
Article:
Reeves, A., Gilbert, E. and Holman, D. (2015) Class dis-identification, cultural stereotypes, and music preferences: Experimental evidence from the UK. Poetics, 50. pp. 44-61. ISSN 1872-7514

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2015.01.002

Class dis-identification, cultural stereotypes, and music preferences: experimental evidence from the UK

Word count: 9,523

Abstract

Do people change their cultural preferences in social interactions where social class is particularly salient? Although previous research has assumed, or been unable to test, whether preferences vary across interactions, we argue that the 'cultural politics of class' may provide a context in which individuals alter cultural preferences depending on the specifics of a particular social interaction. Using a lab-based split-ballot experiment in a research university in the East of England (n = 300), we examine changes in preferences toward music genres depending on whether respondents are assigned to one of three treatment conditions: 1) a vignette describing someone who is working class, 2) a vignette describing someone who is middle class or 3) no vignette. Those born in the UK alter the strength of their preferences toward highbrow music genres when social class is made more salient. When the salience of class is increased it also activates particular cultural stereotypes and these stereotypes also influence the strength of respondents' preferences toward highbrow music genres. This mechanism suggests that individuals use cultural stereotypes in social interaction to position themselves and others in the social hierarchy through cultural preferences.

Keywords: social class, music preferences, experiment, cultural sociology

Introduction

The cultural turn in stratification studies has examined how cultural practices and preferences are embedded within and constitutive of the social hierarchy (Reeves, 2012, Savage et al., 2013). Underlying much of this research is an assumption that cultural preferences are relatively stable across social interactions. However, there are reasons to be cautious about this hypothesis. Cultural preferences are different from cultural practices, and may be subject to short-term fluctuations (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Additionally, the pattern of class dis-identification in the UK – whereby respondents avoid labelling themselves as being a member of a particular class even while being familiar with the rhetoric of class – has emphasised other rhetorical and cultural signals of social position (Skeggs, 2004). One manifestation of this tendency is the social sin of snobbery (Bennett et al., 2009, Skeggs, 2004), whereby people avoid labelling themselves as 'middle class' for fear of being labelled a snob (Savage et al., 2010). Finally, cultural preferences mark individuals as being members of particular social positions and may shape friendship networks (Chan, 2010, Vaisey and Lizardo, 2010). Taken together, this research suggests that the 'cultural politics of class' – which is concerned with how culture is associated with power structures but also how social groups are (de)valued based on their social position – means that individuals alter cultural preferences depending on the specifics of a particular social interaction (Savage et al., 2010).

Using a lab-based split-ballot experiment conducted in a UK university, this paper examines how occupational class and cultural engagement intersect (Savage et al., 2013) by testing if musical preferences vary depending on whether social class is made salient. In particular, we sought to answer the question: do people change their cultural preferences in social interactions where social class is particularly salient? We find that those born in the UK alter the strength of their preferences toward highbrow music genres when social class is more salient and that the salience of class activates cultural stereotypes which, in turn, influences the strength of respondents' preferences toward highbrow music genres.

The cultural politics of music

Cultural practices and preferences mark ourselves in relation to others (Bourdieu, 1984, Lizardo, 2006). They can be used in this way primarily because practices and tastes differ across the social hierarchy; hence those who are university graduates tend to have different cultural preferences and practices (Chan, 2010). This difference is manifest both in the propensity for those higher up the social hierarchy to pursue more highbrow tastes but also in the range of cultural tastes in which individuals will express a positive preference (Bennett et

al., 2009). These tendencies are observed in many domains but especially in music (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007, Bryson, 1996, Savage, 2006).

Music is an interesting case because it is both pervasive and also deeply divided (Savage, 2006, Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Musical taste is a way of identifying with a particular group or subculture while dis-identifying with other groups (Kruse, 1993). This may be manifest in preferences for particular artists, genres and even labels. Rhetorical distinctions between 'pop', 'alternative' or 'indie' capture mainstream or oppositional positions in the cultural field. In many cases, such distinctions are drawn consciously (Kruse, 1993). Similarly, Thornton (1995) observes that such distinctions, e.g., between 'mainstream' and 'hip', are incredibly forceful in defining hierarchies within a specific subculture.

For Bourdieu, 'nothing more clearly affirms one's "class"… than tastes in music' (Bourdieu, 1984: 18). According to one UK-based survey (Bennett et al., 2009), almost everyone in the adult sample owned some recorded music and some of these individuals were devoted music fans. Music spans both elite and popular cultures, is especially divided, has low financial barriers to participation (Edelmann and Vaisey, 2014), and is a contentious domain of the cultural field (Bennett et al., 2009, Savage, 2006). Perhaps due to the pervasiveness and divisiveness of music, people express both positive preferences toward a variety of musical genres but are also willing to express intense dislike of certain genres (Savage, 2006). Shared music consumption is as important as shared non-consumption because tastes are cultural schemas which draw distinctions between groups (Edelmann and Vaisey, 2014). Symbolic exclusion along musical boundaries is common in many settings. In the US, there are some musical genres – usually those whose fans are the least educated – that are consistently rejected by even the most musically tolerant groups (Bryson, 1996). Even musical omnivores (those who express positive preferences for both high- and low-brow music genres) are defined most clearly by the music they dislike rather than the music they enjoy (Tampubolon, 2008). In France, highbrow omnivores reject rap and techno while lowbrow omnivores reject classical and jazz (Chan, 2010).

Musical tastes, as cultural schemas, draw distinctions between individuals but snobbery and class dis-identification also influence how these distinctions are made and how the cultural politics of class is navigated. Snobbery and class dis-identification matter because both are involved in accruing or maintaining the social value of the self in social interactions (Skeggs and Loveday, 2012). Identifying with a particular musical genre is, according to Kruse, a form of dis-identification or distancing from other groups, thereby de-valuing them (Kruse, 1993). Struggles over moral value, or the worth of the individual, have a long association with (musical) taste (Skeggs, 2004). Individuals have nearly always been ascribed lower social and/or moral value because of their position in social hierarchies. Such hierarchical

judgments are not only based on economic and educational resources but also cultural preferences and practices, i.e., enjoying profane culture may lower social worth. These struggles are manifest in how culture is used to accrue or maintain the social value of the self in everyday interactions (Skeggs, 2004, Skeggs, 2005).

Music is one field in which these struggles over social value occur (Kruse, 1993); people do not tend to give neutral responses to particular genres and these judgments are frequently applied to those who enjoy such styles (Savage, 2006, Bennett et al., 2009). Individuals articulate a complex network of intra-genre distinctions which are symptomatic of cultural privilege (Bennett et al., 2009) but also serve to create hierarchies within genres (Thornton, 1995). Two empirical examples illustrate these struggles. Participants in 'club culture', who frequently come from subordinate classes, define themselves and establish their worth against the 'mainstream' and other more dominant classes (Thornton, 1995). Further, working-class white men from Wales have a 'complex agnostic response' to classical music which involves both some enjoyment but care in avoiding the pretensions associated with it (Bennett et al., 2009: 89). This mixture of demonstrating awareness of elite culture while also distancing oneself from it highlights the type of boundary-work (e.g., class dis-identification and snobbery) that influences how people communicate their cultural preferences.

Snobbery and class dis-identification are both vertical (between members of different social classes) and horizontal (between members of the same class) processes (Savage, 2000). In this context, the fear of being labelled a 'snob' may influence how those from privileged social positions interact with those from less privileged social positions (vertical comparisons) (Bennett et al., 2009). Similarly, culture may also be used to differentiate oneself from those who are in the same social class (horizontal comparison) (Savage, 2000). In short, music is a critical part of the cultural politics of class because it can be used to position others and oneself in social interactions.

The context of the cultural politics of class

Yet, the 'cultural politics of class' is also context specific (Savage et al., 2010). This is one of the challenges to Bourdieu's oeuvre - that the association between culture and class he observes in Distinction cannot be generalised outside of 1960s Paris (Lamont, 1992). The general lesson from this observation is that the precise manner in which cultural legitimacy is embedded within the occupational class and power structures will be somewhat unique to each location (Bennett et al., 2009). For example, while denigration of the working class is likely common to many cultures, the specific manifestations of this denigration vary (Skeggs, 2005). 'Chavs', for example, are not found everywhere. Vaisey writes 'substantial evidence

supports the assertion that not only consciously stated values and beliefs but also moral intuitions – the unreflective attractions and repulsions of practical consciousness – vary between cultures' (Vaisey, 2009: 1684). This suggests that those who are born in the UK are more likely to be responsive to the idiosyncrasies of the specific 'cultural politics of class' in the UK than those born elsewhere. This is because people are attuned to how the social value of the self is assessed in their specific locale. People are aware of what a particular practice will articulate in a specific discursive terrain (Kruse, 1993). Being born in a particular cultural context will increase awareness of the cultural politics of that location; but it will also increase the likelihood of responding to these politics in social interactions.

One of the implications of this effort to examine the influence of context-specific cultural values is that it becomes challenging to disentangle the UK-specific components of the results and those that are more generalisable. Cultural practices signify social position in many settings. and cross-national research has demonstrated that among high-income countries there have been a number of concurrent changes in how culture and social strata intersect. For example, the rise of the omnivore (Reeves, 2014, Peterson, 2005), the deep divisions within the music field (Tampubolon, 2008), and the aversion to snobbery (Eijck and Knulst, 2005) have all been observed in various national contexts. However, similar to Bourdieu, by distinguishing between those socialised in different settings it becomes more difficult to draw strong inferences regarding whether the cultural politics of music will shape interaction in similar ways in different settings. Hence, the UK focus of our study is both a strength and a weakness: it facilitates the contrast of interest while also limiting external validity.

In addition to country-specific socialisation, parental educational attainment – as an example of family-specific socialisation – may also moderate how the cultural politics of class are understood (Nagel, 2010). There is a large literature which documents the impact of father's (and, to a lesser extent, mother's) social position on cultural preferences (Nagel, 2010). This literature suggests that those who have more educated fathers have a greater awareness of, and appreciation for, highbrow culture. Moreover, this class background may lead people to respond to specific class cues in diverse ways. For example, someone who was raised in a family where the father was a university graduate may respond to class cues in a different way to someone who was raised in a family with a non-graduate father (Bourdieu, 1984, Lizardo, 2006). Where you are born and also the level of your cultural privilege may moderate how social class influences the expression of cultural preference in a particular social interaction.

Taken together, this discussion leads us to ask: is the effect of social class on cultural preferences (in a particular social interaction) moderated by social background in terms of country of origin and family?

Activating cultural stereotypes

We also seek to test how social class influences cultural preferences in social interaction, given the lack of research on this topic (Vaisey and Lizardo, 2010, Lizardo, 2004). In other words, we want to understand the mechanisms by which the salience of social class alters cultural preferences in social interactions (Pape et al., 2012). One possible mechanism might be via the activation of cultural stereotypes. Cultural preferences are closely associated with specific class positions, and even when they are not known may be ascribed to other people based on their class positions (Johnson et al., 2006). If cultural preferences are used as a way of positioning ourselves in relation to others in the social hierarchy, then individuals may alter their preferences depending on these cultural judgments about others. In short, people may use culture to maintain or increase the social value of the self in social interactions (Skeggs, 2004).

At first blush, this perspective appears to reflect closely the notion of a cultural toolkit; culture is something people use (Swidler, 1986). Cultural preferences may, for example, be 'strategies of action' that are used in everyday interactions to achieve a particular end. However, the ability to deploy culture is largely determined by whether an individual has mastered the necessary skills. One empirical example is Erickson's (1996) analysis of the way in which culture is deployed in the workplace. She observes that the mastery of many forms of cultural practice is a resource that can be effectively deployed in an environment where many social classes must cooperate. In contrast to this view, and inspired by insights from the cognitive sciences, another group of researchers have argued that as well as culture influencing action through deliberate and conscious processes, this also occurs in a fast and largely unconscious way (Vaisey, 2009). In this view, cultural preferences are not tools but rather they are the product of cultural-cognitive structures (or dispositions) that are rooted in experience.

Both of these frameworks can be usefully applied to the question of activating stereotypes. For example, if person X believes that person Y is working class then person X will make some assumptions about person Y's cultural preferences (Hout, 2008). These assumptions will be different if person Y is believed to be middle class. Additionally, these assumptions regarding the cultural preferences of person Y may also influence the stated cultural preferences of person X because such preferences may shape how person X is valued by person Y. The assumptions made about person Y and also any change in the cultural

preferences of person X can be viewed as evidence of how culture is deployed as a tool (Swidler, 1986) or it can be seen as activating a particular set of 'neural associations that facilitate perception, interpretation, and action' (Vaisey, 2009: 1686). Because of this ambiguity we do not take a firm position on this issue here (Edelmann and Vaisey, 2014); rather we are initially interested in documenting whether such processes are observable in this type of interaction.

Assuming that stereotypes mediate the association between social class and stated cultural preferences, then processes of cultural identification or dis-identification may lead individuals to identify with or dis-identify from the cultural preferences of others (Lizardo, 2004). The process of identification occurs when respondents try to match their own preferences with the stereotypes they have ascribed to the person they are interacting with. In contrast, the process of dis-identification occurs when respondents try to distance their own preferences from the assumed preferences of the other person. Whether someone identifies with or dis-identifies from the cultural preferences of another person will be based on the social distance between them and the potential implications for the social value of the self.

Previous research provides support for both processes of identification and dis-identification. Social desirability bias, which has been studied extensively in the field of research methodology, is likely not limited to research settings and could be linked with processes of identification. Similarly, there is a broad literature demonstrating the process of dis-identification through distancing oneself from the class position of another. In the context of ambiguity regarding the mechanism we hypothesise that both are plausible mechanisms. In light of this debate, we ask: how does social class influence cultural preferences (what is the mechanism)?

From the research questions discussed previously, we generated five hypotheses:

1. The impact of social class on cultural preferences will be greater if the respondent was born in the United Kingdom.
2. The impact of social class on cultural preferences will vary depending on whether the respondent's father was a graduate or not.
3. Social class will influence cultural preferences in social interactions through activating stereotypes about the other person. This could occur in two ways:
4. Matching: Activating these stereotypes will increase the degree of similarity between the respondent and the other person.

5. Distancing: Activating these stereotypes will decrease the degree of similarity between the respondent and the other person.

To examine these questions and to test these hypotheses we conducted a lab-based experiment to randomly assign participants to different treatment conditions which differentially increased the salience of social class and cultural stereotypes.

Method

Data

Our data come from a split ballot experiment embedded within an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered via an experimental social science laboratory. Three hundred students at a university in the East of England were recruited from the laboratory's participant recruitment database and completed the questionnaire online in the laboratory. The questionnaire was written into the web-based survey software Qualtrics. Individuals were randomly allocated to treatment groups ('working class' or 'middle class') or the control group.

All respondents who completed the questionnaire in the lab received a conditional incentive of £4.

[Table 1 here]

As expected with a student population, 93% of the respondents were single and the mean age was 22.6 years old (SD: 6.79) (Table 1). 64% of the respondents were female, 75% were born outside of the United Kingdom and 96% had no children. 44% of the respondents had a father who was a university graduate and 53% of the sample described themselves as religious.

Questions concerning cultural preferences were previously validated questions from the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion Project (Silva 2005), and demographic questions were taken from Understanding Society – the UK Household Longitudinal Study (Silva, 2005).

We examined 8 music genres: rock (indie), modern jazz, world music (reggae and bhangra), classical music (opera), country and western, electronic dance music (techno and house), heavy metal, and urban (hip-hop and R&B). Each of these were measured on a 7-point scale (1 = Do not like it at all, 7 = Like it very much indeed). Urban music is, on average, the most popular of the 8 genres with a mean score of 5.04, while heavy metal is the least popular with a mean score of 2.69 (Table 1). We focus the results on classical, jazz, country & western, and electronica music genres. We select these because preferences for classical and country & western are correlated in previous analyses (Bennett et al., 2009), and jazz is often perceived as an elite genre of music, and is correlated with listening to classical music (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Moreover, these genres are traditional forms, somewhat associated with older people, and frequently perceived as middle- or even highbrow. Due to this association, the influence of parents on preferences toward these genres might be greater than

for urban music, for example. In this analysis, they are neither the least nor the most popular genres among those measured here. Therefore, they are potentially more susceptible to variation, because preferences toward these genres are not as strongly held. We also report results for a reported preference for electronica, which we hypothesise is not necessarily influenced by class cues to the same extent. Results for the other genres are largely similar to those for electronica and are therefore not directly reported (see Web Appendix 1 and 2).

Experiment

Respondents were randomly allocated to one of three conditions – two treatment groups and a control group. Those in the 'working class' condition (n = 103) received a vignette describing a fictional woman named Liz using some typically working-class signals. Respondents were then asked a series of questions about what they believed Liz's preferences may be with respect to music, television, and books. Respondents then completed a short quiz on popular culture and answered a series of questions regarding their own cultural preferences, along with some demographic questions. The 'middle class' group (n = 93) received a vignette describing a middle-class version of Liz and then the same series of questions about Liz's preferences, the quiz, and then their own cultural preferences and demographics. The control group (n = 106) received no vignette and therefore did not answer any questions about Liz. Instead they completed the quiz and then answered the questions on their cultural preferences and demographics.

The gender of the person in the vignettes was consistently female because we anticipated more female than male respondents and because the sample size did not allow us to explore further treatment conditions. Splitting the vignettes would have split the information we had about the control group by half and disaggregating the influence of the male vignette would have required a much larger sample size.

The vignettes were designed to increase the salience (or priming) of social class, which we hypothesised would influence responses to the cultural preference questions that followed. Priming is a process in which 'exposure to a stimulus activates a concept in memory that is then given increased weight in subsequent judgement tasks' (Parkin, 2008: 611). We prime social class as a way of activating cultural ideas associated with social hierarchies, anticipating that such cultural notions will be given more weight in subsequent tasks that require individuals to make specific judgements. The prime activates underlying notions and values associated with social class and not specific ideas about specific cultural products (Parkin, 2008). As discussed above, we do not take a firm position on the debate between the toolkit and the dual-process model of culture in action, rather we are concerned with documenting whether cultural preferences vary when social class becomes more salient in a specific judgment.

The vignettes are set out below (Middle-class Liz/Working-class Liz):

> Liz Davies works for a large chain of supermarkets. She is quite tall with short black hair and blue eyes. She is 25 years old although she looks younger than her age. Liz moved away from home when she was 18 and now (owns a large flat/rents a small council flat) in London/, which is (well/adequately) furnished with (comfortable/second-hand) furniture. She is particularly proud of a new set of (diamond/gold hooped) earrings which she recently bought from (Harrods/a friend). She (passed her driving test when she was 20/has a provisional license) and (now

drives a BMW convertible/*sometimes drives her boyfriend's old* Fiesta). On her way home from work, she sometimes picks up a (vintage wine/bottle of wine from the supermarket) to enjoy with her meal and, once home, she feeds the cat and frequently (cooks a meal in her kitchenette/chooses a ready-prepared meal from the freezer and heats it in the microwave). Having eaten, Liz (puts the dishes in the dishwasher/washes up). If the day has been particularly stressful, she might relax in (her new Jacuzzi/a hot shower). Afterward, if she is not too tired, she often goes out with a friend for the rest of the evening.

By focusing on responses to a vignette this experiment is not constructed as an experimental interaction where 'Liz' would be informed of the respondent's answers. This choice diminishes the sense in which this is a test of an interaction proper because 'Liz' is not necessarily an interlocutor. This approach, however, does have other advantages. Because there is no feedback to 'Liz' it is possible that respondents might be more willing to express potentially negative stereotypes, which are an important mechanism linking the vignette and the expressed preferences.

Statistical analysis

To examine whether being born outside of the UK or father's education moderated the influence of the vignette on the respondent's cultural preferences we use OLS regression and mediation analysis (Imai et al., 2011, Imai et al., 2010).

First, we test whether being born outside of the UK moderates the influence of the vignette on attitudes toward music with the following model:

Eq. 1: $Music_i = \alpha + \beta_1 WC_i + \beta_2 MC_i + \beta_3 UK_i + \beta_4 WC \times UK_i + \beta_5 MC \times UK_i + \varepsilon_i$

Where i is person, Music is a vector of variables measuring preferences toward different genres, WC is those who were exposed to the working-class treatment condition, MC is those who were exposed to the middle-class treatment condition, UK is an indicator for those born in the UK, β_4 is an interaction term between being in the working-class treatment group and being born in the UK, and β_5 is an interaction term between being in the middle-class treatment group and being born in the UK.

Second, we test whether the education level of the respondent's father moderates the influence of the vignette on attitudes toward music with a similar model to Eq. 1:

Eq. 2: $Music_i = \alpha + \beta_1 WC_i + \beta_2 MC_i + \beta_3 Grad_i + \beta_4 WC \times Grad_i + \beta_5 MC \times Grad_i + \varepsilon_i$

Where i is person, Music is a vector of variables measuring preferences toward different genres, WC is those who were exposed to the working-class treatment condition, MC is those who were exposed to the middle-class treatment condition, Grad is an indicator for those born in the UK, β_4 is an interaction term between being in the working-class treatment group and having a father who is a university graduate, and β_5 is an interaction term between being in the middle-class treatment group and having a father who is a university graduate.

Finally, we test whether the influence of the salience of class on expressed cultural preferences is mediated by the activation of stereotypes about Liz's cultural preferences. To test this we use a mediation model; after having demonstrated the effect of the vignette on respondents' cultural preferences we then test whether the treatment (viewing the working-class vignette) activates cultural stereotypes, e.g., whether 'Liz' will watch highbrow television. Then we measure whether this stereotype influences whether or not respondents enjoy classical music. This model tests the following mechanism: 1) respondent X views the working-class vignette, 2) the vignette activates a particular class/cultural stereotype, 3) respondent X believes that a highbrow television show is one of Liz's least favourite shows or not, and 4) respondent X becomes more (less) likely to express a positive preference for classical music due to this stereotype. In short, the total effect of the treatment is now decomposed into two component parts: 1) the effect of the treatment on the outcome through the mediator (mediation effect) and 2) the residual (or direct) effect of the treatment on the outcome (Figure 1). These models test whether the activation of these stereotypes can partially explain the impact of the treatment on the outcome, but they also estimate the proportion of the treatment effect that is attributable to this mediator. Following Imai and Yamamoto (2013), we select 90% confidence intervals for the mediation analysis.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

Results

Does being UK-born moderate the impact of social class on cultural preferences?

We hypothesised that the vignettes describing Liz would be most salient to those who are born in the UK because the priming of class through the social cues in them would be most strongly felt by those who were keenly aware of the 'cultural politics of class' (Hout, 2008,

Savage et al., 2010). Thus we'd expect that those born in the UK would be more likely to alter their preferences in response to the various treatment conditions.

When we disaggregate the results by those who are UK-born and those who are foreign-born we find that the treatment changed the music preference for some music genres, but not all. UK and foreign-born respondents who viewed the middle-class vignette or no vignette were very similar in terms of their reported preferences for jazz, classical music, country & western, and electronica (Figure 2; see also Web Appendix 3). In contrast, those UK-born respondents who viewed the working-class vignette were much less likely to express a positive preference for jazz, classical music, and country. Viewing the working-class vignette had no noticeable effect on cultural preferences for electronica.

[Insert figure 2 here]

The results show that exposure to class-based cues does influence cultural preferences, but only for the working-class treatment condition and negatively. Preferences for highbrow music genres declined if respondents viewed the working-class vignette and were born in the UK. There was no clear impact of the treatment on preferences regarding electronica, a genre without a clear position in the social hierarchy.

Does being raised by a father who is a graduate moderate the impact of social class on cultural preferences?

We then examined whether father's education may also moderate the impact of the vignettes on respondents' musical preferences. We hypothesised that people may respond to the vignettes differently depending on their own cultural background. Here we argued that a respondent who has a graduate father might respond differently to the working-class vignette than the middle-class vignette.

The evidence for a moderating effect of father's education on cultural preferences is far weaker than what we observed for the UK-born moderator. We found no effect of father's education on preferences for classical music. Respondents whose father was a graduate and viewed the working-class vignette were more likely to express a positive preference for country music than those in the control group. Respondents whose father was not a graduate and who viewed the middle-class vignette were less likely to express a positive preference for

jazz. Even where there is a significant effect at the $\alpha < 0.05$ level, the size of the effect is far smaller in comparison with that observed when differentiating by whether respondents were born in the UK or not (Figure 3; see also Web Appendix 4). In short, this evidence suggests that being embedded in the cultural politics of class has a larger moderating effect on the association between social class and cultural preferences than whether or not your father graduated from university.

[Insert figure 3 here]

Cultural stereotypes and social class

How successful were the vignettes in activating particular class/culture stereotypes? There is good evidence that these vignettes were able to activate cultural stereotypes regarding Liz (Web Appendix 5). Compared with those who viewed the middle-class vignette, those who viewed the working-class vignette were 21.7% points more likely ($p < 0.001$) to think that Liz would not enjoy the Great British Bake-Off, and they were 25.6% points more likely ($p < 0.001$) to think that Liz would not enjoy The Culture Show. In contrast, compared with those who viewed the working-class vignette, those who viewed the middle-class vignette were 37.7% points more likely ($p < 0.001$) to think that Liz would not enjoy *Britain's Got* Talent. Other television shows had a weaker association, such as Breaking Bad ($p = 0.21$) and Downton Abbey ($p = 0.16$).

Evidence suggests that material markers of social class, such as which car you drive and the amenities in your house, are sufficient to ascribe particular cultural preferences to other people (Hout, 2008). These results provide experimental evidence reinforcing those findings.

Do cultural stereotypes mediate the association between social class and cultural preferences?

We have observed that the two treatment conditions activated particular assumptions about Liz's cultural preferences. The material markers of social class in the vignette were enough for these respondents to make certain judgments about what people in different social positions might enjoy. We hypothesised that these assumptions about the cultural preferences of other people might also influence the expressed cultural preferences of respondents.

Until this point we have been concerned with estimating the total effect of the treatment condition on cultural preferences. However, using mediation analysis, we aim to decompose

the total effect of the treatment condition into the component which influences cultural preferences by activating and responding to cultural stereotypes and the remaining direct effect which is not explained by this association. In other words we estimate the average effect of the treatment through the mediator and also the residual effect of the treatment (Imai et al., 2011, Imai et al., 2010).

To estimate this mediation effect we use a measure of whether respondents believe that The Culture Show (an arts television show) would be one of Liz's least favourite television shows. We select this television show because a) it is starkly divided across the vignettes, b) it has a specific arts component and c) it is aimed at educated viewers. These three features suggest it would be a particularly powerful mediator of the salience of class on music preferences. Our hypothesis is that the treatment influences the likelihood that respondents believe that The Culture Show will be Liz's least favourite television show which, in turn, will influence the respondent's own reported cultural preferences. We have already found that the treatment, i.e., the middle-class or the working-class vignette, influences the degree to which people think this television show will be Liz's least favourite (Table 2). We anticipate that the treatment status and the activation of this stereotype regarding Liz's preferences will interact. In other words, we expect that if the respondent believes that The Culture Show is least likely to be Liz's favourite television show then the effect of the respondent's cultural preferences will differ depending on whether they believe Liz is working class or middle class.

[Insert figure 4 here]

The average mediation effect shows that cultural stereotypes about whether Liz would enjoy The Culture Show influenced respondents' own reported cultural preferences (Figure 4). However, the evidence also suggests that this mediation effect is strongest with respect to both classical music and country & western. The activation of these cultural stereotypes accounted for 28% and 23%, respectively, of the total effect of the treatment. This suggests that holding the treatment constant, believing that Liz does not enjoy The Culture Show will increase the likelihood that the respondent reports enjoying classical music and country music. However, there is still a large residual to explain. In contrast, there is no clear evidence of any mediation effect with respect to preferences toward electronica, as expected, or jazz.

As a sensitivity test, we examine whether there are any mediation effects for a television show for which there is no evidence of stereotype activation. According to table 2, Downton Abbey, a popular period drama, does not signify clear class cues. Viewers of either vignette

were not more likely to assume that Downton Abbey would be Liz's least favourite show ($p = 0.16$). Given this observation and its wide popularity amongst all segments of the population, we would not expect Downton Abbey to influence cultural preferences through activating particular class-based stereotypes. Consistent with this, we find no evidence of a mediation effect from Downton Abbey, giving our findings specificity (see Web Appendix 6).

Discussion

The malleability of cultural preferences

Enacted or expressed music preferences are somewhat malleable in response to social class cues, stressing the importance of understanding how class is articulated through cultural practice (Kruse, 1993). This malleability suggests that cultural preferences are not necessarily stable; they fluctuate somewhat in response to particular social settings and also in response to particular interactions. Such malleability may be completely innocent, simply reflecting random variation in where people put themselves on a particular scale. Yet, because cultural preferences are signals through which we position others and ourselves (Kruse, 1993), this malleability highlights how culture may be used in social interaction to mark others and influence how we are perceived (Thornton, 1995).

However, this malleability is only observed among those who are born in the UK, indicating that whether or not one is born in the UK moderates the influence of country-specific class cues on music preferences. Being born and raised in a particular cultural setting will sensitise an individual toward a particular set of social and cultural codes (Bourdieu, 1984). While the globalisation of the media has increased the universality of some of these codes, they still vary widely between contexts (Vaisey, 2009). Stability in the preferences of those born outside the UK indicates that culture is fairly stable over time and does not alter simply because someone has migrated from one country to another. It also suggests that these cultural frames are borrowed from the existing structures in which individuals are embedded and at the same time these frames reinforce those same symbolic structures.

While these cross-cultural frames shape how individuals respond in these social interactions, the influence of father's education on musical preferences is less clear. On the surface this result may appear inconsistent with previous research suggesting that father's educational attainment would influence cultural preferences. However, an inconclusive finding in this study does not falsify these previous results; rather it merely suggests that the impact of father's education may also be moderated by country of origin, because cultural values and stereotypes do not necessarily translate across countries (Lamont, 1992, Vaisey, 2009).

Additionally, testing the importance of parental education on cultural preferences is not ideal with a sampling frame largely consisting of university students, who represent a relatively privileged section of society. Our results are inconclusive on this point because our sample size was not sufficiently large to test this additional interaction between the treatment, being UK-born or not, and father's education.

Notwithstanding this important caveat, we still observe that father's education does have a small moderating influence on some of the indicators used in this analysis (e.g., country & western and jazz). While it would be hasty to draw strong conclusions from these results, especially because the effect sizes are small, they are suggestive of future areas of research. Coupled with the weight of previous evidence, our results indicate that father's education may play a role in how people respond to social class in everyday interactions. However, this will need to be explored in future projects.

Cultural stereotypes and shifting cultural preferences

When social class becomes salient in a particular interaction, our evidence suggests that cultural stereotypes are activated (Pape et al., 2012). These stereotypes are used to locate other people within a particular position in the symbolic hierarchy, but respondents also use them to position themselves in relation to other people (Skeggs, 2004).

We find that when these cultural stereotypes are activated, some cultural distancing occurs. Respondents who believe that Liz would not enjoy The Culture Show (an arts magazine television show) are more likely to express a preference for classical and country & western music. Somewhat surprisingly, this cultural distancing is largest among those who viewed the middle-class vignette.

This is especially pertinent because the majority of our respondents were currently undergraduates in a research university and therefore represent a fairly privileged group in British society. Of course, the expansion of higher education has meant that an increasing number of people who attend university are from more deprived backgrounds. Despite this, these individuals are also more likely to be aspirational in terms of their social mobility (Goldthorpe, 2010), and culturally knowledgeable (Boliver, 2013). In other words, even those who are from deprived backgrounds are perhaps more similar to the middle-class than the working-class vignette of Liz. In short, this distancing is a fairly privileged group trying to distinguish themselves from another privileged group using cultural preferences.

Is there a contradiction between our findings?

Results pertaining to place of birth suggest that when people born in the UK viewed the working-class vignette they became less likely to express a positive preference for classical and country & western music. In contrast, our results also suggest that when people believe that Liz does not enjoy The Culture Show they express more positive preferences toward classical and country & western music. Is there a contradiction here? It is important to remember that these processes apply to two different groups. The UK-born effect was only witnessed among those who viewed the working-class vignette. Additionally, the mediation effect of cultural stereotypes was primarily driven by those who viewed the middle-class vignette, i.e., those who viewed the middle-class vignette and who then thought Liz would not enjoy The Culture Show were those people who were more likely to express a positive preference for classical and country & western music. In short, one affect dominated among those in the working-class treatment condition while the other applied mainly to the middle-class treatment condition.

Further, these two seemingly divergent behaviours can be explained through considering how an individual can accrue or maintain the social value of the self in each interaction. Bourdieu argues that largely unconscious dispositions, which he calls the habitus, shape our responses to certain situations (Bourdieu, 1984). These dispositions are the product of both the social environment in which an individual was raised and also the relational dynamics of their current interactions. For Lizardo, these dispositions reproduce class position through habitual rather than rational (or intentional) deployment of cultural preferences (Lizardo, 2004). In this view, while likely unconscious, individuals are tacitly aware that deploying economic and cultural resources with the aim of reproducing class position is problematic in the British context because this is potentially perceived as snobbery (Eijck and Knulst, 2005). Because Britons very often dis-identify from privileged class positions, they then deploy these resources toward a similar but slightly different goal (Skeggs, 2004, Skeggs and Loveday, 2012); accruing and maintaining the social value of the self. This process can involve different types of relationships depending on the groups involved. For example, how cultural and economic resources are deployed in social interactions can depend both on the availability of these resources but also on available strategies (Skeggs, 2005). Similarly, Erikson demonstrates how cultural resources can be used across different types of interactions in order to maintain social value (Erickson, 1996). Managers use these cultural resources to ensure they accrue and maintain a valued position. Even those in subordinate social positions use music to accrue and maintain social value (Thornton, 1995).

Respondents in this experiment are educated and come from privileged social positions. Whether they would recognise it or not, they are part of the emerging middle class. As such, we need to understand their responses in the context of that social position. Depending on the treatment condition, these respondents are likely deploying cultural resources in order to

maintain their social value in two different contexts (Skeggs, 2004). Cultural dispositions respond to context specific information; they do not necessarily move in a unified direction across settings, but rather they respond to the particularities of each interaction. Hence it is unsurprising that viewing the working-class vignette elicits a different response to viewing the middle-class vignette – especially if there are certain assumptions made about the other middle-class person.

How, then, can this account of snobbery, and the social value of self, explain how these relatively privileged individuals responded to these vignettes? Consider the response to the working-class vignette, which elicited a lower likelihood of expressing a positive preference for classical music. For white-British respondents, 'classical music remains attuned to class' (Bennett et al., 2009: 83). Graduates are six times more likely to appreciate classical music than non-graduates (Savage, 2006). Moreover, describing classical music as being something for 'intellectuals' is common (Bennett et al., 2009: 83). Expressing a positive preference for classical music may then, in an interaction with someone who is working class, position you above them in the social hierarchy. In such a situation, that person is at risk of being labelled a 'snob' (Savage et al., 2001). Rather than risk this, respondents may well play down their preference for classical and other 'highbrow' music genres (Savage et al., 2010). In short, faced with a possible vertical social comparison, the person at the top (i.e., the university undergraduate) may downplay their preference for classical music as a strategy to collapse the vertical distance between them and their interlocutor. Because being labelled a snob would radically reduce the social value of the self in that specific interaction it is less costly to reduce the vertical distance through minimising cultural distance, thereby increasing the chances of accruing or maintaining the social value of the self in this particular interaction.

Can this same account explain the behaviour in response to the middle-class vignette? Recall that when respondents believed that the middle-class Liz was also not someone who would enjoy The Culture Show, they were more likely to express a positive preference for classical music. Rather than a vertical comparison, this is a horizontal comparison because both the respondent and the middle-class Liz are in similar social positions. In this setting the risk of being labelled a snob is far lower because the respondent and Liz both already occupy similar social positions. In this circumstance, expressing a positive preference for classical music can now be used to accrue additional social value to the self because the interlocutor is assumed to recognise the value of this type of cultural preference. In this horizontal interaction, the respondents increase cultural distance because this is the strategy most likely to accrue or maintain the social value of the self.

Despite the experimental design, with such small numbers in each condition it would be unwise to make causal claims. And yet, in both these settings, the results are consistent with

the view that respondents are attempting to accrue or maintain the social value of the self and that this (unconscious) goal manifests itself in two divergent social practices.

Limitations

There are important limitations to our study. The sample size is relatively small, given the size of the effects we are attempting to measure. However, that we have been able to document consistent associations across a theoretically plausible set of musical genres strengthens our findings but also suggests the need for replication (Ioannidis, 2005). The sample size and the sampling frame also constrained our ability to examine in detail the impact of parental social class on cultural preferences in social interactions. This will be an important area for future research. Further, lab-based experiments are not always good proxies for in situ social interaction and may therefore lack generalizability (Vaisey, 2009). This experiment did not, for example, intend to share with 'Liz' the respondent's tastes and this may have reduced the cost of expressing less favourable preferences. However, if this had occurred, then our estimates are likely conservative. More research will be needed to assess whether these results can be replicated and whether they are observable in other research designs when 'real' interaction occurs. In addition, musical genres are far more complex and refined than those used in this study and therefore our results may not reflect how individuals can use preferences for specific genres to enact social position in everyday interactions (Bennett et al., 2009). Another limitation is that this research has not been able to test whether these processes are conscious or unconscious. While these mechanisms have been described rhetorically as if they were conscious, we do not take a firm position on this issue. Based on previous research it is both plausible and likely that these are unconscious processes and so the descriptions of the mechanisms in this paper should be viewed as attempts to articulate the association between values and interaction and not as making any ontological claim (Lizardo, 2004, Vaisey and Lizardo, 2010). Our sample also lacks generalisability because it only represents a small subset of young and relatively privileged individuals in the UK. Finally, although we intentionally selected some of the most popular TV shows in the UK at the time, it is not clear from the data itself whether foreign students were as aware of these shows as the British students. However, given that there is no item non-response then less familiarity with these shows suggests that answers are likely random with respect to the treatment condition; reinforcing our general finding. Future research will be needed to test whether similar patterns are observed among other groups.

Conclusion

Acknowledging the limitations of the research method and the sample, there are five conclusions that can be drawn from these results. First, cultural preferences may vary across

social interactions. Second, this variation is greatest when the cultural politics of class relevant to a specific interaction are salient to that individual. Third, father's education appears to have a minor effect on whether music preferences vary or not, but this may also be due to the salience of the particular class-cues that are evident in a particular interaction. Fourth, social class cues activate cultural stereotypes which influence music preferences, suggesting that this may be one important mechanism through which these vignettes influence cultural preferences. Finally, our results suggest that individuals may be willing to increase or reduce cultural distance between themselves and another person in order to accrue or maintain social value.

This paper is concerned with how cultural competences are deployed in social interactions (Rivera, 2012). We find that individuals deploy cultural competences in ways that are consistent with the cultural politics of class in the UK. Deploying these competences within this context serves to position oneself in relation to others in the social hierarchy. It remains to be seen whether deploying these cultural preferences in social interactions has any subjective or objective gains.

References

BENNETT, T., SAVAGE, M., SILVA, E., WARDE, A., GAYO-CAL, M. & WRIGHT, D. 2009. *Culture, class, distinction,* London, Routledge.

BOLIVER, V. 2013. How fair is access to more prestigious UK universities? *British Journal of Sociology,* 64**,** 344-364.

BOURDIEU, P. 1984. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste,* London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

BRYSON, B. 1996. "Anything But Heavy Metal": Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes. *American Sociological Review,* 61**,** 884-899.

CHAN, T. W. 2010. *Social status and cultural consumption,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

CHAN, T. W. & GOLDTHORPE, J. H. 2007. Social stratification and cultural consumption: Music in England. *European Sociological Review,* 23**,** 1-19.

EDELMANN, A. & VAISEY, S. 2014. Cultural resources and cultural distinction in networks. *Poetics,* 46**,** 22-37.

EIJCK, K. V. & KNULST, W. 2005. No More Need for Snobbism: Highbrow Cultural Participation in a Taste Democracy. *European Sociological Review,* 21**,** 513-528.

ERICKSON, B. H. 1996. Culture, Class, and Connections. *The American Journal of Sociology,* 102**,** 217-251.

GOLDTHORPE, J. H. 2010. Class analysis and the reorientation of class theory: the case of persisting differentials in educational attainment. *British Journal of Sociology,* 61**,** 311-335.

HOUT, M. (ed.) 2008. *How Class Works in Popular Conception: Most Americans Identify with the Class Their Income, Occupation, and Education Implies for Them,* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

IMAI, K., KEELE, L., TINGLEY, D. & YAMAMOTO, T. 2011. Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Studies. *American Political Science Review,* 105**,** 765-789.

IMAI, K., KEELE, L. & YAMAMOTO, T. 2010. Identification, Inference and Sensitivity Analysis for Causal Mediation Effects. *Statistical Science,* 25**,** 51-71.

IMAI, K. & YAMAMOTO, T. 2013. Identification and Sensitivity Analysis for Multiple Causal Mechanisms: Revisiting Evidence from Framing Experiments. *Political Analysis,* 21**,** 141-171.

IOANNIDIS, J. P. A. 2005. Why most published research findings are false. *Plos Medicine,* 2**,** 696-701.

JOHNSON, C., DOWD, T. J. & RIDGEWAY, C. L. 2006. Legitimacy as a social process. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 32**,** 53-78.

KRUSE, H. 1993. Subcultural Identity in Alternative Music Culture. *Popular music,* 12**,** 33-41.

LAMONT, M. L. 1992. *Money, morals, and manners : the culture of the French and American upper-middle class,* Chicago ; London, University of Chicago Press.

LIZARDO, O. 2004. The cognitive origins of Bourdieu's Habitus. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour,* 34**,** 375-401.

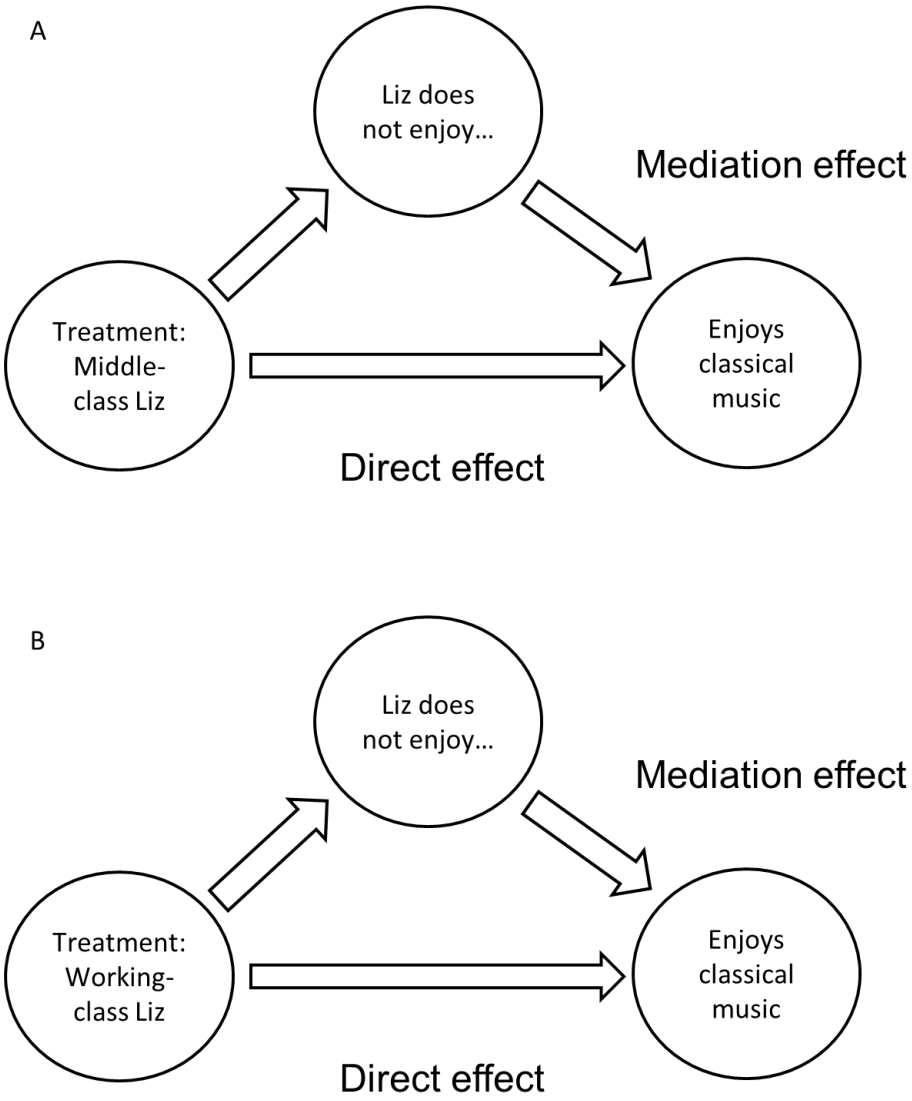
LIZARDO, O. 2006. How cultural tastes shape personal networks. *American Sociological Review,* 71**,** 778-807.

NAGEL, I. 2010. Cultural Participation Between the Ages of 14 and 24: Intergenerational Transmission or Cultural Mobility? *European Sociological Review,* 26**,** 541-556.

PAPE, S., ROSSEL, J. & SOLGA, H. 2012. Do we see class membership and how? *Poetics,* 40**,** 317-336.
PARKIN, M. 2008. Priming. *In:* LAVRAKAS, P. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of survey research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
PETERSON, R. A. 2005. Problems in comparative research: The example of omnivorousness. *Poetics,* 33**,** 257-282.
REEVES, A. 2012. Social Stratification, Gender and Sport Participation. *Sociological Research Online,* 17**,** 12.
REEVES, A. 2014. Cultural engagement across the life-course: examining age-period-cohort effects. *Cultural Trends*.
RIVERA, L. A. 2012. Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms. *American Sociological Review,* 77**,** 999-1022.
SAVAGE, M. 2000. *Class analysis and social transformation,* Buckingham, Open University.
SAVAGE, M. 2006. The Musical Field. *Cultural Trends,* 15**,** 159-74.
SAVAGE, M., BAGNALL, G. & LONGHURST, B. 2001. Ordinary, ambivalent and defensive: Class identities in the Northwest of England. *Sociology-the Journal of the British Sociological Association,* 35**,** 875-892.
SAVAGE, M., DEVINE, F., CUNNINGHAM, N., TAYLOR, M., LI, Y. J., HJELLBREKKE, J., LE ROUX, B., FRIEDMAN, S. & MILES, A. 2013. A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment. *Sociology,* 47**,** 219-250.
SAVAGE, M., SILVA, E. & WARDE, A. 2010. Dis-identification and class identity. *In:* SILVA, E. & WARDE, A. (eds.) *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy.* London: Routledge.
SILVA, E. 2005. 'Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion Household Study: Technical Report. Manchester: CCSE.
SKEGGS, B. 2004. *Class, self, culture,* London, Routledge.
SKEGGS, B. 2005. The re-branding of class: Propertising culture. *In:* DEVINE, F., SCOTT, J., SAVAGE, M. & CROMPTON, R. (eds.) *Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities and Lifestyles.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
SKEGGS, B. & LOVEDAY, V. 2012. Struggles for value: value practices, injustice, judgment, affect and the idea of class. *British Journal of Sociology,* 63**,** 472-490.
SWIDLER, A. 1986. Culture in Action - Symbols and Strategies. *American Sociological Review,* 51**,** 273-286.
TAMPUBOLON, G. 2008. Revisiting omnivores in America circa 1990s: The exclusiveness of omnivores? *Poetics,* 36**,** 243-264.
THORNTON, S. 1995. *Club cultures : music, media and subcultural capital,* Cambridge, Polity.
VAISEY, S. 2009. Motivation and Justification: A Dual-Process Model of Culture in Action. *American Journal of Sociology,* 114**,** 1675-1715.
VAISEY, S. & LIZARDO, O. 2010. Can Cultural Worldviews Influence Network Composition? *Social Forces,* 88**,** 1595-1618.

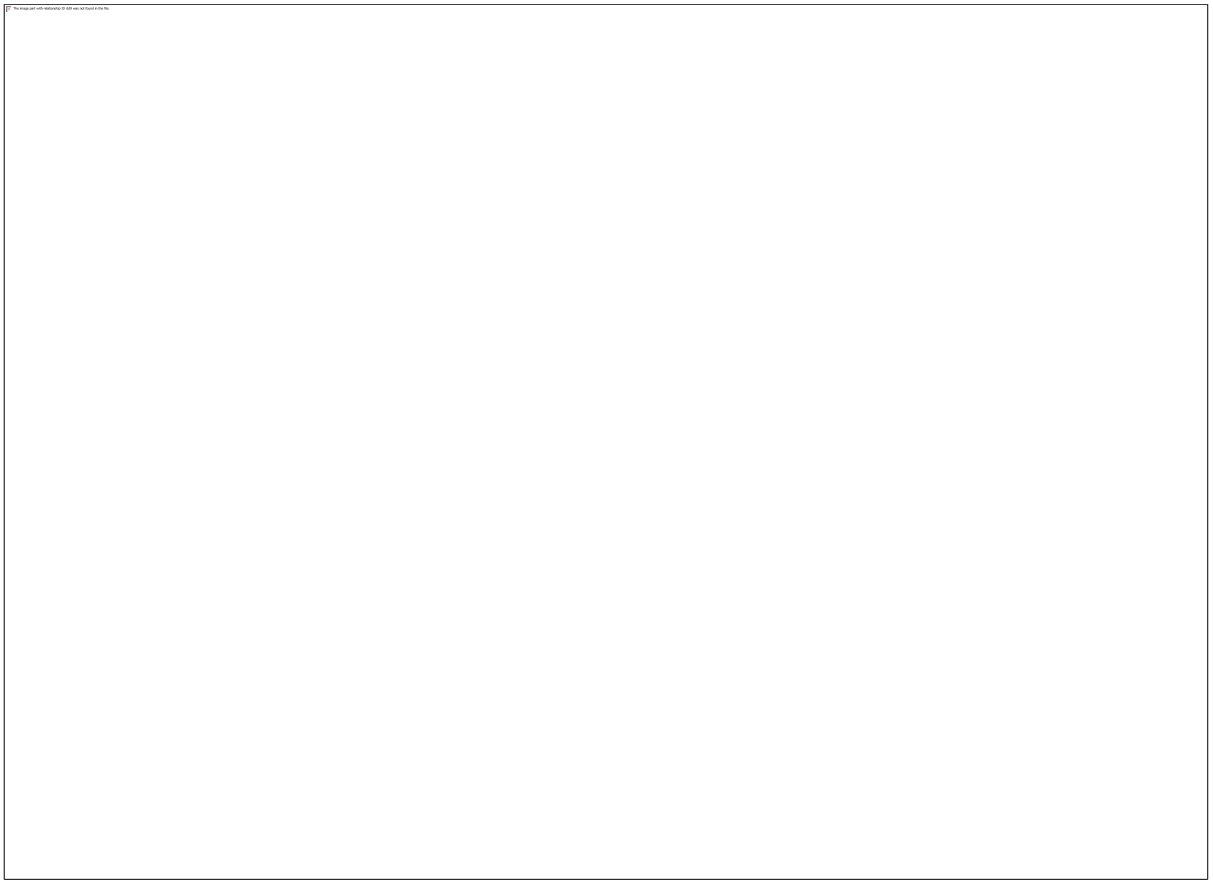
Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Diagrams representing causal mediation analysis



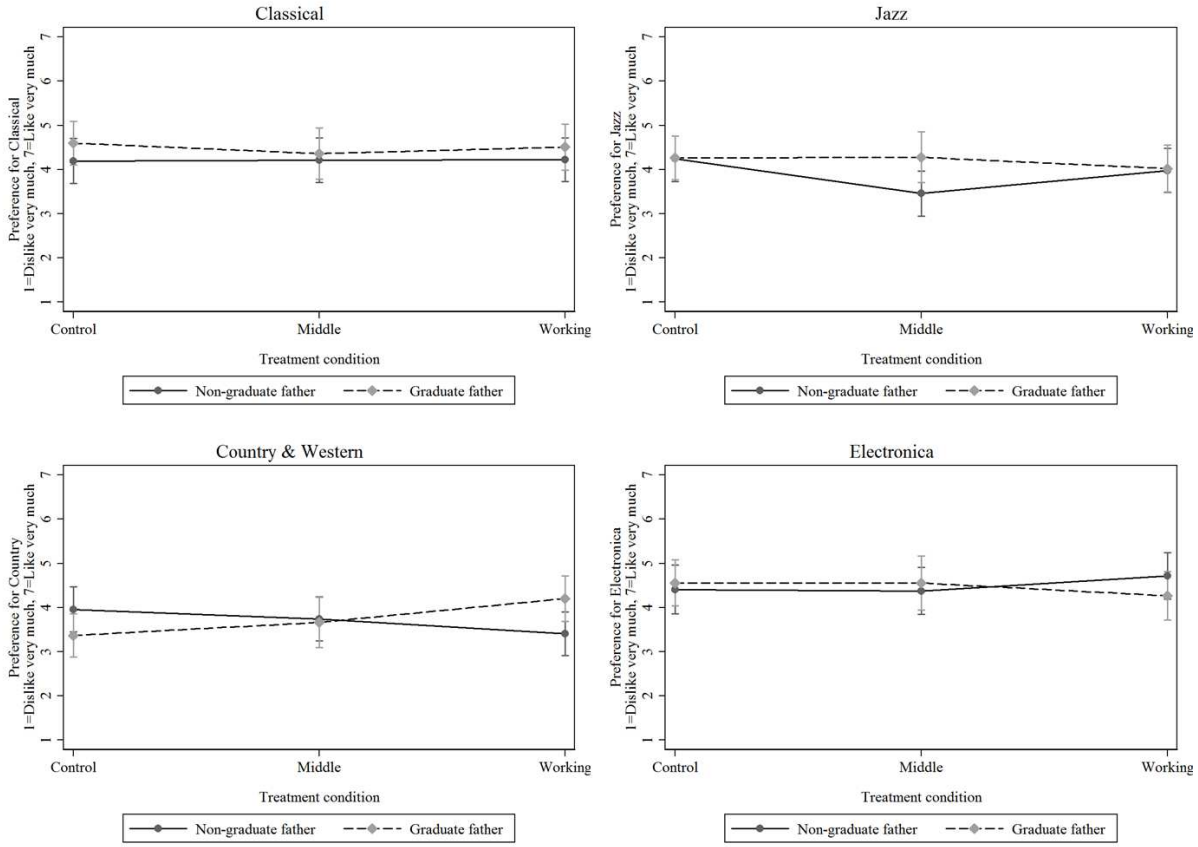
Notes: Graphical representations of the decomposition of the treatment effect on the outcome into a direct effect and indirect effect through a mediator; (a) Middle-class 'Liz' treatment condition and (b) Working-class 'Liz' treatment condition. Graphical structure inspired by Imai and colleagues (2011).

Figure 2: Influence of country of origin and the vignette on music preferences



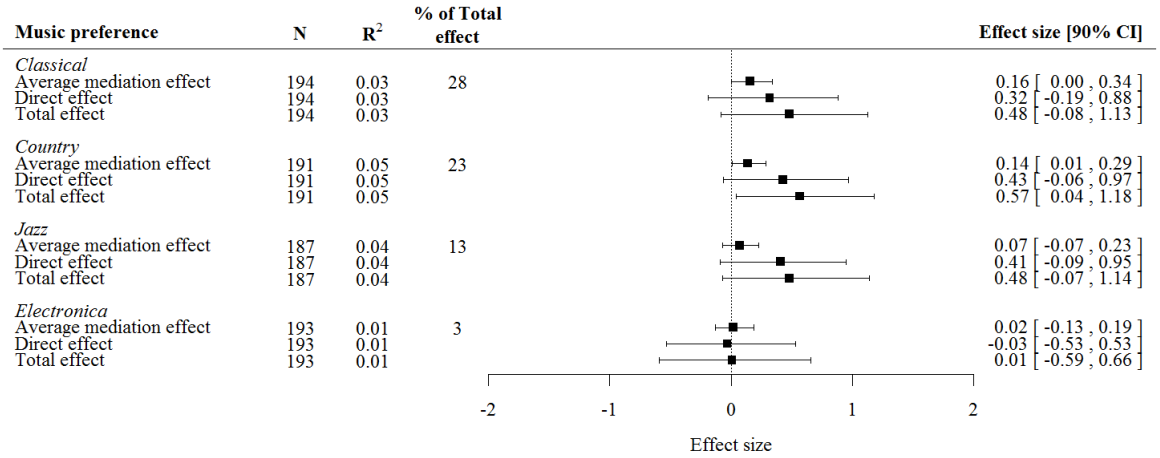
Notes: Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 3: Influence of father's education and the vignette on music preferences



Notes: Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 4: Causal mediation analysis of stereotypes on music preferences



Notes: All models were estimated using the user-written 'mediation' package in STATA v.13. Following Imai et al., 2010 we select 90% confidence intervals.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Categorical variables	**Frequency**	**%**
Gender		
Male	109	36
Female	191	64
Marital status		
Single	279	93
Married	16	5
Other	5	2
Country of origin		
Born in UK	76	25
Born outside UK	224	75
Father's education		
Degree	133	44
Less than degree	145	48
Don't know	22	7
Religious		
No	140	47
Yes	160	53
Parent		
No children	279	96

Parent	13	4
Liz's opinion on The Culture Show[1]		
Least favourite	58	30%
Not least favourite	138	70%

	Mean	**Range**
Continuous variables	**(SD)**	**(Min, Max)**
Age	22.6 (6.79)	17, 69
Music		
Rock, including Indie	4.60 (2.11)	1, 7
Modern Jazz	4.05 (1.76)	1, 7
World Music (Reggae and Bhangra)	4.15 (1.70)	1, 7
Classical music (Opera)	4.41 (1.78)	1, 7
Country and Western	3.72 (1.75)	1, 7
Electronic Dance Music (Techno and House)	4.54 (1.84)	1, 7
Heavy Metal	2.67 (1.92)	1, 7
Urban (Hip Hop and R&B)	5.04 (1.91)	1, 7

Notes:

1. Only those in one of the treatment categories would be able to respond to this question hence n = 196.

Web Appendix

Web Appendix 1: Influence of country of origin and the vignette on music preferences for Metal, World, Rock and Urban

Web Appendix 2: Influence of father's education and the vignette on music preferences for Metal, World, Rock and Urban

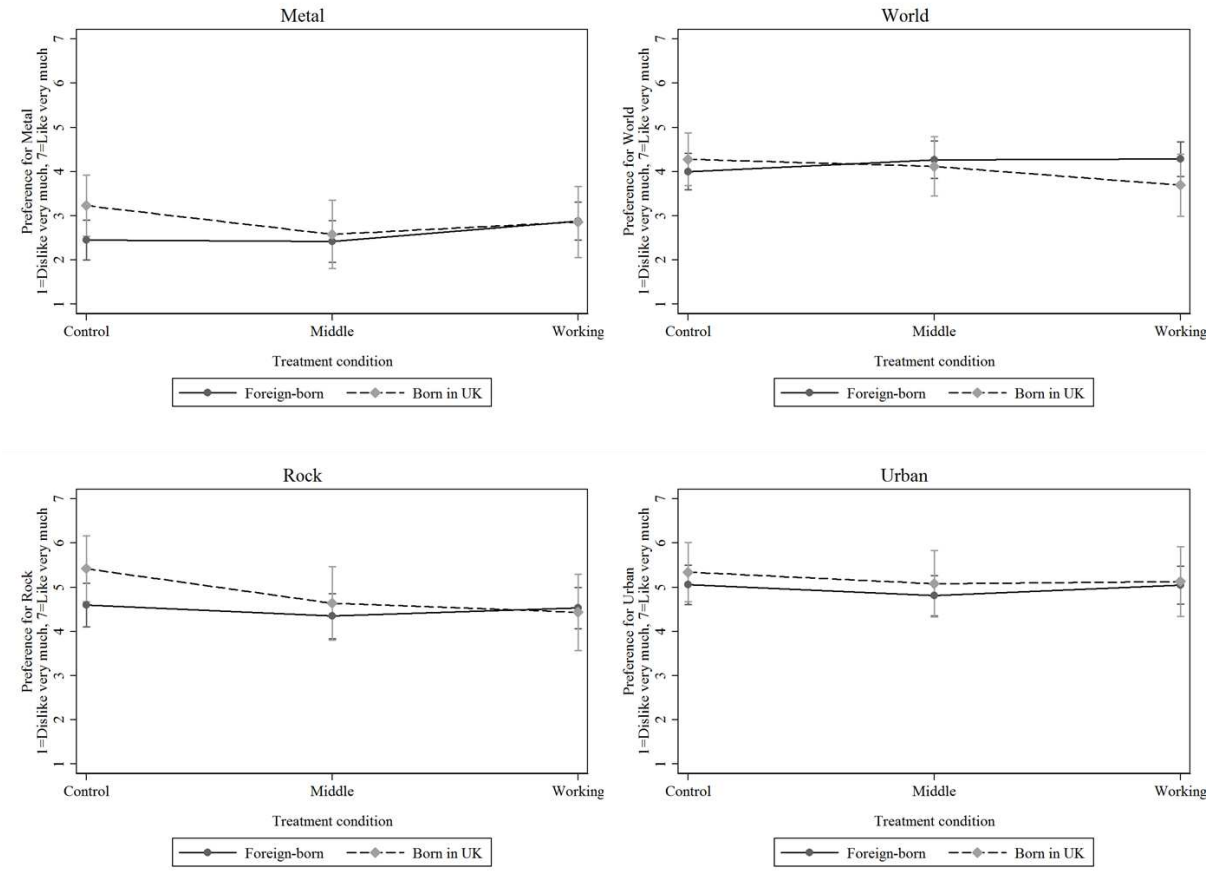
Web Appendix 3: Regression model of the influence of country of origin and the vignette on music preferences

Web Appendix 4: Regression model of the influence of father's education and the vignette on music preferences

Web Appendix 5: Difference-in-means test of stereotype activation

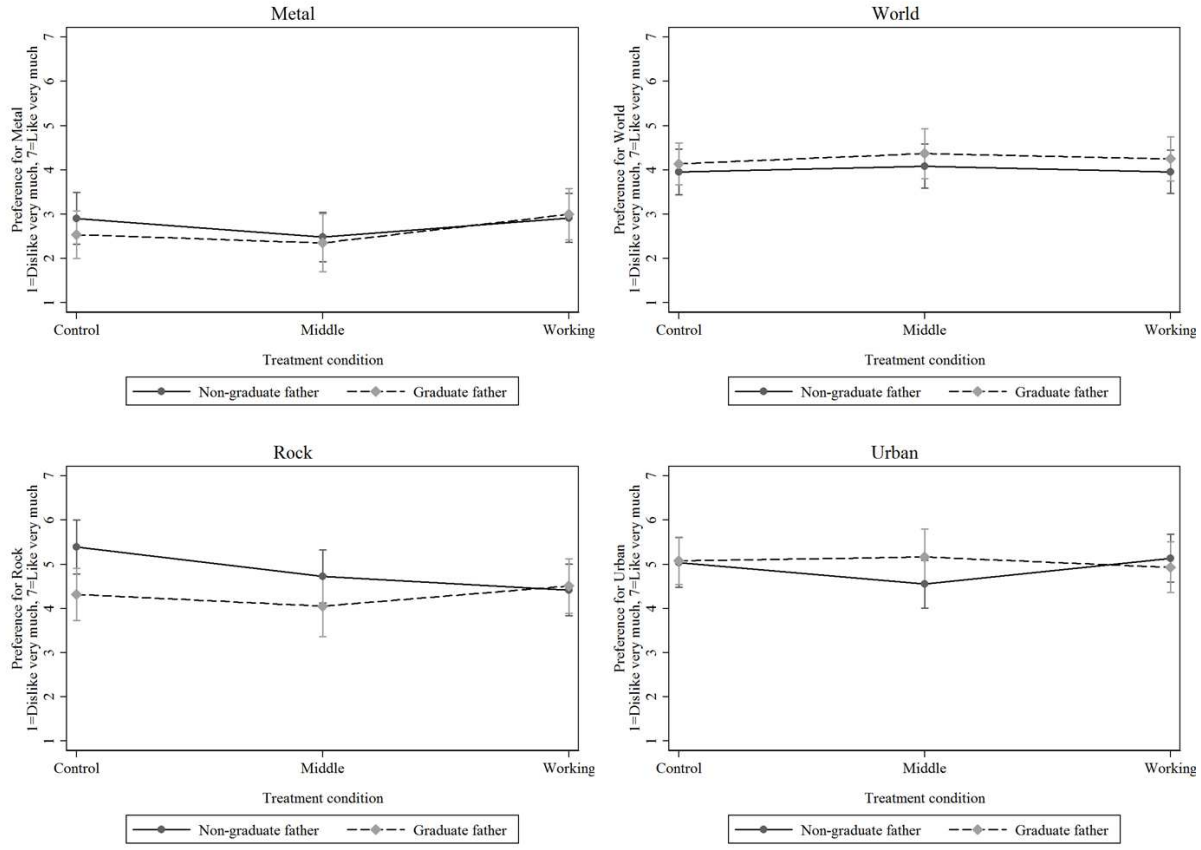
Web Appendix 6: Causal mediation analysis of stereotypes (Downton Abbey) on music preferences

Web Appendix 1: Influence of country of origin and the vignette on music preferences for Metal, World, Rock and Urban



Notes: Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Web Appendix 2: Influence of father's education and the vignette on music preferences for Metal, World, Rock and Urban



Notes: Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Web Appendix 3: Regression model of the influence of country of origin and the vignette on music preferences

	Classical	Jazz	Country & Western	Electronica
Covariates	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Middle-class Liz condition	-0.27	-0.40	-0.11	-0.16
	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.29)	(0.32)
Working-class Liz condition	0.24	-0.053	0.44	-0.022
	(0.28)	(0.29)	(0.28)	(0.30)
Whether born in the UK = 1	-0.57	-0.34	-0.0059	0.12
	(0.36)	(0.37)	(0.36)	(0.40)
Middle-class Liz condition and born in the UK	0.30	0.20	0.19	0.35
	(0.54)	(0.56)	(0.55)	(0.59)
Working-class Liz condition and born in the UK	-1.73**	-0.99	-1.77**	0.059
	(0.54)	(0.57)	(0.55)	(0.60)
Control condition	4.67**	4.34**	3.72**	4.53**
	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.22)
Observations	298	288	292	294
R^2	0.11	0.043	0.064	0.0050

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Web Appendix 4: Regression model of the influence of father's education and the vignette on music preferences

Covariates	Classical (1)	Jazz (2)	Country & Western (3)	Electronica (4)
Middle-class Liz condition	0.075	-0.79*	-0.21	-0.034
	(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.36)	(0.39)
Working-class Liz condition	0.024	-0.27	-0.55	0.31
	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.39)
Whether father is a graduate = 1	0.41	0.021	-0.59	0.15
	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.39)
Middle-class Liz condition and father is agraduate	-0.32	0.80	0.51	0.030
	(0.53)	(0.53)	(0.53)	(0.56)
Working-class Liz condition and father ia graduate	-0.12	0.024	1.38**	-0.60
	(0.51)	(0.52)	(0.51)	(0.55)
Control condition	4.20**	4.24**	3.96**	4.41**
	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.28)
Observations	276	266	270	272
R^2	0.0079	0.027	0.029	0.0064

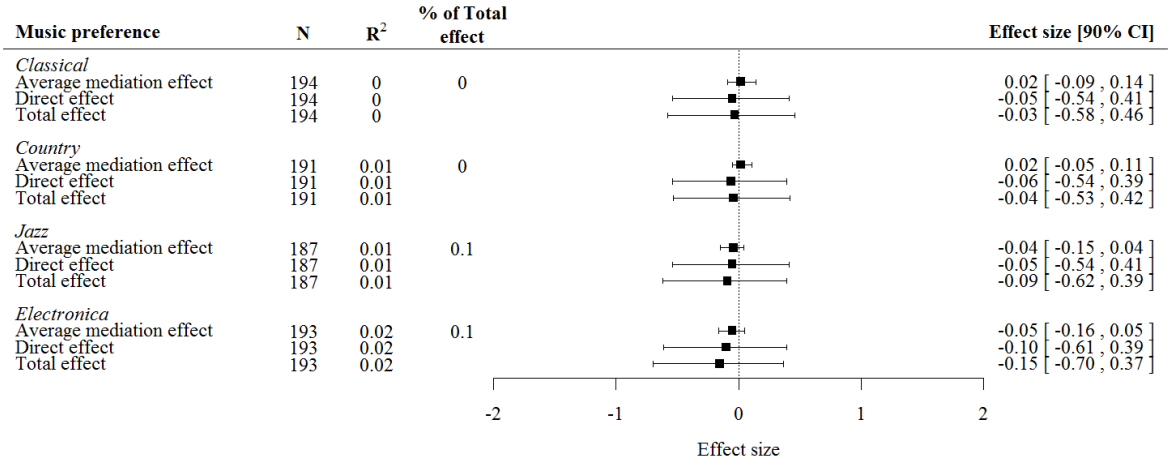
Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Web Appendix 5: Difference-in-means test of stereotype activation

Liz enjoys the least…	Middle-class vignette Mean (Std. Error)	Working-class vignette Mean (Std. Error)	Difference Middle - Working (Std. Error)	p-value
The Culture Show	16.1% (3.83)	41.7% (4.88)	-25.6% (6.30)	<0.001
Britain's Got Talent	48.4% (5.21)	10.7% (3.23)	37.7% (5.90)	<0.001
Great British Bake-off	16.1% (3.83)	37.9% (4.80)	-21.7% (6.23)	<0.001
Coronation Street	33.3% (4.91)	20.4% (3.99)	12.9% (6.28)	0.04
Downton Abbey	16.1% (3.83)	24.3% (4.25)	-8.14% (5.77)	0.16
Breaking Bad	34.4% (4.95)	26.2% (3.28)	8.2% (6.57)	0.21

Notes: p-value is calculated using two-tailed t-test assuming equal variances.

Web Appendix 6: Causal mediation analysis of stereotypes (Downton Abbey) on music preferences



Notes: All models were estimated using the user-written 'mediation' package in STATA v.13. Following Imai et al., 2010 we select 90% confidence intervals.