

The overlap between economic and cultural threat:
Accepting racial minorities in the French national community

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the willingness of majority individuals in France to accept black minorities in the national community. I use original data from a recent online survey to focus on how acceptance varies according to minorities' occupations. The standard debate over why majority individuals are more or less likely to accept immigrant-origin minorities focuses on economic and cultural threats. In this article I challenge that juxtaposition by examining how the two concepts may overlap. In particular, I explore how an ostensibly "economic" indicator such as minority occupation may have cultural and symbolic dimensions. I do this by measuring attitudes towards minorities in four occupations: banker, chef, civil service, and winemaker. The results indicate that majority individuals are more likely to accept minorities as part of the French nation as bankers or civil servants than as chefs or winemakers. To account for this variation, there is support for both economic and cultural threat but the relationship with cultural threat is stronger. When majority individuals feel an occupation is more culturally important for French identity they are less likely to accept minorities who are employed in that occupation as part of the national community. I interpret these results as evidence that minority occupation holds important cultural and symbolic content. These findings have numerous implications for our understanding of majority-minority relations and national communities more broadly.

Under what conditions are majority individuals more or less likely to accept minorities in the national community? The answer can be a matter of life or death when conflict between majority and minority groups leads to violence (Horowitz 1985). In other cases, majority individuals may marginalize minorities through repressive policies or informal discriminatory practices that heighten social tensions (Blumer 1958). The extent to which majority individuals accept minorities is also relevant for policy debates that cut across the political system (e.g. citizenship policy, immigration policy, welfare policy, or affirmative action) (Bail 2008; Feldman and Huddy 2005; Schaffner 2011; Sniderman et al. 2000; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007; Valentino, Hutchings and White 2002). In short, whether majority individuals will accept or reject minorities has broad social and political implications.

This article examines the willingness of majority individuals in France to accept black minorities as part of the national community. France is a useful site for this study because like many European countries it experienced a rapid rise in ethnic and racial diversity during the second half of the twentieth century due to migration from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean (Messina 2007). France now has a range of ethnic and racial migrant-origin minorities who have lived in the country for several generations, acquired citizenship, and can objectively claim full membership in the French community (Maxwell 2012; Weil 2008). French popular myth highlights its republican tradition of offering integration possibilities to anyone – of any origin – who accepts mainstream civic values.¹ However the place of non-whites in contemporary French society is highly controversial. Many native French whites complain that non-white

¹One should note that different scholars attribute different weight to the concept of republicanism for understanding minority integration in France. Some feel that it has been the dominant framework that distinguishes France from other countries (Noiriel 1988). Others claim that French republicanism is not a cohesive intellectual project because it has changed focus numerous times over recent decades (Bertossi 2012). I accept these critiques, although I leave their detailed exploration to other research.

migrant communities have not sufficiently assimilated to mainstream French norms. Others claim that non-white minorities are stigmatized, discriminated against, and not accepted in mainstream French society (Chapman and Frader 2004; Hargreaves 2007; Simon 2011). This contestation makes France an excellent location for examining the conditions under which majority individuals accept minorities as part of the national community.

The standard debate over why majority individuals are more or less likely to accept immigrant-origin minorities focuses on economic and cultural threats. One side of this debate argues that majority individuals are primarily concerned about how minorities may threaten their material interests (Mayda 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001). The other side argues that majority individuals are mainly motivated by whether or not minorities pose a cultural threat to the pre-existing national identity and culture (Citrin et al. 1997; Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004). Over the years, there has been more evidence in favor of cultural as opposed to economic explanations for majority willingness to accept minorities, although the juxtaposition of economic and cultural threats continues to be the dominant framework for most studies.²

In this article I challenge the juxtaposition of economic and cultural threats by examining how the two concepts may overlap. In particular, I explore how an ostensibly “economic” indicator such as minority occupation may have cultural and symbolic dimensions. The central research question is whether majority individuals are more likely to accept minorities as part of the French nation when those minorities are employed in some occupations as opposed to others. I explore attitudes towards minorities in four occupations: banker, chef, civil servant, and winemaker. The results indicate that majority individuals are more likely to accept minorities as part of the French nation as bankers or civil servants than as chefs or winemakers. To account

²For a recent detailed overview of these debates see Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014.

for this variation, there is support for both economic and cultural threat but the relationship with cultural threat is stronger. When majority individuals feel an occupation is more culturally important for French identity they are less likely to accept minorities who are employed in that occupation as part of the national community. I interpret these results as evidence that minority occupation holds important cultural and symbolic content.

This article makes several contributions. First, I speak to ongoing debates about the integration of immigrant-origin minorities in France. My results offer support both for the republican claim that minorities are accepted into mainstream society as well as the more pessimistic view that minorities are stigmatized. Yet, contrary to the republican emphasis on the power of assimilation, my analysis highlights variation in acceptance according to the symbolic content of occupation among minorities. This suggests that assimilation is most likely not enough to guarantee acceptance into mainstream society.

I also offer a new perspective on debates about economic threat and cultural threat. The standard assumption is that these two types of threats are fundamentally different concepts. Although most studies show that cultural threat is a better predictor than economic threat of attitudes towards immigrant-origin minorities, the juxtaposition of the two threats continues to dominate most research frameworks. In this article I show how the two types of threats are connected, which encourages a more nuanced understanding of attitudes towards minorities.

Finally, this article speaks to broader concerns about the sources and content of nationalism. Existing literature explores the subjective content of national identity and highlights multiple ways in which individuals can understand their connection to the national community (Billig 1995; Hooghe and Marks 2004; Theiss-Morse 2009). However, to my knowledge, existing research has not explored the connection between the symbolic content of

occupation and national identity. Moreover, not only do I find variation across occupations in the extent to which minorities are accepted in the national community, I also find variation across occupation in attitudes towards whites as ideal representatives of France. This symbolic occupational analysis is potentially a new way of understanding how individuals conceptualize the national community.

In the next section I review the existing literature on how economic and cultural threats are related to the acceptance of minorities and discuss the hypotheses that guide my analysis. I then discuss the data in this article and outline my empirical strategy for measuring attitudes about accepting minorities in France across different occupations. The following section presents results for acceptance of minorities across skill levels and occupations with different symbolic content. I then explore a series of robustness checks and the last section concludes.

Existing literature

The dominant framework in research on the acceptance of immigrant-origin minorities focuses on two types of threats: economic and cultural. The common assumption in literature on economic threats is that attitudes about minorities are driven by material self-interest. These material concerns can take several forms including fear of potential labor market competition (Scheve and Slaughter 2001), or concern about the potential for a higher fiscal burden (Hanson, Scheve and Slaughter 2007; Faccini and Mayda 2009). Either way, the logic is that majority acceptance of minorities is least likely when they are seen as economically threatening and it is most likely when they are seen as economically beneficial.

To apply this general argument about economic threats to the specific question of why acceptance of minorities may vary across occupations, existing literature mainly focuses on

minorities' skill level. For the most part, previous studies find that highly-skilled minorities are preferable to low-skilled minorities because they are seen as more economically beneficial for society (Aalberg, Iyengar and Messing 2011; Hainmueller, Hiscox and Malhotra 2013; Harell et al. 2011). There have been attempts to locate the source of economic threat in the direct competition of immigrants and natives with the same skill level (Scheve and Slaughter 2001). However that initial research did not empirically distinguish between high and low skill immigrants and subsequent studies with more detailed research designs have not found evidence to support the earlier claims as both high and low skill natives tend to prefer highly skilled immigrants (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007, 2010; Tingley 2013).³ This generates the following hypothesis about how variation in the acceptance of minorities across occupations may reflect an economic threat.

H1: Majority individuals are more likely to accept high-skilled minorities and less likely to accept low-skilled minorities as part of mainstream society.

Literature on cultural threat takes a different approach by arguing that attitudes about minorities are primarily driven by symbolic concerns. In particular, this research argues that majority individuals will be less likely to accept minorities that constitute a perceived threat to the established cultural order (Blumer 1958; Bobo and Hutchings 1996; Citrin et al. 1997; Sniderman and Prior 2004; Stephan, Ybarra and Bachman 1999; Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). Existing research examines many minority characteristics including country of

³More recent work has found evidence of the importance of direct competition between immigrants and natives in the same economic sectors, although the fine-grained nature of their analyses are beyond the scope of this article (Dancygier and Donnelly 2013; Malhotra, Margalit and Mo 2013).

origin, religion, language, skin color, race and ethnicity, all of which can trigger cultural threats among the majority population (Hainmueller and Hangartner 2013; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2012; Newman, Hartman and Taber 2012). Yet to my knowledge, existing research has not explored how minority occupation may be a source of cultural threat. In this article, I attempt to make that connection. In doing so, I draw on research about how occupations have symbolic content that shapes how individuals in those occupations are perceived. This research does not usually address the issue of minorities but focuses on common stereotypes, associations, and evaluations that people make about different professions. For examples, nurses are generally considered to be caring and nurturing while used car salesmen are generally considered manipulative and untrustworthy (Bourdieu 1987; Corneo and Jeanne 2010; Humlum, Kleinjans and Nielsen 2012). I use those insights to generate the following hypothesis about how the symbolic content of occupations may be related to the acceptance of minorities.

H2: Majority individuals are more likely to accept minorities in professions that are less important for national identity and less likely to accept minorities in professions that are more important for national identity.

Data and measures

The data in this article are from an online survey conducted from March 18 – 21, 2013 by YouGovFrance.⁴ YouGovFrance has a panel comprising almost 70,000 individuals from which they were able to draw a sample of 1,032 respondents that is nationally-representative in terms of

⁴The survey was designed by the author in French and conducted in French. All references to the survey in this article are in English from translations made by the author. The original French text is available upon request.

gender, age, region, education and occupation.⁵ The data are weighted to account for any potential imbalances in political affiliations. A pilot study with 1,066 respondents was conducted through YouGovFrance in June 2012 to test several of the items. All data presented in this article are from the March 2013 data.

To study majority attitudes towards racial minorities, my subject population of interest is white native-origin French people. However, YouGovFrance does not collect data on the racial or ethnic identity of its panel members so it was unable to target the survey at white respondents. To make the most efficient use of my sample and to maximize the number of white respondents, the sample was limited to panel members born in metropolitan France.⁶ However, I needed an additional step to distinguish between racial majority and minority individuals born in metropolitan France. This posed a challenge because many French people (racial majority and minority individuals alike) believe the use of racial categories is illegitimate because such categories are socially constructed, subjective, and do not represent real underlying differences in the population (Simon 2008). I decided not to ask respondents to state their specific ethnic or racial category because of the potential for large amounts of non-response or even hostile dissimulation. Instead, I posed a more general question about whether respondents consider themselves visible minorities.⁷ I then restricted the sample to those who do not consider themselves visible minorities: 1,008 of the 1,032 overall respondents.⁸

⁵Response rates are calculated differently for YouGovFrance than for conventional surveys. YouGovFrance uses a ‘turbo sampling’ method in which respondents from their panel are randomly invited to participate in a survey and then assigned to a specific survey once they have accepted the invitation. The overall panel response rate is approximately 25%. Of the 1,032 people who started taking the survey, 43 (or 4%) did not complete the survey and were not included in the final sample.

⁶Most non-whites in metropolitan France are either migrants or have parents or grandparents who were migrants.

⁷Another possibility would have been to ask questions about the place of birth and citizenship of subjects’ parents and grandparents. This could allow me to identify respondents with at least three generations of French heritage who would therefore most likely not be visible minorities. However, due to population movements during the

To explore attitudes towards minorities, I present all respondents with a series of four fictional vignettes and ask their opinion about the main character in the vignette. To examine whether attitudes vary across occupations, one vignette is about a banker, another is about a chef, a third is about a civil service employee, and a fourth is about a winemaker. The vignettes were designed to be as similar as possible across occupations. In each case the vignettes describe someone who is moderately successful and therefore potentially likeable, although not so successful as to be impossible to relate to for the average subject. To evaluate H1 and the importance of skill level as a source of economic threat I include two versions of each vignette, one where the character is highly skilled and one where the character is low skilled.⁹ The text for each vignette follows:

Banker: Laurent Bourg is [a bank teller/the head of an important banking firm]. He loves all the details of the finance industry and hopes to work for his own benefit but also the benefit of his bank and his clients.

French colonial empire this strategy is also vulnerable to falsely identifying visible minorities as non-visible minorities. Moreover, this strategy would use a lot more resources in the form of survey items.

⁸‘Visible minority’ is a term currently used in France to apply to all non-white minorities who can be phenotypically distinguished from the white majority. This question included four response options: Yes (11%), No (64%), I do not know (19%), and I prefer not to respond (5%). If respondents answered ‘Yes’ they were presented with a follow-up question that asked them to specify their visible minority category and which included an open textbox option for them to state their own category. The main analysis in this paper classifies the majority population as those who did not answer ‘Yes’ to the visible minority question, with the exception of those who then specified that their ‘visible minority’ category was something clearly not related to being non-white (e.g. Breton, East European, communist, or working class). Sensitivity analyses use more limited definitions of the white majority (e.g. only those who answered ‘No’) and do not change the overall results in this article.

⁹Existing research often uses the terms ‘high skill’ and ‘low skill’ directly in the survey but that terminology would have been awkward in the detailed vignettes used in this study. Instead, when describing the characters I operationalize skills as either educational qualifications or professional rank. Despite this flexible definition it is worth noting that the acceptance of minorities is higher for the highly skilled as opposed to the low skilled vignettes for each occupation and with roughly the same magnitude. This suggests that the slightly different operationalizations of skill level across occupation did not significantly bias the results. Nonetheless, future work might consider teasing apart the relative importance of these two dimensions in more detail.

Chef: Christophe Aubry [is an untrained chef/became a chef after receiving a prestigious degree in Culinary Arts]. He has worked in several restaurants and one day hopes to open his own restaurant.

Civil service: Jean-Louis Perret [is a civil service executive/works at the counter of a civil service department]. He gets along well with his colleagues and is very attached to his department.

Winemaker: Maurice Giraud [is an untrained winemaker/is a winemaker with a diploma in Enology and] who leads a team that works with him. He hopes that his wines will be very successful.

The four specific occupations were chosen to evaluate H2 and the importance of occupations as a source of cultural threat. Two occupations were selected as examples of high symbolic importance for French national identity: chef and winemaker. The other two occupations – banker and civil servant – were examples of low symbolic importance for French national identity. This classification was chosen for two main reasons. First, background research of secondary sources suggests that wine and cuisine are particularly central to French identity (Haine 2006; Harp 2001). This does not mean that French people are not proud of their bankers or civil servants. Instead, it means that wine and cuisine are seen as domains in which France excels relative to other countries and which therefore hold privileged positions as symbols of French culture in ways that banking and civil service do not. In the pilot study, I asked respondents whether France was known for unique success in each of twelve different

domains, and gastronomy was viewed as the most uniquely French while economics and the civil service were the least uniquely French.¹⁰ Winemaker was added to the final survey because of its strong symbolic importance as emphasized in the secondary literature.

The order of the four vignettes was randomized across respondents and after each vignette I ask how well the person “corresponds to the ideal image you have of a French person?” This wording was designed to measure how well each fictional character represents French-ness to the respondents. To be clear, these questions measure how acceptance into the national community varies according to minority occupation and not whether minorities are suitable employees in particular occupations, as other recent work has explored (Adida, Laitin and Valfort 2010). It is also worth noting that my approach differs from much of the literature on acceptance of high versus low skill immigrant-origin minorities, which typically focuses on whether majority individuals would support minorities with various occupational profiles as candidates for entry into the country. In this article, I am more concerned with how majority individuals relate to minorities who are already part of the national community in many respects but may not be fully accepted. My decision to use the same name for the black and the white photos reinforces this presentation of black minorities who share as many similarities with whites as possible, except for their skin color. Moreover, I ask whether the fictional characters correspond to the ‘ideal image’ of a French person because I want to go beyond whether majority individuals merely tolerate minorities as part of society. Instead, I am interested in the extent to which majority individuals are comfortable with minorities being able to represent the nation. This is a strict test of acceptance, but it measures a deeper level of integration that may be more desirable than mere tolerance in the long-term (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007).

¹⁰The other ten domains in the pilot study question were business, history, religion, education, science, health, sports, art/music/culture, politics/civil service, and cinema/television.

To measure the extent to which attitudes are racialized there are two versions of each question, one accompanied by a photo of a black man and one accompanied by a photo of a white man.¹¹ A straight-forward way of examining racialized attitudes would involve presenting respondents with one vignette about a black man and one vignette about a white man, for each occupation. However, providing both photos to the same respondent would clearly indicate that the purpose of the survey is to compare attitudes towards black and white French people. This could introduce social desirability bias because subjects with negative attitudes towards blacks might feel pressured to dissimulate. Therefore, I randomly split the sample into two halves and one was presented with the series of black faces and another was presented with the series of white faces. The only difference across the two sub-samples is whether or not they were presented with a black or a white photo. This allows me to attribute any differences across the two sub-samples to a racialized response. I then compare that racialized gap in acceptance across the four occupations.

Within each racial condition the sample was randomly split a second time so that one half received vignettes about low-skill people and one half received vignettes about high-skill people. This was done so that subjects would not know that attitudes about people at different skill levels were being compared, which could have been another source of social desirability bias. This research design yields four randomly assigned sub-samples for the four vignettes: black face low-skill, white face low-skill, black face high-skill, and white face high-skill. Within each condition, the four photos were randomly assigned to specific occupations for each respondent.

¹¹The photos were obtained from the Eberhardt Face Database, maintained by Professor Jennifer Eberhardt of the Department of Psychology at Stanford University. Each photo was rated by participants in an online study across three dimensions: age, attractiveness, and racial stereotypicality. The photos selected for my survey were matched at the same age, attractiveness, and racial stereotypicality across black and white and across questions to reduce any variance other than race. Due to privacy concerns these photos cannot be presented in publication. For more information please contact Professor Eberhardt (jleberhard@stanford.edu) or the Mind, Culture, & Society Laboratory at Stanford University (mcslab@gmail.com).

One potential concern is that although subjects who received black faces had no way of knowing that their responses were being compared to another sub-sample with different photos, they may have nonetheless responded more positively than they truly felt because they knew the survey was examining racial attitudes. There is no way to determine the exact extent of this social desirability bias, but there is also no reason to believe that this bias would vary across occupations, which is the key issue of interest in this article. Moreover, one implication of social desirability bias is that subjects should feel more discomfort when receiving black as opposed to white photos and therefore be more likely to opt out of responding when receiving black photos as opposed to white photos. Yet appendix table 2 presents non-response rates for the vignette acceptance questions and indicates that the percentages are similar between the black and white photo conditions across occupations and skill levels.

Another potential question is why choose photos of black faces for the minority conditions, given the wide range of other non-white migrant groups in France. One reason is that black faces are easiest to identify as minorities because of the distinct contrast in skin color with whites. The other main non-white migrant group in France is North African Arabs, but in many cases their skin color is similar to those of white French people and they would not be easily identifiable as minorities in the basic headshots used in this survey. In addition, although North African Arabs are often considered the migrant-origin minority group in France with the most problematic integration (due to conflicts with Arabs' Muslim religious practices and ongoing reverberations from the brutal Algerian War of Independence that ended in 1962), there is plenty of discrimination, stigmatization, and integration difficulties for black minorities as well (Fleming 2012; Maxwell 2012). Therefore, one can imagine that the results in this study display a bit more acceptance of minorities than they would for North African Arabs, although there is

no theoretical reason to expect that the variation in acceptance across occupations would be any different across those two minority groups or for any of the other non-white groups in France (e.g. Turks or East Asians).

Results: Acceptance of black minorities as the ‘ideal image’ of French people

The first question is whether there is any evidence of racial bias in general (i.e. irrespective of skill level or occupation) when majority subjects respond to the vignettes about ideal French people. To answer this question, figure 1 presents the mean acceptance score across all skill level and occupational conditions for the black and the white photos. The results in figure 1 indicate that there is a general tendency towards more positive scores for the white conditions where the mean score is 2.63 as opposed to 2.47 for the black conditions. The 95% confidence intervals for these two mean scores do not overlap and t-tests comparing mean acceptance scores among all black and white conditions suggest the difference is statistically significant at $p < .001$. It is worth noting that despite the statistical significance, the numerical bias in favor of whites is rather modest at 0.16 points on a response scale of 0 to 4. This may provide some support for French republican claims that minorities are generally accepted into the national community when they behave the same as majority whites. It could also reflect the fact that the black conditions were designed to be well integrated and a strict test of acceptance. Or there may be some social desirability bias with white respondents feeling pressure to respond more positively about blacks than they truly feel. Nonetheless, there is some evidence of bias and my next question is whether that bias varies more across skill levels (H1) or across occupations with different symbolic content (H2).

‘Figure 1 about here’

Figure 2 explores the importance of skill level by presenting mean acceptance scores for the black and the white conditions according to skill level. At both skill levels there is evidence of bias in favor of whites, but the gap is much larger in low skill vignettes (0.27 points) as opposed to the high skill vignettes (0.05 points). Moreover, the 95% confidence intervals for the mean black and white score in the high skill conditions overlap and t-tests comparing those two means indicate that the difference is not statistically significant at $p < .05$. T-tests comparing black and white mean scores in the low skill conditions suggest that that difference is statistically significant at $p < .001$. It is also worth noting that the score for white photos is roughly the same across skill levels but scores for the black photos are higher in the skill level condition. This suggests that majority individuals' willingness to accept whites as ideal French people is consistent across skill levels but their willingness to accept blacks is related to skill level. All of this is consistent with the expectations of H1, which is that majority individuals are more likely to be biased against low skill as opposed to high skill minorities.

'Figure 2 about here'

The next step is to examine how acceptance of minorities may vary across occupations and then whether that variation is larger or smaller than the variation across skill levels depicted in figure 2. Figure 3 presents mean acceptance scores for the black and white conditions across the four occupations.¹² In all four occupations the acceptance gaps are in favor of whites, but the racial bias gaps are much larger for the two professions with more symbolic importance for French identity as predicted by H2. The gap is 0.08 points in favor of whites for civil servants and only 0.04 points in favor of whites for bankers. In comparison, the bias is 0.23 points in favor of whites among chefs and 0.35 points in favor of whites among winemakers. Moreover,

¹²Figure 1 in the online appendix provides detailed information on the percentage of majority individuals who chose each response category for each race, skill level, and occupation.

the 95% confidence intervals overlap for the black and white conditions among civil servants and bankers and t-tests suggest that the racial differences for those two occupations are not statistically significant at $p < .05$. T-tests also indicate that the black and white acceptance gaps among chefs and winemakers are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

‘Figure 3 about here’

The results in figure 2 and figure 3 provide support for both H1 and H2. Alone, these findings contribute to our understanding of acceptance in mainstream society because they suggest that while minority occupation was previously considered a source of potential economic and material threat, it may also have symbolic and cultural meaning. My next step is to examine which of these relationships is stronger. If the symbolic component of minority occupation is fairly minor in comparison to the economic component, then my contribution would be rather limited. An initial comparison can be done by considering the differences in the black-white gaps within figures 2 and 3. In figure 2, the black-white gap is 0.22 points larger for the low skill as opposed to the high skill conditions. In figure 3, the difference between the smallest black-white occupational gap (0.04 points for bankers) and the largest black-white occupational gap (0.35 points for winemakers) is 0.31 points. This rough comparison suggests that there is more variation in acceptance across occupations than across skill levels, which boosts the importance of my emphasis on the symbolic aspect of minority occupation.

For a more formal test of whether there is more variation in acceptance across skill levels or across occupations, I estimate a series of ordinal logistic regression models. I first expand the dataset so that each respondent has four observations, one for each occupation (civil service, banker, chef, and winemaker). This allows me to estimate ordinal logistic regression models in which race, skill level, and occupation can be included as covariates predicting the extent to

which the photo corresponds to respondents' ideal image of a French person. Results from these regressions are presented in table 1.

Model I in table 1 does not include any covariates and is a baseline for comparisons with subsequent models. Model II includes a covariate for whether respondents received white or black photos and indicates that receiving black photos is associated with more negative responses. The log pseudolikelihood statistic is larger for model II than model I, which indicates that model II likely accounts for more variation on the dependent variable. Model III adds covariates for whether respondents received the high or the low skill condition and an interaction term for whether respondents received black or white high or low skill conditions. Interestingly, the coefficient for receiving white or black photos is no longer statistically significant at $p < .05$ in model III. However, the interaction term suggests that receiving a black low skill condition is associated with more negative responses and is statistically significant at $p < .01$. Model IV includes covariates for answers to specific occupations and interaction terms for whether respondents received white or black photos in those specific occupations. Once again, the coefficient for receiving white or black photos is not statistically significant at $p < .05$. Yet, responding to civil service, chef, or winemaker questions are all associated with more positive responses than the omitted banker category. In addition, the interaction terms for responding to black chefs and black winemakers are statistically significant at $p < .05$ and are associated with more negative responses. More importantly, the larger log pseudolikelihood and pseudo r -squared statistics in model IV as opposed to model III suggest that model IV accounts for more variation in the dependent variable.

'Table 1 about here'

Finally, model V includes covariates for all skill level and specific occupation conditions. A comparison of all the log pseudolikelihood and the pseudo r-squared statistics suggest that the addition of covariates for specific occupations in model IV contributes more information than the addition of covariates for skill level in model III.¹³ Moreover, the full model V is only a modest improvement over model IV but a substantial improvement over model III. In summary, the results in table 1 provide more support for H2 than H1 and suggest that the symbolic aspect of minority occupation may be more important than skill level for understanding the likelihood of acceptance into mainstream French society.

Robustness checks

The analysis thus far has been fairly straight-forward but there are several ways in which the story may be more complicated. The first is that the extent of racial bias across occupations may not be the same across skill levels. Exploring this nuance provides insight on the extent to which the symbolic threat of minority occupation is truly more important than economic threat. Figure 4 presents mean acceptance scores across racial conditions for both high and low skill versions of each occupation. The results in figure 4 indicate that the variation in acceptance across occupations is in fact not the same across skill levels. In the high skill conditions at the top of figure 4, the black-white acceptance gaps are statistically indistinguishable from zero in all four occupations. The actual gap in the black-white mean scores is larger in favor of whites for chefs and winemakers as opposed to civil servants and bankers, yet in each of the four cases the 95% confidence intervals overlap across blacks and whites in the same high skill occupation. In

¹³The pseudo r-squared statistics for all models in table 1 are fairly low. Most likely this is a function of the expanded dataset where models predict the likelihood of feeling that individuals are the ideal image of France, without accounting for any specifics of different occupations.

comparison, graphs at the bottom of figure 4 indicate more variation in the black-white acceptance gaps across occupation. In this case, the black-white gaps for chefs and winemakers are three to four times as large as the black-white gaps for civil servants and bankers. These nuances refine my argument and suggest that the symbolic threat of occupation is most likely to be relevant among low skill minorities, whereas high skill minorities are judged more or less the same as their white counterparts.

‘Figure 4 about here’

A second potential concern is that the previous section did not explore all of the ways in which minorities’ occupation may function as an economic threat. I assumed that preferences about low and high skill minorities are the same across majority individuals, but some research ties economic threat to the vulnerabilities of specific majority individuals (Scheve and Slaughter 2001). It is possible that while lower-skilled majority individuals are most threatened by low skilled minorities, more highly-skilled majority individuals are more threatened by high skilled minorities. If this were true, the results in figure 2 might obscure more substantial variation in acceptance according to skill level once the more fine-grained nature of economic threat is taken into account. To address this concern, figure 5 presents mean acceptance scores for black and white photos across skill levels according to respondents’ education. The results indicate that – as expected – majority individuals with less education have larger pro-white gaps for low skill as opposed to high skill photo conditions. Yet the same pattern also holds for majority individuals with higher levels of education. This suggests that the economic threat of minorities’ occupation is not dependent on majority individuals’ education level.

‘Figure 5 about here’

Another possible complication is that my use of objective measures for material and symbolic threat. Guided by existing theory and the pilot data, I specified which skill levels are more likely to be sources of economic threat and which occupations are more likely to be sources of symbolic threat. Yet it is possible that majority individuals have diverse subjective definitions of what constitutes a material or symbolic threat. It is possible that some majority individuals find minorities more symbolically threatening to the nation as civil servants or bankers. In addition, while I focus on skill level as the aspect of minority occupation that could spark economic threat, it is possible that occupations themselves could be a source of economic threat. For example, personal or family involvement in an occupation may make majority individuals feel that minorities are threatening to their economic interests when employed as bankers.¹⁴

To address this issue, I posed questions that allow respondents to reveal how their personal conceptions of economic or cultural threat may vary across occupations. I provided subjects with a list of themes and asked the extent to which each theme is materially valuable for society in general and the extent to which each theme is symbolically important for French identity. To minimize the possibility of respondents connecting these questions to the vignettes in the survey, the list included eight themes, four of which correspond to the four occupations in the study and four of which were completely different.¹⁵ To measure economic and cultural threat I compare the extent of racial bias for a given occupation among individuals who feel that occupation is either more or less economically or culturally important for France.¹⁶

¹⁴Recent research highlights the importance of fine-grained sectoral or occupational analysis for understanding economic threat (Dancygier and Donnelly 2013; Malhotra, Margalit and Mo 2013).

¹⁵The eight themes were: Wine, Religion, Modern art, Cuisine, Finance and banking, Cinema and television, Public services, Sports.

¹⁶Another possibility would have been to pose direct questions about the extent to which minorities are economically or culturally threatening in each occupation. However, I decided against that strategy for two reasons. First, directly asking about whether minorities pose a threat may be a sensitive issue for many subjects and lead to higher non-response rates or distorted responses due to social desirability bias. In fact, in the pilot study I posed a

I then estimate four ordinal logistic regression models – one for each occupation – that predict the extent to which the photo corresponds to respondents’ ideal image of a French person. I include covariates for the racial condition, respondents’ views about the material or symbolic value of the respective occupation, and interactions between the racial condition and the material and the symbolic value of the respective occupation. Of particular interest is how the likelihood of agreeing that the person in the photo is an ideal French person varies according to whether the photo is black or white and whether respondents feel that the occupation is materially or symbolically important for France. Figure 6 summarizes these results with graphs of predicted probabilities that were calculated from the ordinal logistic regression models.¹⁷

‘Figure 6 about here’

To obtain the graphs in figure 6, I started by calculating the predicted probability of the most positive response category ‘Completely agree’ for both the white and the black condition in each occupation. The difference between the predicted probabilities of ‘Completely agree’ for the black and white conditions is the predicted racial gap in acceptance for each occupation. Figure 6 plots how that racial gap in acceptance changes as respondents have positive as opposed to negative views about the material and symbolic importance of each occupation. For example, the bars on the far left of figure 6 indicates that the bias in favor of whites is roughly 0.02 points

more direct question about minority threat in specific occupations and the non-response rate was 7 percent, compared to 5 percent for the indirect questions. Previous studies have dealt with social desirability bias through manipulations that pose questions about threat with and without reference to minorities (Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007), although given the sample size it was not feasible to add an additional manipulation to this study. The second reason for my indirect strategy is that direct questions about whether minorities are threatening may measure the same thing as the acceptance of minorities which is supposed to be the dependent variable. In the pilot study I asked about the extent of minority threat in twelve occupations and factor analysis suggested that all twelve items loaded onto one factor. This suggests that majority respondents answered the explicit minority threat questions by paying more attention to their sense of general threat than to the specifics of different occupations. If these items were used to predict acceptance of minorities it would be a tautology with endogeneity problems in the statistical analysis. My indirect strategy provides a cleaner measurement of how economic and cultural salience – and therefore threat – may vary across occupations.

¹⁷Full results for the regression models can be found in appendix table 2.

higher among individuals who feel that civil servants are materially valuable for French society as opposed to among those who feel that civil servants are not materially valuable. Yet, the bar immediately to the right indicates that the bias in favor of whites is almost 0.06 points higher among individuals who feel that civil servants are symbolically important for French identity as opposed to among those who feel that civil servants are not symbolically important. These results suggest that when respondents are allowed to specify their own value system, there is evidence that both material and cultural threat can account for bias against black civil servants but that cultural threat is the more important dynamic. A similar pattern can be seen across the other three occupations. In each case, there is evidence that more material and cultural threat is associated with more bias against black minorities and that cultural threat is more significant than economic threat.

The results in figure 6 suggest that allowing respondents to reveal their own definition of economic and cultural threat can highlight additional nuances not found in the earlier analysis with objective markers of economic and cultural threat. Nonetheless, this more nuanced analysis reinforces the larger argument in this article, which is that minority occupation is a marker of symbolic threat. Moreover, the symbolic threat of minority occupation appears to be more significant than the material threat, in both the objective and subjective analytical approach.

A final concern is that majority individuals may be less likely to accept minorities as chefs or winemakers not because those professions are central to their sense of French identity but because those occupations are seen as inappropriate or uncommon for minorities. There is in fact a rich literature in social psychology arguing that when out-groups are placed in situations that highlight their distinctiveness from the in-group (e.g. occupations where they are rarely

employed), their out-group status is more likely to be salient and they will be less likely to be accepted as part of mainstream society (Brewer 1991; Tajfel 1974).

To evaluate this concern, I provided subjects with a list of eight occupations and asked how common it is in France for minorities to be employed in each occupation. The list of occupations was the same as in the questions about material and symbolic importance. I then estimated ordinal logistic regression models predicting whether the photo ‘corresponds to your image of an ideal French person’ for each occupation. I included covariates for the racial condition, views on minority distinctiveness in the respective occupation, and an interaction between race and minority distinctiveness. Full results for these models can be found in the online appendix table 3, but the summary is that these models do not support the claim that acceptance of minorities is driven by views on how distinctive they are in a given occupation. The interaction between receiving a black photo and feeling that minorities are more distinctive in the occupation is only associated with less acceptance for winemakers, but the coefficient is small relative to the standard errors and is not statistically significant at $p < .05$. For the other three professions, the interaction between receiving a black photo and feeling that minorities are more distinctive in the occupation is actually associated with slightly more acceptance.

All of the analyses in this article were also conducted among male and female French whites. Existing literature is inconclusive but there is some evidence that majority men may be more likely than majority women to hold negative attitudes towards minorities because of the greater tendency among men to be instrumental and self-oriented (Hughes and Tuch 2003). In my sample, minority acceptance levels are slightly higher among French women as opposed to French men, but the dynamics of acceptance across skill level and occupation are consistent

among men and women. It is also worth noting that Brant tests of the ordinal logistic regression models presented above suggest that the parallel regression assumption was not violated.

Conclusion

This article has analyzed the conditions under which members of the majority are more likely to accept racial minorities into the national community. Existing literature primarily frames that question through a debate over whether immigrant-origin minorities pose more of an economic or a cultural threat. I challenge that juxtaposition and argue that economic and cultural threat can overlap. I do that by exploring variation in the acceptance of minorities according to minority occupation. Minority occupation is typically considered an indicator of economic threat but I argue that it can also reflect symbolic threat. Moreover, in my results the symbolic threat is even greater than the economic threat of minority occupation.

It is important to note that my research design does not lend itself to strict claims about how views on occupations cause variation in the acceptance of minorities as part of France. Yet it is worth noting that the reverse is very unlikely to be true. It is hard to imagine how the extent to which one accepts minorities in different occupations as part of France would cause variation in attitudes about different occupations.

The findings in this article have numerous implications. First, the results offer some support for claims about the inclusive French republican framework. This inclusiveness appears to be especially true for highly-skilled minorities, for whom there is no overall gap in acceptance with whites and for whom there is no statistically significant gap in acceptance with whites in each of the four professions. This can be interpreted as optimistic evidence for the possibilities of minority acceptance in France. Yet, there are also reasons to be pessimistic. Low-skilled

minority chefs and winemakers are less likely than their white counterparts to be accepted as French. Moreover, the fact that minorities are more likely to be rejected in occupations that are seen as more symbolically important to the national identity suggests that minorities still face stigmatization and marginalization in French society. Beyond France, this article speaks to broader debates about majority-minority relations. By highlighting the overlap between economic and cultural threat I urge scholars to rethink some of their assumptions about attitudes towards minorities. In particular, it is not the case that some majority individuals are motivated by narrow material self-interest while others are more concerned with symbolic cultural concerns. Instead, it is plausible that both types of evaluation are present at the same time and work together to generate threat. Finally, by highlighting the symbolic content of minorities' occupations, this article opens new avenues for the study of national identity. Scholars increasingly examine the multiple and subtle ways in which national communities are built and reinforced. The results in this article suggest that the symbolic content of occupation may be a new way of understanding those processes.

Future extensions to this research could explore reactions to other types of minorities. This study used white and black photos but as mentioned earlier it is possible that results may be different for comparisons between white and Arab or Asian minorities or between native white French people and immigrant-origin whites (e.g. Southern or Eastern Europeans). Most likely, one would observe differences in the level of acceptance as one would imagine lower levels of acceptance for Arab minorities and higher levels of acceptance for immigrant-origin whites. Yet it is not clear whether levels of acceptance would vary in different ways across occupations for other minorities as opposed to blacks. Another possibility is to explore how acceptance of female minorities may be different to acceptance of male minorities. Finally, future research

might consider how the symbolic importance of minority occupation operates in other countries. National identity is fairly important in France but in other countries where it is less culturally relevant the symbolic threat found in this study may be attenuated.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Ordinal logistic regression results predicting the likelihood that the photo ‘corresponds to the ideal image you have of a French person’

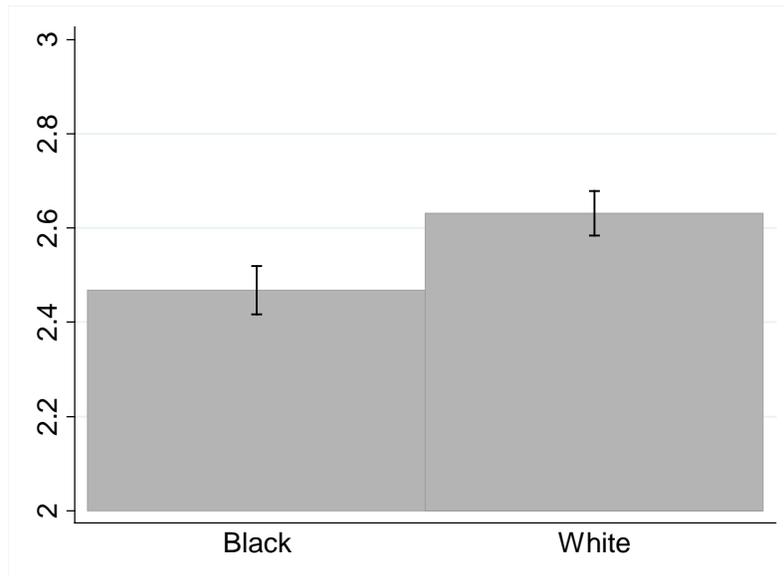
	I	II	III	IV	V
Black photo		-.250** (.063)	-.076 (.095)	.039 (.126)	.218 (.164)
Low skill			.017 (.085)		.020 (.084)
Low skill * Black photo			-.341* (.126)		-.345* (.126)
Civil service				.331* (.117)	.331* (.117)
Chef				.842** (.120)	.844** (.120)
Winemaker				.746** (.119)	.748** (.119)
Civil service * Black photo				-.169 (.175)	-.172 (.176)
Chef * Black photo				-.414† (.178)	-.420† (.178)
Winemaker * Black photo				-.587* (.182)	-.592* (.182)
Cut point 1	-2.87 (.078)	-3.01 (.082)	-3.01 (.097)	-2.56 (.105)	-2.55 (.117)
Cut point 2	-1.97 (.053)	-2.11 (.060)	-2.11 (.078)	-1.66 (.090)	-1.65 (.103)
Cut point 3	-.140 (.035)	-.269 (.046)	-.262 (.066)	.206 (.084)	.216 (.097)
Cut point 4	1.49 (.045)	1.36 (.051)	1.38 (.070)	1.86 (.090)	1.88 (.102)
Pseudo R ²	-0.000	0.002	0.003	0.009	0.010
Log pseudolikelihood	-5020.459	-5011.949	-5004.483	-4975.604	-4968.130
N	3644	3644	3644	3644	3644

Note: Weighted data

Each cell gives the estimated coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses

†=p<.05, *=p<.01, ** =p<.001

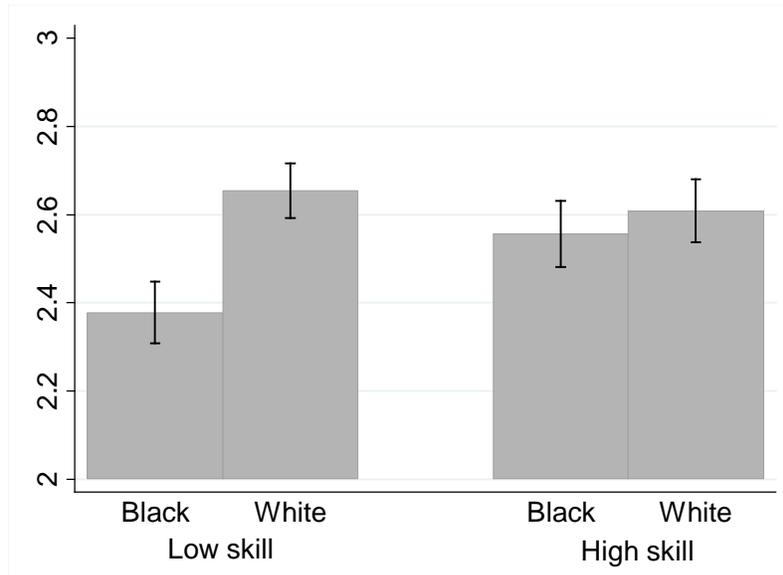
Figure 1: Mean acceptance score for black and white photo conditions



Note: Respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities only.

Grey bars plot weighted mean acceptance scores and black bars plot 95% confidence intervals. The dependent variable 'Acceptance' is coded 0 'Very poorly', 1 'Poorly', 2 'Neither poorly nor well', 3 'Well', 4 'Very well'.

Figure 2: Mean acceptance score across racial and skill level conditions

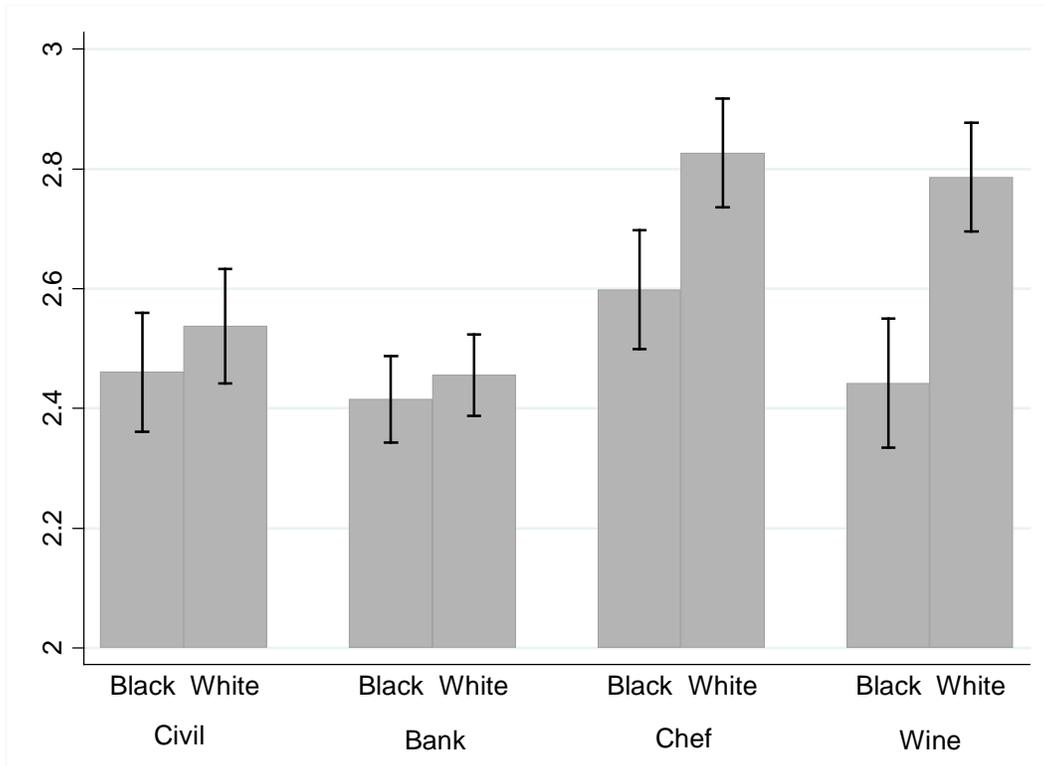


Note: Respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities only.

Grey bars plot weighted mean acceptance scores across skill levels and black bars plot 95% confidence intervals.

The dependent variable 'Acceptance' is coded 0 'Very poorly', 1 'Poorly', 2 'Neither poorly nor well', 3 'Well', 4 'Very well'.

Figure 3: Mean acceptance scores across occupations

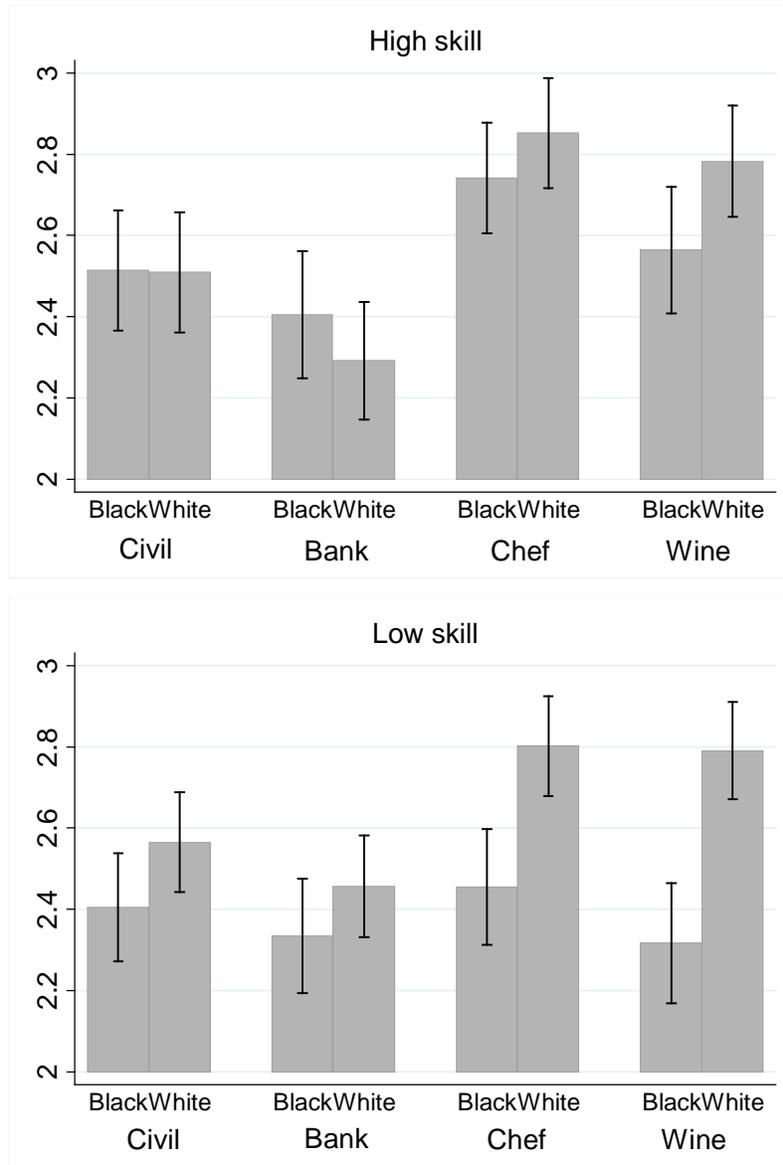


Note: Respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities only.

Grey bars plot weighted mean acceptance scores across occupations and black bars plot 95% confidence intervals.

The dependent variable 'Acceptance' is coded 0 'Very poorly', 1 'Poorly', 2 'Neither poorly nor well', 3 'Well', 4 'Very well'.

Figure 4: Mean acceptance scores across race, occupation and skill level

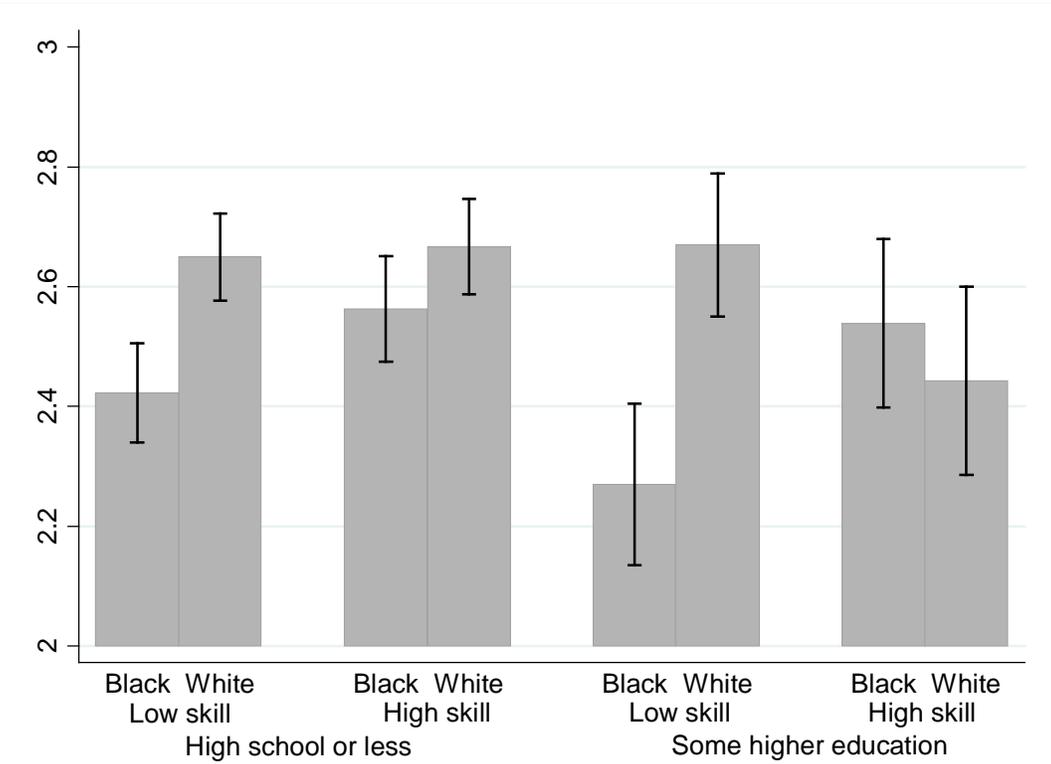


Note: Respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities only.

Grey bars plot weighted mean acceptance scores across all occupations and skill levels and black bars plot 95% confidence intervals.

The dependent variable 'Acceptance' is coded 0 'Very poorly', 1 'Poorly', 2 'Neither poorly nor well', 3 'Well', 4 'Very well'.

Figure 5: Mean acceptance scores across race and skill level according to respondents' education

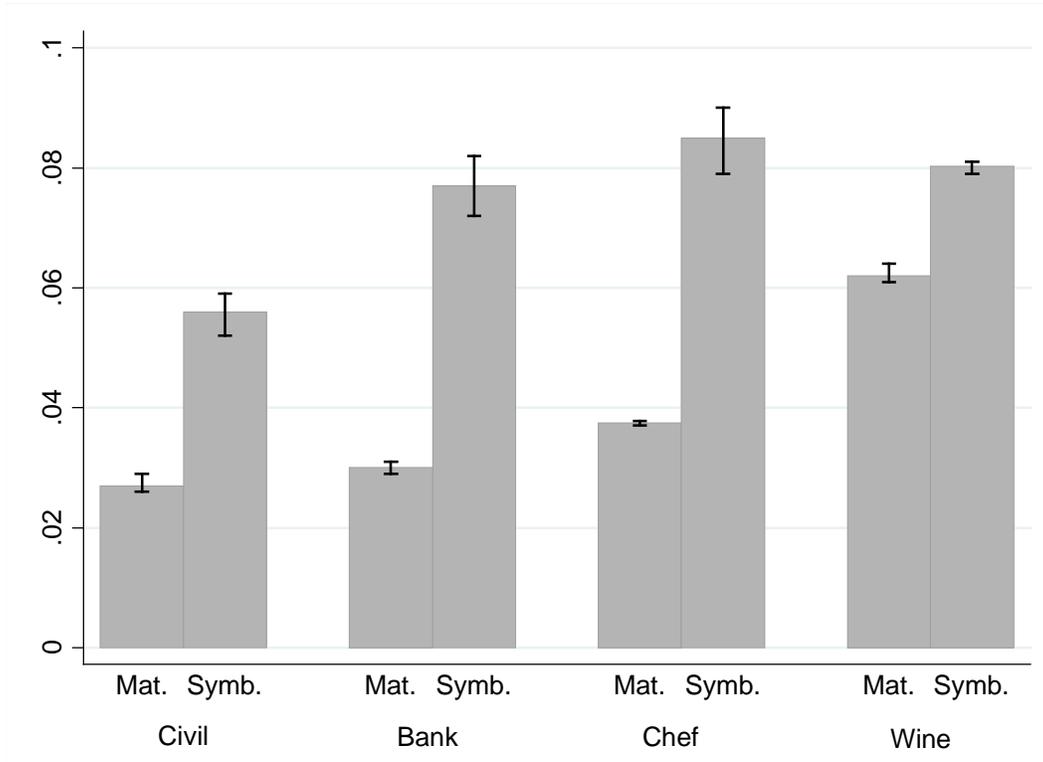


Note: Respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities only.

Grey bars plot weighted mean acceptance scores across all occupations and skill levels and black bars plot 95% confidence intervals.

The dependent variable 'Acceptance' is coded 0 'Very poorly', 1 'Poorly', 2 'Neither poorly nor well', 3 'Well', 4 'Very well'.

Figure 6: Change in the black-white predicted probability gap of ‘Completely agree’ that the photo corresponds to ideal image of French people across negative to positive material and symbolic importance of each occupation



Note: Only respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities.

Figure 2 uses the difference between the predicted probability of responding in the most positive category (‘Completely agree’) for the white as opposed to the black photo condition and plots the change in that difference as the material and symbolic importance of each occupation changes from negative to positive.

Positive scores indicate larger gaps in favor of the white condition.
 Grey bars are surrounded by black 95% confidence intervals.

APPENDIX

Variable descriptions

Dependent variable:

Banker high-skill: Laurent Bourg is the head of an important banking firm. He loves all the details of the finance industry and hopes to work for his own benefit but also the benefit of his bank and his clients.

Banker low-skill: Laurent Bourg is a bank teller. He loves all the details of the finance industry and hopes to work for his own benefit but also the benefit of his bank and his clients.

Chef high-skill: Christophe Aubry became a chef after receiving a prestigious degree in Culinary Arts. He has worked in several restaurants and one day hopes to open his own restaurant.

Chef low-skill: Christophe Aubry is an untrained chef. He has worked in several restaurants and one day hopes to open his own restaurant.

Civil service high-skill: Jean-Louis Perret is a civil service executive. He gets along well with his colleagues and is very attached to his department.

Civil service low-skill: Jean-Louis Perret works at the counter of a civil service department. He gets along well with his colleagues and is very attached to his department.

Winemaker high-skill: Maurice Giraud is a winemaker with a diploma in Enology and who leads a team that works with him. He hopes that his wines will be very successful.

Winemaker low-skill: Maurice Giraud is an untrained winemaker who leads a team that works with him. He hopes that his wines will be very successful.

How well does [Laurent/Christophe/Jean-Louis/Maurice] correspond to the ideal image you have of a French person?

0-Very poorly, 1-Poorly, 2-Neither poorly nor well, 3-Well, 4-Very well

Education:

Highest degree obtained

0-Primary school, 1-Vocational school, 2-High school, 3-Some higher education

Symbolic importance: “Here is a list of themes. According to you, what is the importance of each theme for French identity today?” [the order of the themes was randomized across respondents]

Wine, Religion, Modern art, Cuisine, Finance and banking, Cinema and television, Public services, Sports

0 – Not at all important, 1 – Not very important, 2 – Somewhat important, 3 – Very important

Material importance: “Here is a list of themes. According to you, what is the material value of each theme for society in general?” [the order of the themes was randomized across respondents]

Wine, Religion, Modern art, Cuisine, Finance and banking, Cinema and television, Public services, Sports

0 – Not at all important, 1 – Not very important, 2 – Somewhat important, 3 – Very important

Minority distinctiveness: “We will now speak about the way in which visible minorities are integrated in French society. In each of the following domains, do you think visible minorities are present or absent?” [the order of the themes was randomized across respondents]

Wine, Religion, Modern art, Cuisine, Finance and banking, Cinema and television, Public services, Sports

0 – Very present, 1 – Somewhat present, 2 – Neither present nor absent, 3 – Somewhat absent, 4 – Very absent

Appendix Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Banker (white low)	0	4	2.48	0.82
Banker (black low)	0	4	2.35	1.08
Banker (white high)	0	4	2.30	1.00
Banker (black high)	0	4	2.48	0.82
Chef (white low)	0	4	2.80	0.89
Chef (black low)	0	4	2.47	1.10
Chef (white high)	0	4	2.87	0.93
Chef (black high)	0	4	2.73	1.05
Civil service (white low)	0	4	2.55	0.91
Civil service (black low)	0	4	2.42	1.02
Civil service (white high)	0	4	2.52	1.04
Civil service (black high)	0	4	2.52	1.09
Winemaker (white low)	0	4	2.79	0.83
Winemaker (black low)	0	4	2.35	1.14
Winemaker (white high)	0	4	2.80	0.94
Winemaker (black high)	0	4	2.57	1.14
Highest degree: Middle school	0	1	0.11	0.31
Some higher education	0	1	0.25	0.43
Symbolic value (banker)	0	3	1.81	0.87
Symbolic value (chef)	0	3	2.21	0.80
Symbolic value (civil service)	0	3	2.07	0.84
Symbolic value (winemaker)	0	3	1.90	0.91
Material value (banker)	0	3	1.99	0.81
Material value (chef)	0	3	2.10	0.78
Material value (civil service)	0	3	2.10	0.79
Material value (winemaker)	0	3	1.72	0.86
Minority distinctive (banker)	0	4	1.88	1.08
Minority distinctive (chef)	0	4	1.61	1.02
Minority distinctive (civil serv.)	0	4	1.60	0.99
Minority distinctive (wine)	0	4	2.23	1.13

Note: Unweighted data. Respondents are those who do not claim to be visible minorities.

Appendix table 2: Ordinal logistic regression results predicting the likelihood that the photo ‘corresponds to the ideal image you have of a French person’

	Civil	Banker	Chef	Wine
Black photo	.276 (.470)	.678 (.436)	.078 (.427)	.003 (.328)
Material value	.315 (.162)	.220 (.159)	.391 (.146)*	.372 (.136)*
Symbolic value	.371 (.161)†	.303 (.143)†	.191 (.139)	.056 (.116)
Material * Black	.095 (.240)	.164 (.236)	.167 (.207)	-.019 (.204)
Symbolic * Black	-.318 (.234)	-.548 (.231)†	-.381 (.202)	-.277 (.183)
Cut point 1	-1.48 (.360)	-1.70 (.304)	-2.24 (.322)	-2.41 (.253)
Cut point 2	-.688 (.339)	-.712 (.286)	-1.23 (.302)	-1.60 (.225)
Cut point 3	1.25 (.334)	1.20 (.290)	.537 (.289)	.184 (.218)
Cut point 4	3.11 (.343)	2.85 (.303)	2.29 (.296)	1.84 (.225)
Pseudo R ²	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02
N	868	847	877	865

Note: Weighted data

Only respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities

Each cell gives the estimated coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses

†=p<.05, *=p<.01,** =p<.001

Appendix Table 3: Ordinal logistic regression results predicting the likelihood that the photo ‘corresponds to the ideal image you have of a French person’ with covariates for minority distinctiveness in each occupation

	Civil	Banker	Chef	Wine
Black photo	-.398 (.263)	-.478 (.281)	-.674* (.255)	-.394 (.309)
Minority distinctiveness	-.114 (.089)	-.150 (.083)	-.246* (.094)	.027 (.074)
Distinctiveness * Black photo	.175 (.138)	.265† (.127)	.193 (.135)	-.077 (.123)
Cut point 1	-2.99 (.212)	-.294 (.223)	-3.79 (.243)	-3.06 (.236)
Cut point 2	-2.21 (.188)	-1.95 (.200)	-2.80 (.203)	-2.25 (.204)
Cut point 3	-.329 (.170)	-.029 (.184)	-1.04 (.176)	-.486 (.193)
Cut point 4	1.48 (.178)	1.58 (.194)	.679 (.174)	1.15 (.198)
Pseudo R ²	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
N	851	844	865	842

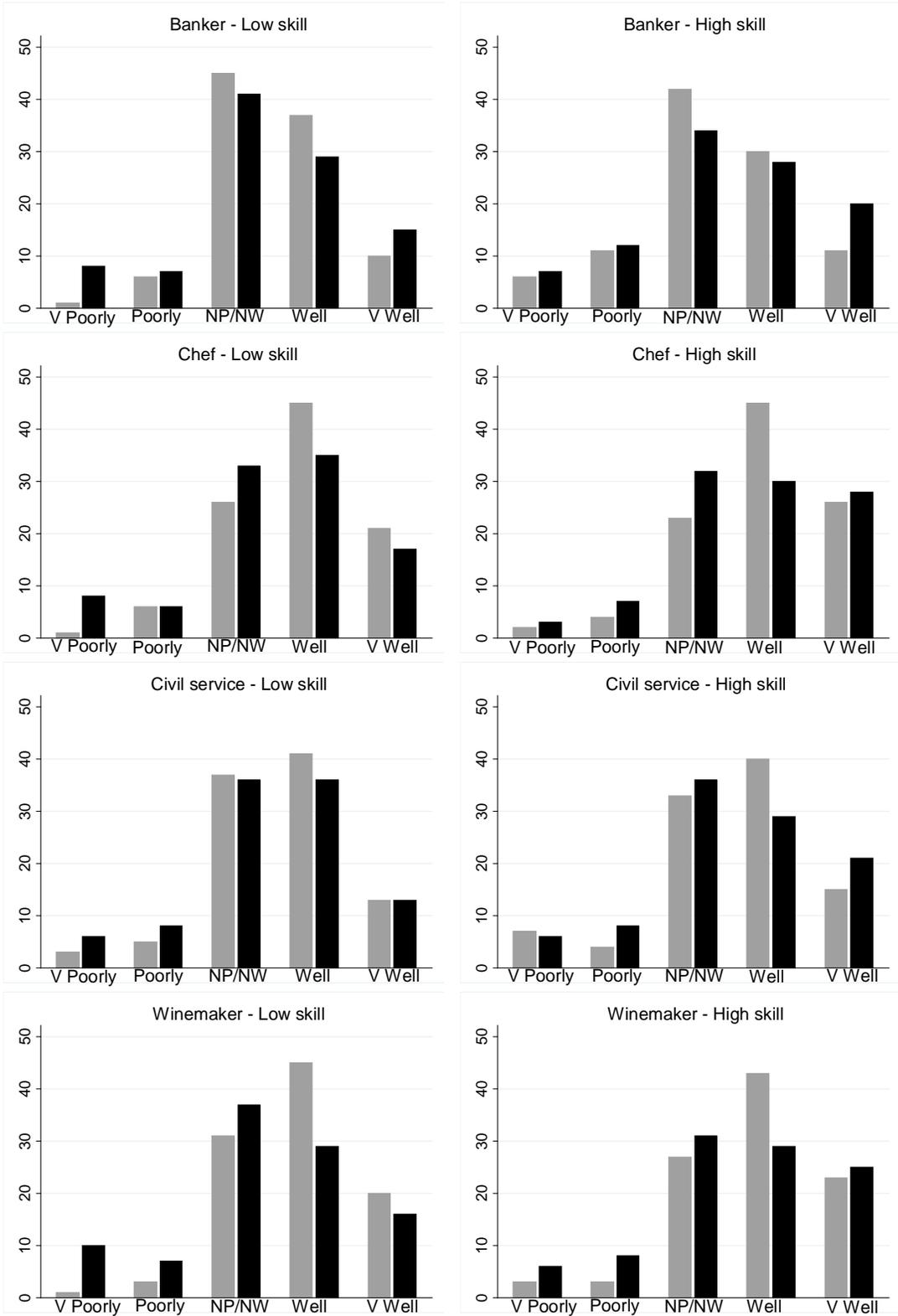
Note: Weighted data

Only respondents who do not claim to be visible minorities

Each cell gives the estimated coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses

†=p<.05, *=p<.01,** =p<.001

Appendix Figure 1: Distribution of responses to “How well does [this person] correspond to the ideal image you have of a French person?”



Note: Respondents are limited to those who do not claim to be visible minorities. There are five response options: Very poorly, Poorly, Neither poorly nor well, Well, Very Well. The y-axis of each graph indicates the percentage of respondents selecting the response option. Black bars indicate responses for the sub-sample with photos of black men, grey bars indicate responses for the sub-sample with photos of white men.