Divine Intervention? The Influence of Religious Value Communication on U.S. Intervention Policy

Paul A. Djupe · Brian R. Calfano

Abstract Opinion about U.S. foreign intervention depends on both one's belief about how the world works and those cognitively available value conceptions about how it should work. Consistent with social identity theory, we argue that values can shape social group boundaries and that these boundaries are analogous to the position of the U.S. in the world. Thus, the religious values we explore neatly map onto opinion about whether U.S. intervention should be qualified in its scope and rationale. In this investigation, we first provide experimental tests of religious value priming conducted on Christians, Muslims, and Jews. We then assess the degree to which American Protestant clergy communicate these values. The results of both investigations support the efficacy of considering the communication of religious values in shaping public opinion on U.S. foreign intervention.

> You're either with us or against us in the fight against terror. (Bush 2001)
> Brotherhood and bigotry are intertwined in all religion. (Allport 1959, p. 1)

U.S. foreign interventions are amenable to a variety of interpretations depending on one's beliefs about how the world works. These beliefs can help validate state action by demonizing an intervention target as "evil". They can also frame intervention as the product of compromises necessary in achieving cooperation

P. A. Djupe (✉)
Department of Political Science, Denison University, Granville, OH 43230, USA
e-mail: djupe@denison.edu

B. R. Calfano
Department of Political Science, Missouri State University, 901 S. National Ave., Springfield, MO 65897, USA
e-mail: briancalfano@missouristate.edu

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among diverse international actors. While we do not seek to diminish the power of beliefs in shaping foreign policy views, we focus here on exposure to religious values that facilitate different views of foreign interventions. We argue that the baseline for how people view foreign interventions can be shaped by the superordinate religious values to which they are exposed. The religious values we explore help define the ingroup and outgroup narrowly or expansively and thus help to set the analogous bounds for appropriate state action.

What we label "inclusive values" claim that religious organizations should reach out to new members, define ingroup boundaries expansively, and consider the interests of outgroup members. Thus, those encountering inclusive values will think about the interests of those outside the United States while evaluating U.S. foreign intervention policy. This will tend to lead to opposition of unilateral foreign interventions based solely on American interests. On the other hand, those encountering what we term "exclusive values," which reify narrow group boundaries to the world by suggesting members consort only with coreligionists, should show greater support for unilateral, self-interested foreign interventions. Though we use foreign policy as our test vehicle, there is no reason to think that the same basic logic does not apply to any number of public policies where group tensions can be analogized.

We explore value-based effects on U.S. intervention attitudes with data involving multiple actors. Since we wish to assess communication effects, finding a cross-sectional correlation between popular agreement with these values and public support for foreign interventionism would be insufficient. Therefore, we utilize an experimental design that variably primes inclusive or exclusive religious values prior to soliciting opinions on six U.S. foreign intervention policies. Different from artificial lab environments, when encountering the intervention prime our subjects were sitting in their actual houses of worship that represent a wide variety of U.S. religious traditions. In our view, the essence of religious leader communication to followers is exposure to a core value prescribing how people order their lives and collective action in the world. This communication is most consistently found in sermons. Indeed, stripped to their core, sermons consist of elevating the importance of a value in the decision-making process of members. This process of value elevation is the definition of priming (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder 1990).

Given their centrality in value priming, we also assess the degree to which clergy actually communicate these two religious value sets. We find that these values are not just theoretical constructs, but are communicated to millions of believers on a regular basis in the U.S. Moreover, the actual distribution of value presentation supports the pattern of experimental results, showcasing the power of occasional exposure to exclusive values.

Values to the People—Religious Communities and Clergy

Our argument is that religious elites prime religious values that activate social identity boundaries that shape citizen attitudes. Given their long-recognized role in instilling values, religious communities are a sensible place to look to understand

the source of general notions about how the world ought to function (e.g., Bellah et al. 1985; Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Leege and Welch 1989; Parsons 1937; Rokeach 1973; Tocqueville 1994/1840). Houses of worship make explicit arguments about how the world should be ordered and draw on specific lessons for how to bring this order to fruition (Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Gilbert 1993; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Jelen 1992; Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Leege and Welch 1989; Wald et al. 1988). In this process, clergy and related community leaders help to shape the values people hold. The values then work to inform how members might live and reflect those lessons in society.

Remarkably, it was only recently that clergy influence was considered systematically. Early research was concerned with what clergy thought and did politically, but was content to assume that clergy communication affects people in the pews (see, e.g., Campbell and Pettigrew 1959; Djupe and Gilbert 2003; Guth et al. 1997; Hadden 1969; Quinley 1974; Stark et al. 1971). Recent research, containing designs with sufficient complexity to test this conventional wisdom, has tended to undermine it (Leege 1985; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). A multi-level design allowed Djupe and Gilbert (2009) to document why clergy are often found to have little political effect.

First, as Djupe and Gilbert (2009) argue, community members systematically misperceive the amount of political cues clergy provide based on the direction of their attitudes and issue importance. Second, high levels of issue importance lead members to project their own views onto clergy attitudes (Krosnick 1989; Krosnick et al. 1993). And, third, disagreement with the clergy leads members to ignore clergy cue giving in-line with psychology research showing how people develop defensive motivations in information processing (Chaiken et al. 1996), promoting confirmation bias (e.g., Munro et al. 2002). These micro-mechanisms for clergy influence are neatly encapsulated by the finding that clergy have less credibility when they communicate political rather than religious messages (Djupe and Calfano 2009; Kohut et al. 2000).

These studies point the way to more systematic theorizing about how clergy may affect congregant opinions regarding the mode and content of communication. Specifically, effective clergy communication will overcome or avoid congregant defenses against dissonant political information. It is clear that effective clergy communication will take an indirect route to influence, which might include agenda setting, priming, and framing rather than direct persuasion (see, e.g., Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007). We focus on one such possibility here: Clergy may shape member politics through the priming of religious values, which may often occur during sermons and similar elite-led presentations. Message credibility is affected by cue attributes, including the strength of the message and whether it is pitted against competing arguments (Chong and Druckman 2008; Sniderman and Theriault 2004). Religious values sit in the most obvious, credible purview of clergy—to communicate how people should order their lives, and how religious communities should orient themselves to the world.[1] Thus, the religious values we

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[1] For instance, a 2007 Gallup poll (Newport 2007) found explicit support that people look for guidance from their house of worship—23 % attended church "for spiritual growth and guidance" and 20 %

investigate might reasonably be thought of as strong messages. In addition, since there are very likely no competing religious elites presenting competing value messages, it is unlikely that these values are subject to competition and thus the defenses that congregants may have built toward overtly political messages are likely avoided.

Religious Values and Group Boundaries

Our conception of religious values follows the classic distinction among religious organizations of churches and sects first identified by Troeltsch (1931; see also Niebuhr 1951). Church and sect lie at the end points of a scale marking the degree of tension between the group and society (Finke and Stark 2005; Johnson 1963), with churches coincident with society and sects living in tension (Stark and Finke 2000). Put simply, tension is the engine driving the religious economy, the essential variable shaping religious growth and decline (Finke and Stark 2005; Stark and Finke 2000). This suggests that one is highly likely to encounter statements in the local religious context that vary between assimilation and distinctiveness, barriers and bridges, or inclusive and exclusive values.

Regarding religious exclusivity, Appleby (2003, pp. 181–182) suggests, "Enclave builders portray their religion's truths, 'rights,' and responsibilities as inherently superior to those of their rivals…The strength of a religious community's claim to the loyalty of its adherents rests on the community's ability to present itself as the exclusive bearer of specific moral and/or material benefits." It is no surprise then that more exclusive, sect-like religious organizations host much more dense social networks (Stark and Finke 2000; Stark and Glock 1968; but see Djupe and Calfano 2012; Djupe and Gilbert 2009). Thus, the presentation of exclusive values should encourage people to pit their group's interests against those of a broader world—the outgroup.

In contrast, religious values relating to inclusion seek openness and communion with others, including and especially those not already part of the particular community (Sowle Cahill 1994). The landmark transition in the Catholic Church known as Vatican II was a way to embrace inclusion and a measure of diversity. This shift had real implications for church activity—those with an inclusive, post-Vatican II vision for the church were much more engaged in social outreach and activism than those with a more exclusive, pre-Vatican II vision (Leege and Trozzolo 1989/2006**). Thus, we expect that those exposed to inclusive values will evince more concern for the interests of others beyond their group.

There is little doubt that these values live in tension. Volf, for instance, while advocating for inclusion, defines sin itself "as the practice of exclusion" (1996, p. 72) and, in broad brush, whether religious bodies take more inclusive or exclusive

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Footnote 1 continued

attended because it "keeps me grounded/inspired." The remainder suggested they attend "because it's my faith" (15 %), "to worship God" (15 %), for "the fellowship of other believers/the community" (12 %), "believe in God/believe in religion" (12 %), and because they were "brought up that way/a family value/ tradition" (12 %), all of which are not incompatible with the value setting potential of churches.

directions is the essence of ongoing denominational battles, most recently in the ELCA, Episcopal Church, and Presbyterian Church (USA) over the acceptance of gay clergy and among Latter-Day Saints regarding immigration. At the same time, aspects of both inclusive and exclusive values appear to be reflected in the seven heavenly virtues (Cairns 1996), suggesting that both value sets should be equally recognizable to religious adherents across a variety of communities.

Drawing on this perspective, we focus on communicated values regarding the role of religious communities toward society that recognize varying degrees of intergroup tension—whether the constituted aim is to reach out and be inclusive of people or to reinforce boundaries with the world and focus inward to the exclusion of outsiders. Specifically, religious community members hearing exhortations to hold exclusive values should lead to support of other ingroup projects, such as unilateral U.S. foreign intervention. Conversely, clergy pushing inclusive values should lead members to consider the interests of outgroup members such that qualified, cooperative U.S. foreign interventions become more attractive than unilateralism. These values are constantly addressed by congregational clergy (as we shall see), which means that religious communities offer a regular fount of variably primed values that can either help transcend group divisions or exacerbate them.

Values and Foreign Policy Opinion

Following Converse's seminal work (1964), public opinion research has been concerned with assessing whether various kinds of predispositions interact with contemporary information to shape opinions. While Converse was concerned with the degree to which a single dimension—ideology—produced opinion consistency, subsequent work has produced a multitude of more nuanced approaches. Research has allowed multiple dimensions of predispositions to operate (e.g., Hurwitz and Peffley 1987), argued that contemporary information allows dispositions to function (Zaller 1992; see also Goren 2005), found that predispositions motivate a search for useful contemporary information (e.g., Brady and Sniderman 1985; Lupia 1994; Sniderman et al. 1991), and furthered the notion that citizens continually update their preferences from contemporary information in ways consistent with prior beliefs (e.g., Fiske and Taylor 1984; Lodge et al. 1989; Taber and Lodge 2006).

Work on American foreign policy opinion, including topics related to interventionism, has, of course, adopted this occupation with the role of predispositions. Long-term stability in foreign policy opinions can be located in two sources. First, Hurwitz and Peffley (1987) find that a set of general ideas about foreign policy guide opinion on specific instances (see also Barker et al. 2008). A number of studies have found opinion solidified around a few poles that define what elites and the public see as laudable goals in the national interest (e.g., Wittkopf 1986). Though public opinion on American foreign policy has contained a desire for policy consensus (Holmes 1985; Mueller 1973), at least until the Vietnam era (Hinckley 1988; Mandelbaum and Schneider 1979; Modigliani 1972), the locus of this consensus has fluctuated between isolationist and interventionist poles, with

intervention divided between unilateral and multilateral distinctions (Kull and Destler 1999; Mandelbaum and Schneider 1979; Page and Shapiro 1992; Todorov and Mandisodsa 2004).

Zaller (1991, 1992) argues forcefully against claims of attitudinal consistency through his theory of the survey response (see also Zaller and Feldman 1992), in which contemporary information generates top of the head, rather than reflective, responses. However, in a series of experiments, Herrmann et al. (1999) show that despite being reliant on contemporary information in ways that undermine ideological consistency, people adapt their policy preferences in sensible, consistent ways. The balance of the literature, therefore, has found that predispositions are important in shaping specific attitudes, but Zaller's top of the head characterization of public opinion is important because it suggests that predispositional effects on policy preferences can be manipulated by elites in their particular domains.

Indeed, while values are foundational determinants of individual preferences, values are themselves susceptible to manipulation. Experimental work has found a number of instances of value instability. Katz and Haas (1988) find that values are subject to priming, which can then affect policy stances. In addition, exposure to conflicting values may lead to ambivalence (e.g., Alvarez and Brehm 1995; Nelson et al. 1997). Moreover, as noted, Zaller (1992) finds that value implementation depends on variable information stocks. Hence, there is substantial evidence that value hierarchies and their effect on attitudes are quite mutable, even if they do not seem to change much over time in the population (Jennings and Niemi 1968), especially among the sophisticated (Jacoby 2006).

The Bounds of Conflict

The intersection between group conflict and intervention decisions is not new in the study of international relations (see Regan 2002 for a review of this literature). It is not hard to see why the linkage between groups, identity formation, and conflict is so appealing. In social identity theories, even minimal, randomly assigned amounts of tension are sufficient to orient attitudes and behaviors toward group-centric patterns that increase positive ingroup evaluations, while decreasing positive evaluations for outgroup members (Sherif et al. 1961; Tajfel 1970; Tajfel and Turner 1986; see Huddy 2001 and Monroe et al. 2000 for reviews). Though the lack of competition for resources or conflict can still sustain identity construction even in the most sterile of circumstances (e.g., Hogg and Abrams 1988), other branches of social identity theory see identity rooted in real group conflict, though only the perception of competition is sufficient to alter identities (Taylor and Moghaddam 1994). As one of the early proponents of real group conflict theory, Sherif (1967) suggested that only the generation of superordinate goals would induce cooperation and reduce intergroup tension. Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) expand Sherif's observation beyond goal seeking to assert the power of shared, broader group identities to help overcome intergroup tension. Building on this perspective, Transue (2007) found that priming a superordinate, national identity allows whites to overcome racial particularism in their policy views (see also Gibson and Gouws 2002).

We expand this line of thinking about what may induce or overcome group conflict to include value considerations. As statements of how the world should be ordered, religious values may include the definition of the interests to consider before taking action. For instance, should people act in the interests of the individual or community, and, if the latter, which community? Presented in this way, value considerations should have the power to help erase or establish group boundaries and determine for whose benefit a public policy should be enacted.

Two qualifications are in order. First, the priming effects may interact with or be subsumed by acceptance of the message (see Transue 2007). Fortunately our design allows us to assess whether adoption of the religious values we employ bears on their attitudes. Second, the extent of the value priming effects should depend on the frequency with which people are exposed to them. Priming frequently received criteria would be unlikely to induce a shift in attitudes since the attitudes may already reflect consideration of those criteria. As we shall see, inclusive values are vastly more frequently communicated than exclusive values. Therefore, we expect that priming only exclusive values will result in a shift in attitudes compared to the control.

Study One: Religious Value Priming and Intervention Preferences

The goal of our sample construction for our experiment was to include an enormous range of American religion. To ensure a wide diversity of adult religious community members, we sent mail and e-mail invitations to all local religious bodies in five randomly selected zip codes in both metropolitan Pittsburgh and northern New Jersey.[2] Following several iterations of scheduling and negotiations over project terms, the experimental surveys were distributed in houses of worship in evangelical Protestant, mainline Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim congregations in these geographic areas during the spring and summer of 2008. In all, one mainline Protestant congregation (Methodist), two evangelical congregations (non-denominational), two Jewish congregations (Reform), two Mosques and one Islamic Center (all predominantly Sunni) agreed to participate on the condition that the names of the houses of worship are kept confidential.[3] We also conducted this experiment in two Catholic parishes. However, the completion rate of the relevant dependent variable items by Catholic subjects was too low for inclusion here.

In all, 734 surveys were returned across the nine houses of worship participating in the experiment. As would be expected, not all surveys were returned with usable data for the dependent variables. Using only those surveys that contained information for our dependent variables drops our N to 525, which contains usable responses from 87 evangelical Protestants, 135 mainline Protestants, 151 Muslims, and 152 Jews. There is no evidence that experimental responses were lost systematically across the traditions. Because the sample is not reflective of each group's size in the population, we examine treatment effects separately by religious

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[2] These areas were selected because of proximity to the authors.

[3] This was also a stated condition of the Institutional Review Board's permission to sanction this project.

tradition. Though Jews and Muslims constitute small portions of the contemporary electorate relative to Christians, their inclusion helps to provide a generalizable test of value influence that better reflects the true diversity of American religion. A test with this kind of diversity has, heretofore, not existed in the literature since the numbers of Jews and Muslims are minimal in even large national probability samples.

Of course, we cannot and do not claim that the subjects participating in our experiment are perfectly representative of their respective religious traditions. However, our choice of samples goes far in addressing the concern political scientists have with reliance on student convenience samples (Sears 1986). While executing survey-embedded experiments in representative samples is ideal, given that subjects are likely to respond to stimuli in roughly the same way as average Americans (especially once appropriate controls are applied, see Lucas 2003), we have general confidence that the results found have adequate external validity. Moreover, we conducted our experiment in houses of worship—the actual milieu of clergy-led, religious value socialization. If simple survey experimental effects can be instigated while participants are surrounded by powerful reminders of what their religious community stands for, then actual communication from religious elites using value priming probably may be considered more effectual. Lastly, since we are not concerned with generating point estimates of religious value effects, but, instead, with knowing if value presentations instigate some attitudinal response (see Kam et al. 2007), the complications inherent in not using a perfectly representative sample of religious communities are lessened.

Treatments

We wished to simulate the effect of a clergyperson including either inclusive or exclusive values in a sermon (though this procedure mimics any communicative event). To do so, we stripped a sermon down to its most minimal feature—among other things, sermons attempt to provide congregants with or remind them about values to guide decision making, which we see as akin to priming. Thus, our 1×3 experimental design randomly assigned whether subjects were (1) primed with inclusive religious values prior to the intervention policy questions, (2) primed with exclusive values, or (3) whether subjects received the value questions after the intervention questions.

The values were operationalized through batteries of two questions per type.[4] The *exclusive values* were measured by the following two statements:

- In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to shop as much as possible at stores owned by other Christians.

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[4] These items load heavily on two factors split along the expected inclusive/exclusive lines. There are no other items in use that tap these concepts. We draw heavily on Finke and Stark (2005) for broad conceptual development and include an economic item in the exclusive battery given a growing literature on the ingroup reinforcing effects of participation in the Christian economy (e.g., Park and Baker 2007; Wuthnow 1998).

- In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to keep company with other Christians.

The *inclusive* value set included these two statements:

- In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to "love the stranger as yourself."
- In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to invite others to church even if the church begins to change as a result.

We asked if the subjects agreed or disagreed with the statements, though our goal in asking about their agreement was merely to bring a set of values to subjects' attention consistent with the notion of priming. We also made the wording religious tradition specific so that Jews were given statements starting with, "In trying to be a good Jew…" Muslims were given statements beginning, "In trying to be a good Muslim…"

The distribution of agreement (higher on the Y axis) with each value question across the four religious traditions represented in the sample is available in Fig. 1. There is very little variation in agreement with each value across traditions (all ANOVA tests are insignificant and no t-tests of individual pairs are significant). All of them average "agree" with each statement (rounding up to 3). We have no reason to believe that participants were inattentive and instead suggest that the relatively high agreement rates indicate the relative ease of priming these values for congregation members.
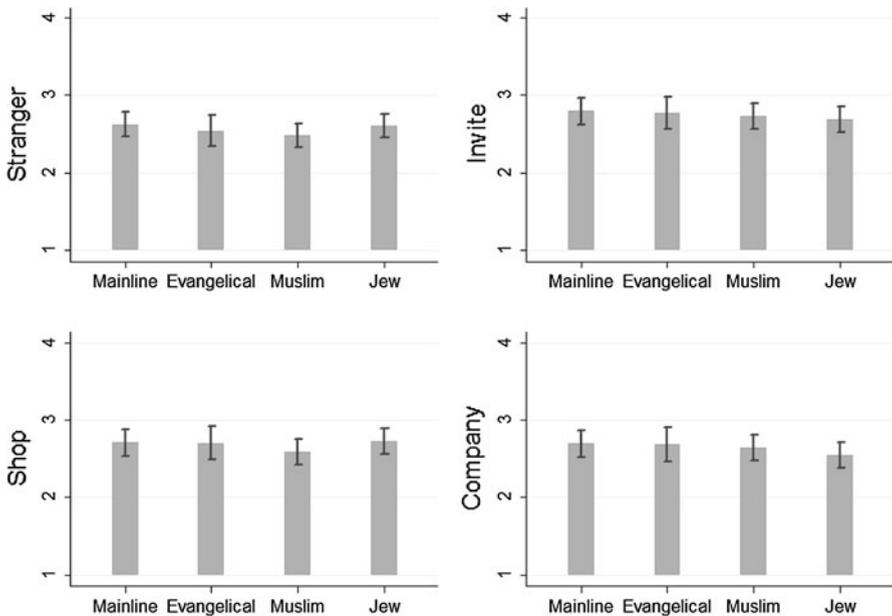

Fig. 1 Mean agreement with inclusive and exclusive religious values by religious tradition (with 95 % confidence interval caps)

Dependent Variable Index

Each of the six variables that compose our index deals with a particular disposition regarding U.S. intervention in the affairs of other entities, be they states or terror groups, and the extent of external coordination with the United States (see the Appendix for the full list). We selected policy statements that assess support for interventionism or isolationism and whether the intervention should be coordinated or unilateral. Thus, each policy statement contains what we label either "unilateral" or "qualified" interventionism (see Hilpold 2001; Pugh 1996). Distinguishing interventionism in this manner is helpful in assessing the role that religious values play in shaping dispositions in a broader policy space; much past work on religious effects on foreign policy has focused more narrowly, such as on the Bush Doctrine (Guth 2009) and on support for Israel (Mayer 2004; Guth et al. 1996). The index formed from the six variables capturing a wide range of intervention forms ($\alpha = .59$), were coded such that a positive number signifies support for unqualified US interventions—a more hawkish stance.

Scores for the dependent variables are based on responses to two 0–10 scales that asked subjects to list the number of *arguments in favor* and *arguments opposed* to each dependent variable statement. This approach reflects aspects of the indicators used in ambivalence research (see Thompson et al. 1995; Gainous 2008), and addresses Cacioppo et al. (1997) concern that positive and negative attitudinal poles may move independently and should be measured to allow for such movement. This well-tested measurement strategy allows us to capture the intrinsic cognitive complexity of political concepts to which subjects may have both affirming and negative responses. Reflecting Eagly et al. (1994) argument that closed ended response scales are inadequate for effectively capturing attitude responses, subjects were free to create the affirming and opposing arguments on their own. They were asked only to enter the numerical count of the affirming and opposing arguments they could think of in each of two boxes on the survey sheet (which were designated "arguments in favor?" and "arguments opposed?" respectively). Since we are only interested in the relative argument conflict that subjects have with the intervention statements, we do not employ an actual ambivalence measure here. Instead, our dependent variables are constructed as the numerical difference between the two argument scales for each intervention statement—subtracting the number of arguments opposed from the number of arguments in favor, which mirrors the way Crites et al. (1994, p. 633) calculated their "thought-listing" measure (see also the argument repertoire approach of Price et al. 2002). This creates a variable range of −10 to 10 in theory (−7 to 8 in these data), where positive values reflect greater favoritism for a given policy.

Despite strong references for this style of question construction, there is the possibility that such a cognitively intensive exercise may induce variance from the attitudes respondents would provide if their intuition were the guide.[5] Wilson and colleagues have found that it is "difficult for people to know themselves" (Wilson and Dunn 2004, p. 493) and it is common for attempts to encourage introspection

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[5] We thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this possibility.

and explain why people hold attitudes to induce weakened correlations between attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Wilson et al. 1989). Without explicit evidence, it is difficult to know the extent to which our measurement strategy suffers from this problem since it does not explicitly ask participants to explain themselves but instead to rate the extent of the arguments they have in favor and opposition; it does not go as far as to ask respondents to list their arguments. Still, it is an important counter argument that future research should take up, especially given the increase in ambivalence research that uses variants of this measurement strategy.

Based on our expectation that primed exclusive values lead subjects to emphasize in-group/out-group differences, we take it as evidence that these group differences are mapped onto U.S. intervention policy if exclusive values lead to greater support of unqualified U.S. interventionism—a significant, positive effect. We expect these effects to exist across the four religious communities represented in our sample, each of which has a particular baseline public opinion in regard to the general question of interventionism. Based on national opinion surveys, evangelical Protestants have been found to be the most supportive of unilateral U.S. interventionism, American Muslims the least. Mainline Protestants and American Jews fall somewhere between these poles, with mainliners generally more supportive than Jews (Calfano et al. 2008; Guth 2009; Mayer 2004). Those findings are supported here—sample evangelicals have the highest support for US interventionism (and significantly different from the rest), while sample Muslims are the least supportive (though not significantly different from Mainliners or Jews).

Results: Religious Value Effects on U.S. Interventionism

Because the sample of houses of worship is not representative, nor random, we estimate models for the foreign policy attitudes index within each of the four religious traditions represented in the sample. Thus, we estimate four models containing the two experimental conditions, agreement with the value questions, and the following controls: frequency of attendance at religious services, political ideology, and sex.[6] The OLS regression results are presented in Table 1.

The results are simple to describe. As expected, exposure to exclusive values exerts a positive, significant effect, shifting foreign policy attitudes more than 3 points for all and nearly 5 points in the case of evangelicals in favor of unqualified US foreign interventions. The results are consistent and clear—priming exclusive values reduces considerations about the interests of the outgroup, which in this case are those outside the United States. In only one case does inclusive value priming shift attitudes from the control. Sample Muslims exposed to inclusive values become more *supportive* of unqualified U.S. interventions. As an embattled minority, it makes sense that inclusive value exposure would break down barriers with the U.S. government (as their outgroup).

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[6] We also elected to include these controls to address any concern that the random assignment mechanism may have been less effective than in a lab setting. We created interaction terms between the controls and stimuli and found no significant effects.

Table 1 OLS estimates of value priming and value adoption on foreign policy attitudes index

	Mainline protestants			Evangelical protestants			Muslims			Jews		
	β*	(se)	p	β*	(se)	p	β*	(se)	p	β*	(se)	p
Inclusive value priming	.70	(.57)		.48	(.52)		.90	(.30)	***	−.01	(.23)	
Exclusive value priming	3.69	(.86)	***	4.77	(.56)	***	3.42	(.30)	***	3.11	(.23)	***
Inclusive value agreement	−.20	(.32)		.06	(.28)		.02	(.18)		−.01	(.12)	
Exclusive value agreement	.24	(.32)		.38	(.31)		.06	(.16)		.20	(.12)	
Religious attendance	.30	(.16)	*	.02	(.16)		.07	(.12)		−.04	(.06)	
Sex	−.40	(.48)		−.74	(.41)	*	.57	(.28)	**	.02	(.18)	
Political ideology	.54	(.25)	**	.80	(.21)	***	.01	(.10)		.01	(.08)	
Constant	−2.28	1.54		−2.94	(1.48)	**	−1.39	(.84)	*	−.42	(.61)	
Model statistics	$N = 135$ Adj $R^2 = .18$ RMSE = 2.67			$N = 87$ Adj $R^2 = .48$ RMSE = 1.87			$N = 151$ Adj $R^2 = .49$ RMSE = 1.50			$N = 152$ Adj $R^2 = .56$ RMSE = 1.07		

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$ (two-tailed tests)

We also estimated the effect of value adoption. In no model did agreement with inclusive or exclusive values affect foreign policy attitudes. Only the signs for exclusive value agreement are consistently in the expected direction, though still insignificant. However, it is possible that participants need to be reminded about their values and only then do participants link them to their attitudes. That is, there may be an interaction between value priming and agreement. We estimated a series of models for inclusive and exclusive values individually compared to the control condition among the four religious traditions, interacting value agreement and priming (along with the same controls as in Table 1). In 7 of the 8 models, the interaction was insignificant (not shown). In only one was the interaction significant—inclusive value priming and agreement among evangelicals. That interaction, depicted in Fig. 2, shows that those primed (black line) who disagree with inclusive values (left side) show separation from those not primed (gray line)— they hold more conservative foreign intervention attitudes. Among sample evangelicals, the effects are limited to only 11 % of the sample, which highlights how restricted these effects are. That is, foreign intervention attitudes are moving here because of the elevation of a values criterion and not because they have internalized the value.
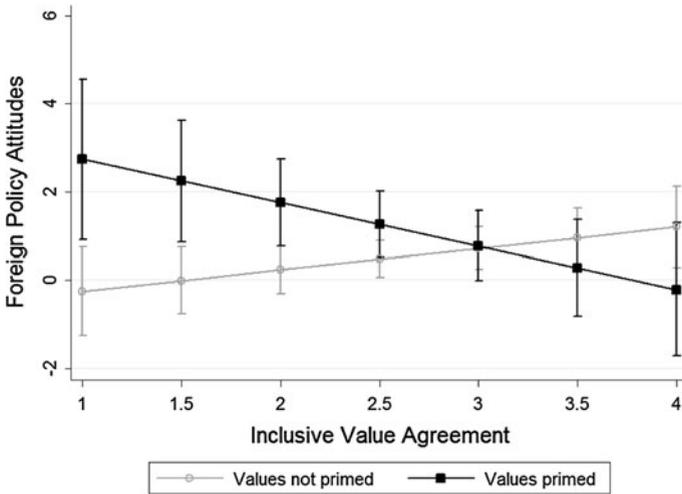
Fig. 2 Estimated foreign policy attitudes driven by the interaction of inclusive value priming and agreement (90 % confidence intervals)

We theorized that the communication and elevation of religious values tapping in-group/outgroup distinctions would affect policy attitudes among religious publics. Our results show that primed values otherwise disconnected from politics can influence the direction of support for policy measures. Given the cognitive distance between these religious values and U.S. intervention policy, participants clearly map the value's logic onto international policy considerations as social identity theory would predict—exclusive values lead to promoting the interests of the ingroup. In this case, the primed exclusive values consistently move subject policy arguments in the direction of favoring U.S. latitude in pursuing foreign interventions, an effect consistent with favoring the ingroup.

Inclusive value priming is indistinguishable from the control, which could be the result of several possibilities: the treatment is weak, people do not respond to calls to lower ingroup boundaries, and/or their attitudes already reflect exposure to inclusive values. Though we cannot rule out the former two, we can examine evidence supportive of the latter argument.

Study Two: The Religious Value Presentation of Clergy and its Effects

The strong, consistent effects of religious value priming demonstrated above are meaningful only insofar as these values are primed in the real world. Fortunately, there are data to assess just how frequently they are. Thus, we now draw on data from the most recent incarnation of the Cooperative Clergy Study, which was coordinated by Corwin Smidt at Calvin College (see also Smidt 2004). A group of scholars coordinated surveys of clergy covering a wide spectrum of Protestant
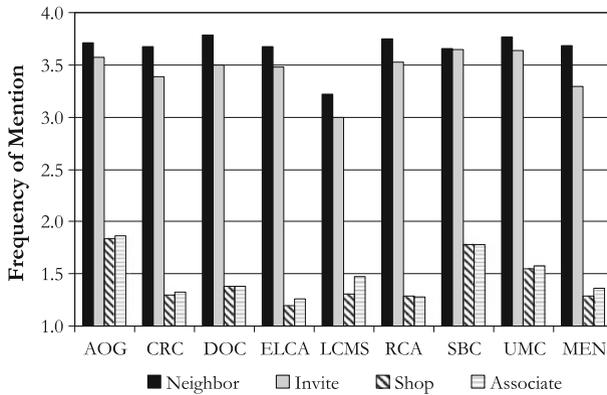
Fig. 3 The frequency of addressing inclusive and exclusive religious values by clergy in nine protestant denominations. *Note* Each is coded 4 = very often, 3 = often, 2 = seldom, and 1 = never. "Neighbor" refers to "In trying to be a good Christian", it is important to "love the stranger as yourself." "Invite" refers to, "In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to invite others to church even if the church begins to change as a result." "Shop" refers to "In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to shop as much as possible at stores owned by other Christians." "Associate" refers to, "In trying to be a good Christian, it is important to keep company with other Christians."

denominations.[7] We included four questions asking how often clergy presented four specific value statements using the following language, "How often do you preach on the following values in your sermons?" The value statements used the same wording as that listed above in study 1, two for each the inclusive and exclusive value sets, and each question coded very often (=4), often, seldom, or never (=1).

Figure 3 shows the means by denomination of the four value presentation questions asked in the survey—two each for inclusive and exclusive values using the same wording as in our experiment described above. The solid color bars are inclusive values, while the dashed bars represent the means for exclusive values. From the figure, it is evident that all denominational clergy report presenting inclusive values at high rates, with most approaching "very often" (except for Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod clergy). Expressions of exclusive values are relatively rare, though there is some variation. Exclusive value presentations are more common among evangelical Assemblies of God and Southern Baptist Church ministers by a factor of two (approaching "seldom") over most other denominations. United Methodist clergy occupy a middle ground, while the other denominations average something close to "never" with regard to their exclusive value presentations.

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[7] The denominations surveyed (the primary sponsor for each denomination is in parentheses followed by the final n and the response rate) included the Assemblies of God (John C. Green, $n = 208$, response rate(rr) = 21.1), Christian Reformed Church (Corwin Smidt, $n = 370$, $rr = 53.3$), Disciples of Christ (Christopher Devine, $n = 335$, $rr = 34.9$), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (Laura Olson; $n = 272$, $rr = 34.1$), Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (Jeff Walz and Steve Montreal; $n = 359$, $rr = 41.7$), Reformed Church of America (Corwin Smidt, 312, $rr = 50.9$), Southern Baptist Church (James Guth, $n = 248$, $rr = 25.4$), United Methodist Church (John C. Green, $n = 282$, $rr = 28.7$), and the Mennonites (Kyle Kopko, $n = 520$, $rr = 53.6$).

The degree of consistency in the value presentations is impressive, showing only marginal variation across denominations that otherwise vary quite widely in their theological commitments (Guth et al. 1997). We should also note that while one would expect that clergy would choose one value to highlight at one point in time, the two measures are actually positively correlated ($r = .173$, $p = .00$, n = 2800).[8] More frequent inclusive value presentations are positively related to more frequent presentations of exclusive ones. This serves to confirm, to an extent, the twin goals of religious organizations—the evidently more important goal of recruiting new members (inclusive) while maintaining social and moral boundaries (exclusive) (Stark and Finke 2000). The results only reflect a swath of Protestant denominations, but are suggestive of what the patterns of value presentation might look like across the remainder of American religion, especially given the decline of religious particularism and the formation of two religious camps in the United States (Wuthnow 1988).

Discussion

Clergy promote inclusive values most often and the estimated effect of priming inclusive values is equivalent with the non-primed condition. Only in the case of exclusive value priming do attitudes shift off the baseline. While this pattern is open to multiple interpretations, we argue that the experimental results simply affirm the observational results. If congregants are actually hearing inclusive values regularly, then their attitudes already reflect that, and priming the quotidian should have little effect. It is only priming irregularly heard exclusive values that produces attitudinal movement in the experiment.

These findings are notable because the literature has largely overlooked operationalizing religion's politically salient values in determining policy attitude formation (though see similarly oriented work by Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Leege and Welch 1989; Mockabee et al. 2007). Of the dozens of studies done with the American National Election Studies (ANES) since 1992—the last time the religion measures were significantly updated—none include an operationalization of religious values. As Leege and Kellstedt note, the ANES measures are simply not suitable for this purpose (1993, p. 220). Instead the ANES measures have examined "vertical" religious links (i.e., with God), instead of emphasizing the far more politically salient "horizontal" links (i.e., with other humans) that religious organizations confront and help establish (Leege and Welch 1989). Hence, based on our findings, more research emphasizing this values-based, "horizontal" linkage of religion and society is long overdue.

The focus on values also helps us make sense of clergy political influence. Most studies have found very little influence to exist because, as Djupe and Gilbert (2009) argue, members erect defenses to political messages from clergy. This means that

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[8] Inclusive and exclusive value presentations are significantly and positively correlated with each other within each denomination as well, all at least at the .05 level with the exception of the CRC, in which $r = .09$ and $p = .09$.

messages evading those defenses might persuade members to adopt a new disposition to public policy more consistent with the clergy's expectations. The religious values we explore appear to be one operative way to avoid those defenses and shape public policy views (for other avenues of clergy influence, see Djupe and Calfano 2009; Djupe and Gwiasda 2010).

Our work should be noted as a significant shift in the study of religion and politics, where scholars have hesitated in emphasizing communication within religious communities (but see Djupe and Gilbert 2003, 2009; Smith 2008). In the dynamic view of religious influence presented here, policy attitudes will vary as religious leaders and members explore the role of their houses of worship in a world driven by the religious economy and the state of the world. An emphasis on communicated values in houses of worship provides a plausible mechanism for how opinions of religious people change, which has been lacking in existing theories of religious influence. There is little doubt, then, that religious communities can arrive at attitudes and behaviors that may differ considerably from brethren wearing the same religious label both across town and around the world (Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Gilbert 1993; Jelen 1992; Roozen et al. 1984; Wald et al. 1988).

Conclusion

Our contention is that value considerations may affect the degree of tension with society a group experiences, affecting the definitional width of in and outgroups. This tension, in turn, has effects on how people think about public policy in line with social identity theory. Inclusive values are posited to lead to an expansive consideration of the ingroup, which was analogized to apply to cooperative U.S. interventions. On the other hand, exclusive values emphasize narrow group boundaries and lead to support for unilateral, self-interested foreign interventions. There is no reason to think that the same basic logic does not apply to any number of public policies where group tensions can be analogized, such as immigration, gay rights, and the politics of race.

Equally important to our story is that the exclusive values we examine have consistent communication effects and that they are centered in associations. Testing whether the hierarchy of these values is stable among members of houses of worship across religious communities requires a suitable temporal research design. But it is clear from our results that religious value hierarchies are malleable and subject to priming. And the effects of our value priming experiment were consistent across a wide range of religious traditions.

While religious communities appear to prioritize outreach (inclusion), they also may attempt to maintain current membership levels by emphasizing boundaries with the world (exclusion). It is these rare, defensive moves to emphasize difference that can have the most potent effects on individual attitudes. This may be a stable result, but we believe it simply raises the question of the conditions under which religious values may exert themselves, with a focus on the nature of the baseline, the policy area, and the composition of the communication space.

Coding Appendix

Experimental Data

US foreign intervention index Averages the difference in the number of positive and negative arguments (from 0 to 10) given regarding six statements: "The U.S. should intervene in the affairs of foreign states to prevent genocide;" "The U.S. is justified in waging a pre-emptive strike against states it believes pose a threat to its national security;" "The U.S. should intervene in the affairs of foreign states only if it has the support of the United Nations;" "The U.S. should use its influence and resources to shape the political environments of other nations;" "The U.S. should intervene in the affairs of foreign states to protect its own economic and political interests;" "The United States is justified in warring against states and terror groups espousing radical Islamic ideology." The index runs in actuality from -7.3 to 8.3 (in theory from -10 to $+10$), in which a positive number suggests favor for unqualified US interventions.

Attendance "Aside from weddings or funerals, I typically attend church:" 1 = once a week or more, 2 = once or twice a month, 3 = about once a month, 4 = several times a year, 5 = rarely, if ever.

Ideology "Now, thinking of your general political views, which of these labels best describes you?" 1 = strongly liberal, 2 = liberal, 3 = moderate, 4 = conservative, 5 = strongly conservative.

Sex 1 = female, 2 = male.

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