

# Class and Status: The Conceptual Distinction and its Empirical Relevance

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*In this article, we return to Max Weber's distinction between class and status as related but different forms of social stratification. We argue that this distinction is not only conceptually cogent, but empirically important as well. Indeed, class and status do have distinct explanatory power when it comes to studying varying areas of social life. Consistent with Weber's assertions, we show that economic security and prospects are stratified more by class than by status, while the opposite is true for outcomes in the domain of cultural consumption. Within politics, class rather than status predicts Conservative versus Labour Party voting in British general elections and also Left–Right political attitudes. But it is status rather than class that predicts Libertarian–Authoritarian attitudes.*

## INTRODUCTION

Weber's distinction between class and status (Weber [1922] 1968:926–40) is commonplace in materials in introductory courses and texts dealing with social stratification. Surprisingly, however, contemporary research makes little use of the distinction. Moreover, the concepts of class and status are often applied in ways that, at least from a Weberian standpoint, appear unclear if not confusing.

In the United States, much of the refinement of Weber's approach appears to already have been lost by the 1950s and 1960s as leading authors, in effect, reinterpreted class in terms of

status. Thus, one finds definitions of social classes on such lines as “strata of society composed of individuals who accept each other as status equals” (Lipset and Bendix 1959:275) or “aggregate[s] of persons, within a society, possessing approximately the same status” (Shils [1962] 1975:249). Subsequently, the essentially one-dimensional view of stratification implicit in such definitions was confirmed through the widespread acceptance of the notion of “socioeconomic” status, which, while little explicated, allowed stratification to be treated—in a way highly convenient to quantitative researchers—in terms of a single continuous measure such as the Duncan Socio-Economic Index (Duncan 1961).

In Europe, and especially in Britain, the idea of class and status as two qualitatively different forms of social stratification retained currency through the 1970s, following its effective deployment in Lockwood's influential *The Blackcoated Worker* (1958) and also in various community studies. Interest in status, however, then rather rapidly declined. In part, this can be seen as a response to actual social change—that is, to the rather evident decay over the postwar decades of many features of the traditional status order. The revival of academic Marxism and a consequent preoccupation, on the part of Marxist and non-Marxist sociologists alike, with issues of class was also important. More recently, the theoretical efforts of Bourdieu (see

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**Table 1.** Versions of the Class Schema

Original Version		National Statistics Socioeconomic Classification
I	Professionals and managers, higher grade	1 Higher managers and professionals
II	Professionals and managers, lower grade	2 Lower managers and professionals
IIIa	Routine nonmanual employees, higher grade	3 Intermediate employees
IIIb	Routine nonmanual employees, lower grade	
IVac	Small employers and proprietors (including farmers)	4 Small employers and own-account workers
IVb	Self-employed workers	
V	Technicians and supervisors of manual workers	5 Lower supervisors and technicians
VI	Skilled manual workers	6 Semi-routine workers
VII	Nonskilled manual workers	7 Routine workers

*Note:* NS occupational unit groups in combination with employment status codes are allocated to classes following algorithms available for the original version at <http://www.cf.ac.uk/CAMSIS/Data/Britain91.html> and for NS-SEC at [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods\\_quality/ns\\_sec/downloads/NS-SEC\\_User\\_2005.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/methods_quality/ns_sec/downloads/NS-SEC_User_2005.pdf).

esp. 1984) have attracted much attention, particularly his attempt to rethink and indeed overcome Weber's opposition between class and status (1984:*xii*): that is, by treating status as the symbolic aspect of class structure that is itself deemed to be not reducible to economic relations alone (cf. Weininger 2005).

In a previous article, we sought to reassert the conceptual value of the distinction between class and status; and to argue, on empirical grounds, that, in present-day British society at least, a status order is still discernible (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004). In the present article, we have two further, complementary aims. We seek to show, again on empirical grounds, how, in different areas of social life, the stratification of outcomes, whether seen as life-chances or as life-choices, may predominantly occur on the basis of *either* class *or* status. In this way, we then hope to clarify and reinforce the case for treating class and status as different forms of stratification that exert their effects through quite distinct social processes, or mechanisms. Both require recognition if a full understanding of the structuring of social inequality in contemporary societies is to be obtained.

## CLASS AND STATUS

Taking a broadly Weberian position, we regard a class structure as one formed by the social relations of economic life or, more specifically, by relations in labor markets and production units. Thus, a primary level of differentiation of class positions is that which sets apart employers, self-employed workers, and employees. In modern societies, however, further differentiation

must be recognized among employees in terms of their relations with employers, as these are regulated by the (implicit as well as explicit) terms of their employment contracts. In recent years, a fairly wide consensus has emerged, at least among sociologists engaging in comparative empirical research (e.g., Blossfeld, Mills, and Bernadi 2006; Breen 2004; Shavit, Arum, and Gamoran 2006; Shavit and Müller 1998), to treat class operationally on these lines on the basis of the EGP or CASMIN class schema (Breen 2005; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero 1979).<sup>1</sup>

Table 1 shows the versions of the schema that we use in this article. The following points should be noted. First, in the formation of the schema employment status (employer, self-employed, employee, etc.) and occupation are taken as proxies for employment relations: it is supposed that individuals with similar employment status and occupation are likely to be subject to similar forms of employment regulation and thus to have similar class positions. The theoretical basis for this approach is set out by Goldthorpe (2007, vol. II, chap. 5), drawing on the analysis of problems of work-monitoring and

<sup>1</sup> An important alternative class schema is that proposed from a Marxist standpoint by Wright. It is beyond the scope of this article to compare the two class schemata. Suffice to note that Wright (1997:37) himself recognizes that although the two schemata have clearly differing theoretical origins, "as a practical set of operational categories, the [Wright] class structure matrix . . . does not dramatically differ from the class typology used by Goldthorpe."

of human asset specificity as found in the literature of transaction-cost and personnel economics. To test the validity of the schema as thus constructed, a good deal of empirical research has been undertaken—and with largely encouraging results—both with regards to the schema in its original version (e.g., Birkelund, Goodman, and Rose 1996; Evans 1992; Evans and Mills 1998, 2000) and the more recent version represented by the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC)—a classification that has, since 2000, replaced the Registrar General's Social Classes in UK official statistics (Office for National Statistics 2005; Rose and Pevalin 2003; Rose, Pevalin, and O'Reilly 2005).

Second, while we regard the class structure that the schema represents as being, preeminently, a structure of inequality, we do not envisage classes as always falling into a simple hierarchical ordering (cf. Dahrendorf 1959:74–77; Giddens 1973:106). Individuals in different classes may be advantaged and disadvantaged in differing and, perhaps, not entirely commensurable respects as a result of the employment relations in which they are involved. Thus, while members of Classes I and II, the professional and managerial salariat, can be seen as generally advantaged relative to members of other classes, and members of Classes VI and VII, the wage-earning working class, as being generally disadvantaged, any single ranking of the intermediate classes is more problematic. Their employment relations clearly differ—compare, for example, those of a bank clerk (Class IIIa), a self-employed electrician (IVb), and a factory foreman (V)—but in ways that give balances of advantage and disadvantage (e.g., in regard to job security, earnings stability, and prospects and promotion opportunities) that are not readily ordered. Consequently, our analyses treat the classes of the schema, as is the usual practice, as unordered categorical variables.

Third, the classes of the schema are not intended to capture “real” sociocultural groupings in the sense of collectivities recognized by and subjectively meaningful to their members, and with well-defined social boundaries as created, say, by processes of selection, socialization, or closure. In other words, and still following Weber, we do not treat classes as “communities” (“*Klassen sind keine Gemeinschaften*”) but

simply as existing insofar as “a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life-chances” (Weber [1922] 1968:930) that derives from their relations within labor markets and production units—which, we wish to add, also importantly condition various life-choices that they are typically required to make. From this standpoint, class effects are brought about in two main ways. On the one hand, they result from events that impact on those holding different class positions with significantly differing frequencies—quite independently of their class awareness (e.g., members of Class VII do not have to think of themselves as being working class to have a far higher risk of unemployment than members of Class I). And, on the other hand, such effects result simply from members of different classes pursuing their particular interests and goals in ways shaped by the particular patterns of constraint and opportunity by which their class situations are characterized—independent of any influence of class-specific values and norms which may or may not exist (cf. the distinction between *Massenhandeln* and *Gemeinschaftshandeln* made by Weber [1922] 1968:930).<sup>2</sup>

Further following Weber ([1922] 1968:932–39), we regard a status order as a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality, and inferiority among individuals. This does not reflect personal qualities, but rather the degree of “social honor” attached to certain of their positional or perhaps purely ascribed attributes (e.g., birth or ethnicity).<sup>3</sup> The social hierarchy thus created is expressed in differential association, especially in more intimate kinds of sociability—Weber speaks of commensality and connubium—and in lifestyles of differing distinction that are seen as appropriate to different status levels. In status orders in

<sup>2</sup> Our understanding of class is therefore very different from that of authors who argue for the “death of class” (e.g., Kingston 2000; Pakulski and Waters 1996).

<sup>3</sup> This understanding of status should be recognized as clearly different from that found in the current literature on status generating and confirming interactional processes, especially in microsocioal contexts, where the emphasis clearly does fall on personal qualities and their perceived worth (e.g., Jasso 2001).

their most developed forms—such as were found in early modern Europe—the demarcation of patterns of association and lifestyles is clear-cut and often institutionally grounded, as, for example, through sumptuary legislation. In modern societies, however, the development of ideas of citizenship, implying a fundamental equality of legal and political rights (cf. Lockwood 1992:173–78; Marshall 1950), means that the status order takes on an increasingly conventional character, or in other words, is for the most part, maintained only informally. Moreover, the egalitarian ideology of citizenship results in a greater reluctance on the part of those treated as social inferiors to respond with deference, and in claims to superiority being less often made, at least in an explicit and public way (for Britain, see McKibbin 1998; Runciman 1997). Thus, the hierarchy of status relations becomes less one of well-defined status groups than one of relatively loose social networks, and its expression is more implicit or covert.

Although there are good grounds for supposing that in present-day societies the stratifying force of status has weakened, it would be rash to suppose that status can now be simply disregarded. Most obviously, issues of status are still widely recognized among the population at large. When the topic of class is raised in everyday conversations or in the media, or when members of the public are asked about class in interviews with sociologists, it is in fact status rather than class, following the distinction made above, that is chiefly—and quite readily—discussed. For example, phrases such as “class distinctions,” “class barriers,” or “class consciousness” are commonly used in ways that make it apparent that they in fact refer to distinctions of status and to status exclusiveness and sensitivity.<sup>4</sup>

We have already provided systematic evidence of the persistence of a status order in Britain (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004). Drawing directly on the work of Laumann (1966, 1973), we take occupation to be one of the most salient

positional characteristics to which status attaches in modern societies. And we assume close friendship implies a relation of basic equality between individuals—that is, one into which status differences are unlikely to intrude. We use national survey data to investigate the occupational structure of close friendship, and we take dissimilarity indices for the occupational distributions of friends by occupational grouping as input to a multidimensional scaling analysis. From this, a leading dimension emerges on which occupational groupings are ordered, according to the degree of similarity of their friendship patterns, and which can, we believe, be most plausibly interpreted as representing status. That is to say, starting from the structuring of a relationship implying social equality, a structure of inequality can be inferred.<sup>5</sup>

Table 2 shows the 31 occupational groupings used in the scaling exercise in the order in which they appear, and with the scores that they take, on the dimension that we see as capturing status. This hierarchy of occupations has clear continuities with that described for earlier periods in historical and pioneering sociological research (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004). In general, occupations that require working with symbols and perhaps people, and especially professional occupations, confer the highest status, while those that require working directly with material things confer the lowest status. At a more detailed level, managers employed in a more blue-collar milieu in industry or trade tend to rank lower than managers, or indeed even routine administrative employees, who work in an entirely white-collar milieu, while occupations that require working with both people and things—such as many occupations in the now expanding services sector—have typically intermediate rankings. We report various

<sup>5</sup> As noted above, in addition to occupation, status is also likely to be based on ascribed characteristics, such as ethnicity. Thus, Laumann (1973) treats ethnoreligious affiliation as a further characteristic of primary importance for status in modern American society. However, he shows that the status-conferring effects of occupation are largely replicated *within* each ethnoreligious grouping that he distinguishes, and that no interaction effects occur. We expect a similar situation to be found in the British case, although we do not so far have data available that would allow the matter to be empirically investigated.

<sup>4</sup> Indeed, ethnographic work (e.g., Deverson and Lindsay 1975), even if of a rather unsystematic kind, has indicated that, in the right context, individuals may still be quite ready to speak in ways that obviously imply status superiority and derogation.

**Table 2.** 31 Status Groups Ranked in Descending Order of Status Score and Representative Occupations Within Each Category

Rank	Title	Code	Representative Occupations <sup>a</sup>	Score
1	higher professionals	HP	chartered accountants, clergy, medical practitioners, solicitors	.5643
2	associate professionals in business	APB	journalists, investment analysts, insurance brokers, designers	.5337
3	specialist managers	SM	company treasurers, financial managers, computer systems managers, personnel managers	.5107
4	teachers and other professionals in education	TPE	college lecturers, education officers and inspectors, school teachers	.5017
5	general managers and administrators	GMA	bank and building society managers, general managers in industry, national and local government officers	.4114
6	associate professionals in industry	API	computer analysts and programmers, quantity surveyors, vocational and industrial trainers	.3116
7	scientists, engineers, and technologists	SET	civil and structural engineers, clinical biochemists, industrial chemists, planning engineers, software engineers	.3115
8	filing and record clerks	FRC	conveyancing clerks, computer clerks, library assistants	.2559
9	managers and officials, nec	OMO	security managers, cleaning managers	.2355
10	administrative officers and assistants	AOA	clerical officers in national and local government	.2274
11	numerical clerks and cashiers	NCC	accounts assistants, bank clerks	.2238
12	associate professionals in health and welfare	APH	community workers, nurses, occupational therapists, youth workers	.2228
13	secretaries and receptionists	SEC	personal assistants, receptionists, secretaries, word processor operators	.1539
14	other clerical workers	OCW	general assistants, commercial and clerical assistants	.1443
15	buyers and sales representatives	BSR	buyers and purchasing officers, technical sales representatives, wholesale representatives	.1193
16	childcare workers	CCW	educational assistants, nursery nurses	.1097
17	managers and proprietors in services	MPS	catering managers, hoteliers, publicans, shopkeepers and managers	-.0453
18	plant, depot, and site managers	PDM	clerks of works, farm managers, maintenance managers, transport managers, works managers	-.0625
19	sales workers	SW	cash desk and check-out operators, sales and shop assistants, window dressers	-.1151
20	health workers	HW	ambulance staff, dental nurses, nursing auxiliaries	-.2121
21	personal service workers	PSW	caretakers and housekeepers, hairdressers and beauticians, travel attendants, undertakers	-.2261
22	protective service personnel	PSP	fire service and police officers, security guards	-.2288
23	routine workers in services	RWS	car park attendants, cleaners, counter-hands, couriers and messengers, hotel porters, postal workers	-.2974
24	catering workers	CW	bar staff, chefs, cooks, waiters and waitresses	-.3261
25	store and dispatch clerks	SDC	dispatch and production control clerks, storekeepers	-.3353
26	skilled and related manual workers n.e.c.	SMO	gardeners and groundsmen, printers, textile workers, woodworkers	-.4072
27	transport operatives	TO	bus and coach drivers, truck and van drivers, taxi drivers	-.4114

*(Continued on next page)*

**Table 2.** (continued)

Rank	Title	Code	Representative Occupations <sup>a</sup>	Score
28	skilled and related manual workers in construction and maintenance	SMC	bricklayers, electricians, painters and decorators, plasterers, roofers, telephone repairmen	-.5014
29	skilled and related manual workers in metal trades	SMM	fitters, setters, setter-operators, sheet metal workers, turners, welders	-.5121
30	plant and machine operatives	PMO	assemblers, canners, fillers and packers, food processors, moulders and extruders, routine inspectors and testers	-.5589
31	general laborers	GL	agricultural workers, factory laborers, goods porters, refuse collectors	-.5979

Note: The four broad status bands that are for some purposes used in the analyses are indicated by dashed lines.

<sup>a</sup> Representative occupations refer to those that account for relatively large numbers of individuals within each category and at the same time give some idea of its range.

other instances where occupations located in economically advantaged classes are of relatively low status, and vice versa (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004:391–92). These examples are important inasmuch as they demonstrate that although both the class schemata we use and our status scale are occupationally-based constructs (with, in the case of class, other information on employment status also being required), quite distinct, even if moderately correlated, aspects of occupations are in fact captured: on the one hand, the employment relations typically involved and, on the other, the degree of social honor typically conferred.

Several further points are of relevance for our present purposes. First, while status, as determined by an analysis of the occupational structure of close friendships, is correlated with income and education, the correlation is quite modest, especially for income (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004). The status scale is clearly tapping something other than socioeconomic status insofar as this is determined by a combination of income and education.<sup>6</sup> It is also distinct from—supposed—scales of occupational prestige, insofar as these simply reflect judgments of job rewards and requirements (cf. Goldthorpe and Hope 1974).

Second, while a status gradient can be seen as running across classes (as represented by the schema of Table 1) from the higher professional and managerial salariat down to the non-

skilled working class, there is still a good deal of variation in status homogeneity within classes. Some classes, notably Class II, the lower salariat, and Classes IVac and IVb, small employers and the self-employed, show relatively high internal stratification by status, while others, notably Class I, the higher salariat, and Class VI, skilled manual workers, are far more status homogenous (see Chan and Goldthorpe 2004, fig. 6).<sup>7</sup>

Third, although we shall for convenience refer to the occupational categories of our scale as status groups, we would again, as in the case of classes, not wish to imply that they are “real” sociocultural entities, or at all events not ones of a clearly bounded kind. Rather, as we already indicated, we see the social organization of status in modern societies as taking the form of relatively loose social networks—networks of relations, often extensive in space, among individuals who come together as equals in more intimate forms of sociability, and who tend to value and seek to pursue broadly similar lifestyles with, perhaps, only quite limited normative reinforcement from the expectations of

<sup>6</sup> When the status scale is regressed on income and education, the coefficient for income turns out to be insignificant (Chan and Goldthorpe 2004, table 3).

<sup>7</sup> In the context of a comparative research project on social stratification and cultural consumption, colleagues from six other countries (Chile, France, Hungary, Israel, the Netherlands, and the United States) have followed the methodology described above in constructing status scales for their societies, although using for the most part data on marriage rather than friendship. Preliminary analyses indicate a high degree of cross-national commonality in the ordering of occupations on these scales.

significant others.<sup>8</sup> We thus treat status effects, in those areas of social life where they are apparent, as resulting primarily from individuals' efforts to maintain, and possibly to enhance, their status via various lifestyle choices and commitments.

This final point is of particular importance in differentiating our position from that recently taken up by Grusky and his colleagues in response to claims of the decay, or death, of class in contemporary societies (e.g., Kingston 2000; Pakulski and Waters 1996). If such claims are to be adequately countered, it is argued, class analysis and, it would seem, the study of social stratification more generally, will need to be ratcheted down to and regrounded at the level of occupations (see, e.g., Grusky 2005; Grusky and Sørensen 1998; Grusky and Weeden 2001; Weeden and Grusky 2005). In this way, "real" sociocultural entities may be more readily identified, arising from processes of occupational selection, socialization, and regulation, and it will in turn be possible to show the full extent to which, and range of mechanisms through which, experience at "the point of production" impacts on social attitudes and behavior. We ourselves take occupation (along with employment status) as a proxy for class position and, again, as a prime characteristic to which status attaches. However, we are concerned only with quite specific—and quite different—aspects of occupations in thus seeking to make our Weberian approach operational. Indeed, we do not consider it necessary to conceive of occupations, classes, or status groups as being "real" entities in Grusky's sense to show that individuals' class and status positions can, and do, have very real consequences for their social lives. This becomes apparent in the analyses that follow.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> While Weber ([1922] 1968:932) sees status groups (*Stände*) as tending, unlike classes, to form as communities (*Gemeinschaften*), he still adds that these are often "of an amorphous kind," especially in "modern democracies," and he speaks also of status "circles" (*Kreise*).

<sup>9</sup> While we see the research program envisaged and embarked on by Grusky and his colleagues as having the potential to revitalize the sociology of occupations, its relevance to research in the field of social stratification must be difficult to assess until the problem is resolved of how the categories of the

## RESULTS

### CLASS AND ECONOMIC LIFE-CHANCES

Given our understanding of class in terms of employment relations, we expect individuals' class positions rather than their status to be the major influence in determining their economic life-chances. Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006) present empirical results for Britain showing strong connections between class and risks of unemployment, short-term variability in earnings, and long-term earnings prospects; and they also spell out the underlying mechanisms operating through different forms of employment contracts. It is not easy to envisage similar mechanisms that might operate in the case of status. Nonetheless, we seek to test our expectations more strictly, at least in regard to unemployment and earnings prospects, by bringing status as well as class directly into the analysis.<sup>10</sup>

With regard to unemployment risks, we use the same data set as Goldthorpe and McKnight, the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). We take individuals ages 21 to 54 in 1991 who were interviewed in all years between 1991 and 2002 ( $N = 2,860$ ). Over this 12-year period, 826 respondents (28.9 percent) reported at least one spell of unemployment and 299 (10.5 percent) reported a cumulative unemployment duration of 12 months or more. To avoid cases of merely transitional or even planned unemployment between jobs, we concentrate on these latter individuals who experienced what could be

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detailed occupational classification with which they work are to be ordered, and according to what criteria. When attitudinal and behavioral differences are revealed across occupational groups (cf. Weeden and Grusky 2005), these are likely to result only in part from their stratification—that is, from structured social inequalities in some form or other—and in part also from purely "horizontal" differentiation (sociologists and accountants, say, may have similar class and status positions but still very different occupational subcultures). It seems essential to specify some basis on which these two kinds of effect are to be distinguished (see Goldthorpe 2007, vol. II, chap. 5).

<sup>10</sup> We cannot include analyses of variability in earnings since no data set is available that contains information on this matter and also occupational data of a kind that would allow us to implement our status scale.

**Table 3.** Determinants of Long-Term Unemployment (logistic regression, N = 2,860)

	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Age 34–43 <sup>a</sup>	.145	(.150)	.152	(.150)
Age 44–51	.154	(.175)	.155	(.176)
Female <sup>b</sup>	-.710**	(.145)	-.674**	(.148)
Cohabit <sup>c</sup>	.636**	(.221)	.633**	(.221)
Single	.668**	(.215)	.670**	(.215)
Wid./Div./Sep.	1.097**	(.193)	1.092**	(.193)
Children <sup>d</sup>	.102	(.150)	.095	(.150)
Class II <sup>e</sup>	.339	(.265)	.267	(.273)
Class IIIa	.763**	(.279)	.645*	(.298)
Class IIIb	.859*	(.335)	.664	(.375)
Class IVac	-.073	(.557)	-.311	(.595)
Class IVb	1.193**	(.303)	.897*	(.398)
Class V	.622*	(.309)	.317	(.407)
Class VI	1.145**	(.291)	.800	(.416)
Class VII	1.398**	(.242)	1.062**	(.379)
Status			-.413	(.359)
Constant	-2.986**	(.265)	-2.836**	(.295)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.065		.066
Log-Likelihood		-895.38		-894.72

<sup>a</sup> Age 21–33 as reference category

<sup>b</sup> Male as reference category

<sup>c</sup> Married as reference category

<sup>d</sup> Childless as reference category

<sup>e</sup> Class I as reference category

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests).

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regarded as long-term (or recurrent) unemployment.

Table 3 reports results from binomial logistic regression analyses in which experience (or not) of long-term unemployment is the dependent variable. In Model 1, class is included as an explanatory variable along with a number of sociodemographic variables that, for present purposes, we treat as controls.<sup>11</sup> Class effects show up quite consistently and on essentially the same pattern as found by Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006, fig. 2). The most striking feature is the much greater risk of long-term unemployment run by members of Class IVb, self-employed workers, and of Classes VI and VII, the working class, than by members of Class I and Class II, the salariat. At the extreme,

an unskilled worker in Class VII is four times ( $e^{1.398}$ ) more likely to have been long-term unemployed than a higher-level professional or manager in Class I. As noted by Goldthorpe and McKnight, the form of regulation of employment—the service relationship—that is typically enjoyed by members of the salariat is more likely than the basic labor contract to imply an expectation of continuity of employment or at least of employability; and further, should job loss occur, usually involves a much longer period of notice during which alternative employment can be sought (see also Gallie et al. 1998).

Model 2 repeats the analysis with status, as measured by the scale presented in Table 2, included. Two points of main importance emerge. First, while class effects are in most cases lowered, and those for Class VI and IIIb become marginally insignificant at the 5 percent level, their pattern is little changed. In particular, the far more serious risk of long-term unem-

<sup>11</sup> Descriptive statistics for all variables included are available from the authors on request.



ployment for unskilled workers remains almost three times greater ( $e^{1.062}$ ) than for those in Class I. Second, although introducing status reduces class effects somewhat, the effect of status itself is far from significant. In accounting for this, more detailed analyses show that there is a particularly weak association between status and the risk of long-term unemployment across the higher ranges of our status scale, where the risk tends to be well below average.<sup>12</sup>

Turning now to economic prospects, we focus, as do Goldthorpe and McKnight, on age-earnings curves. We cannot, however, follow them in using the data set of the New Earnings Survey because of difficulties in applying our status scale. We therefore continue with the BHPS data set, despite problems that arise with relatively small numbers. Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006, figs. 4 and 6) show that marked differences exist in the economic prospects of members of different classes as indexed by age-earnings curves. Most notably, while the earnings of those in the salariat tend to rise with age up to around age 50, reflecting, it may be supposed, the operation of incremental salary scales and promotion ladders, for those in the working class earnings tend more or less to level out in their thirties.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 1, Panel A, presents age-earnings curves, based on BHPS data, for men and women who were employed full-time in 2002 and were in Class I, Class II, or a combined blue-

collar Class V+VI+VII.<sup>14</sup> These curves bring out essentially the same class differences as those observed by Goldthorpe and McKnight. The other panels of Figure 1 present curves for broad status bands within these three classes, using the four major divisions that we proposed within our status scale (see Table 2).<sup>15</sup> It can be seen (Panels B and C) that within both Class I and Class II, the higher and lower salariat, the curves for status band 1 lie somewhat above those for status band 2 but are still very similar in shape (allowing for some fluctuation in band 2, probably due to small numbers); and further (Panel D), that within Class V+VI+VII both status bands 3 and 4 show the same, much flatter curves, with the curve of status band 4 actually lying above that of status group 3—reflecting the fact that the manual occupations that predominate in band 4 yield generally higher earnings than the personal service or people-processing occupations that predominate in band 3.

In sum, thinking in terms of status as well as class does not appear to add a great deal to our understanding of differences in age-earnings curves. To check this impression more formally, Table 4 shows results from analyses, based on the same data used in Figure 1, in which we regress earnings on age and age-squared.

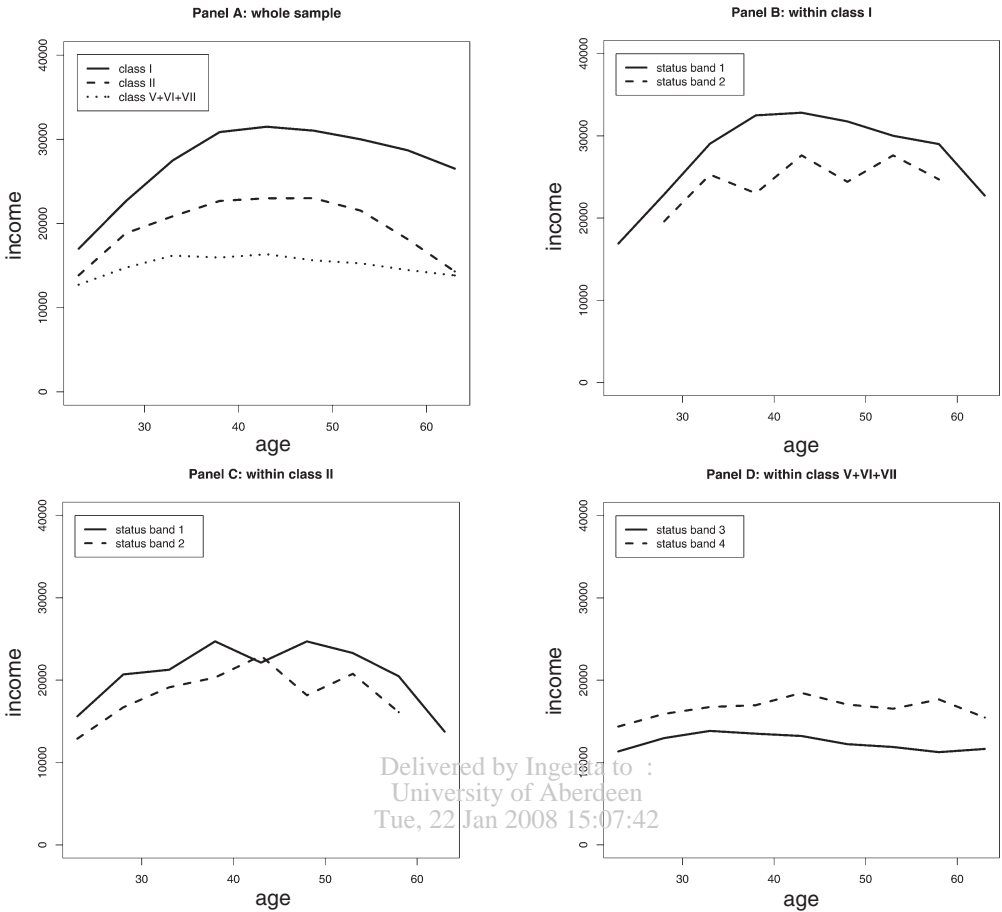
It is evident from the first panel of Table 4 that, as would be expected, the coefficients for both age terms are significantly larger for Classes I and II than for Class V+VI+VII. But the second panel shows that, while the coefficients for status band 1 are larger than those for status bands 2, 3, and 4, there is far less differ-

<sup>12</sup> Since class and status are correlated, if class is dropped from Model 2, status becomes statistically significant and negative, suggesting that low status respondents face higher risks of long-term unemployment. We regard this, though, as a misspecified model. A graph plotting the risk of long-term unemployment by status group is available from the authors on request. In another model, not reported here, we added educational qualifications in the regression. This again leads to marginal reductions in class effects but the effects of different levels of qualification are not themselves statistically significant.

<sup>13</sup> Neither Goldthorpe and McKnight's analyses nor our own claim to trace the actual life-course earnings of individuals but, rather, to show how age-specific earnings differ by class. Some distortion is possible due both to cohort effects and to selection effects (see Goldthorpe and McKnight 2006) but not, we believe, of a kind sufficient to disturb the main results of the analyses.

<sup>14</sup> We combine Classes V, VI, and VII and pool men and women together, since we wish to consider earnings within combinations of age, class, and broad status band, and, for such analyses, the sample size of even the BHPS is relatively small. We do not consider age-earnings curves for Class III, that of routine non-manual workers, because it could in this case be misleading to treat men and women together. As Goldthorpe and McKnight (2006) show, age-earnings curves show marked differences by gender, and this problem could only be addressed by making a further IIIa/IIIb division.

<sup>15</sup> For purposes of comparison with classes, we use the four broad status bands defined within our scale (see Table 2). However, in all other analyses, status is treated as a continuous variable, using the status score indicated in that table.



**Figure 1.** Median Annual Earnings by Age for Men and Women in Full-Time Employment by Class (Panel A) and by Broad Status Band Within class (Panels B to D)

**Table 4.** Parameter Estimates and Standard Errors of Age and Age-Squared in OLS Regression Models Predicting the Logarithm of Annual Earnings (Men and Women Combined)

	Age		Age Squared		N
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	
Class I	.116	.011	-.127	.013	954
Class II	.111	.011	-.124	.013	1,255
Class V+VI+VII	.055	.007	-.063	.009	1,600
Status Band 1	.145	.01	-.163	.013	1,317
Status Band 2	.056	.009	-.058	.011	1,540
Status Band 3	.088	.011	-.101	.014	786
Status Band 4	.051	.009	-.057	.011	1,155
Class I & Status Band 1	.137	.012	-.152	.015	735
Class I & Status Band 2	.054	.023	-.053	.026	218
Class II & Status Band 1	.147	.017	-.168	.022	577
Class II & Status Band 2	.070	.013	-.074	.017	585
Class II & Status Band 3	.251	.058	-.299	.076	76
Class V+VI+VII & Status Band 3	.063	.013	-.073	.015	497
Class V+VI+VII & Status Band 4	.045	.009	-.052	.011	1,090

*Note:* The regression models also control for the logarithm of hours worked and gender.

entiation among the latter.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the remaining panels of the table show that, although within both Class I and Class II age effects on earnings are clearly stronger for those in status band 1 than for those in lower status bands, in Class II the coefficients for status bands 2 and 3 go in the “wrong” direction—a major factor being the inclusion in band 3 of protective service personnel—and in Class V+VI+VII the coefficients for status bands 3 and 4 are not significantly different.

Insofar, then, as risk of long-term unemployment and age-earnings curves serve well as indicators of economic life-chances—as good indicators of security and prospects, respectively—we can say that our expectation that class rather than status will mainly differentiate such life-chances is in general confirmed. We turn next to a quite different topic: that of cultural consumption considered as an aspect of lifestyle. In this case, and following from our earlier discussion, our expectation is the exact reverse of the above: we expect that stratification here will be on the basis of status rather than of class.

### STATUS AND CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

For Weber, lifestyle is the most typical way through which members of different status groups, even within the purely conventional and relatively loose status orders of modern societies, seek to define their boundaries—that is, to establish cues or markers of inclusion and exclusion. Furthermore, a number of more recent authors emphasize cultural taste and consumption as an aspect of lifestyle that is of particular importance as a means of the symbolic communication of “distinction” and thus of expressing a form of hierarchy that is set apart from that of mere economic advantage (e.g., Bourdieu 1984; DiMaggio 1987; Peterson 1997).

In a series of published and forthcoming papers (Chan and Goldthorpe 2005, 2007b, 2007c) we examine the social stratification of cultural consumption in three different

domains—music; theater, dance, and cinema; and the visual arts—using data from the Arts in England Survey of 2001 (Skelton et al. 2002).<sup>17</sup> For each of these domains we first applied latent class analysis to raw data on the frequency of different kinds of consumption, for men and women ages 20 to 64, to establish *patterns of consumption* and, in turn, *types of consumer*. We then used multinomial logistic regression analyses to examine the determinants of individuals’ approximation to one type or another.

An initial finding from these analyses is that cultural consumption in England is not stratified along elite-to-mass lines: in particular, we cannot identify an elite that is distinctive in consuming “high” cultural forms while at the same time rejecting “lower,” or more popular, forms. There is, in other words, no evidence of a close homology between cultural and social stratification. We do find support, albeit with some qualifications, for the alternative hypothesis that the main axis of cultural stratification, in modern societies at least, is one that separates cultural “omnivores” from cultural “univores” (see Peterson and Kern 1996; Peterson and Simkus 1992). The former have relatively high levels of consumption of *all* genres within a particular domain, but the latter are restricted in their consumption to popular genres only.<sup>18</sup> For our present purposes, therefore, the question of chief importance is that of the basis on which omnivore–univore stratification occurs.

Table 5 shows selected results from our articles previously referred to: specifically, from our logistic regressions in which the dependent variable is type of cultural consumer. We present those results that relate to the major contrasts of interest: that is, the effects of covariates on the

<sup>17</sup> Chan and Goldthorpe (2007a), which examines the social stratification of newspaper readership, is also relevant.

<sup>18</sup> For example, in the case of music, omnivores have similarly high levels of consumption of pop and rock as do univores but, unlike the latter, also consume classical music, opera, and jazz. In the case of theater, dance, and cinema, omnivores have relatively high attendance at plays, musicals, pantomimes, ballet, and other dance performances as well as the cinema, while univores are essentially restricted to the latter. With the visual arts, however, as noted in the text below, the most extreme contrast is that between omnivores and nonconsumers.

<sup>16</sup> For example, the 95 percent confidence interval of the linear age term for status band 2 is: .038 – .074 (i.e.,  $.056 \pm 1.96 \times .009$ ), which overlaps with that for status band 3, .066 – .110.

**Table 5.** Determinants of Types of Consumer in the Domains of Music; Theater, Dance, and Cinema; and the Visual Arts (multinomial logit model, N = 3,819)

	Music		Theater, Dance, and Cinema		Visual Arts	
	Omnivore versus Univore		Omnivore versus Univore		Omnivore versus Inactive	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Female <sup>a</sup>	.156	(.137)	.615**	(.092)	.223	(.192)
Married <sup>b</sup>	-.321	(.176)	.148	(.112)	-.200	(.239)
Separated	-.065	(.214)	.188	(.139)	.180	(.295)
Age	.066**	(.006)	.005	(.004)	.026**	(.009)
Child (0–4) <sup>c</sup>	-.391	(.214)	-.562**	(.113)	-.639*	(.285)
Child (5–10)	-.340	(.188)	.070	(.100)	.260	(.232)
Child (11–15)	-.397*	(.191)	.088	(.105)	.039	(.252)
The North <sup>d</sup>	-.470*	(.193)	-.231	(.124)	-.089	(.253)
Midlands	-.198	(.184)	-.207	(.123)	-.880**	(.279)
South East	.060	(.198)	.083	(.135)	-.150	(.270)
South West	-.224	(.238)	-.189	(.153)	-.174	(.321)
Income	.012	(.007)	.026**	(.005)	.006	(.009)
CSE/Others <sup>e</sup>	1.006**	(.276)	.169	(.152)	1.220*	(.499)
O-Levels	1.109**	(.242)	.668**	(.128)	1.072*	(.462)
A-Levels	1.523**	(.265)	1.130**	(.145)	1.849**	(.471)
Subdegree	1.851**	(.266)	1.027**	(.160)	2.219**	(.469)
Degree	2.367**	(.256)	1.223**	(.151)	3.260**	(.450)
Class II <sup>f</sup>	-.135	(.172)	.078	(.126)	.613*	(.241)
Class III	-.329	(.247)	-.161	(.160)	-.396	(.376)
Class IV	.299	(.291)	.205	(.203)	.699	(.411)
Class V	-.253	(.382)	-.134	(.218)	.073	(.554)
Class VI	-.107	(.317)	-.199	(.195)	-.480	(.514)
Class VII	-.109	(.387)	-.507*	(.230)	-.325	(.646)
Status	1.047**	(.287)	.631**	(.179)	1.229**	(.402)
Constant	-5.906**	(.472)	-2.118**	(.292)	-5.461**	(.688)

<sup>a</sup> Male as reference category

<sup>b</sup> Single as reference category

<sup>c</sup> Childless as reference category

<sup>d</sup> London as reference category

<sup>e</sup> No qualification as reference category

<sup>f</sup> Class I as reference category

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests).

log odds of being an omnivore rather than either a univore or, as with the visual arts, a type that can only be described as a nonconsumer or inactive.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> In the case of the visual arts, we also need to modify the omnivore–univore distinction to allow for a type of consumer we label as a “paucivore,” who consumes across a modest range of genres; and in the case of music, to allow for a type of omnivore–listener who consumes most genres via various media but not in live form. Supplementary tables for Tables 5 to 7 are provided in the Online Supplement on the

Note first from Table 5 that the range of sociodemographic variables that we introduce chiefly as controls have significant effects in only rather patchy, albeit fairly plausible, ways. Turning then to the stratification variables on which our interest centers, one can see that the effects of class on the chances of an individual being an omnivore rather than a univore or an inactive are largely insignificant across each of

the three cultural domains. The effects of status, in contrast, are significant for each and quite strong.<sup>20</sup> It is true that we here treat class on the basis of the seven-class NS-SEC rather than the original nine-class version of the schema that we use in analyzing the risk of unemployment. However, while we measure class in a somewhat less detailed way than previously, we think it unlikely that this in itself could be the source of the clear predominance of status over class that we find.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, Table 5 shows that while income has a significant effect in only one domain (theater, dance, and cinema), level of educational qualifications is generally significant in its effects, even if not always in an entirely monotonic way. But the question then arises of how far, given that class, income, and status are also included in our analyses, education is to be regarded as itself operating as a stratification variable. It seems reasonable to suppose that level of qualifications is, to some extent at least, picking up individual *psychological* attributes, such as information processing capacity, that could exert a quite independent influence on the likelihood of being a cultural omnivore (cf. Berlyne 1974; Moles 1971; see also Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a).

Regardless of what view may be taken on this last issue, Table 5 still provides clear support for our expectation that differences in lifestyle will be associated with—and can indeed be taken as expressions of—stratification by status *rather* than by class.<sup>22</sup> By way of illustration, we can

<sup>20</sup> For example, in the case of theater, dance, and cinema, the probability of a hypothetical woman who is 40 years old, childless, lives in London, and earns £25,000 being an omnivore rather than a univore is 23 to 26 percentage points higher (depending on her educational attainment) if she is at the top rather than at the bottom of status hierarchy. For details, see Chan and Goldthorpe (2005:206).

<sup>21</sup> NS-SEC could in fact be regarded as instantiating the conceptual approach of the schema in a more reliable way than previously. Moreover, as we note in the articles previously cited, even if we simplify our measure of status to the four broad status bands that we introduced above in our analyses of age-wage curves, this still does not remove the closer association of cultural consumption with status than with class, as treated by the seven NS-SEC classes.

<sup>22</sup> This remains the case even if education is

turned to some of the descriptive detail of our results. For example, while members of Classes I and II, the professional and managerial salariat, are more likely to be cultural omnivores than are members of other classes, the importance of status stratification *within* these classes is much in evidence. We have previously observed that in the higher ranges of the status scale professionals generally rank above managers. Correspondingly, we find that the groups that most regularly show the highest proportions of omnivores are higher professionals, teachers and other professionals in education, and specialist managers, for example, finance, IT, and personnel managers, who often have professional qualifications and operate in professional roles.<sup>23</sup> Conversely, other types of managers, in manufacturing, transport, construction, or services, whose status rankings are similar to, or even below, those of some groups of routine nonmanual workers in Class III, have only a similar, or if anything a lower, probability of being omnivores.

So far, then, we have sought to bring out the contrast between the stratification of economic life-chances and the stratification of cultural consumption—the former primarily reflecting individuals' positions within the class structure, understood in terms of employment relations; the latter, their position within the status order. We do not wish to suggest, however, that it is possible for all areas of social life to be simply divided into those in which either class or status is the dominant stratifying influence. Often the situation may be more complex. We now seek to illustrate this point by focusing specifically on individuals' political commitments and value orientations.

### CLASS, STATUS, AND POLITICS

A relationship between class and political party support has long been recognized. Indeed, several authors view the development of electoral politics in modern societies as “the democrat-

dropped from the model. Details available from the authors on request.

<sup>23</sup> As seen in Table 2, these groups rank 1, 3, and 4 in the order of our status scale. The second-ranking group, associate professionals in business, also tends to show relatively high proportions of omnivores.

ic translation” of the class struggle (Korpi 1983; Lipset 1960). Of late, though, it has been widely argued that class politics are in decline; and some authors claim a growing importance for what has been variously termed identity, lifestyle, or status politics (e.g., Beck 1992; Giddens 1994; Hechter 2004). In Britain, the association between class and vote did in fact weaken at the General Election of 1997 (Evans 1999) and has since remained at a lower level than previously. This is not to say, however, that class is no longer a major influence on voting, nor that it has become overshadowed by other influences such as status (Brooks, Nieuwbeerta, and Manza 2006).

To investigate this matter further, we turn to the data set of the British Election Surveys and,

to obtain an adequate basis for the kind of multivariate analysis we wish to undertake, pool the data for the 1997 and 2001 elections. In Table 6 we take party choice, between the Conservatives, Labour, and all other parties, as the dependent variable in a multinomial regression that includes similar explanatory and control variables as we use in our previous analyses.

Under Model 1, it is clear that at all events in the case of the major contrast—voting Conservative rather than Labour—class is the most important explanatory variable (using the original version of the class schema) and on a pattern that is familiar from all earlier research. The higher salariat of Class I, the small employers of Class IVac, and the self-employed workers of Class IVb are the most likely to vote

**Table 6.** Determinants of Party Choice at the 1997 and 2001 British General Elections (multinomial logit model, N = 3,407)

	Model 1				Model 2			
	Conservatives versus Labour		Others versus Labour		Conservatives versus Labour		Others versus Labour	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
2001 <sup>a</sup>	-.220*	(.101)	.259**	(.095)	-.220*	(.101)	.258**	(.095)
Age	.030**	(.003)	.009**	(.003)	.030**	(.003)	.009**	(.003)
Female <sup>b</sup>	.250*	(.101)	.016	(.098)	.230*	(.103)	.008	(.099)
CSE <sup>c</sup>	.126	(.152)	.281	(.151)	.126	(.152)	.281	(.151)
O-Levels	.468**	(.151)	.490**	(.157)	.465**	(.151)	.489**	(.157)
A-Levels	.288	(.179)	.797**	(.175)	.280	(.179)	.794**	(.175)
Subdegree	.381*	(.168)	1.154**	(.166)	.363*	(.169)	1.146**	(.167)
Degree	-.313	(.179)	.977**	(.169)	-.347	(.183)	.961**	(.172)
Income	.032**	(.004)	.006	(.004)	.032**	(.004)	.006	(.004)
Class II <sup>d</sup>	-.159	(.151)	-.036	(.152)	-.129	(.154)	-.023	(.155)
Class IIIa	-.313	(.182)	.108	(.183)	-.259	(.190)	.132	(.192)
Class IIIb	-.600**	(.216)	-.001	(.211)	-.499*	(.240)	.045	(.236)
Class IVac	.655*	(.265)	.235	(.310)	.760**	(.287)	.283	(.329)
Class IVb	.248	(.232)	.079	(.260)	.395	(.278)	.147	(.305)
Class V	-1.046**	(.231)	-.043	(.206)	-.879**	(.289)	.034	(.272)
Class VI	-1.126**	(.222)	-.466*	(.215)	-.944**	(.291)	-.382	(.289)
Class VII	-1.013**	(.182)	-.222	(.178)	-.838**	(.257)	-.141	(.257)
Status					.243	(.252)	.111	(.256)
Constant	-2.651**	(.289)	-1.828**	(.281)	-2.709**	(.296)	-1.857**	(.289)
Pseudo $R^2$			.064				.064	
Log-Likelihood			-3296.90				-3296.43	

Note: Others = all other parties.

<sup>a</sup> 1997 as reference category

<sup>b</sup> Male as reference category

<sup>c</sup> No qualification as reference category

<sup>d</sup> Class I as reference category

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests).

Conservative rather than Labour, and unskilled workers in Class VII are the least likely—in fact, only about a third ( $e^{-1.013}$ ) as likely as members of Class I. Further, the probability of supporting the Conservatives rather than Labour rises with income.

Level of educational qualifications also has significant effects on voting, and in the contrast between voting “other” rather than Labour, education could be regarded as more influential than class. It should be noted, however, that in neither contrast are the effects of education monotonic. Thus, in the case of the Conservative–Labour contrast, those with O-levels or subdegree qualifications are most likely to vote Conservative. For this reason, the role of education specifically as an indicator of stratification again seems somewhat problematic.

Introducing status into the analysis (Model 2), we see that in most cases class effects are somewhat reduced (though the effects of income remain unchanged). However, while in the contrast between other parties and Labour, no class effect is now significant—only education effects, in much the same way as before—in the Conservative–Labour contrast class effects, as well as those of education, remain very much on their previous pattern. Unskilled workers in Class VII are still less than half ( $e^{-.838}$ ) as likely to vote Conservative rather than Labour as are the higher salariat of Class I. Furthermore, the effect of status itself is clearly not significant in either contrast. On this evidence, then, we can say that class has certainly not disappeared as a basis of the stratification of political partisanship in Britain. And at least so far as the central division within electoral politics is concerned, class remains of obvious importance even when the effects of status are also taken into account.<sup>24</sup>

From the general theoretical position that we have adopted, the results in Table 6 should be in no way surprising. Individuals holding different class positions, as we wish to understand them in terms of employment relations, can quite rationally see themselves as having different interests (e.g., on economic inequality and the

redistribution of income and wealth, levels of public spending on social welfare, and relations between employers and employees). These interests are likely to be better represented and upheld by different parties—for those in the salariat and the petty bourgeoisie, by the Conservatives, and for those in other classes, particularly the working class, by Labour.<sup>25</sup>

However, in addition to these more or less standard, left–right issues, it may be supposed that various other issues also have resonance among the electorate, and perhaps to an increasing extent. Issues relating to social order and to the limits of freedom and authority—issues concerning tradition and respect, compliance with the law and its enforcement, and censorship—attract much attention today. Likert-type scales with good reliability are now available that allow for the measurement of individuals’ value positions on the left–right dimension and also on what might be called the libertarian–authoritarian dimension (Evans, Heath, and Lalljee 1996; Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 1994). We would then ask if, in the placing of individuals on the left–right scale, class maintains its importance relative to status in the same way as with voting; and, if so, whether a similar situation obtains in regard to the libertarian–authoritarian scale.

To address this question, we draw on the data set of the British Social Attitudes Survey of 2002 that allows respondents to be given scores on both the left–right and libertarian–authoritarian scales (see the Appendix for the survey items used in the construction of these scales and also Park and Surridge [2003]). Table 7 shows the results of regressing individuals’ scores on these two scales on a similar range of explanatory and control variables as those we use in regard to voting.

In the case of the left–right scale, the results in Table 7 are, in most respects, similar to the chances of voting Conservative rather than Labour. Class effects are generally significant, often strong, and on essentially the same pattern as before—due allowance being made for the fact that we have reverted to the seven NS-SEC classes; and class effects are, as it were, reinforced by income effects. The effects of educa-

<sup>24</sup> If education is dropped from the model, class effects become slightly stronger, while the status parameter remains nonsignificant for both contrasts.

<sup>25</sup> On the rationality of class voting see Evans (1993) and Weakliem and Heath (1994).

**Table 7.** Determinants of Political Attitudes on Left–Right and Libertarian–Authoritarian Scales (OLS regression)

	Left–Right		Libertarian–Authoritarian	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Age	.005	(.005)	.030**	(.005)
Female <sup>a</sup>	.605**	(.166)	.136	(.169)
10–23k <sup>b</sup>	.257	(.214)	.297	(.217)
23–44k	.958**	(.233)	.209	(.237)
> 44k	2.153**	(.277)	–.111	(.282)
CSE <sup>c</sup>	.472	(.276)	.193	(.281)
O-Levels	1.039**	(.261)	–.261	(.263)
A-Levels	1.090**	(.294)	–.726*	(.299)
Subdegree	1.089**	(.289)	–.822**	(.292)
Degree	.153	(.321)	–3.223**	(.325)
Class II <sup>d</sup>	–.873**	(.282)	.020	(.288)
Class III	–1.233**	(.359)	–.004	(.367)
Class IV	.021	(.429)	–.138	(.438)
Class V	–1.553**	(.434)	.082	(.443)
Class VI	–1.551**	(.406)	–.340	(.416)
Class VII	–1.732**	(.453)	–.130	(.462)
Status	.684	(.377)	–1.381**	(.385)
Constant	11.711**	(.529)	21.363**	(.537)
N	2,421		2,441	
R <sup>2</sup>	.13		.17	

<sup>a</sup> Male as reference category

<sup>b</sup> Income < 10k as reference category

<sup>c</sup> No qualification as reference category

<sup>d</sup> Class I as reference category

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed tests).

tion are also on the same pattern as for voting: that is, those with intermediate-level qualifications tend to be more right-wing than either those with lower or higher qualifications. Again, too, the effect of status fails to reach significance—although only marginally so, and with the sign of the coefficient indicating a tendency for higher status to be associated with a more right-wing orientation.

In the case of the libertarian–authoritarian scale, however, an entirely different pattern emerges. All class effects, and likewise those of income, are now far from significant while the effect of status is both significant and quite strong. The higher a person's status, the more likely the person is to express libertarian rather than authoritarian values. Specifically, other things being equal, an increase of one standard deviation in status is associated with a change of  $-.51$  ( $-1.381 \times .366$ ) on the libertarian–authoritarian scale. Education also

shows some positive libertarian effects, although only for those with A-level qualifications or higher, and by far the strongest effect occurs with graduates.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Park and SurrIDGE (2003), in their analysis of the same data set, find stronger and more consistent effects of education in regard to libertarian–authoritarian values. This suggests that neglecting status, as they do, may lead to an overestimation of the importance of education. If education is dropped from the model, the status parameter still fails to reach statistical significance at the conventional 5 percent level for the left–right scale, and while some patchy class effects appear for the libertarian–authoritarian scale, the estimate for status almost doubles in magnitude. Details are available from the authors on request. Park and SurrIDGE also include a measure of religious adherence and find that this too has significant effects. We repeated our own analysis with religion included and obtained similar results to Park and



A more detailed examination of our data reveals that the far more important effect of status on libertarian–authoritarian than on left–right value orientations is a phenomenon chiefly of the higher ranges of the status order. Figure 2 shows that at lower status levels—that is, in status bands 3 and 4 (marked in Figure 2 by ‘+’ and ‘Δ’ respectively), which comprise mainly routine service and manual occupational groups—left-wing and authoritarian values tend to go together rather closely (cf. Lipset 1960). But as status increases, authoritarian values tend to give way to more libertarian ones and left–right differences become apparent. Thus, among groups in status band 2 (marked by ‘o’ in Figure 2), who tend to hold middling positions on the libertarian–authoritarian scale, one finds *both* groups that are quite right-wing, such as plant, depot, and site managers and managers and proprietors in services, *and* those who are more centrist, such as buyers and sales representatives and several lower administrative and clerical groups. A similar division occurs in status band 1 (marked by ‘×’ in Figure 2) among groups who are alike in having the most libertarian values. Thus, general managers and administrators, specialist managers, and higher professionals are clearly more right-wing than are teachers and other professionals in education; scientists, engineers, and technologists; and the three groups of associate professionals.

This indicates the importance of the class-status distinction in allowing a new perspective on the social stratification of political partisanship and of value orientations.<sup>27</sup> Class politics are clearly not dead. Class can still be regarded as the main basis of social cleavage so far as left–right issues are concerned: that is, issues

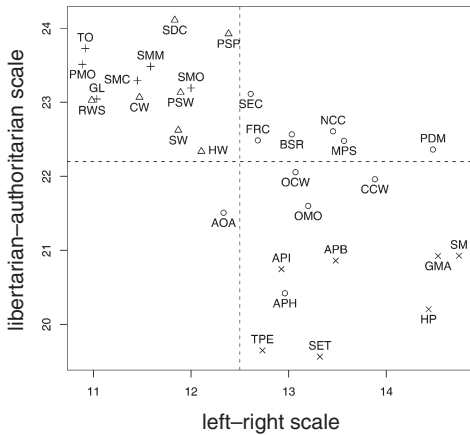
that turn on divergent interests arising out of inequalities in economic conditions and life-chances. But in regard to libertarian–authoritarian issues, it is status, not class, that appears as the major stratifying force. Adherence to libertarian values, we suggest, tends to be a feature of a high-status lifestyle and general *Weltanschauung*—in just the same way as is relatively high and omnivorous (rather than elitist) cultural consumption. In this regard, we agree with Hechter (2004:404) that status politics are likely to bring together “individuals who have a common interest in consuming culturally specific goods and who are attributed with a specific degree of social honour on this account.”<sup>28</sup> It is still important, however, to recognize that status politics do not replace class politics but rather coexist with them in a complex interrelationship.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> This line of argument could be subjected to a more stringent empirical test if we had a data set that included information on both individuals’ cultural consumption and their sociopolitical values, as well as class and status. But, so far, we have not been able to find such a data set for Britain. For the United States, DiMaggio (1996) reports that art-museum visitors tend to be more liberal, tolerant, and open to the values of other lifestyles and cultures than non-visitors—but no more likely to have voted for Clinton than for Bush in the 1992 presidential election and no less likely to be supportive of capitalist economic institutions. This points to the relevance of distinguishing, as we have suggested, between orientations on the left–right dimension, differentiated by class rather than by status, and orientations on the libertarian–authoritarian dimension, differentiated by status rather than by class. Unfortunately, the data set used by DiMaggio contains information only on education and income.

<sup>29</sup> The various associations reported in this article between cultural consumption, politics, and attitudes on the one hand, and status or class on the other, might arise partly as a result of self-selection. That is, people with certain unobserved dispositions might choose to take up particular occupations and thereby acquire a specific status (and class). At the same time, such dispositions might be associated with particular lifestyles or attitudes. Having said that, class and status might also shape attitudes and other life choices (Kohn 1977). Both causal *and* self-selection processes could be at work.

Surridge, but without the pattern of our other results being appreciably affected.

<sup>27</sup> If the class dummies are dropped from the models in Tables 3 and 6, or from the regression predicting left–right values in Table 7, the status parameter becomes statistically significant. Likewise, if the status parameter is dropped from Table 5 or from the model predicting libertarian–authoritarian scale in Table 7, then some class parameters become significant. This is not surprising because class and status are correlated. However, we would regard these as misspecified models.



**Figure 2.** Mean Position of the 31 Status Groups on Left–Right and Libertarian–Authoritarian Scales

*Note:* Groups in status bands 1, 2, 3, and 4 are marked by the following symbols respectively: ×, ○, Δ, +. Table 2 provides a key to the status groups abbreviations. The dashed lines refer to the mean sample values of the two scales.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we have aimed to show that recent tendencies to disregard, or to seek to elide, the Weberian distinction between class and status are unfortunate. Indeed, where the distinction is not recognized, and empirically implemented, research into the stratification of British society—and, we believe, of other modern societies—may well go astray. This point seems especially relevant with regard to studies of the impact of social stratification on life-chances and life-choices across different areas of social life. As shown in our analyses, individuals' positions within the class structure, understood in terms of employment relations, have a prevailing influence on economic life-chances, as indicated by risks of long-term unemployment and earnings prospects, while it is their positions within the status order that are of key importance in regard to at least one major aspect of lifestyle: level and pattern of cultural consumption. If the study of these outcomes had been undertaken on the basis of some unidimensional conception of stratification, a less clear appreciation of their structuring would in all probability have resulted.

In the case of politics, we have sought to show that both class and status are involved in the shaping of partisanship and value orientations, but in clearly differing ways. Class is dominant with regard to left–right issues that involve primarily material interests. Status, however, prevails when it comes to libertarian–authoritarian issues that involve, to use Weber's phrase, ideal interests. We believe there may be many other situations of this kind that, rather than calling for analyses primarily in terms of class *or* status, will require a careful separating out of the influence that each exerts.<sup>30</sup>

As an illustration, a rather fierce debate has recently broken out over social inequalities in health between, on the one hand, epidemiologists and medical sociologists favoring material or political economy explanations of such inequalities and, on the other, those favoring psychosocial or cultural-behavioral explanations—to follow the terminology used in Bartley's (2004) valuable review of the debate. There are obvious parallels here between class-based and status-based explanations, and it seems essential that, to advance the debate, the stratification of *different* health outcomes should be investigated on the basis of reliable measures of *both* class and status, rather than of just one or the other or of ad hoc measures that confuse the two.

By extending the substantive range of analyses of the kind that we have presented in this article, a more comprehensive mapping should be possible of the relative importance of stratification by class and by status across different areas of social life. In turn, a wider basis may be provided for a more detailed investigation than has so far proved possible of the range of causal processes or mechanisms through which the effects of class and status on individual lives are actually brought about.

<sup>30</sup> Because in the foregoing analyses we focus on status as attaching to occupation, it is quite possible that status effects on both cultural consumption and politics are underestimated. For example, these effects might be somewhat greater if status as attaching to ethnicity were also taken into account.

## APPENDIX

**THE LEFT–RIGHT AND  
LIBERTARIAN–AUTHORITARIAN SCALES**

The two scales used in the section “Class, Status, and Politics” are constructed additively from the following survey items. Each item has five response categories, ranging from 1 (agree strongly) to 5 (disagree strongly). The values of the left–right scale range from 5 to 25, with higher values denoting more right-wing views, and the values of the libertarian–authoritarian scale range from 6 to 30, with higher values denoting more authoritarian views. Cronbach’s alpha for the two scales is quite high, at .82 and .74 respectively.

## Left–Right scale:

- Government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well off.
- Big business benefits owners at the expense of workers.
- Ordinary working people do not get their fair share of the nation’s wealth.
- There is one law for the rich and one for the poor.
- Management will always try to get the better of employees if it gets the chance.

## Libertarian–Authoritarian scale:

- Young people today don’t have enough respect for traditional British values.
- People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences.
- For some crimes, the death penalty is the most appropriate sentence.
- Schools should teach children to obey authority.
- The law should always be obeyed, even if a particular law is wrong.
- Censorship of films and magazines is necessary to uphold moral standards.

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