

BRIEF REPORT

For Whom Do Boundaries Become Restrictions?
The Role of Political OrientationJianna Jin¹, Selin A. Malkoc¹, and Russell H. Fazio²¹ Department of Marketing and Logistics, Fisher College of Business, The Ohio State University² Department of Psychology, The Ohio State University

While the global pandemic highlighted the importance of adhering to boundaries (e.g., social distancing rules), compliance with these boundary-imposing measures has been politically divided. This research proposes one reason that may underlie the observed ideological asymmetries toward COVID-19 prevention measures and boundaries in general: Conservatives and liberals may fundamentally differ in how they construe boundaries. Supporting this prediction, Studies 1a–1d and two follow-up studies ($n = 3,231$; Studies 1a–1c and follow-up studies: Amazon Mechanical Turk and Prolific users, Study 1d: U.S. students) demonstrate that identifying with political conservatism (vs. liberalism) increases the likelihood to construe boundaries as restrictions. We further show that, due to conservatives' greater preference for order, structure-related words carry a more positive connotation among conservatives versus liberals (Study 2: $n = 744$; MTurk users). Capitalizing on this finding, we demonstrate that linguistic framing that highlights the structure-providing function of a boundary (e.g., a social distancing sign can “structure” customer flow in a restaurant) can reduce the salience of its usual restrictive aspect and hence effectively improve conservatives' attitudes toward the boundaries (Study 3: $n = 740$; MTurk users).

Public Significance Statement

People ascribing to conservative and liberal political ideologies differ in how they construe “boundaries” in their lives (e.g., a row of traffic cones, a three-sectioned plate): More conservative individuals are more likely to associate boundaries with restriction. This fundamental difference not only contributes to conservatives' aversion toward boundaries imposed on them during the pandemic (e.g., social distancing signs) but also provides an opportunity to reframe boundaries more favorably. Capitalizing on conservatives' fondness for structure, the research demonstrates that linguistic framing can divert conservatives' construal away from restriction and instead toward the more favorable structure-providing function of boundaries.

Keywords: boundary, political orientation, preference for order, polarization, COVID-19

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Jianna Jin served as lead for formal analysis, investigation, methodology, project administration, software, visualization, writing—original draft, writing—review and editing. Selin A. Malkoc served in a supporting role for methodology, supervision, writing—original draft, writing—review and editing. Russell H. Fazio served in a supporting role for methodology, supervision, writing—original draft, writing—review and editing. Jianna Jin, Selin A. Malkoc, and Russell H. Fazio contributed equally to conceptualization.

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Boundaries—borders that separate and contain a focal object (Cutright, 2012)—are prevalent in our lives, whether they exist in a tangible (e.g., lines separating dates on a calendar; Myrseth & Fishbach, 2009) or an intangible (e.g., conceptual distinctions used by social actors to separate “us” from “them”; Lamont & Molnár, 2002) form. Notably, boundaries became a staple of our lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, as several of the protective measures (e.g., social distancing rules, plexiglass separators) imposed boundaries that separated individuals and contained them in assigned physical spaces. Of interest to the current research is the converging evidence demonstrating that those who identify as conservatives (vs. liberals) exhibited greater reactance to COVID-19 measures (Pew Research Center, 2021; Rosenfeld et al., 2022; Ruisch et al., 2021). Such differential attitude toward pandemic-related boundaries poses a key research question we set out to explore: Could the reactance toward pandemic measures be indicative of a more fundamental difference between how conservatives and liberals construe boundaries?

Prior research on political psychology offers a reason to believe that conservatives would indeed find COVID-19 boundaries, as well as other boundaries imposed upon them, aversive and likely construe them as restrictions. Conservatives place great emphasis on individual freedom and thus show stronger aversion toward social and economic restrictions (Altemeyer, 1998), raising the possibility that conservatives also view boundaries imposed on them as “constraints” that limit what they can do. Consistent with the notion, Irmak et al. (2020) found that conservatives (vs. liberals) show greater reactance against consumption regulations from the government (e.g., food warning labels by the FDA). Political conservatism is also negatively associated with political doctrines such as socialism or communism (Altemeyer, 1998), a major theme of which is that certain regulations can be imposed for the sake of equality. Thus, conservatives (vs. liberals) might view the boundaries that exist in their environment as restrictions that limit one’s freedom.

On the other hand, it is possible that conservatives’ (vs. liberals’) reactance to COVID-19 boundaries is simply an artifact of the political climate (e.g., greater reactance driven by elite cues; Ruisch et al., 2021) and not indicative of how conservatives construe boundaries that are inherently apolitical (e.g., a partitioned plate; Cutright, 2012). In fact, prior research also provides grounds for this opposing prediction: Conservatives (vs. liberals) may be more likely to view boundaries positively, as they possess stronger need for order and structure (Jost, 2017) and prefer organized environment (e.g., neater bedrooms; Carney et al., 2008). The structure-providing function of a boundary is so powerful that individuals whose sense of control is threatened opt for bounded (vs. nonbounded) objects (e.g., a framed vs. unframed painting) to compensate for their lack of control (Cutright, 2012). Thus, conservatives, who have inherently greater need for order, may appreciate the structure afforded by boundaries and be inclined to view the boundaries as guidance that help them structure their environment.

These two streams of prior work thus render a key research question that we set out to explore in Studies 1a to 1d: Are conservatives more likely to construe a boundary as restriction or structure? We used diverse types of bounded objects that are more or less politicized, including a social distancing sign (Study 1a), a partitioned timeslot (i.e., a temporal boundary; Study 1b), a row of traffic cones (i.e., a physical boundary; Study 1c), and a sectioned plate (i.e., a bounded product; Study 1d) to empirically test this question.

Transparency and Openness

The current work meets the Transparency and Openness Promotion guidelines suggested by the journal. We appropriately cite prior work and report materials and data (for which personally identifiable information is removed as per Institutional Review Board’s requirement) for all studies in Open Science Framework repository. The link to the repository is provided in the author note section. We further report the preregistrations for studies (Study 1c follow-up, Studies 2 and 3) for which the designs and analyses plans were preregistered.

Studies 1a to 1d

Method

Participants

Studies 1a to 1c utilized Amazon Mechanical Turk samples, which are proven to be demographically and politically diverse (Paolacci &

Chandler, 2014) and perform similarly to non-MTurk samples across diverse tasks (Hauser et al., 2019), including surveys on political attitudes (Clifford et al., 2015). Furthermore, our samples showed considerable variability in political orientation, spanning the full range of potential scores (1 = *extremely liberal* to 9 = *extremely conservative*) in each study (see Section A of the online supplemental materials for distributions for all studies), despite a slight liberal lean on average (mean political orientation across all studies is 4.36). This variability allowed us to test the association between political orientation and boundary construal. Nonetheless, Study 1d involved a sample of undergraduate students (less liberal-leaning; $M_{\text{political-orientation}} = 4.79$) so as to increase generalizability.

Across all studies, the only demographic information collected was age (“What is your age?”) and gender (“What is your gender?” Male/Female/Other/Prefer not to say). For Studies 1a to 1c, we recruited 614 ($M_{\text{age}} = 38.81$, 51.6% female, 46.9% male, 1% other, 0.5% prefer not to say), 607 ($M_{\text{age}} = 41.53$, 54.9% female, 44.8% male, 0.3% other), and 610 ($M_{\text{age}} = 39.98$, 56.4% female, 43.1% male, 0.5% other) MTurk users, respectively, which had 80% power to detect an effect size (f^2) as small as 0.015 in a simple regression. Three hundred and forty-seven undergraduate students ($M_{\text{age}} = 20.46$, 44.2% female, 55.5% male, 0.3% other) participated in Study 1d, resulting in 80% power to detect an effect size as small as 0.25 (see Section B of the online supplemental materials for more details).

Procedure


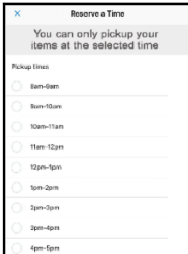


For all four studies, participants first indicated their political orientation on a 9-point scale (“I will place myself as ____ on a political spectrum”; 1 = *extremely liberal*, 5 = *moderate*, 9 = *extremely conservative*) and moved onto a separate task where they viewed a bounded target. In Study 1a, participants viewed an image of a social distancing sign (see Table 1 for stimuli used in Studies 1a–1d) that they imagined seeing during a visit to a restaurant and indicated how likely they would be to describe the sign as providing guidance or restrictions (“The sign seems to ...”; 1 = *guide where customers can or cannot stand*, 7 = *restrict where customers can or cannot stand*). In Study 1b, participants imagined using an app to order groceries and saw an image of a partitioned time slot (Tonietto & Malkoc, 2016) to schedule their pick-up and rated it on a 7-point scale (“The time slots seem to ...”; 1 = *structure when customers can or cannot pick up their items*, 7 = *restrict when customers can or cannot pick up their items*). In Study 1c, participants rated the image of a row of traffic cones on a 7-point scale (“The cones seem to ...”; 1 = *guide where people can or cannot go*, 7 = *restrict where people can or cannot go*), while in Study 1d, they rated a three-sectioned plate (Cutright, 2012; “This plate seems to ...”; 1 = *control your meal portions*, 7 = *restrict your meal portions*).

Results

Studies 1a–1d

For each study, we ran a regression analysis with political orientation as the predictor and perceptions of the bounded target as the dependent variable. Results of all studies revealed that, conservatives, compared to liberals, are more likely to construe these diverse boundaries as restrictions (see Table 1 for relevant statistics), and that this effect is generalizable to bounded objects that are not themselves inherently political.

Table 1
Stimuli Used and the Results Obtained in Studies 1a to 1d

Study	Study 1a	Study 1b	Study 1c	Study 1d
Bounded object	Social distancing sign	Partitioned time slot	Traffic cones	Sectioned plate
Stimuli				
Result	$\beta = 0.18, t(612) = 4.51, p < .001$	$\beta = 0.11, t(605) = 2.65, p = .008$	$\beta = 0.16, t(608) = 3.89, p < .001$	$\beta = 0.11, t(345) = 2.13, p = .034$

Supplemental Studies and Analyses

While demonstrating an association between political conservatism and boundary construal, these studies are not without issues.

First, Studies 1a–1d used a bipolar scale that (a) pitted participants' perception of a boundary as restriction against its perception as structure and (b) associated high (low) scale numbers with restriction (structure). To address these two issues, we conducted a follow-up study ($n = 406$ MTurk users; $M_{\text{age}} = 40.34$, 47.5% female, 51.5% male, 1% other) of Study 1a, utilizing two separate unipolar measures (order counterbalanced) that independently asked about perception of the social distancing sign as providing guidance ("The social distancing sign seems to guide where customers can or cannot stand") or restriction ("The social distancing sign seems to restrict where customers can or cannot stand") on 7-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). This follow-up study replicated the result of Study 1a ($\beta = 0.15, t(402) = 3.13, p = .002$; see Section C of the online supplemental materials for details), making it unlikely that our findings are an artifact of the measurement scales used in Studies 1a–1d.

Furthermore, Studies 1a–1d measured political orientation first, raising the question of whether activation of political identity is necessary to observe the effect. To address this issue, a preregistered follow-up study ($n = 700$ Prolific users, $M_{\text{age}} = 36.18$, 49.4% female, 48.9% male, 0.85% other, 0.85% prefer not to say) of Study 1c manipulated the order in which political orientation measure was administered, counterbalancing whether it was measured before or after the main measure asking about perception of a row of traffic cones. A regression analysis with political orientation, the presentation order, and the interaction yielded only a significant main effect of political orientation ($\beta = 0.11, t(643) = 2.81, p = .005$) and no interaction ($\beta = 0.03, t(643) = 0.39, p = .699$; see Section D of the online supplemental materials for details),¹ demonstrating that the observed effect is robust to when the political orientation is measured.

Finally, we also conducted a mini-meta analysis (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004) of Studies 1a–1d, as well as the two follow-up studies, which demonstrated that the effect is highly reliable (effect size = 0.14; 95% CI [0.10; 0.17]; see Section E of the online supplemental materials for details).

These findings thus favor the "boundary as restriction" account, which is consistent with conservatives' greater emphasis on individual freedom and limited external interventions (Campbell & Kay, 2014). Although conservatives' construal of the social distancing sign as a restriction may be driven in part by the politicization of the pandemic, the results of Studies 1b to 1d suggest a more fundamental association between conservatism and the restriction construal of boundaries. However, this does not negate the potential relevance of conservative's strong preference for order and structure (Jost, 2017). Indeed, it may be possible to leverage conservatives' fondness of structure to change their construal of boundaries.

The next two studies explore whether a linguistic framing that highlights the structure-providing role of a boundary (e.g., describing a social distancing sign as "structuring" customer flow) may reduce the salience of its restrictiveness and increase conservatives' favorability toward the boundary. This conjecture is consistent with prior work showing that conservatives have a greater epistemic need for structure (Carney et al., 2008; Jost et al., 2018) evident in their scoring highly on need for order and structure scales (Jost et al., 2018; Van Hiel et al., 2004). Supporting this, Cichocka et al. (2016) found that when given the choice to complete a sentence with a noun (e.g., "is an optimist") or an adjective ("is optimistic"), conservatives prefer nouns, which evoke a greater sense of stability (Semin & Fiedler, 1991; Walton & Banaji, 2004) and can satisfy their need for structure. Thus, in so far as structure-related words fulfill conservatives' greater epistemic need for structure, using such words to describe boundaries should lead to more favorable evaluations among conservatives than liberals.

Study 2

Study 2 had two goals. First, using a word connotation task, we examined whether conservatives (vs. liberals) view structure-related

¹ While we excluded participants based on a preregistered exclusion criterion, including these people does not change the statistical significance of the result: The same regression analysis yielded only a significant main effect of political orientation ($\beta = 0.12, t(696) = 3.10, p = .002$) and a nonsignificant interaction with the order variable ($\beta = 0.02, t(696) = 0.22, p = .825$; see Section D of the online supplemental materials for more details).

words more favorably. Second, we explored the underlying role of need for order in conservatives' fondness for structure-related words by administering the preference for order scale (adapted from Need for Cognitive Closure scale; Ruisch & Stern, 2021). The scale assesses personal need for order and structure, which has been found to correlate with political conservatism (Jost et al., 2018; Van Hiel et al., 2004) and has been used in earlier research investigating conservatives' language preferences (Cichocka et al., 2016).

Method

Participants

Although a sample of 600 would have provided 80% power to detect an effect size as small as 0.012, we preregistered a larger sample ($n = 750$) because an exploratory study suggested an 11% rate of attention check failure. Surprisingly, 744 MTurk users ($M_{\text{age}} = 39.94$, 51.1% female, 48.4% male, 0.5% other) remained in the final sample after the preregistered exclusion (see Section F of the online supplemental materials for the results with no exclusions for this and Study 3, which yielded stronger results).

Procedure

Participants first engaged in a word evaluation task, where they indicated their reaction to a set of words as quickly as possible. Participants practiced the task, by rating two negative ("murder" and "cockroach") and two positive ("awards" and "ice cream") words on a 7-point scale ($-3 = \text{very negative}$, $+3 = \text{very positive}$). The main task featured 16 words (order randomized), four of which were our target words ("structure," "guidance," "guidelines," and "control") chosen to convey a sense of orderliness and predictability that is associated with structure. The remaining twelve were neutral filler words (e.g., painting; see Section G of the online supplemental materials). After completing an unrelated task, participants indicated their political orientation (as before) and completed the preference for order subscale of the Need for Cognitive Closure scale (e.g., "I dislike unpredictable situations;" Ruisch & Stern, 2021; see Section H of the online supplemental materials for all items).

Results

We averaged the evaluations of the structure-related words ($\alpha = 0.7$) to create an index and regressed this index on political orientation. As expected, more conservative participants were more favorable toward the structure-related words, $\beta = 0.08$, $SE = 0.01$, $t(742) = 2.15$, $p = .032$, but not toward the filler words, $\beta = -0.031$, $SE = 0.01$, $t(742) = -0.86$, $p = .391$. These findings suggest that conservatives do not merely evaluate all words more favorably, but instead, are particularly fond of the words that are structure-related.

We further conducted a mediation analysis using PROCESS model 4 (Hayes, 2017), where political orientation was the independent variable, preference for order was the mediator, and evaluation of structure-related words was the dependent measure. As expected, preference for order significantly and positively mediated the relationship between political orientation and evaluation of structure-related words (standardized effect = 0.03, $SE = 0.01$,

95% CI [0.01, 0.05]; see Figure 1). Study 2 thus demonstrates that (a) conservatives are positively disposed toward structure-related words and that (b) preference for order plays a role in these more favorable evaluations. Utilizing this, we next develop a structure-framing intervention and examine whether it can promote more favorable views of a boundary among conservatives.

Study 3

We devised a structure-framing intervention that aimed to increase the salience of the structure-providing function of a boundary and thus potentially improve conservatives' attitudes toward the boundary. We tested the intervention (vs. no-frame or restriction-frame) using a relatively politicized boundary, namely the social distancing sign. This provides a conservative test of our prediction as participants are likely to have pre-existing attitudes toward the sign.

Method

Participants

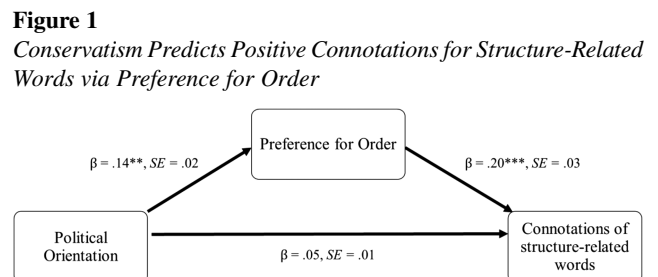
A total of 611 MTurk users were recruited. The sample size provided 80% power to detect an effect size as small as 0.018. The preregistered exclusions resulted in a final sample of 513 participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 38.96$; 54.8% female, 44.6% male, 0.6% other; see Section I of the online supplemental materials for sensitivity power analyses).

Procedure

After indicating their political orientation, participants completed the same social distancing sign task used in Study 1a. We had three between-subjects conditions: no framing, structure-framing, and restriction-framing. In the no-framing (i.e., baseline) condition, participants simply viewed the sign. In the structure (vs. restriction) framing condition, participants read an additional line stating that "arrow stickers on the floor are placed to structure (vs. restrict) the customer flow" in the restaurant (see Section J of the online supplemental materials for details). Next, they indicated their attitude toward the sign on three items ($-3 = \text{unacceptable/bad/unfavorable}$, $3 = \text{acceptable/good/favorable}$), which were averaged to create an index ($\alpha = 0.95$). For exploratory purposes, we also measured intentions to visit the restaurant ($1 = \text{not at all}$, $7 = \text{very likely}$).

Results and Discussion

We first regressed attitude toward the sign on political orientation (mean-centered), a linear contrast of the boundary framing



*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$.

conditions (−1: restriction, 0: control, 1: structure), and their interaction. The regression yielded a significant main effect of political orientation, such that liberal participants were more favorable toward the social distancing sign; $\beta = -0.32$, $SE = 0.02$, $t(509) = -7.60$, $p < .001$. More importantly, we observed the predicted interaction between framing and political orientation; $\beta = 0.18$, $SE = 0.03$, $t(509) = 4.29$, $p < .001$. To compare the restriction-framing and structure-framing to the control condition, respectively, we dummy-coded the boundary framing conditions into two variables (D1: structure-frame coded as 1 and the other two conditions coded as 0; D2: restriction-frame coded as 1 and the other conditions coded as 0) and ran the same regression analysis focusing on the interaction with political orientation. The structure-frame significantly attenuated the impact of political orientation relative to the control, $\beta = 0.15$, $SE = 0.06$, $t(507) = 2.59$, $p = .01$, whereas the restriction-frame tended to enhance it; $\beta = -0.1$, $SE = 0.06$, $t(507) = -1.73$, $p = .085$; see Figure 2. Spotlight analysis revealed that among those who identified as highly conservative (i.e., scored 7 on the 9-point scale), structure-framing indeed led to more positive attitudes toward the sign ($M = 1.93$) compared to no framing ($M = 1.48$; $p = .031$), whereas the restriction frame led to more negative attitudes ($M = 1.14$), albeit marginally ($p = .079$). Interestingly, the same spotlight analysis revealed that among those who identified as highly liberal (i.e., scored 2 on the 9-point scale), structure-framing led to *decreased* favorability toward the sign ($M = 2.16$) compared to no-framing ($M = 2.43$; $p = .034$), with no reliable differences between no-framing and restriction-framing conditions ($M = 2.57$; $p = .473$). We suspect that this is due to the political climate surrounding the social distancing signs: For liberals, who showed appreciation toward the pandemic mandates (Pew Research Center, 2021), the structure-framing might have been viewed as suggesting too lax enforcement of social distancing.

Given the significant positive correlation between the attitudes toward the sign and intentions to visit the restaurant ($r = .53$, $p < .001$), we explored the possibility that structure-frame may also improve conservatives' likelihood to visit a store featuring a social distancing sign. We repeated the above regression analysis using linear contrast codes with this measure and observed a significant interaction; $\beta = 0.098$, $SE = 0.03$, $t(509) = 2.24$, $p = .026$. Examination of the comparisons to the control condition revealed data patterns there were consistent with the results observed for the attitudes toward the sign (albeit not statistically significant; see Section K of the online supplemental materials for details). Taken

together, Study 3 provides evidence that structure-frames can be effective in improving conservatives' attitudes toward a boundary that they inherently view as restrictive.

General Discussion

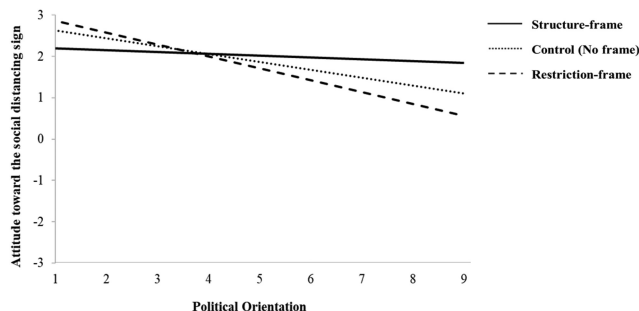
Since its emergence, the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc around the world (Mann et al., 2020; Schippers, 2020), but the response to the crisis has varied with individuals' political orientation. While the influence of cues from the political elite is undeniable (e.g., Ruisch et al., 2021), the current research explores another reason that may underlie the polarized response to certain preventive measures imposed during the pandemic: Conservatives and liberals may inherently differ in how they construe boundaries. Studies 1a to 1d, using diverse boundaries, provide converging evidence of conservatives' spontaneous construal of boundaries as restrictions. Capitalizing on conservatives' fondness of structure as demonstrated in Study 2, Study 3 documents that using structure-frame (vs. no or restriction-frame) and thereby making the structure-providing function of boundaries salient can be effective in eliciting more positive attitudes toward the boundaries among conservatives.

These findings provide theoretical and practical implications. First, we contribute to the health persuasion literature by answering the call to better understand the polarized response toward certain prevention measures (Rosenfeld et al., 2022). Growing research on the topic has focused on identifying means to better communicate the benefits of adhering to the measures (e.g., saving vulnerable individuals; Lunn et al., 2020; Pfattheicher et al., 2020) or correcting the misperceptions regarding the virus (Lammers et al., 2020) and less on accounting for the politically diverse responses to the pandemic measures. Aiming to tackle the seemingly stubborn nature of the polarized attitude toward the prevention measures (e.g., masking mandate; Gelfand et al., 2022), our work proposes and demonstrates a theoretically driven intervention that can better tailor to conservatives' and liberals' inherently different perceptions of a boundary.

More broadly, we contribute to political psychology literature by deepening the understanding of how political orientation influences one's construal of boundaries. Prior work has focused on conceptual boundaries (e.g., social categories; Lamont & Molnár, 2002) and demonstrated that conservatives (vs. liberals) are more sensitive to, and unfavorable toward people who deviate from these boundaries (Okimoto & Gromet, 2016; Stern, 2022). We expand this work by exploring diverse boundaries—political (a social distancing sign), physical (a row of traffic cones and bounded plate), and temporal (a bounded timeslot)—and the inherent interpretation conservatives make when viewing such boundaries.

Worth mentioning is the Constraints on the Generality (Simons et al., 2017) of our findings. While the association between conservative political orientation and construal of boundary as restriction was observed for both undergraduates and MTurk and Prolific samples, these samples were all restricted to U.S. residents. An intriguing question arises as to whether the observed effect generalizes to political conservatives from different cultural background. We have suggested that conservatives' greater emphasis on individual freedom may underlie their tendency to construe boundaries as restriction. Thus, whether the observed association holds in different cultures may depend on the extent to which conservatives in a particular culture differentially emphasize personal freedom. For instance, a large-scale field experiment has shown that collectivism (vs.

Figure 2
Conservatives' (vs. Liberals') Attitude Toward Sign Varies by Framing



individualism) positively predicts mask usage (Lu et al., 2021), suggesting that the effect may not hold in cultures where interdependency and caring for others may override conservative's greater emphasis on individual freedom. We have no reason to believe that the results depend on other characteristics of the participants, materials, or context.

Context of the Research

The current work began with a simple question that we had in mind during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic: Why are we observing such a politically polarized attitude toward many of the prevention measures? To answer this question, we focused on one commonality among the many ways the protective measures were communicated (floor decals, the “six-feet” refrain): They all impose a form of boundary. Inspired by two earlier programs of research conducted by us, one concerning politically diverse responses to pandemic measures (Ruisch et al., 2021) and the other concerning consumers' understanding of temporal boundaries (Tonietto & Malkoc, 2016), we explored whether there might exist a fundamental ideological difference in how people construe boundaries. Across diverse types of boundaries ranging from social distancing signs to traffic cones to timeslots and to “bounded” products (e.g., three-sectioned plate), we demonstrated that conservatives, compared to their liberal counterparts, are more likely to construe boundaries imposed on them as restrictions. We further explored and devised linguistic framing that can divert conservatives' construal away from restriction and instead toward the structure-providing function of boundaries. We find this research question—understanding how conservatives and liberals inherently differ in their construal of the same boundary—intriguing and important. Many questions remain, including the role of such potential moderating variables as who is imposing the boundary (e.g., the government) on whom (e.g., the extent to which the boundary affects others vs. oneself) and for what purpose (e.g., the extent to which boundary protects one from danger).

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