'tacky' items, carefully displayed with irony. We are much better analysts today than we were two decades ago.

Another question lies in the modelling of boundaries. We have a sense of how to conceptualize the centre and even the spaces between bounded regions, thanks to Mary Douglas (1966) and Zerubavel (1991). But, in some cases, it might be useful to model the width of the boundary. Is there a razor-sharp edge between members and outcasts, for example? Or, is there a wider area, perhaps a collection of status markers or a loose network of boundary work? This kind of question could also apply to the bounded area or the ocean between them, as well (the size of which would matter if it were theorized à la Douglas (1966) or otherwise). In addition, the various boundaries in a single study might be compared to each other according to factors such as permeability, fluidity, rigidity, and size, especially width. All these characteristics have been addressed at one time or another, but they have not significantly influenced our images or dominant metaphors. Perhaps that is because of the rich variation in our literature.

The last example I will describe should not be an end, but a beginning, so I have aptly chosen to focus on the movement of boundaries. There are, of course, many ways that boundaries can change, and moving symbolic boundaries research further into the social change literature should certainly be one of our many goals, but it is also possible that boundaries or bounded groups have movement as part of their fundamental condition. Anthony Jack (2014), for example, compares two groups of economically disadvantaged black undergraduates at an elite private college. One group arrives on campus with extensive exposure to and experiences

developing meaningful relationships with wealthy whites by way of private high school scholarships and the accompanying immersion experiences and enrichment. The other group got their first scholarship and introduction to elite academic life at the college level. The two groups are different, but Jack's analysis is not static. For these young students the boundary that they struggle with is not race but social class, and the question of its salience in the college context depends on their dissimilar experiences before college. Therefore, Jack (2014) offers a trajectory analysis that allows us to compare the two groups as they move through time, given the sorts of experiences they were likely to encounter, adding up to – not changes in boundary formation – but different expressions of what we generally understand as the same boundary.

NOTE

1 For review articles see Lamont (2001; 2012), Lamont and Molnár (2002), and Lamont, Pendergrass, and Pachucki (2015). For collected volumes devoted to symbolic boundaries, see Lamont (1992; 1999), and for theoretical and empirical work (in that order) see Lamont and Lareau (1988) and Lamont (1992; 2000; 2009).

REFERENCES

Abbott, A. (1988) *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Acker, J. (1988) 'Class, Gender, and the Relations of Distribution', *Signs*, 13: 473–97.

Acker, J. (1990) 'Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations', *Gender and Society*, 4: 139–58.

Ajrouch, K.J. (2004) 'Gender, Race, and Symbolic Boundaries: Contested Spaces of Identity among Arab American Adolescents', *Sociological Perspectives*, 47: 371–91.

Almeling, R. and Ebrary Academic Complete Subscription Collection (2011) 'Sex Cells'.

Aneesh, A. (2010) 'Bloody Language: Clashes and Constructions of Linguistic Nationalism in India', *Sociological Forum*, 25: 86–109.

Kim, A.H. and White, M.J. (2010) 'Panethnicity, Ethnic Diversity, and Residential Segregation', *American Journal of Sociology*, 115: 1558–96.

Appelrouth, S. and Kelly, C. (2013) 'Rap, Race and the (Re)Production of Boundaries', *Sociological Perspectives*, 56: 301–26.

Bail, C. (2008) 'The Configuration of Symbolic Boundaries against Immigrants in Europe', *American Sociological Review*, 73(1): 37–59.

Becker, H.S. (1963) *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. London: Free Press of Glencoe.

Bourdieu, P. (1979) *Algeria 1960: The Disenchantment of the World: The Sense of Honour: The Kabyle House Or the World Reversed: Essays*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984 [1979]) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryson, B. (1996) '"Anything but Heavy Metal": Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes', *American Sociological Review*, 61: 884–99.

Bryson, B. (2005) *Making Multiculturalism: Boundaries and Meaning in U.S. English Departments*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.

Cherry, E. (2010) 'Shifting Symbolic Boundaries: Cultural Strategies of the Animal Rights Movement', *Sociological Forum*, 25: 450–75.

Collins, P.H. (2000) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Coulangeon, P. (2005) 'Social Stratification of Musical Tastes: Questioning the Cultural Legitimacy Model', *Revue Française De Sociologie*, 46: 123–54.

Crane, D. (1987) *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde: The New York Art World, 1940–1985*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Crane, D. (2000) *Fashion and its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Davis, A.K. (2014) 'Equal but Separate? Gender, Culture, and the Social Organization of Public Space', Meeting of American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

Davis, A.K., Rogers, L.E., and Bryson, B. (2014) 'Own it! Constructions of Masculinity and Heterosexuality on Reality Makeover Television', *Cultural Sociology*, 8(3): 258–74.

Dentler, R.A. and Erikson, K.T. (1959) 'The Functions of Deviance in Groups', *Social Problems*, 7: 98–107.

DeSoucey, M. (2010) 'Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union', *American Sociological Review*, 75: 432–55.

Dill, B.T. (1994) *Across the Boundaries of Race and Class: An Exploration of Work and Family among Black Female Domestic Servants*. New York: Garland.

DiMaggio, P. (1979) 'On Pierre Bourdieu', *American Journal of Sociology*, 84: 1460–74.

DiMaggio, P. (1982) 'Cultural Capital and School Success: The Impact of Status Culture Participation on the Grades of U.S. High School Students', *American Sociological Review*, 47: 189–201.

DiMaggio, P. (1987) 'Classification in Art', *American Sociological Review*, 52: 440–55.

DiMaggio, P. and Mohr, J. (1985) 'Cultural Capital, Educational Attainment, and Marital Selection', *American Journal of Sociology*, 90: 1231–61.

DiMaggio, P., Evans, J., and Bryson, B. (1996) 'Have Americans' Social Attitudes Become More Polarized?', *American Journal of Sociology*, 102: 690–755.

DiTomaso, N. (2014) 'Are Boundaries to Keep People Out Or In?', Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

Douglas, M. (1966) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Praeger.

Douglas, M. (1972) 'Deciphering a Meal', *Daedalus*, 101: 61–81.

Douglas, M. (1986) *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Douglass, F. (1881) 'The Color Line', *The North American Review*, 567.

DuBois, W.E.B. and Bartleby Library (1903) 'The Souls of Black Folk'.

Durkheim, É. (1933 [1893]) *The Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, É. (2008 [1912]) *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Edgell, P. and Tranby, E. (2010) 'Shared Visions? Diversity and Cultural Membership in American Life', *Social Problems*, 57: 175–204.

Epstein, C.F. (1989) 'Workplace Boundaries: Conceptions and Creations', *Social Research*, 56: 571–90.

Epstein, C.F. (1992) 'Tinkerbells and Pinups: The Construction and Reconstruction of Gender Boundaries at Work', in M. Lamont and M. Fournier (eds), *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 232–56.

Erickson, B.H. (1996) 'Culture, Class, and Connections', *American Journal of Sociology*, 102: 217–51.

Erikson, K. (1966) *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: Wiley.

Espeland, W. and Sauder, M. (2007) 'Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Re-create Social Worlds', *American Journal of Sociology*, 24: 313–43.

Espeland, W. and Stevens, M. (1998) 'Commensuration as a Social Process', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 113: 1–40.

Ezzell, M. (2012) 'I'm in Control, Compensatory Manhood in a Therapeutic Community', *Gender & Society*, 26(2):190–215.

Fausto-Sterling, A. (2012) *Sexgender: Biology in a Social World*. New York: Routledge.

Fourcade, M. and Healy, K. (2013) 'Classification Situations: Life-Chances in the Neoliberal Era', *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 38: 559–72.

Friese, C. (2010) 'Classification Conundrums: Categorizing Chimeras and Enacting Species Preservation', *Theory and Society*, 39: 145–72.

Gagné, P. and Tewksbury, R. (1999) 'Knowledge and Power, Body and Self: An Analysis of Knowledge Systems and the Transgendered Self', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 40: 59–83.

Gamson, J. (1995) 'Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma', *Social Problems*, 42: 390–407.

Gerson, J.M. and Peiss, K. (1985) 'Boundaries, Negotiation, Consciousness: Reconceptualizing Gender Relations', *Social Problems*, 317–31.

Gerson, K. (1993) *No Man's Land: Men's Changing Commitments to Family and Work*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Gieryn, T.F. (1983) 'Boundary-Work and the Demarcation of Science from Non-Science: Strains and Interests in Professional Ideologies of Scientists', *American Sociological Review*, 48: 781–95.

Gingrich, L.G. and Lightman, E. (2006) 'Striving Toward Self-Sufficiency: A Qualitative Study of Mutual Aid in an Old Order Mennonite Community', *Family Relations*, 55: 175–89.

Goffman, E. (1986 [1963]) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hale, G.E. (1998) *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Hannan, M.T., Pólos, L., and Carroll, L.R. (2007) *Logics of Organization Theory: Audiences, Codes, and Ecologies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hsu, G. (2006) 'Jacks of all Trades and Masters of None: Audiences' Reactions to Spanning Genres in Feature Film Production', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 51: 420–50.

Hughey, M.W. (2007) 'Racism with Antiracists: Color-Conscious Racism and the Unintentional Persistence of Inequality', *Social Thought and Research*, 28: 67–108.

Hughey, M.W. (2012) *White Bound: Nationalists, Antiracists, and the Shared Meanings of Race*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Jack, A.A. (2014) 'Culture Shock Revisited: The Social and Cultural Contingencies to Class Marginality', *Sociological Forum*, 29: 453–75.

Jacobs, J.A. and Gerson, K. (2004) *The Time Divide: Work, Family, And Gender Inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jenness, V. (2008) 'Pluto, Prisons, and Plaintiffs: Notes on Systematic Back-Translation from an Embedded Researcher', *Social Problems*, 55: 1–22.

Lamont, M. (1992) *Money, Morals, and Manners: The Culture of the French and American Upper-Middle Class*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, M. (1999) *The Cultural Territories of Race: Black and White Boundaries*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press and New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lamont, M. (2000) 'Meaning-Making in Cultural Sociology: Broadening our Agenda', *Contemporary Sociology*, 29: 602–7.

Lamont, M. (2001) 'Symbolic Boundaries', in N.J. Smelser and P.B. Baltes (eds) *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, pp. 15341–15347. London: Pergamon Press.

Lamont, M. (2009) *How Professors Think: Inside the Curious World of Academic Judgment*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lamont, M. (2012) 'How has Bourdieu been Good to Think With? The Case of the United States', *Sociological Forum*, 27: 228–37.

Lamont, M. and Fournier, M. (1992) *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, M. and Lareau, A. (1988) 'Cultural Capital: Allusions, Gaps and Glissandos in Recent Theoretical Developments', *Sociological Theory*, 6: 153–68.

Lamont, M. and Molnár, V. (2002) 'The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28: 167–95.

Lamont, M., Pendergrass, S., and Pachucki, M. (2015) 'Symbolic Boundaries', in J. Wright (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, pp. 850–55. Oxford: Elsevier.

Lan, P-C. (2003) 'Negotiating Social Boundaries and Private Zones: The Micropolitics of Employing Migrant Domestic Workers', *Social Problems*, 50: 525–49.

Lena, J.C. and Peterson, R.A. (2008) 'Classification as Culture: Types and Trajectories of Music Genres', *American Sociological Review*, 73: 697–718.

Lifshitz-Assaf, H. (2015) 'From Problem Solvers to Solution Seekers: The Permeation of Knowledge Boundaries at NASA', *Social Science Research Network*. New York and Cambridge, MA: New York University Leonard N. Stern School of Business and Harvard Business School, January 4, 2015. http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2431717

Lizardo, O. (2006) 'How Cultural Tastes Shape Personal Networks', *American Sociological Review*, 71: 778–807.

Lorber, J. (1999) 'Crossing Borders and Erasing Boundaries: Paradoxes of Identity Politics', *Sociological Focus*, 32: 355–70.

Lorber, J. (2006) 'Shifting Paradigms and Challenging Categories', *Social Problems,* 53: 448–53.

Loveman, M. and Muniz, J.O. (2007) 'How Puerto Rico Became White: Boundary Dynamics and Intercensus Racial Reclassification', *American Sociological Review,* 72: 915–39.

Marks, J. (2000) 'Scientific and Folk Ideas about Heredity', in R.A. Zilinskas and P.J. Balint (eds), *the Human Genome Project and Minority Communities: Ethical, Social and Political Dilemmas.* Westport, CT: Greenwood. pp. 53–66.

Martin, E. (1991) 'The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles', *Signs,* 16: 485–501.

Mäs, M., Flache, A., Takács, K., and Jehn, K.A. (2013) 'In the Short Term we Divide, in the Long Term we Unite: Demographic Crisscrossing and the Effects of Faultlines on Subgroup Polarization', *Organization Science,* 24: 716–36.

McCoy, C. and Scarborough, R.C. (2014) 'Watching "Bad" Television: Ironic Consumption, Camp, and Guilty Pleasures', *Poetics,* 47: 41–59.

McPherson, J.M., Popielarz, P.A. and Drobnic, S. (1992) 'Social Networks and Organizational Dynamics', *American Sociological Review,* 57: 153–70.

McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. and Brashears, M.E. (2006) 'Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades', *American Sociological Review,* 71: 353–75.

Meadow, T. (2010) 'A Rose is a Rose: On Producing Legal Gender Classifications', *Gender and Society,* 24: 814–37.

Meadow, T. (2011) '"Deep Down Where the Music Plays": How Parents Account for Childhood Gender Variance', *Sexualities,* 14: 725–47.

Morning, A. (2005) 'Keywords: Race', *Contexts,* 4: 44–6.

Morrison, T. (1992) *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nagel, J. (1995) 'American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity', *American Sociological Review,* 60: 947–65.

Nippert-Eng, C. (1996) 'Calendars and Keys: The Classification of "Home" and "Work"', *Sociological Forum,* 11: 563–82.

Nippert-Eng, C. (2010) *Islands of Privacy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ollivier, M. (2006) 'Snobs and Quétaines: Prestige and Boundaries in Popular Music in Quebec', *Popular Music,* 25: 97–116.

Parsons, T. (1968) *The Structure of Social Action.* New York: Free Press.

Parsons, T. and Smelser, N.J. (1956) *Economy and Society: A Study in the Integration of Economic and Social Theory.* Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Pascoe, C.J. (2011) *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Peterson, R.A. (1992) 'Understanding Audience Segmentation: From Elite and Mass to Omnivore and Univore', *Poetics,* 21: 243–58.

Peterson, R.A. and Kern, R.M. (1996) 'Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore', *American Sociological Review,* 61: 900–7.

Phillips, D.T. (2013) 'Moving with the Women: Tracing Racialization, Migration, and Domestic Workers in the Archive', *Signs,* 38: 379–404.

Pitts, V. (2005) 'Feminism, Technology and Body Projects', *Women's Studies,* 34: 229–47.

Pitts-Taylor, V. (2007) *Surgery Junkies: Wellness and Pathology in Cosmetic Culture.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Purser, G. (2009) 'The Dignity of Job-Seeking Men: Boundary Work among Immigrant Day Laborers', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography,* 38: 117–39.

Reyes, D. (2015) 'Inhabiting Latino Politics: How Colleges Shape Students' Political Styles', *Sociology of Education,* 88: 302–19.

Rogers, L.E. (2014) '"In Comparison, I'm Really Lucky": How Breast Cancer Patients Utilize Symbolic Boundaries as a Coping Mechanism' presented to the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

Roy, W.G. (2014) 'Musical Genres', unpublished manuscript.

Saguy, A. (2013) *What's Wrong with Fat?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Said, E.W. (2003 [1994]) *Orientalism.* New York: Vintage Books.

Saperstein, A. and Penner, A.M. (2010) 'The Race of a Criminal Record: How Incarceration Colors Racial Perceptions', *Social Problems,* 57: 92–113.

Salzinger, L. (2003) *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schrock, D. and Schwalbe, M. (2009) 'Men, Masculinity, and Manhood Acts', *Annual Review of Sociology,* 35: 277–295.

Schwartz, B. (1981) *Vertical Classification: A Study in Structuralism and the Sociology of Knowledge.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schwartzman, L.F. (2007) 'Does Money Whiten? Intergenerational Changes in Racial Classification in Brazil', *American Sociological Review,* 72: 940–63.

Sedgwick, E.K. (1990) *Epistemology of the Closet.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Shirley, C.D. (2010) '"You might be a Redneck if ...": Boundary Work among Rural, Southern Whites', *Social Forces,* 89: 35–61.

Sigle-Rushton, W. (2010) 'Men's Unpaid Work and Divorce: Reassessing Specialization and Trade in British Families', *Feminist Economics,* 16: 1–26.

Small, M.L., Harding, D.J. and Lamont, M. (2010) 'Introduction: Reconsidering Culture and Poverty', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 629: 6–27.

Spade, D. (2011) *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of Law*. New York: South End Press.

Swartz, B. (1981) *Vertical Classification: A Study in Structuralism and the Sociology of Knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Swindle, J. (2014) 'The Cultural Model of a Developmental Hierarchy of Societies', Center for Cultural Sociology Working Paper Series.

Tilly, C. (1998) *Durable Inequality*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Thorne, B. (1993) *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Wagner-Pacifici, R.E. (2000) *Theorizing the Standoff: Contingency in Action*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Warren, J.W. and Twine, F.W. (1997) 'White Americans, the New Minority? Non-Blacks and the Ever-Expanding Boundaries of Whiteness', *Journal of Black Studies*, 28: 200–18.

Weber, M. (1978 [1922]) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Edited by Guenther, R. and Wittich, C. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zelizer, V. (1994) *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Zerubavel, E. (1991) *The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life*. New York: Free Press.

Zucker, L.G. (1977) 'The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence', *American Sociological Review*, 42(5): 726–43.

Zylan, Y. (2011) *States of Passion: Law, Identity, and the Social Construction of Desire*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.