

Lorenzo D'Hooge



MIND
OVER
MATTER



**Causes and Consequences
of Class Discordance**

MIND OVER MATTER

C a u s e s a n d C o n s e q u e n c e s
o f C l a s s D i s c o r d a n c e

P h D T h e s i s

LORENZO D'HOOGHE

COLOFON

Layout and cover design: Design Your Thesis, www.designyourthesis.com

Printing: Ridderprint B.V., www.ridderprint.nl

ISBN: 978-94-6375-000-4

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MIND OVER MATTER

C a u s e s a n d C o n s e q u e n c e s
o f C l a s s D i s c o r d a n c e

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan Tilburg University
op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. E.H.L. Aarts, in
het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van een door het
college voor promoties aangewezen commissie in de aula van
de Universiteit op vrijdag 1 februari 2019 om 10.00 uur

door

Lorenzo D'Hooge

geboren op 30 september 1990

te Brugge.

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"Our life is what our thoughts make it."

Marcus Aurelius in Ta eis heauton (Meditations), Book IV

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CHAPTER 1

**Class and class identity: relevance of class discordance?
An introduction**

1.1 MATERIAL SOCIAL CLASS AND CLASS IDENTITY

Class is dead! Or is it? Social classes are often referred to in the media, political rhetoric and even in daily conversation, giving rise to the idea of social class being interwoven and omnipresent in the social lives of individuals. Class as one of the focal points of attention is also reflected in academic scholarship, where scholars have studied social classes from the earliest days of social science as an academic discipline. Ever since Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, in their three volumes of *Das Kapital* (1867, 1885 & 1894) laid out their ideas on how since the Industrial Revolution in every society the relationship between individuals and the means of economic production has resulted in sharply defined social classes, social scientists have been puzzled by the consequences being a member of a particular social class brings about. These material social classes are grounded in the relationship between the individual and the market and in consequence bring together people with shared market positions and in doing so can result in similar life chances and behaviours (Breen 2005; Giddens, Ociepka & Zujewicz 1973; Giddens & Held 1982; Holton & Turner 2010; Weber 2009). Since the emergence of sociology until contemporary scholarship, this concept of social classes defined by material conditions and their implications or consequences in everyday behaviour has received ample attention. The same can however not be said of the potential impact of people not perceiving their class position to be as it materially is, since not a lot of scholars have studied why the two sometimes do not coincide and what its implications are for understanding different attitudes and behaviours. In this dissertation I focus exactly on this phenomenon of class discordance, which entails a situation in which an individual's material class position does not correspond with how they subjectively perceive it to be. Consequently, studying class discordance goes beyond a focus on class identity since I explicitly aim to assess what the importance of material class is when it does or does not coincide with one's class perception, i.e. in the case of class concordance/discordance. As I will elaborate in this introduction, scholars often assume class identity to follow from class positions while this does not necessarily need to be the case. In this chapter I introduce reasons explaining how in the case of class discordance, subjective class perceptions can contain meaning *autonomous* from material class. In the empirical part of my dissertation I start by zooming in on the origins of discordance, ranging from the childhood of people, and further study its implications, of which the influence extends until one's last breath.

1.1.1 Social class as a scholarly subject

The academic attention towards material social class starts out from the work of Marx and Engels, where they explain in *Das Kapital* (1867, 1885 & 1894) how a system of

base and superstructure dominates and structures every society. This base consists of the economic production in that society, including both those owning the means of production (land, machines, capital) as well as those using them, while only owning their own labor. Marx and Engels argue that these relations of production divide people into two very distinct groups, namely those who have the means of production which they refer to as capitalists, next to those who do not own the means of production and can only sell their labor in order to survive, labelled as the proletariat. Marx and Engels argue that this economic base in every society dominates the rest of that society, or the superstructure. The latter refers to the non-economic domains of society such as the religious, political, educational, cultural system, and so on. The developments in these domains are determined by the developments in the economic base of society.

To summarize in a nutshell, Marx and Engels explained in a very detailed way how according to them occupational relations create sharp divisions between people, generating material social classes while this class membership in turn defines how people act and differ from each other in other domains of social life. One of the most striking examples is their assumption on how the different self-interest between material social classes leads to profound political differences and ultimately to a class struggle.

Evidently, the ideas of Marx and Engels have inspired a lot of scholars while not being free of criticism. A second founding father of sociology and social science in general, Max Weber, approached the relationship between the means of production and the rest of society differently than Marx and Engels. In his two most prominent works (and in other writings as well), being *Economy and Society* (1922/1968) and *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904/2013), Weber explains how indeed the relationships of production, or the occupational system in a society, influences other institutions and processes in that society. But contrary to Marx and Engels, he nuances their arguments and argues that this relationship is one with a reciprocal nature. Where Marx and Engels, for example, expect political action to be solely determined by economic antagonisms, Weber argues that next to the purely economic classes, other forms of stratification exert an influence. He describes the existence of status groups and political parties, next to material social classes, which are not structured according to economic means but respectively according to prestige and power. While the three are related, they can have different interests and can influence each other. This in contrast with ideas of Marx and Engels where the spheres of prestige and politics are fully dependent on economic differences.

Whereas Marx and Engels, and Weber all start out from the idea of material social classes existing in some form of conflict with each other, the third founding father

of sociology, Emile Durkheim, employs a different approach in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893/2014). He explains how again the relationship of people towards the means of production has resulted in occupational groups existing as material social classes. But he fundamentally differs from Marx and Weber on the point of these material social classes necessarily existing in conflict, and rather sees societies as constantly moving towards an equilibrium (Pope 1975). However, just as Marx, Engels, and Weber, Durkheim also recognizes the existence of a process of influence from the realm of production towards other aspects of society. Of these three founding fathers of sociology Emile Durkheim, however, was less occupied with class compared to Marx, Engels, and Weber and consequently had a less profound influence on later academic developments regarding class. To summarize, despite the differences between the ideas of these founding fathers, they all share one fundamental conviction, namely that material social classes are an important factor in how people behave.

While a detailed discussion of the writings of Marx and Engels, Weber and Durkheim is beyond the scope of this dissertation, laying out their basic ideas concerning material social classes is necessary since further academic research has been inspired by their work. Throughout the years scholars have put a lot of effort in translating the ideas of these classical writers into all sorts of class schemes, where people are categorized in different material social classes, in order to study social stratification and/or inequality. In a first step, this has resulted in the development of the more traditional class schemes such as the Marxist-inspired class schemes developed by Erik Olin Wright (1989) and colleagues (1982) where more attention is paid to ownership and exploitation or the Weberian-inspired Erikson–Goldthorpe–Portocarero class scheme (EGP-scheme) where there is an emphasis on the degree of authority and autonomy in occupations (Ganzeboom & Treiman 1996). However, this focus solely on material social class has received ample criticism, starting with Clark & Lipset's study *Are Social Classes Dying* (1991) in which they argued that the traditional focus on explaining differences between people from the perspective of a disparate position in the class stratification was not sufficient anymore to accurately explain these disparities because of new emerging forms of stratification. In essence, their point is that the traditional ways of conceptualizing class by classifying individuals based on their socio-economic background such as people's occupation, work autonomy or income is not accurate or relevant enough to capture differences between groups. As a response, scholars have repeatedly tried to re-conceptualize social class by using more refined measurements adapted to contemporary class stratification. Consequently, several discussions on the viability of traditional conceptualizations of class have led to propositions of alterations and resulted in detailed, modern class schemes (see Bol & Weeden 2014; Güveli, Luijkx & Ganzeboom 2012; Wacquant 1991; Wright 2005; Wodtke 2016). In these more recent

class schemes the traditional measurements are nuanced and tweaked in order to adapt to the changes in society over the last decades. Prominent examples are the work of Wodtke (2016), where attention is paid to the role of ownership and supervision in defining class, or the work on micro-classes by Weeden & Grusky (2005). The latter approach completely turns away from the big material social classes in which numerous occupations are clustered, but instead focuses on the fact that what makes individuals in a certain occupation different from others is related to that occupation itself. In their detailed method, they try to explain social stratification by studying the particular differences between occupations instead of clusters of occupations.

1.1.2 The understudied role of class identity

Although there are (considerable) differences between all these approaches towards material social class concerning the emphasis they place on issues like ownership, exploitation, work autonomy and the type of labour, they all share two vital points. On the one hand, they start out from the notion that material social classes *exist* in a certain material way and on the other hand they all claim that material social classes are *important* in regards to behavioural differences. However, while these, according to scholars on class, real and important material social classes are generated and reproduced by the societal structures regarding the market, it is not their existence in itself that shapes behaviour. Rather, the fundamental notion in this process is the awareness of individuals concerning their place in the social stratification. While material conditions shape the class structure, it is the membership that results in a class identity which plays a pivotal role in why and how class membership structures behaviour (Evans & Tilley 2017; Jackman & Jackman 1985; Marcuse 1968; Robinson & Stubager 2017). Starting out again from Marx and Engels, and Weber, there is a quite extensive scholarly tradition focusing on class consciousness, awareness or identity in order to explain how individuals indeed feel part of the material social class position they belong to (Aronowitz 1992; Eyerman 1981; Giddens et al. 1982; Lukacs & Lukacs 1971; Jackman 1979).

In this scholarly tradition the common ground consequently is that class consciousness and resulting identity is expected to follow from one's material class position, while the possibility of subjective identity having *meaning* in itself, apart from material class, is not explored. This approach towards class identity not having any meaning on its own is a logical consequence of the ideas of Marx and Weber. Karl Marx' view on class consciousness and identity can be illustrated by the following two excerpts, respectively from the preface of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859/ 1970) and the *Eighteenth of Brumaire* (1852 in Marx & Leon (1898):

"The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." (Preface)

"A whole superstructure is reared of various and peculiarly shaped feelings, illusions, habits of thought and conceptions of life. The whole class produces and shapes these out of its material foundation and out of the corresponding social conditions." (Preface)

The idea put forward is very clear, namely this of class consciousness and the resulting identity only existing as a consequence of being in a particular material class position. According to Marx there is no reason to pay attention to class identity possibly bearing importance outside of its connection with a material class position. Important to note here is that Marx and Engels did not anticipate all people to correctly analyze their own situation in such way that they 'correctly' identify with their material class. While Marx himself never used the term 'false consciousness' in his writings, he implicitly describes the concept to refer to those people who are not aware of their material class position and identify differently. This illustrates that Marx assumed class discordance to exist, but did not see it as being worthy of study but rather as a nuisance. The general Marxist idea on people perceiving their class situation as different from what it is can be illustrated and summarized by the following quote from Herbert Marcuse: *"men must come to see it and to find their way from false to true consciousness, from their immediate interests to their real interest."* (Marcuse 1968, p.44).

Whereas Max Weber had a more nuanced idea on material social classes than Karl Marx, his view on the meaning of class consciousness is fairly similar since according to him it only exists when people correctly assess *'the connections between the causes and the consequences of the class situation'* (Levine 2006, p. 46). Again, class identity is merely a byproduct of being in a certain class position, without having any agency or importance in itself. Especially for Weber this is very remarkable, since it contradicts his own idea of *Verstehen*, where he defends the necessity of taking people's perceptions into account in order to understand why they act in a certain way. Despite being a cultural sociologist, he does not extend this key concept of his work to class and class consciousness (Parkin 2002, p. 26).

Even Emile Durkheim, who was much less preoccupied with material social class than Marx or Weber, leaves little room for individual perceptions in his writings on collective consciousness. Just as Marx and Weber, he is not keen on paying attention to individuals having diverging thoughts on their class membership and even deems it problematic: *"I may not be conscious of the pressure that they are exerting upon me, but that pressure*

makes its presence felt immediately I attempt to struggle against them. If an individual tries to pit himself against one of these collective manifestations, the sentiments that he is rejecting will be turned against him." (Durkheim 1895/1982, p. 53). Again, Durkheim's ideas on society moving towards an equilibrium leaves no room for dissidence, not even in the minds of people.

Inspired mainly by Marx and Weber, later scholars frequently argued that shared occupational circumstances act as the basis of a shared subjective class identification, which in turn results in shared behaviour (Centers 1949; Jackman & Jackman 1973; Evans & Kelley 2004, Kelley & Evans 1995; Wolff et al. 2010). Since a class identity has often been described as an economic identity (Dahrendorf 1959; Savage 2001), assuming similar occupational circumstances to result in a shared class identity seems plausible at first. However, an increasing number of voices in the academic world have signaled a declining importance of class as the primary form of social stratification (Clark et al. 1991; Pakulski & Waters 1996; Scott 2014). Rather in recent times other cleavages such as but not limited to ethnicity, gender and religion have gained importance causing, according to these authors, class to lose relevance as an explanatory factor in behavioural differences.

While this debate on whether social class has indeed lost all relevance since the emerging salience of other identities is an interesting one, it bypasses a vital question regarding the possibility of class identity having a meaning on its own. As argued by Bourdieu in *La Distinction* (1984), ontological classifications do not automatically follow from analytical classifications of class and claiming so overlooks any autonomous importance of the former. Or in other words, analytical conceptions of material class do not necessarily correspond with (subjective) classifications that bear meaning for people. What these scholars of class consistently overlook is the possibility that culture, and in turn identity, has an *autonomous meaning* apart from the structures to which they are expected to be related (Alexander & Smith 2001, also see Kane 1991)¹. Such approach on culture is fundamentally different from those of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Bourdieu², and those inspired by their ideas since it negates the idea that culture is fully derived from structure (Alexander & Seidman 1990; Alexander 1995; Eyerman 2004). Evidently, contemporary scholars do pay some attention to the cultural aspects of class, i.e. the idea

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1. Although Parsons' action theory could also be seen as an important step towards cultural autonomy, he too easily connects culture with values (see Alexander et al. 1990; Eyerman 2004).
 2. While I do not explicitly focus on the class theory of Bourdieu in this dissertation, it deserves to be mentioned that he sees class as somewhat more complex compared to Marx, Weber or Durkheim since he distinguishes classes according to three axes taking volume, composition and trajectory of capital into account (see for example Weinger in Wright (2005)). Despite this additional nuance and the fact that he argues class identity to be of importance, he doesn't ascribe any autonomy to class identity but rather sees it as derived from one's structural position (see Bottero 2004; Savage 2000).

that class can exert an influence without individuals being aware of it (cfr. The concept of the habitus by Bourdieu (1984) or nondeclarative modes by Lizardo (2017)). But few studies focused on the possibility of class identity being culturally autonomous (with the exception of Sosnaud, Brady & Frenk (2013), as I elaborate further). Consequently, in this dissertation I argue that both the traditional and newer approaches to class too easily connect the analytical and ontological classifications of class, without accounting for the meaning individuals' class perception can have. This is not unproblematic since there is no formal, objective membership of social class and consequently no certainty that these conceptualizations of material social classes also exist and mean something outside of the academic world. Studies on social class and conceptualizations thereof all implicitly place a strong emphasis on the agency of the individual in this phenomenon of class position influencing their behaviour, since they start out from the idea that it is exactly class identity motivating behaviour. This suggests that when individuals do not subjectively perceive their class position as it materially is, class discordance could be of importance. Not because, as commonly argued, subjectively class identity is necessarily linked to material class itself but because subjective classes can have an autonomous meaning. In order to adequately study this, I focus on class discordance rather than solely on subjective class since only by studying the assumed relationship between both the structural and cultural aspect of class can I clarify whether the cultural, subjective, aspect of class has meaning when it does not correspond with the structural, material, aspect of class. Alexander et al. (1990) argue the following in this respect:

"We cannot understand culture without reference to subjective meaning, and we cannot understand it without reference to social structural constraints. We cannot interpret social behavior without acknowledging that it follows codes that it does not invent; at the same time, human invention creates a changing environment for every cultural code." (Alexander et al. 1990, p. 26)

Consequently, for my research questions this implies that subjective classes borrow from certain cultures codes and ideas (perceived to be) associated with specific material classes. However, contrary to most class studies, I argue that subjective classes do not need to be derived only from material classes and can have an autonomous meaning. In my dissertation I do not attach any normative implications to the concept of class discordance but rather aim to take the step from knowing that it exists to empirically verifying what it means.

1.2 SUBJECTIVE CLASS IDENTITY

Benjamin Sosnaud, David Brady & Steven M. Frenk explored the option of an alternative explanation for the so-called declining importance of class in their article *Class in Name Only: Subjective Class Identity, Objective Class Position, and Vote Choice in American Presidential Elections (2013)*. In this study they shifted the focus of the debate on the relevance of class towards the issue of correspondence between material social class and class identity by trying to explain what happens to voting behaviour when people do not identify as part of the material class they materially belong to. While their work was far from the first empirical study on class and class identity, it is a pivotal in that sense that it steps away from the assumption that class and class identity are inherently related, and introduces the possibility of cultural autonomy of subjective class. This approach bypasses normative questions on whether a diverging material class position and subjective class identity has to do with misconceptions of individuals or measurement errors by scholars, but focuses on the vital question of meaning instead. While their study did not find an impact of class discordance on the presidential voting choices people make, it did generate interesting findings on the high prevalence, motivating me in this dissertation to explore this phenomenon of non-coinciding class position and class perceptions further. Theoretically, material social classes in the literature are expected to exist as *imagined communities* (Anderson 1991) entailing that those within such a community do not know all the others, nor will they ever do so, but still they share a common idea of what being part of that social class entails (Domhoff 2002). These communities are vital in forming and maintaining a shared class identity (MacKenzie et al. 2006, Strangleman 2001) and surpass the idea of merely being a misconception of one's class position. Of vital importance here however is *awareness* of that social position, which has been shown to often differ from one's material position (Sosnaud et al. 2013).

The social identity theory explains how a subjective concept as class awareness can have real consequences, autonomous from the impact of material class. The way people perceive their place in the social stratification and form a class identity is important since it features as a social identity which Tajfel (1974) describes as "*that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership*" (Tajfel 1974, p. 69). Since people want to achieve and maintain a positive social identity, they are motivated to assess the class they identify with as positive while adhering to less favorable feelings towards classes they do not consider themselves as being part of (Abrams & Hogg 2006; Turner 1975). This awareness and resulting positive assessment of a class position is influential because those who are strongly attached to a certain

group are more likely to adhere to the norms and values of that group (Christensen et al. 2004; Huddy & Khatib 2007). These social-psychological theories are echoed in the Thomas-theorem: “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas & Thomas 1928, p. 572, in Merton 1995, p. 380). When individuals perceive themselves as part of a social class, they will act as members of that social class. Theoretically, this similar behaviour can exist through two distinct pathways. On the one hand, following a Weberian vision on culture (see Weber 2013), those perceiving themselves to be part of a specific class could make conscious decisions promoting their self-interest, be it inspired by material conditions or values. On the other hand, this group identity could also exist as a *social fact* (Durkheim 1982) in which subjective class exerts an unconscious influence. Evidently, as with material class (see Bourdieu 1984; Lizardo 2017), it is possible that subjective class exerts its influence through both a conscious and unconscious pathway.

1.2.1 State of contemporary research leading to the research question

Theoretically, in order for material social class position to impact attitudes and behaviour and generate inequalities, people within a certain class position need to believe and feel that they are in such a position (Bendix & Lipset 1966; Lockwood 1969; see also Giddens et al. (1982) who speak about ‘conflict consciousness’). The big problem however with research on material social class and its consequences is that they do often not question whether their ontological classifications actually correspond with this agency they claim to be important. While studies have indicated a tendency for people to perceive themselves as part of the middle class (e.g. Andersen & Curtis 2012; Curtis 2014; Evans et al. 2004; Vanneman 1980), empirical research by Sosnaud et al. (2013) shows that paying attention to, what they term, class discordance is vital and should be subjected to further academic scrutiny. Their findings illustrate that in the United States, from 1972 onwards, a majority of the population tends to identify as part of a different social class than they are categorized in by social scientists. This goes beyond a tendency to identify as part of the middle class and demonstrates class discordance to be a phenomenon not limited to one particular material social class but rather as affecting the entire class structure.

Across all layers of society, individuals are inclined to compare themselves with others. Through social comparison, people subjectively form ideas about social classes and assess where they do and do not belong to (Robinson et al. 2017). They do so by comparing themselves within their own personal, small networks as by meetings with

co-workers, unions, employer organizations and others with similar and disparate positions. Because of this they form some idea or awareness of their place in the stratification order (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008; Nakhaie 1992).

The expectation of shared preferences as a consequence of a shared class position in the literature exists because of two theoretical reasons. First, individuals in different material classes have different interests instigating shared attitudes and behaviour within material classes, distinct from the attitudes and behaviour in other material classes (Houtman et al. 2009; Middendorp 1991). While this might be motivated by the resources (financial and knowledge-related) that are related to material social classes, a more pivotal second explanation is at hand. Individuals within a particular class are anticipated to display attitudes and behaviour (perceived to be) fitting to that social class in order to enhance their acceptance in the group (Bourdieu 1989; Christensen et al. 2004; Daniels & Leaper 2006; Parkin 1981; Stringhini et al. 2011; Willis 1977). This implies that material social classes can be related to behavioural choices due to the associated resources people within a certain class have, but they are also expected to exist as imagined communities (Anderson 1991; Domhoff 2002; MacKenzie et al. 2006, Strangleman 2001). Since, as argued earlier in this introduction, awareness is a prerequisite to act as a member of a material class, in the case of class discordance, people are anticipated to behave differently as their peers with the same material class background. To distinguish between the two potential manners in which class theoretically can be of importance, it is vital to control the analyses in the empirical chapters, as far as the data allows to do so, for the resources people have (income and educational attainment). Doing so will better allow to appraise these imagined communities in relation to class discordance.

Inspired by the findings of Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) and the literature on imagined communities, supported by the social identity and social categorization theory, I aim in this dissertation at explaining why class discordance occurs and whether it can help understand attitudinal and behavioural differences. Consequently, my research question is the following: *Which are the socio-economic and socio-cultural factors contributing to the occurrence of class discordance and which are the attitudinal, behavioural and health-related consequences of class discordance across time and space?*

By studying this research question I aim to clarify whether the whole concept of social class is losing its relevance, as argued by some (see Clark et al. 1991; Pakulski et al. 1996) or whether studying class discordance can generate new insights. While traditional scholarship aims at explaining why people do identify as part of their class position, or in other words why they are *concordant*, in this dissertation I start out from the opposite

idea and focus on the causes, prevalence and repercussions of the phenomenon in which people *do not feel part of their material class*, or in other words when they experience *class discordance*. While the question on why people do or do not identify with their material social class and what this means for research and society as a whole is a complex puzzle, I aim at untangling part of it.

The question of what causes class discordance is convoluted. In the first part of my dissertation I explore the extent in which class discordance is influenced by material characteristics and cultural heterogeneity. I do so because class identity can but does not need to follow from one's structural position and empirically explore cultural reasons as well (see Alexander et al. 2001). In doing this I study class discordance in both Europe and the United States. These regions are selected because they are often seen as distinct in class studies, where material class is described as being more important in (Western) Europe than in the United States (Marsh 1964; Nieuwbeerta 1996; Myles 1979; Vanneman & Cannon 1987; Kelley et al. 1995; Devine 1997). By using this comparative approach, incorporating countries with a perceived differing importance of class, I first aim to establish a clearer view on the mechanisms and prevalence of class discordance across both time and space.

In a second step, to tap into the potential importance of class discordance I focus on several implications it has in regards to understanding differences in social behaviour. In doing so I selected some of the most prominent study subjects in class research, more specifically political preferences (Lipset 1963; Oesch 2008; Van der Waal, Achterberg & Houtman 2007), cultural consumption (Veblen 2009; Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996), health and health lifestyle (Elo 2009; Turner, Brown & Hale 2017; Marmot et al. 1997) and ultimately the age at which people die (Smith et al. 1997). Evidently, this is not an exhaustive list of attitudinal and behavioural aspects and inequalities where class can be of importance but a selection made based on the availability of data and inspired by an attempt of not only focusing on what people think and do (by studying attitudes and behaviour) but also on, often unintended, health and death-related inequalities.

By this approach I aim to form a broad overview of the causes, prevalence and consequences of class discordance and hope to explain some trends in research on social class that have been waiting to be answered for years. In this dissertation I aspire to answer the question whether social class is indeed losing relevance as a scholarly subject of study, or whether there is an alternative explanation. Burying the concept of social class altogether may be easy, but as one of the most prominent post-war public intellectuals of Great-Britain, Richard Hoggart, stated in the preface of *The Road to Wigan Pier* by George Orwell:

"Class distinctions do not die; they merely learn new ways of expressing themselves." (Orwell 1958 p. vii)

1.3 CLASS OUTSIDE OF THE ACADEMIC WORLD

While this dissertation is an academic work aimed at empirically testing an array of hypotheses on the causes and implications of class discordance, the theoretical findings can also help understand current societal processes on social class and its importance outside of the academic world. In both the political debate and everyday life, social stratification and class are often prominent subjects of attention in both political rhetoric and the media. Whereas political figures such as Margaret Thatcher in her famous claim that *"there is no such thing as society, only individuals"*, have made assumptions that classes do not exist out of political-ideological motives, governments and institutions across the world study social stratification and its influence on society in order to appraise the meaning and implications of class differences and possibly intervene when necessary.

In 2017 the American Pew Research Center published a report (Kochhar 2017) showing that in the United States and several European countries the middle class is shrinking. The work of Vaughan-Whitehead (2016) further confirms that in European societies more and more there is a dichotomy emerging between rich and poor, whilst the middle class is disappearing. In Great-Britain the debate on class was recently fueled by Mike Savage's book *Social Class in the 21st Century* where he demonstrates the British class structure to be changing. Even in The Netherlands, the Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (Engbersen, Snel & Kremer 2017) and Sociaal-Cultureel Planbureau (2014) reported on the dwindling middle class (Vrooman, Gijsberts & Boelhouwer 2014). The potential issue with all these reports however is that they tend to focus solely on the theoretical reality concerning social class and do not assess the 'lived reality' of social class. Or in other words, as is the case in academic studies as well, they study the changes in the class structure based on their own classifications without paying attention to the meaning it has for the people living in the social stratification they study.

Since people tend to use a concept as social class to distinguish between themselves and others, the question arises whether a shrinking middle class also exists in the minds of people and thus has any influence on their behaviour. Hopefully this dissertation will help shed more light on whether all these non-academic attempts at studying the changes in the class structure aimed at identifying any issues related to class differences

actually use an adequate way of measuring class differences or whether they should rather pay more attention to the lived experience of class, or in others words subjective class.

1.4 OUTLINE AND DATA

The outline of this dissertation is as follows. The dissertation can be divided in two main sections: whereas chapters 2 and 3 focus on the causes of class discordance, chapters 4-8 zoom in on the behavioural and health-related consequences. Throughout these chapters I use a very similar material class scheme although some variation exists as a consequence of the used data-sources. Most data used provides the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)³ codes, allowing me to recode the occupations into a reduced, threefold EGP-scheme based on the work of (Ganzeboom, De Graaf & Treiman 1992; Ganzeboom et al. 1996). Some data-sources however, such as the European Election Study in chapter 4 or the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing and Whitehall II in chapter 7 provide their own condensed occupational categories. These variations are nonetheless not an issue for the coherence throughout the chapters since I systematically reduce the ISCO or already condensed categories into a threefold EGP-scheme. This choice is based on studies demonstrating an EGP-schema dividing between a smaller service class, intermediate occupations and wage-labour contracts to reflect class patterns in real life (Evans & Mills 1998; 2000). As shown by Evans (1992) aggregating the full EGP-range into the aforementioned three bigger classes provides a good capture of the class formation, while not resulting in a loss of information. Furthermore, throughout chapters 3-8 I control, when the used data allows to do so, for educational attainment and/or income. While one might argue, especially from a Weberian perspective, that these factors are part of one's material class, there are studies empirically showing income and educational attainment to be important control variables in research on material class (see for example Chan & Goldthorpe 2007). Throughout my empirical chapters this is confirmed since including income or educational attainment generally has no substantial impact on the effect of material or subjective social class apart from two minor exceptions (for specific information see sections 6.4.2 and 8.5). However, in all cases excluding these control variables systematically lowers the model fit.

3. In research on stratification occupations have often been the focal point (see Blau & Duncan 1967; Ganzeboom et al. 1992; Sosnaud et al. 2013). Even when this information is not available, scholars point at their potential importance (see for example Daenekindt & Roose 2014, p. 90).

Furthermore, in regards to subjective social class I again use a threefold class scheme, which is condensed when this is not yet the case in the data-source in order to make both measures of class comparable allowing me to measure class discordance with 9 possible combinations of material and subjective class⁴. The illustrative Table 1.1 gives an example of class concordance and discordance.

TABLE 1.1 Illustrative table displaying the 9 possible expressions of class discordance and concordance

	Subjective Working Class	Subjective Middle Class	Subjective Higher Class
Material Working Class	<i>Working Class Concordant</i>	<i>Working to Middle Discordant</i>	<i>Working to Higher Discordant</i>
Material Middle Class	<i>Middle to Working Discordant</i>	<i>Middle Concordant</i>	<i>Middle to Higher Discordant</i>
Material Higher Class	<i>Higher to Working Discordant</i>	<i>Higher to Middle Discordant</i>	<i>Higher Concordant</i>

Next, I will give an overview of the content of each chapter. First, chapter 2 discusses the prevalence and causes of class discordance. Chapter 2 assesses the occurrence of class discordance in the United States between 1987 and 2014 and identifies individual and contextual causes. In this chapter I try to formulate an answer to what causes discordance to occur and define two explanations. On the one hand, this of competing social identities next to status inconsistency of individuals influencing class identification. To study this, I use the General Social Survey (GSS) between 1987 and 2014, since these data include questions on several aspects of people's social identity and socio-economic background to measure status in consistency, in addition to questions on their occupation and class identity. This cross-sectional dataset contains data collected at 17 repeated cross-sections: 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014.

In chapter 3 I extend the previous research conducted in chapter 2 on the causes of class discordance by including the European context. In this chapter I specifically analyze to what extent and in which way social mobility and the macro-economic context plays a role in explaining class discordance in the United States and Europe. The same cross-sectional waves (apart of the 1987-wave) of the General Social Survey

4. Except in chapter 7 where due to data-constraints I use a linear measurement of subjective social status. While I do trichotomize subjective status in this chapter, this is merely a pragmatic attempt to assess a potential non-linear effect of subjective social status rather than a measurement of class discordance.

are used, next to data from the American National Election Study (ANES) between 1968 and 1992, in order to analyze the United States. These data sources are selected because they contain specific questions on the occupation of respondents' parents when the respondent was young, which allows me to analyze how social mobility affects the chances of class discordance in the United States. Furthermore in this chapter, I use data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) collected in 2009. This source contains the needed information on social mobility and class identity in the following 20 European countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. In all three surveys, respondents are randomly selected making them representative for all individuals aged 18 and older in the United States and 15 and older in Europe. Additionally, in chapter 3 I add additional macro-level data on the level of unemployment, GDP and Gini-coefficient. These measures are collected from data made freely available by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In these first two chapters I pay attention to both structural and cultural reasons for class discordance by zooming in on status inconsistency, social mobility and cultural heterogeneity. The attention for structural influences on class discordance does not contradict my empirical focus on studying an autonomous meaning of class discordance regarding its consequences. The idea of cultural autonomy does not entail that there are no structural influences whatsoever since ideas, orientations and perceptions do not arise out of thin air. Rather Jeffrey Alexander and colleagues argue that culture can be, in part, influenced by structure while at the same time it can have substantial implications or consequences apart from said structure (Alexander et al. 2000). Consequently, in these first two chapters I study to what extent structural influences are of importance next to a cultural influence such as cultural heterogeneity. Next, in the second part of this dissertation I study whether class discordance and identity have a culturally autonomous meaning when it comes to consequences on political, cultural and health-related behaviour of individuals and ultimately the age at which people die.

In chapter 4 I try to demonstrate the importance of class discordance on voting behaviour in Europe in order to assess whether there are different effects compared with the findings of Sosnaud et al. (2013) on the United States. I do so I examine the following 18 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Great-Britain. In this chapter attention is paid to both economic and cultural voting behaviour by employing the Comparative Manifesto

Project (CMP) data in order to make voting behaviour in the different countries comparable. The use of the CMP allows to express the data on voting behaviour from the European Election Study (EES) 2009 in a metric way.

In chapter 5 the political consequences of class discordance are further explored by examining the impact on economic-political attitudes concerning redistribution. Here both the United States and Great-Britain are examined, as two examples of what is in literature often referred to as respectively a non-class society and a class society. As was the case in chapter 3, I use the ISSP-data to examine this since there is a battery of questions on the needed economic-political attitudes zooming in on economic redistribution.

Further, in chapter 6 the focus on the consequences of class discordance is expanded from political behaviour to musical consumption. In this chapter I study whether class discordance influences musical consumption and omnivorism. I do so by making a distinction between positively assessing several musical genres on the one hand and positively assessing culturally disparate musical genres. In doing so, I include two distinct ways of measuring a closed or open musical preference pattern and highlight the differences between both approaches towards musical omnivorism. In this chapter, I use data from the 1993 General Social Survey, which contains detailed data on the degree in which American people prefer listening to the following 18 musical genres: bigband, bluegrass, country, blues, musical, classical, folk, gospel, jazz, latin, easy listening, new age, opera, rap, reggae, pop-rock, oldies and heavy metal.

In chapter 7 I study how perceptions of social positions influence the health and health-related behaviour of British people. Here I use a slightly different approach by not studying subjective class identity but rather subjective social status due to data availability. In doing so I use subjective status as a linear variable but also employ a threefold categorical operationalization in order to find a potential non-linear effect. Because of the substantial differences between people placing themselves in subjective social classes and me distinguishing between subjective status groups derived from a scale, this should however not be interpreted as a similar attempt to measure class discordance as in the other chapters. But rather as a pragmatic solution to study whether there is a non-linear effect of subjective social status. To do so, I employ two data sources to assess the impact of perceived social status in relation with class position on health inequalities and lifestyles. To study the former, I employ cross-sectional data from the second (2004/2005) and sixth (2012/2013) wave of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing to assess health inequalities by means of blood pressure and several biomarkers

indicating cardiovascular health. To study the latter, I use data from the fifth wave (1997-1999) of the Whitehall II-survey to analyze differences in alcohol consumption, exercising patterns, food habits and smoking behaviour.

In the last empirical chapter, I study whether class identity and class discordance can help explain disparities in regards to the age at which American people die. To do so I use the linked General Social Survey-National Death Index where I use cross-sectional survey waves between 1988 and 2002 that are linked to information on the cause and age of death of respondents until 2008. This unique dataset consequently includes both the answers people have provided during their participation in the cross-sectional waves of the GSS and for those who died until 2008, the information on their death. In this chapter I assess the degree in which subjective class identity mediates and moderates the impact of material class on the age at which people die and whether this mediation can be ascribed to certain risk-related causes of death.

Finally, chapter 9 summarizes and evaluates the results of the empirical studies in the different chapters. Here I draw an overarching conclusion on the meaning, prevalence, causes and consequences of class discordance in Europe and the United States and illustrate how this dissertation expands current literature on class studies and class identity.

CHAPTER 2

Explaining class discordance: socio-economic background or social identity?

A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

ABSTRACT

Recent research on class and class identity has shown that for a majority of Americans these two do not coincide, a phenomenon referred to as class discordance. In this study I focus on the role status inconsistency and cross-cutting social identities play. I use data from the General Social Survey 1987-2014 to cross material and subjective class and measure discrepancies. My results show that status inconsistency plays a role, but belonging to certain ethnic or religious minorities and being a union member or Republican also has an important impact. These findings challenge earlier studies who claim that a class identity is solely an economic identity. Holding several salient group memberships can intersect with how people perceive their class position. My findings highlight the necessity of paying attention to the role of other, more cultural, aspects of one's social identity next to status inconsistency in understanding why class discordance occurs.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Advanced industrialized societies are confronted with an interesting albeit troubling paradox. On the one hand, the middle class seems to be shrinking (cf. Vaughan-Whitehead 2016), while on the other hand evidence suggests that an increasing amount of people identify with the middle class (Evans et al. 2004; Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman 1980). A similar observation has recently also been made by students of class politics (Sosnaud et al. 2013): there is a substantial mismatch between people's material social class position – i.e. one's material position based on the skills, autonomy and the level of authority one has in his/her professional life ought to result in similar life chances (Weber 2009; Giddens et al. 1973) – and people's subjective class identification (cf. Jackman et al. 1973; Jackman 1979; Mackenzie et al. 2006). Evidence suggests that about half of the American population experiences what Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) refer to as *class discordance*: about half of the American people do not identify with the social class they, according to their occupational position, materially belong to. While recent research has shown these perceptions of class to remain highly relevant in how people form an opinion on those who are alike or different from them (Evans et al. 2017; Robinson et al. 2017), few studies have focused on the potential sources of class discordance (with the exception of Hout 2008; Sosnaud et al. 2013).

In the past, studies have attempted to explain why material class positions and subjective identification coincide (Jackman et al. 1973; Evans et al. 2004, Kelley et al. 1995, Wolff et al. 2010). The claim in this chapter is that the mechanisms for class discordance go beyond the traditional explanations that are invoked to explain such overlap between material class and subjective identification. Repeatedly, interest group theory is used, according to which a shared occupational context is the basis of a shared class identification (Jackman et al. 1973; Evans et al. 2004; Kelley et al. 1995; Wolff et al. 2010). I will argue that insights into class discordance can be broadened by studying two distinct yet relevant perspectives: status inconsistency and cross-cutting identities.

The first model of status inconsistency departs from the idea that a class identity is an economic identity based on differentiation as a result of social comparison across socioeconomic cleavages (Savage 2001). As such, an individual class identity is mainly a reflection of the experienced *perception* of socio-economic inequality and the peace of mind one has concerning it (Sosnaud et al. 2013, also see Adair 2001) and might deviate from one's material class. The second model of cross-cutting identities proposes that class discordance occurs if other salient social identities, such as religious, ethnic and political identities, next to union membership, influence the relevance of class identity. In every society, some groups occupy a dominant position while others are marginal,

resulting in a disparate salience of group identities across different groups. Dominant group membership often results in less salient group identities, while minority groups tend to attach more importance to that respective group identity (Doane 1997; Hout 2008; Lewis 2004; Knowles & Peng 2005), making the connection of their class identity to their material class less evident.

Although there is some research on how one's socio-economic background and cross-cutting identities play a role in the class identification process (Hout 2008; Brooks, Nieuwbeerta & Manza 2006; Pakulski et al. 1996), there have been few studies assessing whether these can explain the occurrence of class concordance and discordance. With the notable exception of Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) who show indications that both status inconsistency as well as cross-cutting identities play a role in regards to class discordance. Given their promising findings, I aim at pushing forward their study by assessing whether status inconsistency and cross-cutting identities have a differing impact in specific material social classes rather than studying their effect in a general overarching model. While the authors do not distinguish between material social classes, I argue that class discordance is not necessarily a linear process motivating me to study the effects separately by material social class. In order study this, I will analyze the General Social Survey between 1987 and 2014.

2.2 WHY DO PEOPLE NOT IDENTIFY WITH THEIR MATERIAL CLASS POSITION?

2.2.1 Class identity as an economic identity

While my study focuses on explaining class discordance, it is undeniable that scholarship explaining concordance, i.e. why people identify with their corresponding material class position, often starts, as said above, from interest group theory. This scholarship sees society as organized by distinct economic classes with strong intra-class identification and concomitantly interclass aversion (Jackman et al., 1973). It is these shared experiences that create awareness of one's individual position in the social class hierarchy, making people subjectively identify with their material social class (Giddens et al. 1982; Jackman 1979). Studies about the perceptions of class in the United States (Vanneman 1980; Jackman 1979) show that people indeed are aware of the existence of hierarchical social classes. Despite this awareness, a big part of the American population tends to identify as part of another material class not coinciding with their material class position (Sosnaud et al. 2013). Interest group theory is useful for explaining why

people subjectively identify with their material class, yet, it is insufficient to tie material class positions to subjective positions as it cannot explain why a substantial part of the population displays class discordance.

Although Americans in the lower material class are inclined to overestimate the amount of people that are worse off than them while those in the material higher class overestimate the amount of people better off, motivating Americans to cluster in the middle class (Evans et al. 2004; Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman 1980), scholars of class discordance have shown these processes of inflation and deflation to be more complex. While indeed some people are discordant towards the middle class, substantial amounts of individuals in that material middle class are discordant as well and identify with a lower or higher class (Sosnaud et al. 2013). By studying these material social classes separately, I can further disentangle the specifics of class discordance.

A class identity has been described as an economic identity (Savage 2001), making it plausible to seek the reasons for class discordance in other socio-economic characteristics that do not correspond with an individual's material class position. Studies indeed suggest that status inconsistency can obscure identification with one's material class (Hodge & Treiman 1968; Hout 2008; Sosnaud et al. 2013); since in two distinct ways, people are motivated to put more emphasis on certain aspects of their socio-economic situation than on others when assessing their class position. On the one hand, through a process of social comparison people are inclined to compare their own situation with this of their peers in order to form an idea on their position in society (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008). On the other hand, through a process of status maximization, people put a stronger emphasis on those aspects of their socio-economic situation that are better (De Graaf & Ganzeboom 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt & Roose 2011).

Given that people strive for a positive self-assessment of their social identity (Tajfel 1974; Turner 1975) next to being motivated to maximize their status (De Graaf et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011), I argue that those in the working and middle class will rather be inclined to base their class identity primarily on those aspects of their socio-economic background that are advantageous rather than those aspects where they do less well. For instance, when people are part of the working or middle class but have a higher income they tend to attach more weight to the latter as their reference point in perceiving their own position in society (De Graaf et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011). Consequently in my first hypothesis I expect *that people in the working or middle class will have higher chances of class inflation than their material class peers when their income or educational level is higher.*

When it comes to those in the middle and higher material class experiencing status inconsistency, I have additional expectations. While status maximization is also a factor, those higher in the social stratification tend to overestimate the amount of people above them (Evans et al. 2004). Although they are aware of an existing social hierarchy (Vanneman 1980; Jackman 1979), these individuals are more inclined to use aspects of their socio-economic identity that are not associated with the elite (such as a lower educational attainment or income) as reasons to underestimate their class (Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman 1980; Evans et al. 2004; Sosnaud et al. 2013). This leads to my second hypothesis, where I expect *a middle or higher material class position coupled with a lower income or educational attainment than their material peers to result in underestimation of one's class position.*

Next to the individual socio-economic characteristics of people potentially influencing how they perceive their own class position, there are also relevant socio-economic factors outside of the individual. First of all, the place where people live can impact their class identification. Since a class identity is formed by social comparison with others (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008), living in an economically more homogenous region is expected to result in more class discordance compared to living in an economically heterogeneous region. Theoretically, however, the direction of class discordance can go two ways. On the one hand, studies on rural areas in the United States show these to be on average less affluent (Brown & Hirschl 1995; Cotter 2002; Lichter, Johnston & McLaughlin 1994; Lichter & Johnson 2007; Tickamyer & Duncan 1990) instigating both those living there as well as those living in the cities to see people in the rural areas as lower in the social stratification. This leads to my hypothesis 3a where I expect *a higher chance of deflation in rural areas for those part of the middle or higher class and a higher chance of inflation in big cities for those part of the working or middle class.* On the other hand, it is also possible that in these rural areas, despite the lesser affluence, people compare themselves with others who are mainly on the lower end of the social stratification enticing them to inflate their class identity. Whereas those living in cities with more economic diversity are able to form a more accurate image of the American class structure, those in rural areas get a more limited view of the economic hierarchy. Since people form their class identity through social comparison (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008), it is possible that individuals in rural areas consequently overestimate their own position due to their inaccurate image of the American social stratification. This leads to my hypothesis 3b where I anticipate *individuals living in rural areas to be more likely to inflate their class identity when they belong to the material working or middle class.*

2.2.2 CROSS-CUTTING IDENTITIES

A second mechanism, next to status inconsistency, that can help explain class discordance is found by zooming in on other cross-cutting, non-class related identities which can transcend class boundaries. Here, I study religious, ethnic and political identity since these have empirically been shown to exist as important cleavages in American society transcending and cross-cutting class boundaries (Manza & Brooks 1999; Margolis & Sancey 2017; Evans & Northmore-Ball 2017; Morgan & Lee 2017; Fisher 2014; Pakulski et al. 1996). Additionally, I study the role of union membership, not as a cross-cutting identity, but rather as an actor motivating class awareness (Jackman et al. 1973; 1985). Given that people derive their self-worth for a big part from their membership of social groups (Tajfel 1974; Turner 1975) the implication is that if there is an emphasis on relevant non-economic identities, this can hinder concordant class identification, making class discordance more likely.

Whether certain group memberships are salient in one's social identity is often dependent on the degree in which that group is seen as the norm in a particular society. Minority groups with marginalized group identities tend to pay more attention to their group identity (Outten et al. 2009; Schmitt, Spears & Branscombe 2003), while this is much less the case for the dominant group. When certain aspects of one's social identity become more salient, this can conflict with the norms, values and attitudes associated with their class identity and can thus result in a lower salience of the latter (Jackman et al. 1973; Verkuyten & Yildiz 2007). This occurs because being strongly attached to a certain group makes it more likely to adhere to the norms and values of that group (Christensen et al. 2004; Huddy et al. 2007). When people are members of the dominant group, their group identity is less salient since they less often experience this identity as threatened (Doane 1997; Lewis 2004; Knowles et al. 2005). When belonging to a marginalized group, however, the feeling of not being up to the norm results in a stronger importance of this part of one's social identity which might increase class discordance.

While several religious denominations are represented in the United States, a main contrast is this between Protestants⁵ as the dominant group, next to Catholics as the bigger marginalized group (Smith 2002). For the largest group, Protestants, their religious group identity is less important; implying that other identities such as class identity might be more prominent, leading to more class concordance (Hout 2008). The marginal religious groups, with Catholics being one of the primary ones in the United States, tend

5. Some studies distinguish between Evangelical and Mainline Protestants (cf. Sosnaud et al. 2013) which is not possible in my study due to infrequent measurement in the used data.

to focus more on that religious part of their social identity since they see their religious group as being disadvantaged (Harrison, Harrison & Moore 2002; Schulman, Zingraff & Reif 1985; Durant & Sparrow 1997; Lamont & Molnár 2002). Since they perceive their situation as being marginalized while often living mixed in between other religious groups who they compare themselves with through social comparison, I expect them to be more likely of displaying discordance (Massey, Rothwell & Domina 2009). Next, in regards to political identity, the mechanism through which a marginalized group underestimates their class position is similar as for religious denomination, with the difference that the marginalized group here differs according to the political climate at the time (Greene 1999; 2004). In essence, under a Democratic government, Republicans should feel more marginalized, and vice versa, resulting in a bigger chance of class deflation because their political identity is more salient. Furthermore, next to religious denomination and political identity, I focus on ethnic background as another potentially cross-cutting identity. Here, I again expect those part of a more marginalized group, notably non-whites, to have a more prominent ethnic identity since the importance of an ethnic identity is higher for those part of a minority group than for members of the majority groups (Harrison, et al. 2002; Schulman et al. 1985; Roediger 1999; Nickell 1997). People from ethnic minorities, even when part of a higher material class, tend to feel some kind of bond with their ethnic peers, across class boundaries (Massey & Denton 1993; Pattillo 2013). Consequently, in my fourth hypothesis I anticipate *ethnic, religious and political minorities in the middle and high class to have higher odds of deflating than the dominant group while I expect those minorities in the working class to be less likely of inflating their class position in contrast to the dominant group.*

Somewhat on the cross-roads between status inconsistency and cross-cutting identities, I finally have expectations regarding the role of union membership. Here, while not exclusively about identity but also about formal membership the same mechanism as for the cross-cutting identities comes forward, namely being a member is being part of the marginalized minority group. However, in this specific case this does not need to automatically imply class deflation. Instead, two distinct and contrary mechanisms can occur. On the one hand, I expect union membership to generate more class awareness (Jackman et al. 1973), since Americans who are unionized are more focused on their class position and in consequence less prone to identify as part of another material class (Jackman et al. 1985). The stronger focus on and awareness of their class position is a result of the process of socialization union members go through as a result of the strong emphasis on social classes as a collectivity within the unions. In contrast with non-members, this socialization process augments the class identification of those involved in unions and lowers the odds of class discordance (Jackman et al. 1993). Consequently, in hypothesis 5a I anticipate *union members to be more likely of identifying concordantly*

with their material class in contrast with non-union members. On the other hand, because of the somewhat exclusiveness of being in a labor union (Clawson et al. 1999), in my contrasting expectation, I anticipate union membership to increase the odds of class inflation. Because union membership can act as a salient aspect of one's identity and often brings about higher paying jobs than similar jobs that are not unionized (Clawson et al., 1999), I expect in hypothesis 5b that *those within the working and middle class will assess their own material position as higher than their peers with a similar non-unionized job.*

2.3 DATA AND METHODS

For this study 17 cross-sectional waves of the General Social Survey between 1987 and 2014 will be used. After excluding missing values because of people not answering questions about their occupation, class identity or potentially cross-cutting social identities, I collected 21758 respondents.

2.3.1 Dependent variable

To study class discordance, it is necessary to cross people's material social class and their subjective class identification. To do so, I divide material and subjective class positions in three categories: working class, middle class and high class. These three material social classes are derived from the ISCO88-information in the dataset. I employ the following threefold schema: (1) Working class (skilled/ unskilled workers and farm laborers), (2) Middle class (lower controllers, routine non-manual and lower-service sales) and (3) Higher class (higher controllers).

Subjective social class identification, then, consists of three categories reduced from four categories in the survey: (1) Lower class, (2) Working class, (3) Middle class and (4) Upper class. Coherent to the material class operationalization, I distinguish between the working class (Lower and working class), the middle class and higher class.

To study the factors contributing to a mismatch between subjective and material social class, I cross the three subjective with the three material class positions, leading to three categories, as is highlighted in Table 1.1. This scheme consists of those with a *concordant* class combination which represents that the respondents' material and subjective class coincide. Furthermore it is also possible to have an *inflated* class combination which means that a respondent identifies with a higher social class than their material class based on their occupation. Finally, it is also possible to have a *deflated* class combination which refers to a situation in which a respondent identifies

as part of a social class lower than his/her material class. In Table 2.1 the percentages of respondents with deflated, concordant or inflated class combinations are highlighted by material social class. This illustrates that class discordance exists across material social classes, although with a different intensity. While about 70% of the American people part of the material working class also subjectively perceive this as such, only 50% in the material middle class and 7% in the material higher class do so. Table 2.1 shows that there is a fairly strong tendency of people (in the material middle and higher class) to identify as part of a lower class although the opposite also occurs.

TABLE 2.1 Degree of class discordance by material social class

	Working class	Middle class	Higher class
Inflator	2159 (31.11%)	362 (3.18%)	
Concordant	4780 (68.89%)	5635 (49.48%)	234 (6.82%)
Deflator		5392 (47.34%)	3196 (93.18%)

Source: General Social Survey 1987-2014

2.3.2 Independent variables

2.3.2.1 Socio-economic variables

In the analyses I study how the socio-economic background of respondents plays a role in the chances of them inflating or deflating their social class position. Here I pay attention to the family income, marital status, type of residence and educational attainment of people. I prefer to use *family income* over personal income since people with a low income benefit from a partner with a high income and could have a different class identity than others with a low income without a partner with a high income (Hodge et al. 1968; Hout 2008). Because family income is measured in dollars, I divided the variable by 1000 in order to make the estimates easier to interpret.

Next, I also include the *educational attainment* of respondents as a possible factor influencing their class identity and class discordance since a discrepancy between educational attainment and material class position could influence one's perception of one's subjective class (Hodge et al. 1968; Hout 2008). Here I distinguish between having enjoyed higher, tertiary education or not. Further, I include *family type* since the type of family one lives in influences the wealth of people (Wilmoth & Koso 2002). I make a distinction between those living as a couple as the reference category, single individuals, single parents and other types of cohabitation clustered.

Finally, I include the *type of residence*. Here I distinguish between those living in rural areas, small cities, suburbs and big cities. I include the geographic living circumstances of people in my analyses since an important aspect in individuals' subjective identification is social comparison (Savage 2001). Since in rural areas, the diversity of wealth is less than in bigger cities, the social context in which people compare themselves with others can be quite different (Brown et al. 1995; Tickamyer et al. 1990).

2.3.2.2 Cross-cutting identity variables

In addition to the socio-economic circumstances influencing how people subjectively perceive their class position, I turn my attention to other potentially cross-cutting aspects of their social identity. Specifically I look at the potential impact of religious denomination, political orientation, ethnic background, and union membership. When it comes to *religious denomination*, I distinguish between Protestants (Ref.), Catholics, non-religious people and other religions. While this last category is quite diverse it is coded as one group because of the small sample sizes making it difficult to obtain reliable estimates. Further, in the case of *political orientation* I distinguish between those seeing themselves as Democrats (Ref.), Republicans, Independent or other. In regards to *ethnic background* I distinguish between White Americans (Ref.), Black Americans and other ethnic backgrounds. Further, I also include whether respondents are born in the United States (Ref.) or not and whether no (Ref.), one or both parents are foreign born. Finally, *union membership* is operationalized by a distinction between those who are a member and those who are not. The descriptive values of all the variables can be found in Appendix A2.1.

2.3.3 Method

In a first step I estimated multilevel multinomial logistic regression models using the GENLINMIXED-procedure in SPSS in order to see whether the proportion of the religious and ethnic majority group, next to the share of non-union members and the political climate at the time level has an impact on class discordance. To do so all Protestants, White Americans and non-union members are scored as 1 and all respective minority groups as 0. Then I aggregate this information to the contextual level. In regards to the political climate I construct a variable ranging from 0 to 3 measuring the Democratic or Republican control on the institutional level. When the Democrats have the president, next to the majority in the House of Representatives and Senate, the score is 0. When there is a Republican president, majority in the House or majority in the Senate, the score is 1. Further Republican control/majority of two or all of these institutions result in a score of 2 or 3. For the latter I also tested a simpler variable distinguishing between

whether there is a Republican president or not. However, none of these macro-effects regarding the ethnic and religious composition, the degree of union membership and the political climate nor the cross-level interactions rendered significant.

In order to have a better fit for my models, I estimate and present multinomial logistic regression models without macro-level effects. This method is best suited to estimate the effect of one's socio-economic background and cross-cutting social identities on the odds of having an inflated (or overestimated) and deflated (or underestimated) subjective class identity, with concordant positions as reference category (Agresti & Kateri 2011). Further, to control for the nested data structure, a dummy variable for each year is added while clustered robust standard errors are used (Bertrand, Duflo & Mullainathan 2004). I estimate these models split out by social class background in order to counter an influence of a floor and ceiling effect, since for example those with a tertiary education in the higher class cannot further inflate their class position while those in the working and middle class can.

2.4 RESULTS

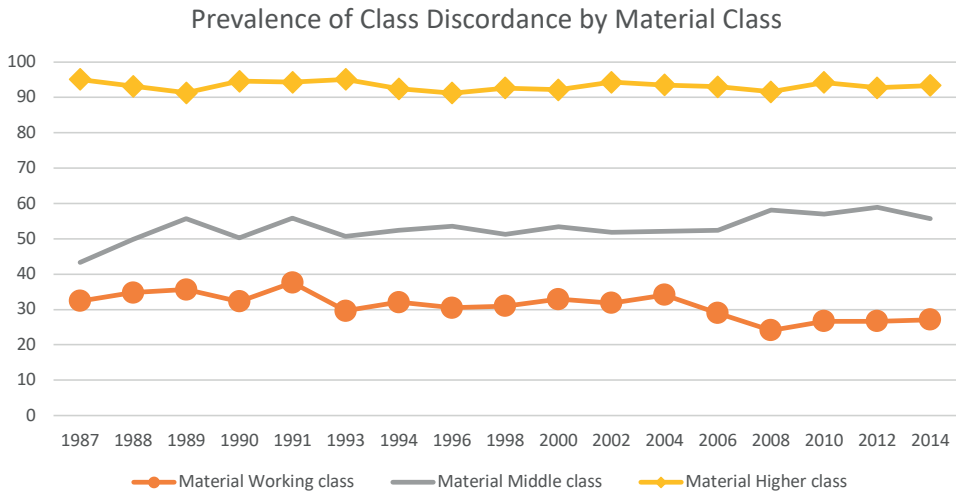


FIGURE 2.1 Evolution of class discordance over time by material social class

Source: General Social Survey 1987-2014 Note: This figure shows the % of Americans who do not identify as part of their material class. The diamond-trend line displays the degree of discordance for those in the material higher class, while the line without marker does the same for the material middle class and the line with circles for the material working class. This figure shows that with some fluctuations, about 30% of the material working class does not identify as such while more than 90% of the material higher class identifies lower. This figure shows that class discordance occurs in all social classes and is not limited to those in the higher or working class placing themselves in the middle.

Before discussing the results of the multinomial logistic regressions, Figure 2.1 shows that class discordance goes beyond Americans placing themselves in the middle class. While this definitely occurs, this figure shows that about half of those materially part of the middle class do not identify as such. While not visible in this figure, those in the middle class who are discordant mainly identify as part of the working class while a minority inflates to the higher class. Further, the results of the Anovas and Chi²-tests in Table 2.2 give an indication regarding whether status inconsistency and cross-cutting social identities are related to class discordance. The results show that one's socio-economic background is related to class discordance since the educational degree, place of residence and income all have discriminatory power across material class backgrounds. Whether the respondents themselves or their parents were born in the USA or not only has some importance in respectively the working/middle and middle class. In regards to cross-cutting social identities, these bivariate analyses indicate ethnic, religious and political background to be of importance as well. Union membership only seems to bear some importance for those materially part of the working and middle class.

TABLE 2.2 Anova and Chi² tests on class discordance

	Working class	Middle class	Higher class
Anova			
Age	112.55***	172.70***	18.52***
Income	227.23***	1034.70***	336.23***
Chi²			
Educational Degree	58.76***	855.46***	87.34***
Residence	21.08***	122.35***	24.25***
Family Type	15.78**	240.74***	4.75
Gender	5.57*	78.08***	6.11*
Ethnicity	12.60**	326.04***	19.85***
Born in the USA	4.15*	16.71***	0.39
Parents origin	2.26	24.29***	1.78
Religious denomination	21.13***	35.77***	18.73***
Union membership	6.37*	9.00*	0.92
Political identification	69.68***	312.35***	12.96**

Source: General Social Survey 1987-2014 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Next, the results of the multivariate regression models in Table 2.3 allow to draw some conclusions. All estimates are presented as relative risk ratios, which can be interpreted as odds-ratios. First, all 4 models, when controlling for potential confounders, illustrate how the socio-economic background of people has an impact on their odds of class discordance. However, only educational level and type of residential area has a consistent effect across all three material classes. As expected having enjoyed higher education makes people in both the working and middle, respectively 2 and 1.5 times more likely to inflate than their peers in their respective material class. It also makes those in the middle and high class less likely to deflate. Furthermore, as anticipated, those who live in more rural areas in contrast to people who live in a big city are less likely to inflate when part of the working class and more likely to deflate when they belong to the middle or high class, respectively about 1.5 and 2.5 times more likely than their peers living in a big city, confirming my hypothesis 3a and consequently rejecting hypothesis 3b. Overall, this indicates a fairly consistent pattern of people living in rural areas being more likely to identify as working class when they are materially part of the working or middle class and to identify as either working or middle class when part of the material high class.

For the other socio-economic factors, namely income and family type, the impact on class discordance depends on one's material class background. Having a higher income makes it more likely to inflate for those in the working class and the middle class while it becomes less likely to deflate as well for those in the middle class. It does however not impact the chances of deflating for those in the higher class. In essence, having a higher income is associated with more discordance in the working and middle class. Furthermore, one's family type only seems to play a role in the middle class since those who are single without children in contrast to couples are more likely to inflate and less likely to deflate.

Next to the impact of people's socio-economic background, I also tested several potentially cross-cutting social identities people can hold. Here I expected religious, political and ethnic minorities to be more likely to deflate their class position than the respective majority groups. In regards to religious minority groups, the main finding is that this occurs for Catholics in the middle and higher class, who are about 1.5 as likely as Protestants to deflate their class. Additionally, remarkably other religious minorities in the middle class are more likely to inflate than Protestants. When it comes to political minorities I expected the chances of Democrats and Republicans to deflate to depend on whether there is a Democratic or Republican government. Although, no such cross-level interaction rendered significant in a multilevel model, a fairly consistent pattern across social classes of Republicans being more likely than Democrats to inflate their

class when they belong to the working or middle class emerges. Further, they are less likely of deflating when part of the middle or high class. This means that, regardless of the political climate, those identifying as Republicans seem to overestimate their class position more often than those perceiving themselves as Democrats. Next, my expectations concerning ethnic minorities are confirmed since in contrast to White Americans, Black Americans in the middle class and higher class are respectively 1.65 and 6.9 times more likely of deflating their class position. Additionally, this role of ethnic background is also reflected by the fact that people in the middle class who aren't born in the United States are slightly more likely to deflate. However, where one's parents are born does not play a role except for those in the middle class of whom only the father is US-born. Finally, when it comes to union membership I anticipated both the possibility of them being more concordant because of their class awareness next to the option of them being more likely to inflate than their peers in the same social class because of the somewhat exclusiveness of unionized jobs. I do however find a different pattern, with union members in the middle class being less likely to inflate and about 1.5 as likely as non-members to identify as part of the working class. Apparently being unionized, at least for those in the middle class, makes it more likely to see themselves as part of the working class.

2.5 ROBUSTNESS

To test the validity of the results, I conducted several robustness checks. First of all, as mentioned in the methods section, I assessed whether the political climate and the share of the dominant religious and ethnic group next to the degree of union membership has an effect on class discordance. While no such macro-effects nor cross-level interactions play a role, estimating my models using the Genlinmixed-procedure yields very similar results as the presented results estimated with dummy's for year of wave and cluster robust standard errors.

Secondly, in the presented models the higher class only consists of the higher controllers (ISCO-group 1) while in a robustness check I extended this to the lower controllers (ISCO-group 2). First, the tendency of those in the middle classes with a higher educational attainment to inflate disappears. Next, doing so makes Black Americans in the middle class more likely than White Americans to inflate their class position, or in other words to identify as part of the higher class. Finally, union members in the higher class become more likely to deflate.

TABLE 2.3 Socio-economic background and cross-cutting social identities regressed on class discordance

	Material working class	Material middle class		Material higher class
	Model 1 Inflator	Model 2 Inflator	Model 3 Deflator	Model 4 Deflator
Constant	0.458 (0.04)***	0.049 (0.01)***	0.840 (0.06)*	41.670 (12.38)***
Degree				
Non-tertiary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Tertiary education	2.038 (0.27)***	1.579 (0.15)***	0.398 (0.02)***	0.323 (0.07)***
Residence				
Big City (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Suburb	0.908 (0.09)	0.851 (0.16)	1.096 (0.07)	1.529 (0.39)
Small City	0.906 (0.06)	0.914 (0.12)	1.055 (0.09)	1.276 (0.20)
Countryside	0.751 (0.06)***	0.748 (0.16)	1.476 (0.11)***	2.602(0.99)*
Family type				
Couple (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Single	1.071 (0.09)	1.436 (0.18)***	0.769 (0.04)***	0.720(0.16)
Single parent	0.928 (0.11)	0.984 (0.36)	1.165 (0.11)	0.693 (0.37)
Other	1.393 (0.15)**	1.414 (0.42)	0.694 (0.08)**	0.721 (0.37)
Income	1.503 (0.05)***	1.916 (0.09)***	0.432 (0.01)***	0.365 (0.04)
Gender				
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Female	1.254 (0.06)***	0.882 (0.12)	.130 0.05)**	1.059 (0.19)
Age	1.406 (0.5)	1.347 (0.07)	0.676 (0.02)***	0.681 (0.09)**
Ethnicity				
White (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Black	0.982 (0.11)	1.708 (0.54)	1.375 (0.15)**	6.893 (4.93)**
Other	0.983 (0.09)	0.810 (0.19)	1.657 (0.10)***	3.277 (1.78)*
Born in the USA				
Yes (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
No	0.901 (0.13)	1.170 (0.40)	1.293 (0.14)*	0.998 (0.49)
Parents Origin				
Born in the USA (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Mother born in the USA	1.138 (0.18)	1.588 (0.40)	0.845 (0.10)	2.068 (0.96)
Father born in the USA	1.123 (0.26)	0.417 (0.15)*	0.836 (0.12)	0.880 (0.31)
Both foreign born	1.047 (0.14)	0.704 (0.17)	1.024 (0.09)	1.260 (0.48)
Religious denomination				
Protestant (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Catholic	1.080 (0.09)	0.904 (0.11)	1.297 (0.08)***	1.511 (0.28)*
Non-Religious	0.868 (0.09)	1.356 (0.22)	1.329 (0.26)	0.832 (0.15)
Other	1.169 (0.16)	2.028 (0.34)***	0.760 (0.03)***	0.644 (0.14)*

TABLE 2.3 (Continued)

	Material working class	Material middle class	Material higher class	
	Model 1 Inflator	Model 2 Inflator	Model 3 Deflator	Model 4 Deflator
Union Membership				
Not a member (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Member	0.936 (0.04)	0.384 (0.14)**	1.475 (0.10)***	1.016 (0.27)
Political Identification				
Democratic (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Republican	1.285 (0.11)**	1.419 (0.22)*	0.760 (0.03)***	0.610 (0.09)**
Independent	0.848 (0.05)**	0.846 (0.24)	1.297 (0.08)***	0.588 (0.14)*
Other	0.487 (0.14)*	0.356 (0.27)	1.329 (0.26)	2.069 (1.56)
Pseudo R ²	0.06	0.17	0.17	0.24

Source: General Social Survey 1987-2014 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

These findings may seem remarkable but can be explained as follows: in regards to educational attainment this indicates that in the presented models it is mainly the lower controllers-group within the middle class that inflates when they have a higher educational attainment, while the routine non-manual and lower-service sales occupations do not do so. This isn't that unexpected since the lower controller-occupations are closer to the higher class than the sales and service occupations. The finding that union members in the high class in the alternative coding become more likely to deflate is not remarkable either, since this means that it's those union members with lower controller-occupations who do not identify as high class. The finding of Black Americans in the middle class being more likely than Whites to inflate is however remarkable. In essence this shows that Black Americans with routine non-manual and lower-service sales occupations more often identify as part of the high class, than Black Americans with lower controller occupations, while the latter group have more complex, higher status occupations. An explaining factor in this could be the fact that ethnic minorities are often geographically segregated, especially those lower in the hierarchy (Iceland & Weinberg 2002; Iceland & Wilkes 2006; Massey et al. 2009). This means that those Black Americans with routine non-manual and lower-service sales tend to live in segregated areas where they compare themselves mainly with a non-representative reference group of people who are mainly worse off, making them perceive their position as being part of the high class while it is in reality (lower) middle class. Those Black Americans with a lower controller-occupation tend to live more outside of these segregated areas, motivating them to more often correctly assess their position as being part of the middle class.

2.6 DISCUSSION

In this chapter I studied how the socio-economic circumstances one lives in next to the social identities one holds influences the odds of people experiencing class discordance. While research has shown perceptions of class to remain highly relevant in how people distinguish between themselves and others (Evans et al. 2017; Robinson et al. 2017), it is unclear why people often do not identify with their material class. To study this I use information on American respondents from 1987 until 2014. While my study corroborates earlier findings by Sosnaud et al. (2013), my results advance their study by showing how status inconsistency and cross-cutting identities affect class discordance differently according to material social class.

Some studies have demonstrated a class identity to mainly be an economic identity (Savage 2001), making status inconsistency a potential explanation of class discordance (Hodge et al. 1968; Hout 2008; Sosnaud et al. 2013). However, there are also strong theoretical reasons to assume that cross-cutting identities might play an important role, the idea being that when people belong to a minority instead of being part of the dominant group, this group identity often becomes more salient, resulting in a sense of identification with the rest of that marginalized social group (Doane 1997; Hout 2008; Lewis 2004; Knowles et al. 2005; Sosnaud et al. 2013), and consequently a higher odds of discordant class identities. When it comes to union membership, I anticipated either more concordance because of the attention paid to the concept of class (Jackman et al. 1973; Jackman et al. 1985) or class inflation because of the better labor conditions (Clawson et al. 1999).

Whereas studies on class perceptions often argue that Americans tend to place themselves in the middle class (Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman, 1980; Evans et al. 2004), the results of the empirical scrutiny in this chapter shows that while this indeed occurs, there are also reasons why people in the middle class do not identify as such. My findings illustrate that through social comparison those in the material working and middle class, when they perceive their income or educational attainment to be higher than their peers, have higher chances of class inflation. Additionally, the opposite occurs for those in material middle and higher class when they assess to be worse off than their material class peers. This is a highly subjective process since the reference group of those in the material working class is different than that of someone in the higher class (Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman 1980; Evans et al. 2004; Sosnaud et al. 2013), consequently meaning that people with a different economic situation can use very different measures to come to the same conclusion concerning their class position. I find that social comparison further plays a role when taking the geographical living

situation of people into account. While their spatial and social isolation (Lichter et al. 2007) does not lead them to inflate, these people are more likely to deflate their class because they perceive their class position as lesser than their material peers living in a bigger city despite being in a similar occupational situation (Cotter 2002; Duncan 1996; Tickamyer et al. 1990).

In addition to status inconsistency, my findings demonstrate cross-cutting social identities to play a role in the chances of class discordance as well. I anticipated religious and ethnic minorities in the middle and high class to have a higher chance of discordance because of their marginalized identity motivating them to identify with their religious or ethnic peers across class boundaries (Harrison et al. 2002; Schulman et al. 1985; Roediger 1999; Nickell 1997) and find this to be confirmed mainly for ethnic minorities. Whereas Catholics are slightly more likely to deflate when they are part of the material higher class, I mainly see that Black Americans in the material middle and even more so in the material high class are far more likely to deflate compared with their White counterparts. While Black Americans are mainly part of the material working class (Lichter, Qian & Crowley 2005; Mingione 2008), I find that those who are not, are far more likely than White Americans to identify as such. This happens because Black Americans often live geographically segregated (Iceland et al. 2002; Massey et al. 2009) motivating them to feel a bond with their ethnic peers who are primarily part of the working class (Massey et al. 1993; Pattillo 2013). While something similar emerges for the Catholics in the material middle and higher class the effect is smaller. A possible explanation is that because religious minorities less often live clustered together, this results in weaker bond across class boundaries than is the case for Black Americans (Iceland et al. 2002).

Further, this identification across class boundaries also emerges for union members. While I anticipated them to be either more concordant (Jackman et al. 1985) or more likely to inflate (Clawson et al. 1999), I find them to be more likely to deflate when they are not part of the material working class. Being a union member is thus associated with a tendency to perceive yourself as part of the working class. A somewhat similar finding emerges in regards to political identity. I anticipated those people not identifying with the political party controlling the political climate to be more likely of deflating their class, but do not find any indications of this. Rather I find that those identifying as Republicans are more likely than Democrats to inflate their class when materially part of the working or middle class. This can be explained by the fact that Democrats are in general more in favor of a redistributive welfare system (Sosnaud et al. 2013) and less often situate themselves at the top of the social stratification. However, already hinted at by Kelley et al. (1995), these findings on union membership and political identity raise the question whether being part of a union or having a certain political conviction

influences how people perceive their class position or whether it is how people see their place in social stratification that motivates their decision of joining a union or forming a political identity.

To summarize, my study further extends on the findings of Sosnaud et al. (2013) by showing how the importance and magnitude of status inconsistency and cross-cutting identities influencing how people perceive their class position is dependent on one's particular material class background. Status inconsistency plays an important role but a class identity is influenced by reasons going beyond purely economic factors. Holding a marginalized social identity also plays a pivotal role in how people perceive their class position. Religious, political and ethnic identity, next to union membership, can unite people in a way that transcends class boundaries.

These findings strongly nuance the traditional idea of *interest group theory* where society is seen as being organized by distinct economic classes with strong intra-class identification and concomitantly interclass aversion (Jackman et al. 1973). However, when going beyond the purely economic motivations, the mechanism behind the interest group theory, entailing that people are inclined to put emphasis on those aspects of their lives they deem to be important in building their class identity is not rejected by my findings. On the contrary, since class discordance could be important in how people behave (Evans et al. 2017), I argue that subjective social classes can be an expression of what people perceive to be in their own best interest. While interest group theory is commonly used to try to explain why people subjectively identify with their material class, it can consequently also help explain why people do not do so.

While the approach and resulting findings in this chapter generate more insight into class discordance, there are some limitations as well. First of all, in regards to socio-economic background, while I did not find one's family situation to be of importance, there are indications that people who have a life partner build their image and perception of their own class position not only based on their own characteristics, but also on those of the partner (Baxter 1994; Erikson 1984). While the used data did not allow to take the occupational or class background of a potential partner into account, apart for controlling for marital status, this could be addressed in future research. Furthermore, in the last years there has been a strong rise of new forms of often insecure, temporary or infrequent labor (Friedman 2014). Related, the rise of the so called 'gig-economy' brings the risk of certain stable working or middle class jobs becoming less secure (Graham & Wood 2016). While my data does not contain information on this, despite

the benefits these new trends bring (De Stefano 2015), these developments could also further challenge current conceptualizations of class and be a factor contributing to class discordance.

Additionally, while I find both status inconsistency as cross-cutting identities to be of importance, further research could shed more light on how these two factors contributing to class discordance interact. For example, I find those part of the material middle or higher class who live in bigger cities to be less likely to display discordance because they have a better overview of the social stratification. However, it could be that at the same time this motivates minority groups to have a more salient minority identity because of the greater diversity in bigger cities compared to rural areas. Next, while I do find that belonging to a religious minority bears some importance in regards to class discordance, data allowing to distinguish between several Protestant denominations could provide additional insights. Further, it would be relevant to focus more on the causality between on the one hand union membership and political identity and on the other hand class identity, in order to clarify whether these social identities influence class identity or whether this also occurs in the other direction. Whereas Lockwood (1969) claims that there is not necessarily a strong link between unionism, political identity and class consciousness, qualitative work by Moore (2010) does find indications of such relationships existing.

Next, while my study is able to capture the effect of several important aspects of people's social identity there are still other potentially cross-cutting identities I could not include because of data-limitations such as gender identity and national identity. Since certain groups will feel marginalized, these could also play an important role. Finally, I explored the possibility of a macro-effect of the ethnic, religious or political composition of the American society in every time period, but did not find this to be of importance. However, when extending this research to the European context, this macro-effect could be relevant due to the greater disparities between countries than between time waves.

In the light of current debates about the so-called 'death of class' (Pakulski et al. 1996; Houtman et al. 2009), these findings consequently help provide additional insights as to why social class could be losing importance. To summarize, both status inconsistency and cross-cutting social identities are of vital importance when explaining why individuals do not identify as part of the material social class they are part of. In the next chapter I will further zoom in on the (socioeconomic) causes of class discordance by assessing the impact of social mobility, as an additional example of discrepancies in one's socio-economic background.

CHAPTER 3

Explaining class discordance: the role of social mobility across space and time

A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal

ABSTRACT

Research on material and subjective social class shows that half of the population in both the United States and Europe experience discordant class positions, which means that they do not identify with their material class. In this chapter I further explore the causes of class discordance by testing how social mobility helps explain its occurrence in the United States and Europe. I look into this by using the GSS 1988-2014 and the ISSP 2009 and employ a class scheme measuring material class based on occupation. These classes are matched with 3 subjective classes. This allows to investigate how class divergence has evolved over time in the United States and exists in contemporary Europe and assess how social mobility at both the individual as the societal level predicts chances of having a coinciding material and subjective class position or an overestimated or underestimated subjective class. My results show that social mobility is vital for explaining class discordance in both the US and Europe, although there are some differences. Generally, those who are upwardly mobile are more likely to identify lower than their material class while those who are downwardly mobile are much more likely to do the opposite. When mobility at the societal level increases there are some slight differences concerning the impact on those who are socially mobile across the studied contexts. Whereas in the United States those downwardly mobile are more likely to overestimate their class, in Europe those who are upwardly and downwardly mobile both are less likely to underestimate their class position.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained previously a rich scholarship shows that people subjectively identify with a social class, next to materially belonging to one (Jackman et al. 1973; Jackman 1979; Mackenzie et al. 2006). Summarized, the findings in chapter 2 confirm that a substantial part of the population do not identify with their material class position. This is related on the one hand to people often holding several salient identities such as gender, ethnicity and religious denomination (Achterberg et al. 2009; Doane 1997; Lewis 2004; Knowles et al. 2005), impacting the class identity of certain minority groups, while on the other hand a class identity is also strongly influenced by one's socioeconomic background (Dahrendorf 1959; Hout 2008; Savage 2001). In this chapter I elaborate on this latter finding by focusing on socio-economic transition by means of social mobility. Studying the United States and Europe, I empirically verify whether social mobility plays a role in class discordance occurring by assessing whether socially mobile individuals subjectively identify with another class position than their current material class position. In doing so, I trace trends in class concordance and discordance, both inflating and deflating, in the past decades in the United States and across countries in the European context. By using individual and contextual information on social mobility this allows to empirically verify whether social mobility confounds these trends.

While the material class position people occupy certainly plays a role in their class identification, this can be obscured by changes in their material class position through social mobility (Daenekindt et al. 2014; Bourdieu 1984, Bourdieu 1987; Weakliem 1992; Savage 2001). Upward or downward social mobility causes tension between two class positions influencing one's class identity for those who are mobile and in addition can influence social closure of class in general (e.g. Nieuwbeerta & Ultee 1999; Abramson & Books, 1971). Given recent insights on the continuing importance of class identity (Robinson et al. 2017) and the tendency of a significant part of the population to identify with a different class as the one they materially are part of (see Sosnaud et al. 2013), this chapter aims to advance understanding on how social mobility can help explain class discordance.

By analyzing the American and European context, I focus on a broad social class spectrum by paying attention to both the United States as a textbook example of a non-class based society (Ogmondson & Ng 1982; Manza & Brooks 1999; Sombart 1906; 1976) as well as focusing on European countries, where class bears a greater importance (Alford, 1963a; 1963b; Andersen et al. 2012). To answer my research questions I will use the General Social Survey between 1988 and 2014 to study changes in American society, and the International Social Survey Program (2009) to explain differences

across European societies. Analyzing these surveys, I aim at answering the following questions: (1) Has class discordance changed over time in the United States? (2) If so, to what extent is social mobility influencing this trend? (3) Can similar explanations clarify differences between and within European countries in class discordance? Below, I discuss my expectations on the role of social mobility in explaining the occurrence of class discordance in the United States and Europe.

3.2 WHY DON'T PEOPLE IDENTIFY WITH THEIR MATERIAL CLASS POSITION?

As earlier described, interest group theory is often used to explain why individuals should identify as part of their material class, according to which a shared occupational context is the basis of a shared class identification (Jackman et al. 1973; Evans et al. 2004 Kelley et al. 1995 Wolff et al. 2010). These theories cannot explain why class discordance exists (see the previous chapter and Sosnaud et al. 2013) while my earlier findings show social identity and individual socioeconomic discrepancies to be of importance.

An additional important reason why class discordance occurs can be the absence of social closure, expressed by intergenerational social mobility. As explained by Lipset and Bendix (1991, pp. 1-2): *"The term "social mobility" refers to the process by which individuals move from one position to another in society - positions which by general consent have been given specific hierarchical values. When we study social mobility we analyze the movement of individuals from positions possessing a certain rank to positions either higher or lower in the social system."*

Theoretically, being socially mobile may impact one's class identification through two distinct yet related mechanisms. Some scholars argue that through a process of anticipatory socialization, socially mobile people adapt to the norms, values and attitudes of their prospective social class (Abramson et al. 1971; Goodman & Barenblatt 1978; Paterson 2008). These studies do not claim that the idea of *habitus*, which entails that people form their whole set of attitudes, values and preferences during their childhood (Bourdieu 1984), does not exist but rather that people leave behind this old class identity formed through primary socialization and adopt a new one when they move from one class to another (Lane & Ellis 1968). Although people will certainly adapt to their newly acquired class positions in a certain way, this mechanism will not help to explain class discordance. The second mechanism will, however, do exactly this. A rich literature suggests that people move from one class to another but still identify as part of their old social class (Daenekindt et al. 2014; Bourdieu 1984; 1987; Weakliem 1992).

Even when people are socially mobile *habitus* continues to assert its influence on the way individuals think and perceive their place in society. Influenced by their parents and the rest of their social environment, including their social class position, people interiorize the attitudinal and behavioural norms of their social class, and carry these for the rest of their lives (Bourdieu 1984; 1987; Bracke & Brutsaert 2008). While the concept of *habitus* is open for adaptation through new experiences, these new experiences will always be seen through the lens developed in one's youth, which means that there is still a dominance of the class of origin (Bourdieu 1987; Daenekindt et al. 2014; Weakliem 1992). This dominance of the primary socialization one undergoes is anticipated to be a vital reason for class discordance: those who are socially mobile still identify with their class of origin. This leads to my first hypothesis in which I *expect that those who are socially mobile are more likely to experience class discordance. More precisely those who are upwardly mobile are more likely to deflate, or underestimate, their class position while those who are downwardly mobile are more likely to inflate, or overestimate, their class position.*

While in this hypothesis I expect those who are socially mobile to be still influenced through *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984) by the class identity they were socialized in, there are reasons to assume this effect to differ in strength between those upwardly and downwardly mobile. Socially mobile people to a degree still feel part of the class they were socialized in, but are at the same time inclined to maximize their status i.e. to identify as part of the highest social class they feel part of (De Graaf & et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011). This makes those upwardly mobile to have a tendency to adapt to the attitudes and values of their new class because of the higher status associated with it (Abramson et al. 1971). Since occupying a position with a higher status derives its value from being a scarce good, social closure acts as a defense mechanism resulting in new, upwardly mobile, members often not being fully accepted (Gorman 2000; Gray & Kish-Gephart 2013; Kessin 1971). Those downwardly mobile often hope to reclaim their former class position with a higher status (Zhao et al. 2017), but also wish to adapt to their new class position (Goodman et al. 1978; Paterson 2008). Since this lower position and the associated lower status is less scarce, social closure is much less of an issue for these people, making it easier to be accepted. While adapting to a certain degree to their new class, both those who are upwardly or downwardly mobile maintain a shared identity with those who remained in the social class they themselves were once part of, making them both more likely to be discordant than those who are not mobile (Savage 2001; Stuber 2005). But because the downwardly mobile group is more easily accepted in their new social class compared to the upwardly mobile group, the latter group will be more likely to maintain its old class identity and thus have a higher likelihood of being discordant than those downwardly mobile (Gorman 2000; Gray et al. 2013; Zhao et al. 2017). In essence, intergenerational social mobility confuses people about their

class identity and thus can lead to class discordance (compare Nieuwbeerta et al. 1999). But I expect the magnitude of this effect to differ depending on the direction. In my second hypothesis I anticipate that *those who are upwardly mobile have higher odds of deflating their class than the odds of downwardly mobile individuals to inflate their class.*

In addition, social mobility does not only affect people through their personal experience, but can also be important at the societal level through two contradictory mechanisms. On the one hand there are studies claiming that, across Western countries, it is the possibility of movement between social strata that shapes social classes (Featherman et al. 1975). When people share common interests and realize they are alike in an economical sense, collective action happens i.e. a social class is formed (Sorensen 1975). In this process social mobility plays an important regulating role by determining who ends up in a particular social class (Sorensen 1991). According to this line of research, movement between different levels of achievement in regards to occupation, plays a fundamental role in the existence of social classes. Which implies that a more open society with more social mobility, would result in better defined social classes and thus lower chances of class discordance. On the other hand there is a strong empirical tradition challenging this by demonstrating that the degree of social mobility in a society does the exact opposite by lowering the cohesion in and awareness of being part of a social class. When there is more social mobility in a society, class awareness lowers because of the fluidity of one's class position and this results in decreasing solidarity within classes (Lipset & Bendix 1991; Sombart 1976). This in return heightens chances of discordance because those who are mobile become less likely to feel part of their new material class (De Graaf, Nieuwbeerta & Heath 1995). However, there are theoretical reasons to assume that this does not work in the same way for the upwardly and downwardly mobile. The former group tends to deflate their class position because they are often confronted with social closure in their class of destination, which diminishes in the case of more social mobility because more mobility lowers class cohesion (Gorman 2000; Gray & Kish-Gephart 2013; Kessin 1971; De Graaf et al. 1995). And since people tend to maximize the social status of their position (De Graaf et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011), it is plausible for upwardly mobile people to be less likely to deflate their class in the case of more social mobility at the societal level. This mechanism does not work for those who are downwardly mobile since they are not necessarily confronted with social closure but rather overestimate their social class because they still aspire to regain their former social position (Zhao et al. 2017). To summarize, in my third hypothesis I expect that *more social mobility in a society leads to a higher prevalence of class discordance.* However, because this entails less social closure, in my fourth hypothesis I anticipate that *more social mobility in a society decreases the odds of upwardly mobile people to deflate their class position.*

To summarize my hypotheses, following the line of reasoning in which people habitually remain to be influenced by their class identity related to their class of origin, I first expect that *(i) in both the United States as Europe, those who are socially mobile are more likely to experience class discordance than those who are not mobile, more precisely those who are upwardly mobile are more likely to deflate, or underestimate, their class position while those who are downwardly mobile are more likely to inflate, or overestimate, their class position.* Second, because they are to a different degree confronted with social closure, I anticipate that *(ii) those who are upwardly mobile have higher odds of deflating their class than the odds of downwardly mobile individuals to inflate their class.* Furthermore, I have hypotheses on the impact of the prevalence of social mobility at the societal level where I thirdly expect *(iii) that the level of total mobility in a society has a positive effect on the likelihood of individuals experiencing class discordance.* Finally, *(iv) I expect the likelihood of upwardly mobile individuals to deflate their class position to decrease when there is more social mobility, because of a decline in social closure.*

3.3 DATA AND METHODS

3.3.1 Sample

For this chapter, with regard to the American context, 16 waves of the General Social Survey between 1988 and 2014 will be used. The International Social Survey Programme 2009 is used for the European context. After excluding missing values because of people not answering the questions concerning their occupation, the occupation of their parents or their class identification, I collected 19,349 respondents for analysis in the 16 waves of the pooled GSS-dataset while the ISSP-dataset contains 16,706 respondents from 20 countries⁶.

3.3.2 Dependent variable

To study class discordance, it is necessary to correspond people's material social class and their subjective class identification. To do so, I divide material and subjective class positions in three categories: working class, middle class and high class. These three material social classes are reduced from the ISCO88-information to the following three social classes: (1) working class (skilled/unskilled workers and farm laborers), (2) middle class (lower controllers, routine non-manual/lower-service sales and self-employed farmers) and (3) higher class (higher controllers). In order to further validate my findings, I conduct two robustness checks concerning the class scheme I use. First, while the

6. Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

current class scheme distinguishes between higher professionals, other non-manual occupations, and manual occupations, in a robustness check I code lower controllers as higher class so that the higher class is less exclusive and also includes lower professionals and managerial occupations. This results in a class scheme consisting of professionals and managers, lower white collar workers, and manual occupations (see Lindemann & Saar 2014). In a second robustness check, I validate my findings by controlling for income since it is possible that in the middle class including the lower-service sales occupations, there are people with a low income while there is also the possibility of skilled workers with a high income which could influence my results on class discordance (Braverman 1998; Klein and Roness 1989; Lohmann 2009).

TABLE 3.1 Material social class in the United States and Europe

Condensed classification	Survey categorization	United States		Europe	
		N	%	N	%
Higher class	Higher Controllers	2810	14.5	2019	12.1
Middle class	Lower Controllers	5484	28.3	3818	22.8
	Routine Nonmanual & Lower Sales Service	4262	22.0	4626	27.7
	Self-employed Farmer	173	0.9	65	0.4
Working class	Skilled Worker	2780	14.4	2684	16.1
	Unskilled Worker	3357	17.3	2749	16.5
	Farm Laborer	483	2.5	750	4.5
Total		19349	100	16706	100

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014 / International Social Survey Programme 2009

Subjective social class identification, then, in the United States consist of three categories reduced from four categories in the survey (see Table 3.2a): (1) Lower class, (2) Working class, (3) Middle class and (4) Upper class. In Europe subjective class consists of three categories that are reduced from a six-fold subjective class scheme in my dataset (see Table 3.2b). The survey asked to what social class individuals belonged to distinguishing between (1) Lower class, (2) Working class, (3) Lower middle class, (4) Middle class (5) Upper middle class and (6) Upper class. Coherent to the material class operationalization I distinguish between the working class (lower, working and lower middle), the middle class (middle), and higher class (upper middle and upper class).

TABLE 3.2A Subjective social class identification in the United States

Condensed classification	Subjective social class	N	Percentage
Higher class	Upper class	578	3.0
Middle class	Middle class	8538	44.1
Working Class	Working class	9052	46.8
	Lower class	1181	6.1
Total		19349	100

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014

TABLE 3.2B Subjective social class identification in Europe⁷

Condensed classification	Subjective social class	N	Percentage
Higher class	Upper class	112	0.7
	Upper middle class	1501	9.0
Middle class	Middle class	7523	45.0
Working class	Lower middle class	2659	15.9
	Working class	4194	25.1
	Lower class	717	4.3
Total		16706	100

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2009

To study the factors contributing to a mismatch between subjective and material social class, I cross the three subjective with the three material class positions, leading to three categories, as is highlighted in Table 3.3. This scheme consists of those with a *concordant* class combination which represents those respondents whose material and subjective class coincide. Furthermore it is also possible to have an *inflated* class combination which means that a respondent identifies with a higher social class than their material class based on their occupation. Finally, it is also possible to have a *deflated* class combination which refers to a situation in which a respondent identifies as part of social class lower than his/her material class. In Table 3.3 the percentages of

7. Despite labelling themselves as lower middle class or upper middle class, I do not include these respondents in the subjective middle class but respectively in the subjective working and higher class in (part of) the analyses in chapters 3 and 5 (while my approach is somewhat different in chapter 4, as explained in footnote 20). I do so because terms as 'lower' and 'upper' have a distinctly different meaning compared to 'middle' (Adair 2001; also see Evans et al. 2004). There are indications that people refrain from using these labels unless they see themselves as different from the middle class (Adair 2001). This is also reflected in the ANES-data, which I use in a robustness check described in section 3.5.1, where 'upper middle' is the highest subjective category. However, to test the extent in which my empirical choices regarding the coding of subjective class affect the findings, I conduct several additional robustness checks which are described in section 3.5.2.

respondents with deflated, concordant or inflated class combinations are highlighted. More than half of the American sample in the period 1988-2014 has a different material and subjective social class (while 48.2% has a concordant class combination, respectively 39.2% and 12.6% of the sample have a deflated and inflated class combination). In the European sample 56.6% of the respondents have a concordant class combination, while respectively 26.5% and 16.9% of the sample have a deflated or inflated class combination.

TABLE 3.3 Degree of deflated, concordant and inflated class combinations by material social class in Europe

Class combination	United States	Europe
Deflated	7590 (39.2)	4426 (26.5)
Concordant	9325 (48.2)	9458 (56.6)
Inflated	2434 (12.6)	2822 (16.9)
N	19349	16706

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014 & International Social Survey Programme 2009

3.3.3 Independent variables

My independent variable measuring social mobility is constructed by combining information on the current occupational activity⁸ and the occupational activity of the father when the respondent was growing up (or the occupational activity of the mother when the father was deceased or when the respondent was not raised by the father).

Just as with the occupational activity of the respondents I constructed a three-fold class scheme, derived from ISCO88-codes for the occupational activity of the father (or in certain cases the mother). In both the American as European data, the occupational activity of the father is measured with 3 classes derived from ISCO88 codes: (1) Working class (skilled/unskilled workers and farm laborers), (2) Middle class (lower controllers, routine non-manual/lower-service sales and self-employed farmers) and (3) High class (higher controllers). Finally, the respondents' social class was combined with the social class of the father which leads to the options: (1) upwardly socially mobile when one's social class is higher than that of the father, (2) not socially mobile when the two social classes coincide or (3) downwardly socially mobile when the respondents' social class is lower than that of the father.

8. For the United States the latest occupational activity when the respondent is retired or unemployed is used while this information is not available for the European sample.

3.3.4 Control variables

Finally, I add control variables to both the individual and contextual level. At the individual level my analyses are further controlled for religion since it can affect the importance of class identity (Verkuyten et al. 2007). Furthermore, I also account for age, gender, marital status and education as control variables. At the contextual level the analyses are controlled for the share of unemployment, by controlling for the percentage of the population that is unemployed, because this can influence class identity (Lindemann et al. 2014; De Graaf et al. 1995; Young & Pedragal 1999)⁹. The descriptives of the control variables are presented in Table A3.1.

3.3.5 Method

In order to estimate how being socially mobile affects the odds of class discordance, I use a two-step approach. In a first step, I use Diagonal Mobility Models (DMM) in order to assess how one's class of origin and destination influence class identity and discordance. This method is designed by Sobel (1981; 1985) and allows to disentangle the effect of social mobility, class of origin and class of destination by comparing those who are not socially mobile with those who are. Or in other words, it allows to estimate the net effect of social mobility and has been proven very useful in sociological research¹⁰ (see Daenekindt et al. 2011; Tolsma, De Graaf & Quilian 2009; Weakliem 1992). This net effect of social mobility is expressed through a parameter p theoretically ranging between 0 and 1, where a results higher than 0.5 indicates a stronger impact of class of origin on the dependent variable while a result lower than 0.5 indicates a stronger impact of class of destination.

However, because the current material class position of a respondent is both part of the independent variable measuring social mobility and the dependent variable measuring class discordance, these DMMs do not culminate in a correct estimate because the data does not theoretically fit the model. Instead, I use class identity as dependent variable since this also allows to answer the research question on whether social mobility affects class discordance. If social mobility does not have any importance, then the parameter p estimate should be 0, meaning that only the class of destination (i.e. the current class

9. I also tested models controlling for inequality measured by the Gini-coefficient and economic growth measured by GDP in the models. Because of multicollinearity however, I did not include these in the presented models.

10. While this method would methodologically be applicable to study the consequences of class discordance as well given that it also entails 'movement' between social positions, theoretically this would not be a suitable option since this method expresses the relative impact of both social positions without estimating the magnitude of the effects, which is exactly what I'm interested in. Consequently, an approach taking class combinations into account is the preferable option in the following chapters studying the consequences of class discordance.

position) plays a role in how socially mobile people perceive their class position. If the parameter estimate is different from 0, this means that social mobility does play a certain role in explaining why class discordance occurs.

In a second step I extend on this by not only studying whether social mobility plays a role but by assessing how it results in a certain likelihood of inflating or deflating one's class position and by assessing the magnitude of this effect. Because of the nested data structure (respectively respondents within years for the US context, and respondents within countries for the European context), I apply the GENLIMIXED-procedure in SPSS in order to estimate multilevel multinomial logistic regression models with random intercepts. Given my interest in contextual effects, this method is best suited to estimate the effect of both contextual and individual effects on the likelihood of having an inflated (or overestimated) and deflated (or underestimated) subjective class identity, with concordant positions as the reference category (Agresti et al. 2011). Additionally, since those who are part of the working class cannot deflate their class position while those part of the higher class cannot inflate it, I validate my results by conducting a sensitivity analysis only on the middle class. This is further discussed in the section on robustness checks.

3.4 RESULTS

3.4.1 United States longitudinal analysis

3.4.1.1 Exploration

Before turning to more refined analysis, Figure 3.1 displays the evolution of class discordance and the degree of social mobility in the United States between 1988 and 2014. Both the degree of discordance and social mobility have remained more or less similar with some fluctuations over time. There is a fairly weak correlation between social mobility and class discordance ($R: -0.23$). This indicates that in times of more social mobility, there is less class discordance.

In the pooled American sample, I find an overall p -parameter of 0.357 (0.02). Since this is higher than 0, this means that in the case of social mobility the class of destination (a respondents' current class position) has the strongest relative impact on one's class identity, but also the class of origin plays a role, indicating social mobility to be a factor in class discordance. Figure 3.2 shows some fluctuation of the relative impact of class of origin over time but demonstrates that when people are mobile both the relative impact of origin as of destination influences one's class identity.

EVOLUTION OF CLASS DISCORDANCE AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN THE US 1988-2014

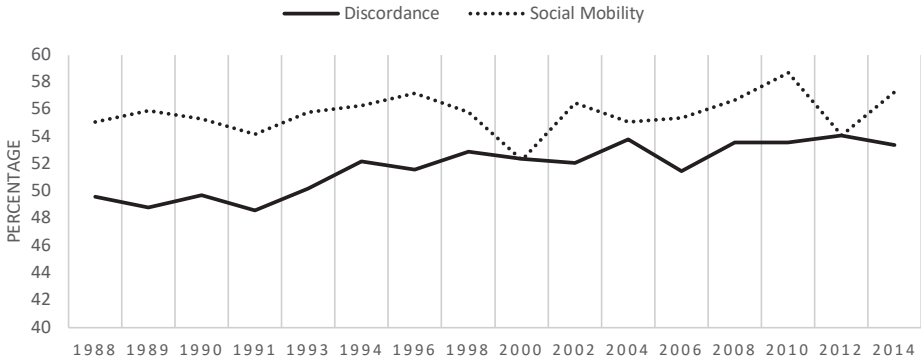


FIGURE 3.1 Evolution of class discordance and social mobility in the US 1988-2014

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014. Note: The dark trendline shows the evolution over time of the percentage of the American sample who are discordant, i.e. those who over- or underestimate their social class position. The dotted trendline shows the evolution of the percentage of the American sample who are socially mobile over time.

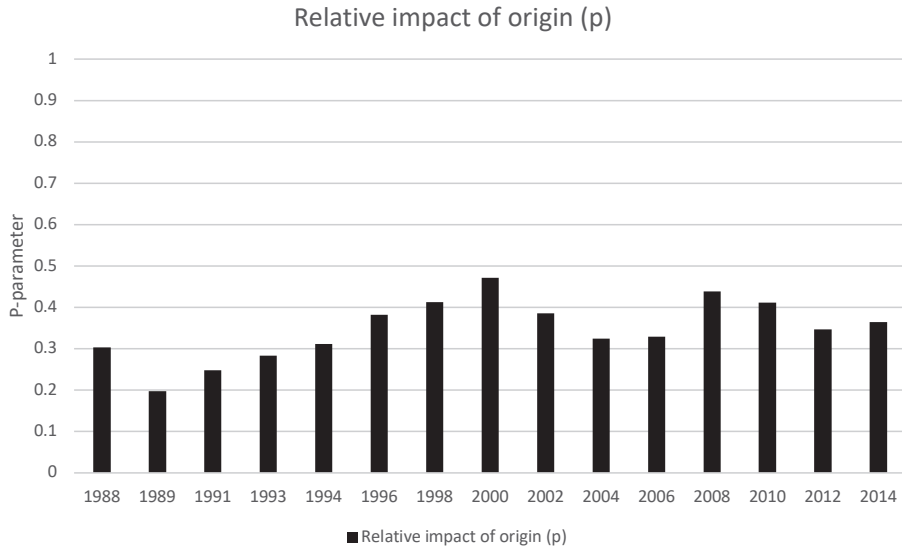


FIGURE 3.2 The relative weight of class of origin of socially mobile individuals

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014. Note: The columns represent the p-parameter obtained from Diagonal Mobility Models by year in the United States. A score closer to 0 and below 0.5 implies a stronger relative impact of class of destination (current class position) on class identity while a score above 0.5 and closer to 1 implies a stronger relative impact of class of origin (parental class during the respondents' youth). This figure demonstrates how despite some fluctuations, both the relative impact of origin and destination are important over time in the United States.

3.4.1.2 Multinomial regression

Since in the case of social mobility both the class position of respondents and the one they grew up in impacts their class identity, and in consequence their chances of class discordance, I analyze this further by means of multinomial logistic regressions in order to assess the odds of socially mobile respondents to overestimate or underestimate their social class position. The results of the multinomial logistic regression models in Table 3.4, while controlling for potential confounders¹¹, allow to draw some conclusions on the United States first. I formulated hypotheses on both the individual level and cross-level interactions between social mobility on the one hand and the share of the socially mobile group in a society on the other. All the estimates are presented as odds-ratios, which means that they are an expression of the likelihood of inflation or deflation for those who are socially mobile in contrast with those who are not. A coefficient of 1 means that they are equally likely to do so, while a coefficient lower or higher than 1 respectively expresses how much less and more times likely it is for socially mobile people to inflate or deflate in contrast with those who are not socially mobile.

In Models 2a and 2b, as anticipated, upwardly mobile individuals have a lower chance of inflating but are more likely to deflate their class position because of their habitus. Since odds-ratios express a relative likelihood, these models show how those who are upwardly mobile are about 0.16 times as likely to inflate or overestimate their class position while being about 4 times more likely to deflate or underestimate their class position in contrast to those who are not mobile.

Those downwardly mobile show the opposite: while they are more likely of inflating their class position (about 1.5 times more likely than the non-mobile), they have lower odds of deflating since they too tend to maintain their former class identity. Next to the individual effect of social mobility I expected the chances of mobility to be positively associated with the share of people with discordant class positions. The correlation from Figure 3.1 does not support this idea, while the results in Models 2a and 2b corroborate this finding and do not confirm the expectation of more mobility resulting in more discordance. When observing the non-significant intercept variance, the results illustrate that there is not much variation between the years of study in the United States. However, in Model 3a it shows that the interaction between the degree of mobility and being downwardly mobile renders to be significant. While those who are downwardly mobile are more likely to inflate or overestimate their class, they tend to do

11. Those in the United States with a higher education are less likely to inflate but more likely to deflate than the lower educated. The older people get, the higher their odds of inflating but the lower for deflating. Furthermore, women have lower odds of inflating but higher odds of deflating, while singles are more likely to deflate. Lastly, other religions or not being religious results in higher odds of deflating.

TABLE 3.4 Social mobility logistically regressed on class discordance in the United States

	Inflator			Deflator		
	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 3a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 3b
Constant	1.142 (1.35)	0.477 (1.32)	2.171 (1.59)	0.086 (1.44)	0.123 (1.57)	0.175 (1.69)
Individual effects						
Social Mobility						
Not mobile (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upwardly	0.161 (0.12)***	0.161 (0.12)***	0.000 (5.08)	4.115 (0.04)***	4.116 (0.04)***	2.413 (1.40)
Downwardly	1.540 (0.05)***	1.540 (0.05)***	0.107 (1.81)	0.272 (0.05)***	0.272 (0.05)***	0.082 (1.99)
Religion						
Protestant (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Catholic	1.038 (0.06)	1.037 (0.06)	1.038 (0.06)	0.922 (0.04)	0.922 (0.04)	0.922 (0.04)
Not religious	0.861 (0.08)	0.860 (0.08)	0.859 (0.08)	1.144 (0.05)*	1.143 (0.05)*	1.142 (0.05)*
Other	1.050 (0.11)	1.051 (0.11)	1.052 (0.11)	1.362 (0.07)***	1.360 (0.07)***	1.361 (0.07)***
Education						
No tertiary education (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tertiary education	0.550 (0.07)***	0.550 (0.07)***	0.550 (0.07)***	1.338 (0.04)***	1.337 (0.04)***	1.337 (0.04)***
Marital Status						
Married or having a partner (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Single	0.923 (0.05)	0.923 (0.05)	0.922 (0.05)	1.134 (0.04)***	1.134 (0.04)***	1.133 (0.04)***
Gender						
Male (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.639 (0.05)***	0.639 (0.05)***	0.639 (0.05)***	1.430 (0.04)***	1.430 (0.04)***	1.430 (0.04)***
Age	1.012 (0.00)***	1.012 (0.00)***	1.012 (0.00)***	0.986 (0.00)***	0.986 (0.00)***	0.986 (0.00)***
Contextual effects						
Share of the population that is socially mobile	0.970 (0.02)	0.990 (0.02)	0.964 (0.03)	1.040 (0.03)	1.031 (0.03)	1.025 (0.03)
Share of the population that is unemployed		0.952 (0.03)	0.951 (0.03)		1.022 (0.03)	1.022 (0.03)

TABLE 3.4 (Continued)

	Inflator			Deflator		
	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 3a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 3b
Share Mobility						
X Not mobile (Ref.)			-			-
X Upwardly mobile			1.049 (0.03)			1.022 (0.04)
X Downwardly mobile			1.198 (0.09)*			1.100 (0.03)
Intercept variance	0.011 (0.01)	0.008 (0.00)	0.008 (0.07)	0.018 (0.01)	0.019(0.01)	0.019 (0.01)
-2loglikelihood	166159.77	166187.23	166120.23	166159.77	166187.23	166120.23

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014. * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. Entries represent the results of two multinomial logistic regressions using Genlinmixed.

so even more often when the degree of mobility in society increases. When the degree of mobility increases with a percentile point, those downwardly mobile get 1.2 times more likely to inflate than those who are not socially mobile.

3.4.2 European cross-national analysis

3.4.2.1 Exploration

Again before turning to a more refined analysis, Figure 3.3 shows the degree of class discordance and social mobility in the 20 European countries in the analyses. While there are differences between the European countries, there is a moderate correlation (R: 0.54) between social mobility and class discordance. This means that in countries with a high degree of social mobility, class discordance is also higher, as expected.

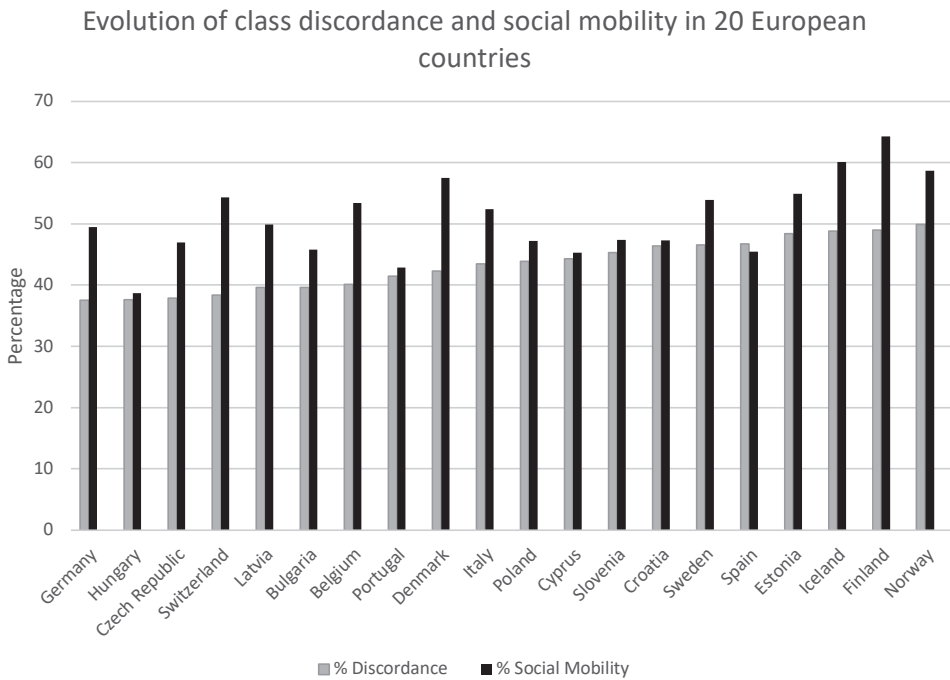


FIGURE 3.3 Class discordance and social mobility in 20 European countries

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2009 Note: The grey columns show the percentage of the European sample being discordant by country. The black columns show the percentage of the European sample being socially mobile by country. Countries are ranked in ascending order according to the degree of discordance.

In the pooled European sample an overall p -parameter of 0.271 (0.03) comes forward. This again indicates that in the case of social mobility both class of origin and destination have a relative impact on one's class identity. Figure 3.4 shows that there are some differences between European countries but in all countries both class of origin and class of destination influence how people identify and in consequence indicate that social mobility can play a role in the occurrence of class discordance.

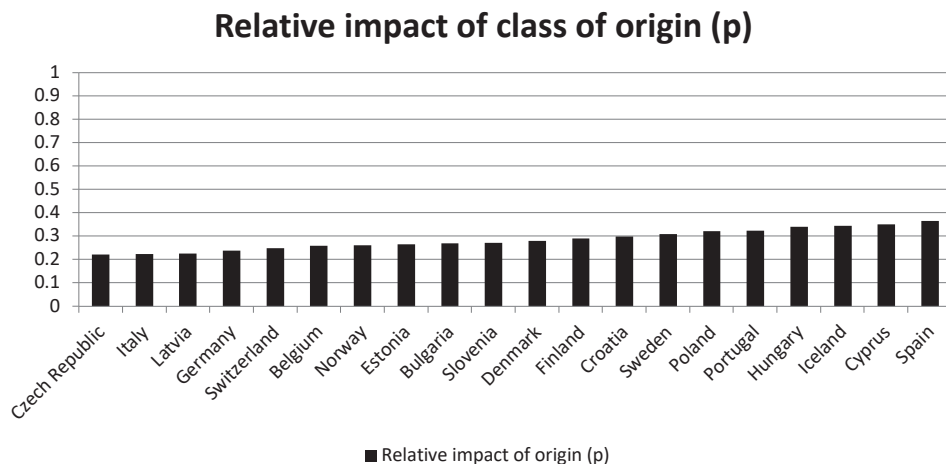


FIGURE 3.4 The relative weight of class of origin of socially mobile individuals in 20 European countries

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2009 Note: The columns represent the p -parameter obtained from Diagonal Mobility Models by country. A score closer to 0 and below 0.5 implies a stronger relative impact of class of destination (current class position) on class identity while a score above 0.5 and closer to 1 implies a stronger relative impact of class of origin (parental class during the respondents' youth). This figure demonstrates how in all studied countries both the relative impact of origin and destination are important.

3.4.4.2 Multinomial regression

Next, the results of the multinomial logistic regression models in Table 3.5, while controlling for potential confounders¹², allow to draw some conclusions on the magnitude of the effect of being socially mobile in Europe. Regarding social mobility there are differences and similarities with the United States. Contrary to years in the United States, the intercept variance shows significant variation between countries. Besides this difference, however, again my expectations that those upwardly mobile

12. Those in Europe who are higher educated are both more likely to inflate as to deflate than the lower educated. Women have lower odds of inflation but higher odds of deflation. Furthermore, singles have lower odds of inflating and higher odds of deflating while older Europeans are less likely to inflate or deflate.

are more likely to deflate while those downwardly mobile are more likely to inflate, both because of the importance of their class of origin, is confirmed in Models 2a and 2b of Table 3.5. When people are upwardly mobile they are almost 5 times as likely to underestimate their class position while only being about 0.3 as likely to inflate or overestimate in contrast with those who are not mobile. Those who are downwardly mobile show the opposite pattern, albeit with lower odds than those upwardly mobile. They are about 0.6 as likely to deflate and 1.6 as likely to inflate in contrast to the non-mobile. So for both socially mobile groups the class of origin renders to be important in their class identity and in consequence the odds of class discordance, although the effect is more outspoken for those upwardly mobile than those downwardly mobile.

Furthermore, as was the case in the United States, the degree of class discordance is not impacted by changes in the degree of social mobility at the societal level. However when adding cross-level interactions for social mobility I find in Model 3b that the odds of socially mobile individuals to deflate their class position decrease when there is more social mobility. Especially for those upwardly mobile this effect is meaningful. While the cross-level effect is fairly small, it means that they are about 5 times as likely to deflate their class in contrast with those who are not mobile, but with every additional percentile point of increase in the degree of social mobility in a country, they get a little less likely to do so. When a society is more open, those upwardly mobile get less likely to deflate their class position.

3.5 ROBUSTNESS

3.5.1 United States

With respect to the American sample, I conducted several robustness checks in order to validate my results. I first of all included ethnicity in the US (which was not possible in the European data, as measures for this are lacking) since a salient ethnic identity in minority groups potentially influences their class identity (DeFina & Hannon 2016; Harrison et al. 2002). Here I distinguished between White, Black and Other Americans, and found that Black Americans were slightly more likely than White Americans to deflate or underestimate their class position. Including the respondents' ethnicity in the model had no substantial impact on the estimates of social mobility and did not play an important role on its own.

TABLE 3.5 Social mobility logistically regressed on class discordance in Europe

	Inflator			Deflator		
	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 3a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 3b
Constant	0.167 (0.84)*	0.164 (1.14)	0.120 (1.15)	0.097 (0.77)**	0.051 (1.025)**	0.010 (1.12)***
Individual effects						
Social Mobility						
Not mobile (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upwardly	0.295 (0.70)***	0.295 (0.70)***	0.416 (0.58)	4.940 (0.04)***	4.941 (0.04)***	72.445 (0.36)***
Downwardly	1.606 (0.06)***	1.606 (0.06)***	2.966 (0.50)*	0.619 (0.09)***	0.619 (0.09)***	3.121 (0.70)
Religion						
Not-religious (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Religious	1.002 (0.06)	1.002 (0.06)	1.004 (0.06)	0.934 (0.05)	0.933 (0.05)	0.934 (0.05)
Education						
Basic (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Secondary	1.450 (0.07)***	1.451 (0.07)***	1.444 (0.07)***	1.393 (0.07)***	1.393 (0.07)***	1.344 (0.07)***
Post-secondary	1.460 (0.09)***	1.461 (0.09)***	1.452 (0.09)***	1.476 (0.08)***	1.477 (0.08)***	1.424 (0.08)***
University	1.578 (0.08)***	1.578 (0.08)***	1.569 (0.08)***	1.660 (0.08)***	1.661 (0.08)***	1.599 (0.08)***
Marital Status						
Married or having a partner (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Single	0.931 (0.15)***	0.931 (0.15)***	0.931 (0.01)***	1.061 (0.01)***	1.061 (0.01)***	1.059 (0.01)***
Gender						
Male (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.721 (0.05)***	0.721 (0.05)***	0.721 (0.05)***	1.274 (0.04)***	1.274 (0.04)***	1.263 (0.04)***
Age	0.997 (0.00)*	0.997 (0.00)*	0.997 (0.00)	0.996 (0.00)*	0.996 (0.00)*	0.997 (0.00)*
Contextual effects						
Share of the population that is socially mobile	1.023 (0.02)	1.023 (0.02)	1.030 (0.02)	1.002 (0.01)	1.011 (0.017)	1.044 (0.02)*
Share of the population that is unemployed	1.001 (0.04)	1.001 (0.04)	1.001 (0.04)	0.967 (0.03)	0.967 (0.03)	1.031 (0.01)

TABLE 3.5 (Continued)

	Inflator			Deflator		
	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 3a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 3b
Share Mobility						
X Not mobile (Ref.)			-		-	-
X Upwardly mobile			0.993 (0.01)			0.949 (0.00)***
X Downwardly mobile			0.988 (0.01)			0.969 (0.01)*
Intercept variance	0.193 (0.07)**	0.204 (0.07)**	0.206 (0.07)**	0.164 (0.06)**	0.166 (0.06)**	0.185 (0.07)**
-2loglikelihood	137252,30	137283,76	137678,97	137252,30	137283,76	137678,97

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2009 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. Entries represent the results of a multinomial logistic regression using Genlinmixed.

In a second robustness check, I included income information in the models. Some studies (Braverman 1998; Klein et al. 1989; Lohmann 2009) show that certain groups within the middle class have a lower income than some skilled workers in the working class, which could influence the validity of my estimates. While a higher income results in higher odds of inflating and lower odds of deflating one's class position, it has almost no mediating impact on the effect of social mobility. Since income does not mediate the role of social mobility and has about 25% missing values, I do not include it in the final models. Unfortunately, I do not have information on the parental income at the time of a respondent's childhood so I could not estimate an effect of intergenerational income mobility.

Third, I conduct an additional robustness check to test the validity of the used class scheme where the lower controllers (which are lower professional and managerial occupations) are included in the higher class instead of the middle class. Doing so does not substantially change the discovered individual effects of social mobility. At the societal level however, in times with more social mobility there is a small positive effect on the odds of inflating and a small negative effect on the odds of deflating. Fourth, I conducted a sensitivity analysis where I only selected those respondents belonging to the material middle class since they have both the possibility of inflating or deflating their class, while those in the working class can only inflate and those in the higher class can only deflate. Although the odds of discordance are lower than in the presented models using the full sample, the results do not substantially change. Separate analyses on the other two classes also confirm my general findings, which indicates that there is a consistent effect of social mobility on class discordance across social classes.

Finally, to test the robustness of the American results I use triangulation to further test the validity of the importance of social mobility over time. Since my research focuses on whether class discordance has changed between 1988 and 2014, I also tested these models by using the American National Election Study-data between 1968-1992 to better appraise the longitudinal trend. In this time period the degree of discordance has risen from about 50% of the population to more than 55%. In the General Social Survey there is also a slow increase from about 50% discordance in 1988 to 53% in 2014. Both data sources confirm a slow increase of class discordance in the United States over time. Highly relevant is that this triangulation provides confirmation of the importance of social mobility. Those who are upwardly mobile are more likely to deflate and less likely to inflate, while downwardly mobile individuals demonstrate the opposite.

3.5.2 Europe

Regarding the European data, I also conducted several similar robustness checks. First, since I include the subjective groups of lower middle class and upper middle class respectively in the subjective working and higher class (as explained in footnote 7), I tested whether including them in the subjective middle class yields different results. Doing so results in those downwardly mobile becoming less likely to inflate instead of being more likely to inflate. When taking the presented findings in Table 3.5 into account, this can be explained by the fact that those downwardly mobile from the material middle class to the material working class and those downwardly mobile from the material higher class to the material middle class are respectively more inclined to inflate their class identity to middle and upper middle. This is further confirmed when conducting robustness checks in which I separately include the subjective lower and upper middle class in the middle class. However, despite these differences the overall trend of people in Europe being more likely to display class discordance when they are socially mobile remains confirmed. Furthermore, controlling for income yielded the same trend of higher odds of inflating when income increases and higher odds of deflating when one's income is lower. Next, my sensitivity analysis with only respondents part of the material middle class yielded the same results as in the American sample, namely a consistent importance of being socially mobile across classes in explaining class discordance. Next, I included the occupational group of lower controllers in the higher class. As in the American sample, doing so has no substantial effect on the individual level although the estimates are slightly lower than in the presented models. Additionally, a small effect is present at the contextual level since in countries with more social mobility the odds of class inflation are higher.

Further, I tested the models by including union membership in Europe (which was not possible in the American data as appropriate measures are lacking) since there are reasons to assume that union members are more aware of their social class and thus should be less likely to demonstrate discordance (Nickell 1997). My results, however, indicate this not to be the case since being in a union or not did not have a significant effect nor did it alter the effect of social mobility. Finally, I included religious denominations instead of being religious or not in Europe. This did not lead to any significant differences between religious groups.

3.6 DISCUSSION

In this chapter I studied how social mobility influences the complex relationship between material and subjective social class. To do so I focused on the United States

between 1988 and 2014 next to contemporary Europe. The theoretical assumptions for this chapter focus on how those who are socially mobile are inclined to identify with their original class because of their habitus (Bourdieu 1984). Next to the individual effects, I also focused on the contextual effect of social mobility in this chapter because the structure of society can impact individual identity processes (De Graaf et al. 1995; Lipset et al. 1991; Sombart 1976).

Diagonal Mobility Models next to multinomial logistic regression analyses on repeated cross-sections of General Social Survey 1988-2014 and the International Social Survey Programme 2009 make it possible to draw a few conclusions concerning class discordance in the United States and Europe. First and foremost, class discordance has occurred in a more or less stable way in the United States between 1988 and 2014. Also in Europe class discordance is a phenomenon manifesting itself in all studied countries. Across time and between countries, I see that when people are socially mobile both their class of origin as their class of destination have a relative impact on how they perceive their place in society.

Although some scholars argue that socially mobile people adapt to their new class and thus identify as members of it (Goodman et al. 1978; Paterson 2008), my results give more support to the idea that socialization during the childhood remains to play a role, in that sense that people who are socially mobile often still identify with their class of origin (Savage 2001; Stuber 2005). In both the United States and Europe, those who are upwardly mobile are less likely to have an inflated class identity while downwardly mobile people are more likely to do so. When it comes to a deflated class identity social mobility is inversely related, meaning being downwardly mobile brings about lower odds of deflating while being upwardly mobile makes it much more likely to do so. Because of their habitus - which entails that people form their whole set of attitudes, values and preferences during their childhood - individuals who are socially mobile continue to carry the attitudinal and behavioural norms of their social class of origin, resulting in class discordance (Bourdieu 1984; 1987). My results confirm that for those who are socially mobile, their class of origin indeed continues to assert its impact on the way they think of and conceive their place in society and is thus an important factor in explaining class discordance (Daenekindt et al. 2014; Bourdieu 1987; Weakliem 1992). As expected, the magnitude of this effect differs between those who are upwardly and downwardly mobile since the former group has higher odds of deflating than the latter does of inflating. While both categories are influenced by their habitus (Bourdieu 1984) they are also inclined to maximize their status by identifying as part of the higher class they feel part of (De Graaf et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011). While both categories do that to a certain degree, as expected, those upwardly mobile have higher

odds of deflating than downwardly mobile individuals have of inflating since the former category is confronted with social closure and consequently has more difficulties being accepted if they wish to adapt to their new class (Gorman 2000; Gray et al. 2013; Zhao et al. 2017).

Furthermore, I had expectations on the impact of social mobility at the societal level on the likelihood of class inflation. First of all, I expected a higher likelihood of people experiencing class discordance in times of more social mobility in society. This because of the decreasing cohesion and solidarity within social classes as the degree of social mobility increases (De Graaf et al. 1995). While I do not find such a trend in my models, in the robustness check where the lower controllers are coded as higher class instead of middle class, there is a small effect. In this robustness check, when there is more social mobility in a society, in both Europe and the United States people are slightly more likely to inflate while being slightly less likely to deflate in the United States. Since there is more deflation than inflation this could indicate that in the United States, contrary to Europe, there is less class discordance in times of more social mobility. These findings for the US give credibility to the idea that it is social mobility itself that shapes social classes (Featherman et al. 1975). Being socially mobile plays a vital regulating role in the process determining who becomes part of a certain class (Sorensen 1991). It is when people share common interests and realize they are alike in an economical sense, collective action happens i.e. when a social class is formed (Sorensen 1975). However since the effects are small and dependent on the particular measurement of class while the found individual effects are much stronger and robust, further research is needed to clarify whether this societal effect is there and what it exactly means.

Additionally, next to the potential importance of social mobility at the societal level for the entire population, I expected more social mobility in a society to result in lower odds for upwardly mobile people to deflate because of the decline in social closure in a more open society (Gorman 2000; Gray et al. 2013; Kessin 1971). I find indications of this in Europe but not in the United States. While those upwardly mobile are more likely to deflate in both Europe and the United States because of their habitus (Bourdieu 1984), they also strive at being accepted within their new social class (De Graaf et al. 1990; Van Eijck 1999; Daenekindt et al. 2011). It is unclear why this cross-level interaction does occur in societies with more mobility in Europe and not in the United States. There are some indications of class being less important in the latter than it is in (Western) European countries (Devine 1997; Ogmundson et al. 1982; Kelley et al. 1995; Manza et al. 1999; Sombart 1906; 1976). My results underscore that when there is more mobility in Europe, and thus less social closure, upwardly mobile people are less likely to identify as part of their former class. In the United States, those who are downwardly mobile and

in consequence have higher odds of inflating their class position are even more likely to do so when there is more social mobility at the societal level. This downwardly mobile group has a tendency to overestimate their social class since they aspire to regain their former higher class position (Zhao et al. 2017), so in times when these people perceive that everybody is improving themselves and grabbing opportunities by being mobile, they get even more reluctant to accept their current, lower position.

While my study shows a robust effect, across data-sources and measures for class, of socially mobile people being more likely to experience class discordance, there are some limitations to my approach. An often-used method (see Daenekindt et al. 2011; Tolsma et al. 2009; Weakliem 1992) when studying the effects of social mobility are Diagonal Mobility Models since these allow to disentangle the effect of social mobility, from the effects of the social positions of origin and destination. Because of the dependent variable and the fact that I am also interested in the odds of socially mobile people inflating or deflating their class position, I opted for an additional approach. While I first use DMMs to show how both class of origin as class of destination impacts one's class identity and in consequence class discordance, I utilize multinomial regression models to estimate the magnitude. These multinomial regression models, however, do not disentangle the effects of mobility and class. This is not a problem for my research question but it is important for the reader to be aware of the fact that in the first step I show the net effect of social mobility, by means of the weight of both class positions, while in the second step I present the odds of class discordance for socially mobile individuals. A second limitation of my study is the certain ambiguity of the macro-effect of social mobility. Whether I do find a (small) effect depends on how I operationalize material class. In order to clarify whether the degree of social mobility in a society is important in the odds of people experiencing class discordance, additional research is needed. Further, next to studying changing class positions, research on social mobility often focuses on changes in educational attainment (Daenekindt et al. 2014) or income (Chetty et al. 2017). Related, in my approach I am limited to only using absolute social mobility while research has demonstrated paying attention to relative social mobility could be of relevance as well (Iannelli & Paterson 2007).

Summarized, this chapter and the previous one underscore the importance of status inconsistency, cross-cutting identities and social mobility in explaining class discordance. Furthermore, these chapters show class discordance to be a phenomenon with a high prevalence in both Europe and the United States. Inspired by these findings, further research on the consequences of class discordance is relevant and is consequently the basis of the following chapters. In a first step, studying the role of class discordance

in explaining (recent) political behaviour in both the United States as in European countries can help further our understanding of the importance of class discordance and is the basis of my empirical scrutiny in the following 2 chapters.

CHAPTER 4

Imagining class: a study into material social class position, subjective identification, and voting behaviour across Europe

A slightly different version of this chapter is published as:

D'Hooge, L., Achterberg, P., & Reeskens, T. (2018). Imagining class: A study into material social class position, subjective identification, and voting behaviour across Europe. *Social Science Research*, 70, 71-89. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2017.11.003>

ABSTRACT

The traditional approach to class voting has largely ignored the question whether material class positions coincides with subjective class identification. This study evaluates party preferences when Europeans' material and subjective social class do not coincide. Seminal studies on voting behaviour have suggested that members of lower classes are more likely to vote for the economic left and cultural right and that higher classes demonstrate the opposite pattern. Yet, these studies have on the one hand overlooked the possibility that there is a mismatch between the material class people can be classified in and the class they think they are part of, and on the second hand the consequences of this discordant class identification on voting behaviour. Analyzing the 2009 wave of the European Elections Study, I find that the majority of the Europeans discordantly identify with the middle class, whereas only a minority of the lower and higher classes concordantly identify with their material social class. Further, material class only seems to predict economic voting behaviour when it coincides with subjective class; for instance, individuals who have a deflated class identification are more likely to vote for the economic left, even when they materially can be classified as middle or high class. I conclude this chapter with a discussion on scholarly debates concerning class and politics.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In spite of a series of seminal studies on the influence of social class positions on political preferences (Barone, Lucchini & Sarti 2007; Clark, Lipset & Rempel 1993; Evans 2000; Houtman et al. 2009; Lipset 1963; Oesch 2008; Van der Waal et al. 2007; Weakliem 1995), the empirically diagnosed diminishing influence of social classes on voting behaviour has sparked much debate among social scientists (De Graaf et al. 1995; Evans 2000; Houtman et al. 2009; Jansen, Evans & De Graaf 2013; Manza et al. 1999; Nieuwbeerta, De Graaf & Ultee 2000; Rydgren 2012; Van der Waal et al. 2007; Weakliem & Heath 1994).

An important, yet surprisingly rarely explored argument concerning class voting has recently been pushed forward by Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) demonstrating that material class positions and subjective class identification do not always coincide. As Jackman et al. (1973) and Jackman (1979) already noted a few decades ago, it is not solely this *membership of* but also *identification with* a social class that has a profound structuring effect (see also Calhoun 1982; Centers 1949). Studies have illustrated that this class membership based on material indicators and subjective identification not always coincide: a majority subjectively identifies as being a member of the middle class while materially they are not (e.g. Andersen et al. 2012; Curtis 2014; Evans et al. 2004; Vanneman 1980). Inspired by the work of Alexander et al. (2001), it is possible that this has *meaning*. Although often neglected in class politics, subjective perceptions do not to align with structural positions nor do they need be related to them, in order to have an autonomous impact. Consequently, as also argued by Calhoun (1982), I explore the possibility that class positions can *only* have consequences for (political) behaviour if one subjectively believes that one *is* in such a class position. Or in other words, the overall aim of my study is to see what the consequences for voting behaviour are when material and subjective class positions do coincide and what happens when they do not.

The idea that subjective class identification has a strong structuring impact for party preferences flows from the idea that class membership brings about a class identity with shared values and attitudes (e.g. Houtman et al. 2009; Middendorp 1991; Savage 2001). The underlying mechanism is *closure*: individuals who are, at least according to their occupation, materially a member of a certain social class, also subjectively identify with that specific social class. This theoretical argument is, however, far from straightforward because of two reasons. First of all, recently Sosnaud et al. (2013) found evidence for non-concordant class positions in the US: while half of the Americans have a *concordant* class position of subjectively identifying with their material social class position, an equal share of people have *discordant* class positions, as they overestimate

(inflate) or underestimate (deflate) their material social class position. Secondly, the authors further showed that there was no impact of these discordant class positions on voting behaviour in the US, contrary to their expectations (Sosnaud et al. 2013, p.95). The idea of being in another social class than the one sociologists classify people in, hence, does not substantially influence one's voting preferences in the United States.

However because of the American Exceptionalism, with an absence of a strong class consciousness in the US (Clark et al. 1993; Clark & Lipset 2001), next to the political two-party system narrowing political preferences, this could be different in the European context with multi-party systems, where an array of studies shows the existence of a relationship between social class and voting (Devine 1992; Domanski 2008; Houtman et al. 2009, Van der Waal et al. 2007; Weakliem 1995). Although there is research trying to explain the reasons for class discordance (see chapters 2 and 3), I turn my attention to the impact of different subjective and material class positions by studying, for the first time, the European context where class consciousness is more crystallized and voting systems offer more than two political alternatives in times of elections.

To study class discordance and voting patterns in Europe, I rely on the European Election Study for 2009 – the only social survey that contain information on material class positions and subjective class identification on European territory in tandem with voting preferences. Relying on the distinction between working, middle and higher class, I will first of all evaluate the extent discordance between material and subjective social classes exists, aligning with existing work by Sosnaud and colleagues (2013). Secondly, I study how concordant and discordant class positions affect voting behaviour. I do so in order to untangle how the relationship between subjective identification and material positions influences party preferences.

4.2 MATERIAL CLASS POSITION AND SUBJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION

The study of the relationship between social class positions and voting behaviour – *class voting* – goes back a long time and has resulted in a rich scholarship.¹³ Inspired by the theoretical notion that sees voting as a democratic translation of the class struggle (cf. Nieuwbeerta et al. 2000; Lipset 1959), scholars have empirically verified the relationship between social class and voting behaviour. From the seminal work of Robert Alford

13. To illustrate the ongoing debate on the relevance of social class, I can refer to the May 2015 special issue of the Sociological Review. In this special issue several approaches to and controversies concerning social class are addressed, often by using the Great British Class Survey.

(1967) to recent scholarly work by Jansen et al. (2013), sociologists repeatedly categorize the population into well-defined schemes – often based on material conditions such as occupations and work autonomy – and sought differences in voting behaviour between these different social strata. Ever since Clark and Lipset published their seminal article *Are Social Classes Dying?* (1991) it has been debated whether such material social classes are relevant for explaining political behaviour. De Graaf et al. (1995), for instance, have shown that levels of class voting are generally in decline in the West. Yet, also De Graaf et al.'s claim (1995) is not undisputed (Hout, Brooks & Manza 1995; Stonecash 2015).

Apart from this controversy on the decline in class voting, two additional issues are apparent in studying class voting. First, class voting rests on the idea that social classes 'objectively' exist. There is no formal membership of a social class, implying that they depend on the ontological classification into distinct categories which themselves are not uncontroversial. Discussions about the viability of specific class definitions are ongoing, and far from resolved (see, e.g. Bol et al., 2014; Güveli et al., 2012; Wacquant, 1991; Wright 2005).¹⁴ The second issue regards the fact that students of class voting have not fully explored the interaction between material and subjective class positions. Lockwood (1969) for instance, has suggested that the common experience of shared class interests will be a vital and powerful motive for social action (cf. Bendix et al. 1966; Giddens et al. 1982) For instance, for the working class, class consciousness plays an important role in making the mental division between managers and employees (Surridge 2007). In this line of reasoning people do not see themselves as members of a class because they materially are in a class position, but because they imagine themselves in one.¹⁵

The observation that the classification into social classes based on material conditions is not unproblematic, and that the consequences of subjectively identifying with a specific class for party preferences is largely left untouched, leads to my assertion that the study into the relationship between social classes and vote choice can be deepened by approaching social classes as social constructs that go beyond ontological constructs. Evidently, one's material social position, the economic securities and insecurities one experiences on a daily basis play a definite role in such class identification (cf. Mann 1973; Savage 2001). In addition, by social comparison, individuals possess ideas about

14. Discussing the benefits and drawbacks of these different approaches to class is beyond the scope of my study, I refer to the overview by Bergman & Joye (2001) discussing these. For a more recent class scheme and critical reflection on the use of class, I can refer to Weeden et al. (2007).

15. Although there are some studies claiming that people do not identify as being members of a social class (e.g. Savage, Silva & Warde 2010) and only do so in surveys because of the limited possibilities of classification scientists provide, I opt to use it since it's been proven useful in other studies (e.g. Sosnaud et al. 2013) and since I do not have the opportunity of answering my research question with qualitative data.

social classes and to which social class they belong to and identify with as well as which class they definitely do not belong to. By virtue of small networks, meetings with co-workers, unions or employer organizations, and connections with other people in similar positions, finally, people will form an idea of their place in the stratification order (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008; Nakhaie 1992).¹⁶

Social classes can consequently serve as *imagined communities* (Anderson 1991).¹⁷ In the tradition of the *imagined-community* literature, it is neither likely that all members of a distinct social class know each other, nor will they come into contact with all of them (Anderson 1991, p. 6; Domhoff 2002). These communities are vital in forming and maintaining a shared class identity (MacKenzie et al. 2006, Strangleman 2001) and surpass the idea of merely being a misconception of one's class position. This is illustrated by the fact that retired people, despite their labor market inactivity, tend to hold on to their class identity formed earlier in their lifetime (Devine 1992; MacKenzie et al. 2006).

The social identity theory (Tajfel 1974) explains this further by stating that class identification features as a *social identity*, which is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1974, p. 69). Empirical studies give rise to the idea that it is mainly *identification with a social class* that has a profound effect on people's behaviour rather than *material membership thereof* (Alexander et al. 2001; Calhoun 1982; Centers 1949; Evans et al. 2017; Jackman et al. 1973; Jackman 1979; Robinson et al. 2017). Individuals are likewise motivated to achieve and maintain a positive social identity, making that those who identify with a particular social class will have a positive assessment of their class identity and adhere to less favorable feelings towards other classes (Abrams et al. 2006; Turner 1975). In addition, the related yet conceptually distinct social categorization theory (Turner 1985) further suggests a de-personalization of the self (Turner et al. 2006), implying that individuals who are strongly attached to a certain group will be more likely to adhere to the norms and values of that group (Christensen et al. 2004; Huddy et al. 2007). Studies on class voting (e.g. Barone et al. 2007; Evans 2000; Houtman et al. 2009; Oesch 2008; Van der Waal et al. 2007; Weakliem 1995) implicitly depart from this idea that social classes are *imagined communities*, building on social psychological

16. However, the Marxian idea of 'false class consciousness' (Aronowitz 1992; Lukács et al. 1971), surely suggest that other factors may lead to different appraisals of one's class position. For example, being part of the working class can be seen as a stigma and result in denying this identity (Crompton 2008).

17. The concept of *imagined communities* originates from the nationalism literature (Anderson 1991) as a constructivist orientation towards nationhood with the idea that a nation exists people perceive themselves to be part of that group.

theories of social identities and social categorization. Political parties, it is argued, not only serve the interest of specific certain classes, they also represent the norms and values of specific classes.

In order for subjective class identification to affect voting behaviour, I need to draw on the Thomas theorem ("if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas et al. 1928, p. 572, in Merton 1995, p. 380)). When people perceive themselves as members of a certain social class, they will show electoral behaviour linked to that social class. Political behaviour is only influenced by material positions when these correspond with the subjective belief that one is effectively in that material position (Calhoun 1982). To give but two examples, if a person is in a financially secure higher or middle class position, one might still vote for a leftist party if s/he actually believes to be a member of the underprivileged class. On the opposite, a member of the material working class who identifies as higher class will be more likely to vote for a conservative party.

Additionally, although the logic of the Thomas-theorem in which perceived class position predicts voting choices seems highly relevant, it could be possible that there are different patterns within the group of discordant people. While extant research suggests that it is always the roles that people experience as having a central part in their life that become a dominant influence in forming their values, attitudes and political preferences (Lane et al. 1968; Daenekindt et al. 2014), this effect is not necessarily equally strong for inflators and deflators. There are indications that identifying with a higher class seems to be associated with a process of adaption to new values and preferences because of the expectations of others in that subjective class (Abramson et al. 1971, Goodman et al. 1978; Paterson 2008). This seems to be less occurring for deflators since these people tend to hold on to their old norms and values and perceive these as superior (Abramson et al. 1971; Clifford & Heath 1993). I thus in hypothesis 1, the discordant vote hypothesis, *expect inflators to vote pursuant to the class they identify with while I expect deflators to vote according to their material class.*

Research focusing on the effect of the interplay between material and subjective class positions on voting behaviour is, as far as I know very limited, except for Sosnaud et al. (2013) who studied the electoral consequences of concordant and discordant class positions on American presidential electoral behaviour. They departed with the finding that half of the American electorate have discordant class positions: whereas half of them have concordant class positions, meaning that their material position and subjective identification coincide, half of them have different class positions, meaning that some have inflated (identifying with a higher material class) or deflated (identifying with a

lower material class) class positions. Subsequently, their initial finding that inflated class identification brought about a higher likelihood of voting Republican was rendered insignificant after taking confounders into account.

4.3 ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL VOTING

The idea that voting behaviour reflects economic interests that are stratified through social class (Chan et al. 2007), whether these classes are material or subjective, is rather dominant in class voting scholarship. While the working class generally prefers economic redistribution and state intervention to protect against economic insecurities, and for this very reason is assumed to vote for leftist parties, the middle and higher classes prefer the exact opposite and are expected to lean more toward rightist parties (Achterberg & Houtman 2003; Devine 1992; Domanski 2008; Svallfors 1997; 1999; Van der Waal et al. 2007). Yet, this economic argument conceals the ideological motives that undergird voting behaviour (cf. Achterberg 2006; Clark 2001).

Recent insights point to cultural motives underlying party preferences (cf. Houtman et al. 2009; Kriesi et al. 2006; Stubager 2010). The mechanism is that the working class is more likely to vote for rightist parties because of their stances on immigration and cultural diversity, while the middle and higher classes consider left-leaning parties for reasons of cultural tolerance and cultural progressiveness (Clark et al. 1993; Kriesi et al. 2006; Lipset 1963; Rydgren 2012; Stubager 2010; Van der Brug & Van Spanje 2009; Weakliem 1995).

Research into the intricacies of this cultural class alignment – that the working class favors authoritarian policies and the middle class libertarian policies, and subsequently vote right and left respectively – however has had difficulty explaining why these classes diverge so much on this cultural dimension: Some relate it to differences in education exclusively (Dekker & Ester 1987; Stubager 2009), some to differences in class background (Oesch & Renwald 2010), some to differences in cultural capital (Houtman et al 2009), and others to generational differences in economic prosperity (Inglehart 1997). While some studies argue against the ongoing relevance of the authoritarian working class as a relevant concept (Dekker et al. 1987; Grabb 1980; Napier & Jost 2008), there is research ranging from Lipset (1963) to recent insights (Kriesi et al. 1963; Rydgren 2012; Van der Brug et al. 2009) confirming the idea of the more liberal middle and high class in contrast to the working class with culturally-right, authoritarian tendencies. Following this logic in accordance with the Thomas theorem, it may well be that those who subjectively identify with the working class – even though they occupy a higher

material class position – will vote for authoritarian right, and not for economically leftist parties. Likewise, those who identify with a middle class position – even if their material class position is lower – will vote for the libertarian left instead of for the economically right.

Because the relationship between class and voting preferences crosses the economic and cultural axis that conceal the traditional left-right continuum (Houtman et al. 2009; Stubager 2010; Van der Waal et al 2007), it is important to distinguish between both. The economic axis that separates preferences for state intervention (left) from laissez-faire politics (right), and a cultural axis that represents libertarianism on the left and authoritarianism on the right (Houtman et al. 2009; Lipset et al. 1991). Such emphasis on cultural voting as a complementing model next to economic voting indicates a shift to cultural topics, including migration (Kriesi et al. 2006; Van der Waal et al. 2007).

For my study on how subjective class identification is decisive for the relationship between material class position and voting behaviour, I formulate expectations for two types of voting behaviour. Those with discordant class combinations will demonstrate different voting patterns as those in the same social class with concordant class combinations and are expected to vote according to the class they believe to be part of since this is a more dominant part of their social identity (Lane et al. 1968; Daenekindt et al. 2014). For the second hypothesis, the economic voting hypothesis, *I propose that inflators are more likely to display more rightist voting behaviour since higher subjective social classes have more conservative or rightist economic preferences. In addition I expect the lower subjective social classes to express their economic-political preferences by demonstrating more leftist electoral behaviour, thus deflators will vote more to the left* (Domanski 2008; Svallfors 1997; 1999; Van der Waal et al. 2007). Finally, in my third hypothesis –the cultural voting hypothesis- *I expect inflators to demonstrate more libertarian, leftist voting behaviour since they identify with a higher subjective class that leans towards more open attitudes towards ethnic minorities, migrants and other socio-cultural phenomena. Because of their stronger authoritarian stance towards socio-cultural societal affairs I expect deflators, who identify with a lower class, to be more likely to vote for the right-winged parties* (Achterberg 2006; Weakliem et al. 1994).

4.4 DATA AND METHODS

4.4.1 Sample

For this chapter, data from the European Elections Study from 2009 will be analyzed, which includes information on 18 European countries¹⁸ on the electoral participation and voting behaviour in national and European Parliament elections. This survey has been conducted alongside the European elections since 1979, originally as a part of the Eurobarometer, and since 1999 as an independent survey. In each of the 18 countries, representative samples of approximately 1000 respondents were selected. The analyses are weighed in accordance to the working age population of each country. This means that bigger countries such as Germany impact the estimates more than smaller countries such as Slovenia. On average 70% of the interviews were conducted by face-to-face interviews, while about 30% was achieved by phone. This dataset is chosen because it is one of the few surveys that includes information on social class measured by occupation, the self-assessment of social class and voting behaviour in the last national elections before the European elections of 2009.¹⁹ Because of non-voters and people refusing to tell their voting choice, 9222 cases were used for the analyses. The missing cases in regards to voting information are randomly distributed across material and subjective social class since the frequencies are not substantially different from the entire sample.

4.4.2 Independent variable

To find coherence between people's material social class and their subjective class identification, I divide material and subjective class positions in three categories: working class, middle class and high class.

While reduced to three categories, material class position was measured in the survey by a 10-category scheme reflecting types of occupation, distinguishing between the 10 categories of (1) professional and technical, (2) higher administrative, (3) clerical, (4) sales, (5) service, (6) skilled worker, (7) semi-skilled worker, (8) unskilled worker, (9) farm worker and (10) farm proprietor or farm manager. As indicated in Table 4.1, I reduce these 10 categories to three social classes: (1) the lower class or working class (comprising

18. These are the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Great-Britain. These were the countries containing relevant information on the voting choice of respondents. The other countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Romania had insufficient information on the vote choice people made in their respective last general election.

19. Although the 2014 EES-survey is available I opted not to use it because of the less useful questioning regarding subjective class identification where no distinction was made between middle class and upper middle class, which is important for my research questions. Additionally a less optimal variant than the EGP-scheme was used to measure material class position. These two issues make the 2009 data preferable over the 2014 data for answering the research questions.

skilled workers, semi-skilled workers, unskilled workers, and farm workers), (2) the middle class (comprising higher administrative, clerical, sales and service jobs and farm proprietors/managers), and (3) the higher class (with professional and technical jobs). About 21 percent of the Europeans can be classified as higher class, 49% as middle class, and 30% as working class.

TABLE 4.1 Material social class positions

Condensed classification	Survey categorization	N	Percentage
Higher class	Professional and technical	1977	21.3
Middle class	Higher administrative	765	8.3
	Clerical	1568	16.9
	Sales	714	7.7
	Service	1308	14.1
	Farm proprietor/ manager	193	2.1
Working class	Skilled worker	1243	13.5
	Semi-skilled worker	754	8.2
	Unskilled worker	542	5.9
	Farm worker	179	2.0

Source: European Elections Study, 2009

Subjective social class identification, then, consists of 3 categories that were reduced from a five-fold subjective class scheme in the dataset (see Table 4.2). The survey asked to what social class individuals belonged to distinguishing between (1) working class, (2) lower middle class, (3) middle class, (4) upper middle class and (5) upper class. Coherent to the material class operationalization, and analogous to Sosnaud et al. (2013), I distinguish between the working class, the middle class (lower middle, and middle class), and higher class (upper middle and high class)²⁰.

20. As explained in footnote 7, I code subjective lower middle class as part of the subjective working class and subjective upper middle class as part of the subjective higher class in chapters 3 & 5. In this chapter however, I use a different approach since my study here is an extension of Sosnaud et al. (2013) to the European context. In their study, the authors are able to distinguish between subjective working, middle and upper middle class which I try to replicate as closely as possible. However, due to the theoretical considerations regarding labels as lower or upper middle, as discussed in footnote 7, I conduct several robustness checks in section 4.6.

TABLE 4.2 Subjective social class identification

Condensed classification	Survey self-placement	N	Percentage
Higher class	High class	117	1.3
	Upper middle class	1105	12.0
Middle class	Middle class	4611	49.8
	Lower middle class	1317	14.3
Working class	Working class	2093	22.6

Source: European Elections Study, 2009

To study if voting behaviour depends on discordance between subjective and material social class, I cross the three subjective with the three material class positions, leading to 9 categories. This scheme consists of the 3 concordant class positions which represents that the respondents' material and subjective class coincide. Next to these three concordant positions, there are 3 inflated class positions which means the respondent identifies with a higher social class than their material class. The last three categories are the deflated class positions which means that respondents identify with a class lower than their material class. The percentage of respondents with deflated, concordant or inflated class combinations are highlighted in Table 4.3. This scheme of inflated, concordant and deflated class positions is adapted from Sosnaud et al. (2013). While they distinguish only between inflated, deflated and concordant class positions, these nine categories allow for a more refined distinction between different inflated, deflated and concordant class positions. Slightly more than half of the sample is concordant (53%), while respectively 24% and 23% has a deflated or inflated class perception.

TABLE 4.3 Distribution of class combinations

	Subjective Working Class	Subjective Middle Class	Subjective Higher Class
Material Working Class	<i>Working Class Concordant</i> 13.3%	<i>Working to Middle Discordant</i> 14.9%	<i>Working to Higher Discordant</i> 1.2%
Material Middle Class	<i>Middle to Working Discordant</i> 7.8%	<i>Middle Concordant</i> 34.4%	<i>Middle to Higher Discordant</i> 7.0%
Material Higher Class	<i>Higher to Working Discordant</i> 1.6%	<i>Higher to Middle Discordant</i> 14.8%	<i>Higher Concordant</i> 5.0%
N	2093	5928	1222

Source: European Elections Study, 2009

4.4.3 Dependent variable

Because of my interest in political preferences, I study voting behaviour, which in the survey was questioned using the item “Which party did you vote for?” To find coherence in the answering categories of the political parties, which evidently are country specific, I recoded the political parties along three dimensions using the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) to make party preferences comparable across Europe (Klingemann et al. 2006; Volkens, Bara & Budge 2009). The CMP is a dataset that measures the political party manifestos in the context of national election campaigns for all political parties across Western Europe since the 1950s, and for Eastern Europe since the 1990s. Not undisputed,²¹ the fact that the CMP expresses information retrieved from party manifestos as a metric score on a wide range of topics, makes it nonetheless the most useful indicator for the placement of parties presently available and therefore most suitable for comparative research into party preferences.

The first dimension is the standard left-right scale, which was directly obtained from the CMP. In this scale the political programs of political parties are expressed as a score on a scale which includes the opinion of political parties on the economy, healthcare, the welfare state, minorities, environment, and more. The scale can be interpreted as a standard left-right scale where a lower score indicates a more leftist program and a higher score indicates a more right winged program. Each respondent gets an individual score according to the political party they voted for. On this scale, the minimum and maximum scores are -100 and 100 since these scores are the amount of positive (rightwing) or negative mentions (left-wing) of certain political items in a parties manifesto (expressed in percentages).

Frequently criticized for being too crude, the traditional left-right continuum conceals two distinct dimensions, namely one economic axis, and one orthogonal cultural axis (Houtman et al. 2009; Lipset 1959). The economic axis of voting preferences distinguishes on the one hand preferences for more state intervention (left) from preferences for more laissez-faire politics (rights). The CMP-items used to construct this scale are: (1) per412: Unfavorable mentions of a controlled economy; (2) per413: Unfavorable mentions of nationalizations or government ownership; (3) per401: Favorable mentions of free enterprise capitalism; (4) per505: Favorable mentions of the limitation of the welfare state and (5) per402: Favorable mentions of giving economic

21. The CMP has been criticized for measurement errors, more specifically for having a centrist bias in which extreme parties are coded too much to the center (Benoit, Laver & Mikhaylov 2007; Mikhaylov, Laver & Benoit 2008). While this means that the results could be conservative, research has shown the CMP to be as reliable as other left-right scales comparing political parties (Gemenis 2013).

incentives to start enterprises. The theoretical scale ranges from -100 to 100, indicating positive mentions of the specific issues. The higher the score, the more market-oriented the political preferences.

The cultural axis, then, distinguishes between libertarian values (left) from authoritarian values (right). To measure this distinction, I have made use of four items in the CMP: (1) per603: Favorable mentions of traditional moral values e.g. stability of the family, religion; (2) per605: Favorable mentions of the enforcement of all laws, more resources for police, tougher attitude in courts; (3) per604: Favorable mentions of traditional moral values, support for divorce, abortion; and (4) per705: Unfavorable mentions of underprivileged minorities e.g. homosexuals, immigrants. For coherence, the items were recoded so that a mention indicates more authoritarian political stances. The theoretical minimum and maximum scores are -100 and 100 with higher scores indicating more authoritarian views.

4.4.4 Control variables

I control the analysis for a number of variables that have previously shown to explain political preferences. First of all, because many political parties originate from religious traditions (Huber, Ragin & Stephens 1993), I control for *religious denomination*, which was surveyed with the question “Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination? If yes, which one?” I distinguish between (1) Not religious (reference), (2) Catholic and (3) Protestant. Further, also the self-assessed *degree of religiosity*, ranging from 0 (not at all religious) to 10 (very religious) is taken into account. Because some parties are more likely to defend traditional family values (Huber et al. 1993), I control for *marital status*, distinguishing between those married (reference) and those not-married. Because women are slightly more inclined to vote for left-wing parties (Weisberg 1987; Welch & Hibbing 1992), I control for *gender*, with men as reference category. I also control for *age*, as particularly older respondents are more likely to vote for conservative parties (Onraet, Van Hiel & Dhont 2013). Furthermore I control for *parents origin* because ethnic identity can have an impact on class identity (Sosnaud et al. 2013). Since *union membership* can influence the way in which class is related to voting, I control for this (Evans 2000). Last but not least, closely related to social class, but conceptually different is *education*, which is measured with the age when the respondent stopped full time education. The youngest age a respondent stopped with full time education is 0 (no education at all) and the oldest 59. Descriptives of the control variables can be found in Appendix Table A4.1.

4.4.5 Methods

Because voting behaviour has been recoded to a metric score by using the CMP, linear regression analysis is used to study the effects of inflated, concordant or deflated class positions on political preferences. In practice this means that I tested the three dependent variables separately.²² To control for the nested data structure, I add a dummy variable for each country and use linear regression analysis with clustered robust standard errors (Bertrand et al. 2004). I also apply robustness checks in which I first of all will look at different ways of operationalizing the EGP-scheme to test the stability of the findings. Secondly I apply a different scheme for operationalizing subjective social class positions. Thirdly, I test different models to assess whether being self-employed, being in a union and religious denomination act as mediators. Furthermore, the analyses are stratified by country to test the stability of my results and identify country differences. Finally, I test models with interactions between the class combinations and education to test whether education influences how people perceive their class position.

4.5 RESULTS²³

Before turning to more refined analysis, Figures 4.1 and 4.2 display differences in voting behaviour according to non-concordant class position respectively grouped by material class and subjective class. The graphs first and foremost shows stronger differences between subjective class identification than material class position. For instance, when comparing 'working concordant', 'middle deflated to working', and 'higher deflated to working', it becomes clear that those Europeans who perceive themselves as working class, notwithstanding they might materially occupy a different class position, show similar voting preferences. This is a first indication that voting differences are not necessarily structured according to people's material class, but rather according to their class identity. The same exercise can be done for middle class voters (working inflated to middle, middle concordant, higher deflated to middle) and to some extent higher class (working inflated to higher, middle inflated to higher, higher concordant; middle inflated to higher deviates). Alternatively, when observing average scores within a material social class (respectively working, middle and higher class), one can

22. I tested the same models by using the factor scores as the dependent variables. This didn't change anything as regards content, except the fact that this explained the model slightly better. Thus the reported results are rather conservative.

23. The presented results differ slightly from the published version of this chapter due to the difference in the operationalization of material class and the class combinations. In the version presented here I included the occupational group of Higher Administrative occupations in the material middle class rather than in the material higher class in order to maintain an as coherent as possible set-up throughout the chapters. While the results are substantially very similar, the effects on general and economic left-right voting are somewhat more outspoken in the published version of this chapter while the significant effects on cultural voting in Table 4.4 are clearer in the currently presented version.

clearly observe that the higher the level of identification, the more right-wing the voter preferences, especially regarding economic voting. This combined evidence indicates that material class position can only explain voting behaviour when it coincides with subjective class position, while subjective class and not material class predicts voting behaviour in the case of discordance. In other words, only when people identify as part of the class they materially belong to is their material class related to how they vote. Not their occupational position but their identity predicts their party choice. Consequently, this refutes my expectation that inflators and deflators would demonstrate different patterns.

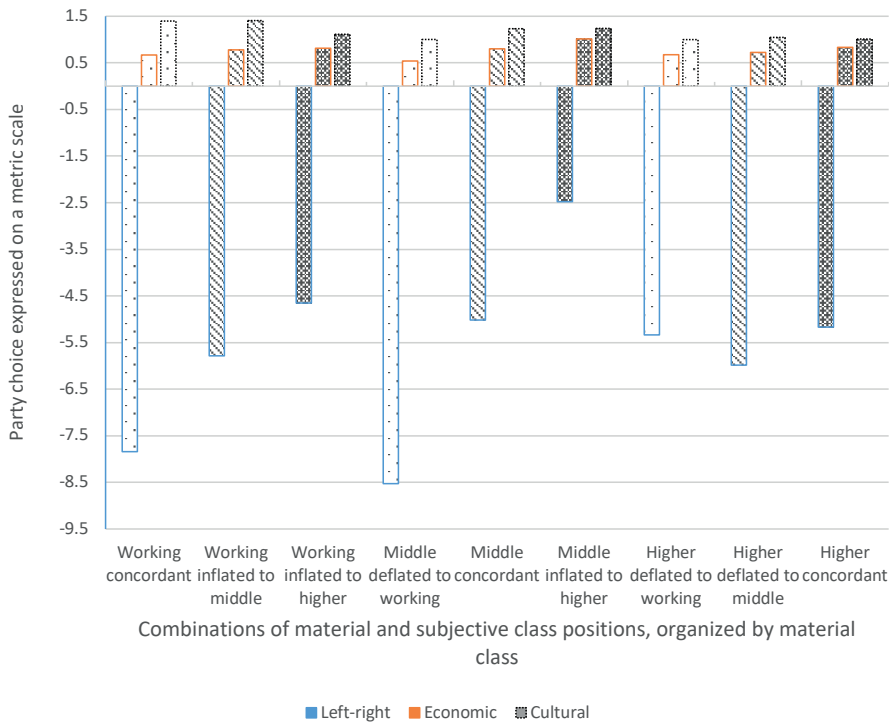


FIGURE 4.1 Bivariate association between voting choice and class combination grouped by material class

Source: European Elections Study, 2009. Note: All bars with a blue edge (below the x-axis) show the average score on the economic left-right scale where party choice is expressed in a metric way. All bars with an orange edge (above the x-axis) show the average group score on the economic left-right scale while all bars with a black edge show the average group score on the cultural left-right scale. The dotted bars are the groups of people subjectively part of the working class, striped are those subjectively part of the middle class while filled with a cross-pattern are those subjectively part of the higher class. The presented results are presented as follows: first 3 clusters are those materially part of the working class, middle 3 clusters are those materially part of the middle class while the last 3 clusters are those who materially belong to the higher class. This demonstrates the similarities within those identifying with a certain class and the disparities between those with the same material background (especially in regards to economic left-right voting).

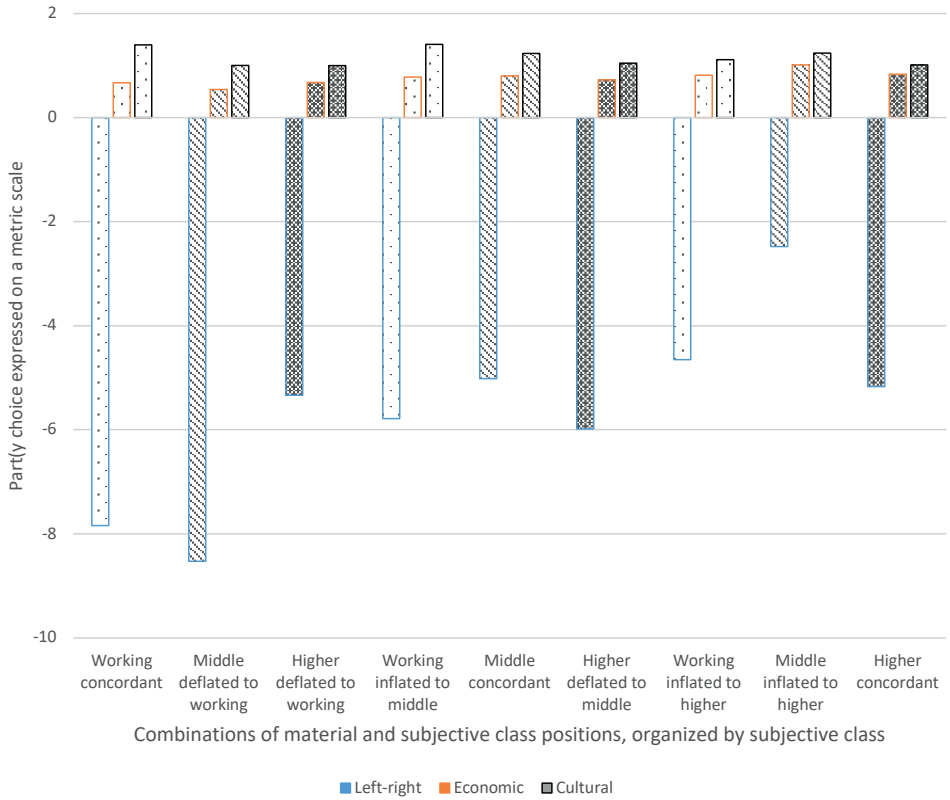


FIGURE 4.2 Bivariate association between voting choice and class combination grouped by subjective class

Source: European Election Study. Note: All bars with a blue edge (below the x-axis) show the average score on the economic left-right scale where party choice is expressed in a metric way. All bars with an orange edge (above the x-axis) show the average group score on the economic left-right scale while all bars with a black edge show the average group score on the cultural left-right scale. The dotted bars are the groups of people materially part of the working class, striped are those materially part of the middle class while filled with a cross-pattern are those materially part of the higher class. The presented results are the same as in Figure 4.1 but are now presented as follows: the first 3 clusters are those identifying as working class, middle 3 clusters are those identifying as middle class while the last 3 clusters are those who identify as higher class. This demonstrates the similarities within those identifying with a certain class (especially in regards to economic left-right voting).

The results of the multiple regression analysis on the traditional left-right scale, the economic left-right scale and the cultural left-right scale in Models 1-2 of Table 4.4 – controlling for potential confounders²⁴ – confirm this finding of stronger effects on left-

24. In the models with control variables religiosity is positively related with rightist voting behaviour, while being Catholic or Protestant does not have an impact. Additionally, women consistently - except for those in the working class - show more leftist electoral behaviour just as those who are not married. Furthermore, union members and people whose parents are born in a different country tend to have more leftist voting preferences. How long people studied is just as age unrelated with left- or right-wing party preferences.

right voting behaviour for subjective identification than for material class positions.²⁵ Because of the otherwise present composition effect, these analyses demonstrate how inflated and deflated people vote according to their material class. These models illustrate how people vote more to the left when they identify with a lower subjective class and more to the right when they identify with a higher social class.

Further nuanced analyses in Table 4.5 confirm this, except for cultural voting. First of all those who *identify* with the working class²⁶ (thus have a concordant or deflated class position) all vote the same, even though they might materially be middle or higher class. Additionally, working class members who think they are part of the middle class vote more to the right than their counterparts with a concordant working class self-identification. To a large extent, similar patterns of voting according to class identity and not material class emerge for the material middle and higher class. Members of the middle class who identify with the higher class vote more to the right while material middle-class members who deflate their position to the working class lean equally to the left as concordant working class members. Similarly, concordant higher class members are more likely to have a rightist party preference, while there is a linear tendency to the left when material higher class-members deflate their position to middle and working class. Interestingly, observing the regression coefficients, middle class members seem to vote slightly more to the right-end of the political spectrum than higher class-members with similar class identification. When observing the effect more substantially, it is so that the general left-right scale ranges from -47.93-47.89 with a standard deviation of 15.16. Those identifying with the middle class vote about 4 points more to the right while those in the high class vote around 6 points to the right, which is a little less than half a standard deviation.

Disaggregating the traditional left-right scale into its economic and cultural dimensions, it emerges that there are similar effects for economic, but much less for cultural party preferences. According to the economic vote hypothesis mainly the subjective working class would vote more towards the *economic* left and the subjective higher class more to the *economic* right. The results (Model 2 of Table 4.5) confirm this and show again that the class people identify with has a stronger influence on their political behaviour than their material position. The differences between subjective classes are stronger here than on the general left-right scale since the latter includes both economic and

25. I also tested the model with the material and subjective classes separately. These results show a trend of more rightist voting choices for the higher subjective social classes regarding general left-right and economic voting. The same occurs for the higher material social classes in regards to general left-right voting and to a lesser extent for economic voting, although less pronounced.

26. The model was also tested with the concordant high class as reference category, which resulted in the same results as in the present Table.

cultural issues. Those with a middle class identity, regardless of their material class, vote slight more than 0.1 points more to the right, which is a little less than half a standard deviation. Those identifying as part of the higher class, again regardless of their material background, vote almost a standard deviation more to the right. Meaning that the differences are not only statistically significant but substantially fairly strong.

The cultural vote hypothesis however, with the expectation that subjective working class identifiers would vote more for the cultural right and those who identify with higher class more for the cultural left, is not confirmed (Model 3 of Table 4.5). The regression model does show two significant effects (working inflated to middle and middle inflated to higher) but there is no clear substantial trend.

To conclude, for the traditional and economic left-right scales, in general there is a European pattern of voting behaviour linked to the subjective class and to a lesser extent the material class, and confirm the descriptives of Figure 4.1. Voting behaviour is thus structured according to what social class individuals identify with, and not necessarily according to the class schemes according to which they are classified. The fact that the cultural scale shows no consistent effect might be attributed to the idea that material class positions and subjective identification still mainly concern economic political behaviour, and less so cultural vote preferences.

TABLE 4.4 Deflated, concordant or inflated class combinations regressed on party preferences for the material working, middle and high class

	Model 1: Left-Right Scale	Model 2: Economic Scale	Model 3: Cultural Scale
Working Class			
Deflated	-	-	-
Concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-
Inflated	2.515 (0.44)***	0.090 (0.03)**	0.071 (0.03)*
Middle Class			
Deflated	-4.086 (0.70)***	-0.168 (0.05)**	-0.146 (0.07)*
Concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-
Inflated	2.901 (0.42)**	0.156 (0.03)**	0.106 (0.03)**
High Class			
Deflated	-1.616 (0.63)*	-0.079 (0.03)*	0.003 (0.05)
Concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-
Inflated	-	-	-

Source: European Elections Study 2009. * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. Entries represent the results of three separate fixed effects regression analyses.

TABLE 4.5 Social class combinations regressed on party preferences

	Model 1: Left-Right Scale	Model 2: Economic Scale	Model 3: Cultural Scale
Intercept	-12.483 (1.16)***	0.119 (0.07)	1.120 (0.07)***
Social Class Combinations			
Working concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-
Working inflated to middle	2.793 (0.49)***	0.086 (0.03)**	0.080 (0.03)*
Working inflated to higher	2.259 (1.61)	0.137 (0.08)	-0.039 (0.06)
Middle deflated to working	-0.040 (0.83)	-0.041 (0.03)	-0.070 (0.05)
Middle concordant	3.907 (0.69)***	0.131 (0.03)**	0.070 (0.04)
Middle inflated to higher	6.814 (0.96)***	0.291 (0.06)***	0.176 (0.06)*
Higher deflated to working	1.519 (1.29)	0.059 (0.05)	0.019 (0.07)
Higher deflated to middle	2.877 (0.75)**	0.079 (0.03)*	0.029 (0.04)
Higher concordant	4.305 (0.90)***	0.158 (0.04)**	0.010 (0.04)
Religious denomination			
Not-religious (Reference)	-	-	-
Catholic	3.515 (1.39)*	0.139 (0.05)*	0.234 (0.06)**
Protestant	0.580 (0.80)	0.061 (0.02)*	0.116 (0.06)
Religiosity	0.428 (0.08)***	0.014 (0.00)**	0.033 (0.01)**
Marital status:			
Married (Reference)	-	-	-
Non-Married	-0.601 (0.53)	-0.032 (0.01)*	-0.011 (0.04)
Both parents born in the country			
Yes (Reference)	-	-	-
No	-2.086 (0.57)**	-0.068 (0.02)*	-0.091 (0.04)*
Union membership			
Not a member (Reference)	-	-	-
Member	-3.903 (0.65)***	-0.152 (0.04)**	-0.166 (0.05)**
Gender			
Male (Reference)	-	-	-
Female	-1.04 (0.35)**	-0.046 (0.02)**	0.075 (0.03)*
Age	-0.003 (0.03)	-0.000 (0.00)	-0.000 (0.00)
Education	-0.087 (0.04)*	-0.005 (0.00)	-0.004 (0.00)
Adjusted R2	35.99%	23.60%	41.24%

Source: European Elections Study 2009. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Entries represent the results of three separate fixed effects regression analyses.

4.6 ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

To check the validity of my results I conducted several robustness checks. First of all, I tested different EGP-inspired class schemes to see whether collapsing to three classes results in important loss of information. In a first step I redid the analyses while using the full range of the EGP-categories and found only minor differences compared to

the presented results in Table 4.5. The only remarkable discrepancy is the group of professionals within the material high class being significantly more leftist-orientated than the higher administrators within that material middle class. This can be explained by the fact that the professionals often have more cultural capital but less economic capital, resulting in voting more to the left (Bourdieu 1984). Despite this variation within the material high class, the same trends as when using a three-fold material class scheme are found. In a second step, I tested a variation within the three-fold material class scheme by including the sales category from the EGP-scheme in the material working class to see if this alters the results. The reasoning behind this is the fact that the sales category is included in the middle class in the EGP-scheme while in reality these people can belong to the 'working poor' (Klein et al. 1989; Lohmann 2009). Making these small adjustments to the class scheme did not have any substantial influence on the results presented above.

Secondly, I tested the robustness of the subjective class scheme by assessing whether including the subjective class category 'lower middle class' or 'upper middle class' from the dataset in respectively the subjective working and middle class instead of respectively in the subjective middle and higher class influences the results. In both robustness checks the regression coefficients changed slightly while when including the group of subjective upper middle in the middle class instead of the higher class, the coefficients of the respondents who are materially part of the working or middle class but identify with the higher class were rendered non-significant. This indicates that those materially in the working or middle class who identify with the high class do in fact identify with the upper middle class. All other findings did not change substantially.

Thirdly, I tested several models by including or excluding religious denomination, union membership and being self-employed as potential mediators. These three variables are related to voting since being Catholic is associated with more rightist choices on all dependent variables while those in a union demonstrate the opposite. Being self-employed results in voting more to the right on the general and economic scale. But including or excluding these variables does not substantially alter the effect of the class combinations and thus they have no important mediating effect. Additionally, I tested age and education as categorical variables in order to test a potential non-linear effect. This did not alter the results of education but in regards to age those between 35 and 60 vote slightly more to the cultural left than younger respondents.

Furthermore, I stratified the analyses by country to assess differences between countries since there are differences between European countries when it comes to class discordance, ranging from about 40% of the respondents demonstrating discordance

in Austria to about 65% in Ireland. Additionally, when it comes to the relevance of class discordance for voting there are some differences between European countries. While my findings, as presented in Table A4.2 of the Appendix, hold for most countries, there are some remarks to be made. As one might expect after observing Table 4.5, a relationship between the class combinations and economic left-right voting exists in more countries than between the class combinations and cultural left-right voting, with the Czech Republic and Sweden as the notable exceptions. There are however some countries (Hungary, Luxembourg, Ireland, Slovakia and Slovenia) where there is only a limited or no impact of class discordance on the different forms of voting.

Finally, I tested an interaction between the class combinations and education in order to control for the possibility of people with a certain material class position, but a lower or higher class identification, voting in a certain way influenced by their educational attainment. None of these interactions were significant.

4.7 DISCUSSION

In this chapter I studied the complex relationship between material and subjective social class positions and voting behaviour across 18 European countries. As recently suggested (Sosnaud et al. 2013), the fact that material social class positions do not necessarily coincide with subjective class identification can have consequences for understanding voting patterns. Following on the Thomas theorem, the implication would be that voting behaviour is more rooted in the social class people perceive themselves in than in the social class they are categorized in according to useful yet imprecise class schemes. My study not only dug into the electoral consequences of concordant and discordant class positions – distinguishing further by looking at *deflated* and *inflated* class positions – but also differentiated between general left-right voting preferences, as well as economic and cultural voting (see Houtman et al. 2009; Van der Waal et al. 2007).

Regression analyses on the 2009 European Elections Survey – to my knowledge the only European survey project that has tapped into material class positions and subjective class identification in tandem with party preferences – allow to make a few conclusions. First and foremost, contrary to the findings of Sosnaud et al. (2013) in the United States, my results show that concordant and discordant class positions do differ significantly from each other in the European context, indicating that subjective class identification is a necessity for material class positions to affect voting behaviour. These findings show that those who subjectively identify with the working class (concordant

or discordant) vote similarly towards the left when it comes to general voting while those who materially belong to the working class but identify with the middle or the high class vote more towards the right. Similar patterns emerge for the material middle and higher classes. My results underscore a consistent pattern of voting more to the political right (on the traditional scale) when one identifies with a higher social class. This outcome nuances the idea of outspoken right-wing preferences by lower social classes (Breen 2001; Domanski 2008; Houtman et al. 2009); my study does confirm that the working class leans more to the left, although subjective identification leads to stronger differentiation than material class positions alone. This is not different for people with an inflated or deflated class identity as proclaimed by some studies (Abramson et al. 1971; Clifford et al. 1993).

By capitalizing on the distinction between economic and cultural voting, I show that only the economic vote thesis holds, while the cultural vote thesis is not confirmed. Indeed, parallel to the findings of the general left-right scale I found that those with higher subjective classes vote more to the economic right. This means that self-identifying with a higher social class, apart from the material class position, is positively related with favorable opinions towards the free market and giving economic incentives to entrepreneurs and inversely related with favorable views towards welfare redistribution, a controlled economy and nationalizations by the state. Importantly, self-identification once again proves a necessary precondition for the effect of material class positions, nuancing earlier findings that emphasized the electoral importance of material class positions (Breen 2001; Domanski 2008; Houtman et al. 2009). Following the logic of Stubager (2009), those who situate themselves as being at the bottom of society prefer left-wing parties that favor redistribution to the most unprivileged whilst those who perceive themselves at the top see this as a natural status-quo and prefer the economic right. Be it as it may, I was unable to confirm my expectation that the (subjective) working class will vote towards the cultural right and the (subjective) higher classes towards the cultural left (Houtman et al. 2009).

The relationship between class identification and voting in more general and economic left-right terms, but not on the cultural left-right scale, might be interpreted as a major liability. This finding is, by contrast, not as problematic as it sounds because of two reasons. First of all, as mentioned before, some studies have refuted the existence of 'working class authoritarianism' (Dekker et al. 1987; Grabb 1980; Napier et al. 2008). Political preferences concerning cultural conservatism and intolerance nowadays seems to be related more with education than with class or class identity (Bobo & Licari 1989; Schuman 1997). Secondly, studies have shown that self-identification with a particular social class first and foremost depends on the individual socio-economic situation

(Jackman et al. 1973). When it comes to political behaviour, indeed a class identity is an *economic* identity based on differentiation as a result of social comparison across socioeconomic cleavages (Dahrendorf 1959; Savage 2001) and is mainly a reflection of the experienced perception of social inequality and the peace of mind one has concerning it (Sosnaud et al. 2013, also see Adair 2001). A collective class identity is in that sense a reflection of the perceived social and political change imagined communities, which subjective social classes are, live through (MacKenzie et al. 2006; Strangleman 2001). Somewhat remarkably, while chapter 2 shows that the class identity people have is influenced by several cultural contextual factors, it only seems to be related to their economic voting behaviour and not the cultural voting preferences they have.

Consequently, Pakulski et al.'s (1996) argument that social classes are no longer relevant factors in society is refuted by my findings. Social classes are *imagined communities* and do certainly not always coincide with the 'objective' categorization according to predefined class schemes based on material conditions such as occupations. Class membership features as a social identity; individual subscribing into a specific social class is based on the subjective understanding of one's own socio-economic position in contrast with others. This self-identification bears important consequences for economic voting behaviour.

This study does however have some limitations. Spousal material class, for instance, can influence the living circumstances and possibly class identification of people (Baxter 1994; Erikson 1984). While this could not be addressed in my study due to data limitations, it is something to consider in future research.²⁷ Furthermore, I could not account for wealth and/or income of respondents while the latter emerges in chapter 2 as a factor in class discordance. Since certain occupations that are coded in the middle classes in the EGP-scheme can have a lower income than those in the working class (Klein et al. 1989; Lohmann 2009) the question arises whether those people identify lower because of their lower income. If they do so, they do have a material reason to underestimate their class even though their occupation is in a different class. While I tried to control for this in a robustness check, which had no substantial impact, further clarifications on its impact could help our understanding of the role between class discordance and voting behaviour.

Additionally, in future research, a more in-depth focus on country differences in regards to class discordance and political preference is a relevant endeavor given the results indicating differences (see Table A4.2). Literature on class and political preference

27. While chapters 2 and 3 focus on several potential causes of class discordance, it was not possible to empirically test spousal influence due to absence or infrequent measurement of spousal occupational activities.

argues that in countries with a traditional strong importance of social class, such as Great-Britain (Nieuwbeerta & De Graaf 1999), the impact of class on voting and political preference is robust while studies claim class to be of lesser importance in the United States (Clark et al. 1993; Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999). In the next chapter I will empirically verify whether this distinction holds when taking class identity and discordance into account.

Furthermore, I also propose a research agenda that goes beyond electoral consequences. It is evident that, with my current findings in mind further (comparative) research across other domains of social life could add significantly to my present findings. In so, I concur with Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) who underscored the importance of studying the consequences of inflated and deflated class positions. By studying more social phenomena linked to social classes, scholars can further untangle these ties and understand the underlying mechanism much better.

CHAPTER 5

Material conditions or subjective perceptions: the role of material and subjective class in understanding economic attitudes in the United States and Great-Britain

A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

ABSTRACT

In research on social class and political preferences, an often-made distinction is that between Great-Britain as a class-based society and the United States as a non-class-based society. This chapter focusses on how this fundamental difference in regards to attitudes on economic redistribution between both countries is still relevant when accounting for subjective social class next to material social class. To test this empirically, I use data from the ISSP 2009. My expectations are based on an extensive literature review where the expectation is that lower social classes favour economic redistribution while the higher classes do not. By using a class categorization consisting of working, middle and higher class, I find confirmation that more than half of the population in Great Britain and the United States do not identify with their material class. My analyses show first, that this has important consequences since subjective class predicts attitudes on redistribution in both countries while material class does not; secondly, the idea of a distinction between Great-Britain as a class-based society and the United States as a non-class-based society is not sustained.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Studies on *class politics* have culminated in a rich scholarship. While theories on the ties between class and politics (e.g. Alford 1963b; Clark et al. 1993) generally suggest a robust relationship between social class positions and political preferences, my findings in the previous chapter strongly nuances this by illustrating how class discordance is of importance. In order to further explore the relationship between material social class, class identity and political preferences I will focus specifically on the seemingly different importance of the social class basis of political behaviour in Great-Britain and the United States (Alford 1963a; 1963b; Andersen et al. 2012; Nieuwbeerta 1996; Vanneman et al. 1987; Kelley et al. 1995; Devine 1997). In light of this difference, already in the middle of the 20th century, Alford (1963a, p. 180) stated that “*Social class and political behaviour are probably not as closely associated in the United States as in some other Anglo-American countries.*” This idea nurtured a division in the literature between *class-based societies* and *non-class-based societies*, with Great-Britain as the ideal type of the former, as people generally are more aware of their class position, seemingly reflecting in a strong link between class and political preferences (Alford 1963a; 1963b; Andersen et al. 2012; Evans et al. 2017). By contrast, the United States is seen as an example of a non-class-based society, because class plays a less central role in daily life, assumed to result in a weaker connection between class and political preferences (see e.g. Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999).

In this chapter I study the proposition that Great Britain can be classified as a class-based society while the US is a non-class based society by assessing the importance of class in preferences towards economic redistribution. While some studies suggest economic cleavages losing relevance in favour of cultural issues (Evans et al. 2017), recent empirical research (see the previous chapter) shows class discordance to be related to economic rather than to cultural voting (D’Hooge, Achterberg & Reeskens 2018a).

My study follows a two-step approach. First, I look at the overlap between *material* and *subjective* social class positions. The claim is that material class membership results in subjectively identifying with the corresponding social class (Houtman et al. 2009; Savage 2001). Yet, the idea that individuals who are, according to their occupation, members of a certain social class also subjectively identify with that specific social class is far from straightforward (Hout 2008). Recent insights have shown that in both the United States (Sosnaud et al. 2013) and Europe (D’Hooge et al. 2018a) *class discordance* exists i.e. overestimating (inflation) or underestimating (deflation) one’s *material* social class position. In my study I first investigate whether this occurs more in the United States as a non-class based society than in Great-Britain as a class-based society.

The second step in my study departs from scholarship showing how class identity plays an important role in people's political preferences (Devine et al. 2005; D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Evans et al. 2017; Payne & Grew 2005; Robinson et al. 2017). However, to my knowledge, few studies (see, however, Sosnaud et al. 2013; D'Hooge et al. 2018a) have tried to verify how both the subjective and material aspect of class influence behaviour together. I aim to advance current scholarship by studying how the overlap, or absence thereof, between the material and subjective aspect of class plays a role in the political preferences on economic redistribution people hold. Evidently, studies on class politics often study *voting behaviour* because class positions reflect economic interests that translate into preferences for specific left or right parties (e.g. Lipset 1963; Clark et al. 1993; Houtman et al. 2009; Van der Waal et al. 2007; Evans 2000). While I, due to data constraints, focus on attitudes towards redistribution this should not be a problem since these have shown to provide good insights into the political preferences of people (Svallfors 2004; 2011). To study my research questions I rely on the International Social Survey Programme 2009 Social Inequality wave because it contains information on both material class, subjective self-placement²⁸ and attitudes on redistribution.

5.2 CLASS DISCORDANCE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS ECONOMIC REDISTRIBUTION

The literature on class politics often distinguishes between Great-Britain being a class-based society and the United States being a non-class-based society (Alford 1963a; 1963b; Andersen et al. 2012; Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999). This distinction is drawn upon the disparate importance social class has for people in these two countries. The argument is that in Great-Britain the concept of social class shapes important social and cultural boundaries between people with similar occupational characteristics. This means that the social groups created in the form of social classes and the awareness of membership cause the boundaries with other classes to resonate in distinct group behaviour, of which I study political preferences. Research by Mike Savage et al. (2013) illustrates the continuing relevance of material class positions in understanding political preferences among the British electorate. By contrast, in the United States these boundaries around occupational categories are less prevalent (Nieuwbeerta 1996): no profound relationship has been discovered between their material class position and their political preferences (Andersen et al. 2012, Vanneman 1980; Nieuwbeerta 1996; Alford 1963a), opposing British patterns.

28. Recent studies by Evans et al. (2017) and Robinson et al. (2017), by means of survey-based research, demonstrate how class identity is important in people's lives.

When it comes to previous research on class politics there are two main limitations, namely the observation that material classification into social classes is not uncontroversial (see, e.g. Bol et al. 2014; Güveli et al. 2012) and the fact that the relationship between material class, subjective class identification, and political attitudes is underspecified. Consequently, given my previous findings on the importance of class discordance in voting behaviour and the indications of country differences. I propose that the study into class politics can be deepened substantially. I suggest that social classes in the United States and Great-Britain are social constructs, going beyond popular ontological class constructs by zooming in on the identity aspect. I do so to assess whether individuals in both societies truly differ from each other in respect to class politics, and whether the indications of country differences regarding the importance of class discordance also extend from voting behaviour to economic-political attitudes. Concomitantly, I aim to verify whether both countries empirically can be distinguished as respectively non-class and class-based societies.

To understand the importance of subjective class identification, it needs to be confronted with material class positions that often but not exclusively are based on occupational categories. Here, I depart from earlier empirical studies demonstrating a disparate material class and subjective identity to occur in both the United States and Europe (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Evans et al. 2004; Sosnaud et al. 2013). Social identity theory (Tajfel 1974) and social categorization theory (Turner, 1985) further explain why class identity is expected to be important across countries. As already mentioned, social identity (Tajfel 1974) and social categorization theory (Turner 1985; 2006) proposes that feeling part of a certain social class features as a *social identity*, making that those individuals perceiving themselves as members of a certain social class will have a positive appraisal of their own subjective social class and consequently will follow the norms and values, including political preferences of that group.

The main proposition of my study is that material class positions only influence political preferences if they coincide with subjective class identification. Put alternatively, since awareness of one's class position causes individuals to demonstrate similar political behaviour, it can be expected that material class positions are only important for understanding attitudes on economic redistribution when people actually identify as part of that class. If this is not the case, one's material class background is not expected to play an important role. Here the Thomas theorem provides additional explanation since material class positions can only have consequences for (political) behaviour if one subjectively believes that one is in such a class position. For instance, working class voters will only have left-wing economic attitudes if they perceive themselves to be members of the working class. If individuals materially classified as working class

perceive themselves as middle class, the odds of being favourable towards redistribution diminishes. Interestingly, the attitudinal consequences of class concordance and discordance have rarely been tested empirically.

In this chapter, I study two main questions regarding class concordance and discordance in the United States and Great-Britain. Recent research by Sosnaud et al. (2013) does tap into this by showing that about half of the Americans have discordant class combinations; put differently, half of the Americans perceive themselves as in a different social class than they materially are part of, based on their occupational activity. First of all, in my first hypothesis, precisely because of the idea that the United States is a non-class-based society (Andersen et al., 2012; Robinson and Kelley, 1979; Wright, 1989), I *expect a lower degree of class discordance in Great-Britain, which is seen as a class-based society*²⁹.

Secondly, I have expectations regarding the meaning of concordance and discordance in both societies for understanding attitudes on redistribution. Because of the lower importance of material class in the United States (Andersen et al. 2012; Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999), in my second hypothesis, I *expect a weaker relationship between material class and attitudes on economic redistribution in the United States than in Great-Britain*. But since American people, just as British people, have strong opinions of what the class system entails and what their perceived place within it is (Vanneman 1980; Kelley et al. 1995; Devine 1997; Jackman 1979), I expect in my third hypothesis subjective class identity in both societies to be important for understanding attitudes on redistribution. Here, I *anticipate the traditional pattern of class politics in which the lower classes have more leftist economic attitudes than the higher classes* (cf. Devine 1997; Domanski 2008) *to hold since research has shown that leftist topics like economic egalitarianism still receive strong support from the lower social classes* (Houtman et al. 2009; Van der Waal et al. 2007; Oesch 2008; Evans 2000). Finally regarding my expectations on concordance and discordance, in the fourth hypothesis, I *anticipate material social class to only be related to political preferences when it coincides with subjective class* (Calhoun 1982; Savage 2001), *or in other words when one's class positions are concordant*. This means that the distinction between the United States as a non-class-based society and Great-Britain as a class-based society can be ascribed to the higher degree of discordance in the former.

29. Although Evans et al. (2004) very clearly show that the majority of the British people perceive themselves as middle class, their study does not take material class positions into account and consequently does not zoom in on the distinction between concordant and discordant class combinations.

5.3 DATA AND METHODS

5.3.1 Sample

For this chapter, data from the 2009 'Social Inequality' module of the International Social Survey Programme will be analysed. Because of missing information concerning occupation, class identity or economic attitudes, 1349 out of 1581 American cases and 732 out of 958 British cases were used. Despite the drawbacks of the ISSP-dataset, notably the relatively small N, it is the substantially best data-source for answering my research questions while making comparisons between the United States and Great-Britain possible. Given the lack of alternative datasets³⁰, in the analyses, I counter this drawback of a small sample size by conducting several robustness checks regarding different operationalisations of class schemes. Further, since the sample has about 24% missing cases in the British sample and about 15% in the United States I assessed the missing values patterns to identify potentially underlying issues of selective non-response which could result in biased estimates, but this is not the case. Further, since these missing values are randomly distributed, I use multiple imputation as a robustness check to see whether these approximately unbiased estimates differs from the models without multiple imputation (Rubin 2004). In doing so, I ran 35 imputations, a more than adequate number for the amount of missings (see Graham, Olchowski & Gilreath 2007), and found no substantial differences compared with the models ran on the original dataset where missing values were deleted listwise.

5.3.2 Independent variable

To study the correspondence between people's material social class and their subjective class identification, as in the previous chapter, I need to rely on overlapping definitions, *in casu* working class, middle class and higher class, derived from the ISCO88-information

As indicated in Table 5.1, this results in the following three material classes: higher class (higher controllers), middle class (lower controllers, routine non-manual workers and lower sales service) and the working class (skilled and unskilled workers, farm owners and workers).

30. There are datasets allowing to answer the research questions for both countries separately, such as the WVS, ANES or GSS for the United States and the EES for Great-Britain. However, except for the ISSP, there are no adequate datasets for my comparative purposes.

TABLE 5.1 Material social class positions

Condensed Material Social Class	Survey Categories	Great-Britain	United States
Working Class	Farm workers	5 (0.6%)	29 (2.1%)
	Farm owners	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.1%)
	Unskilled workers	149 (20.4%)	234 (17.3%)
	Skilled workers	67 (9.3%)	161 (11.9%)
Middle Class	Routine non-manual & lower sale service	266 (36.3%)	330 (24.6%)
	Lower Controllers	127 (17.3%)	336 (24.9%)
Higher Class	Higher controllers	118 (16.1%)	257 (19.1%)
Chi ²	50.831***	732	1349

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009 * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Subjective social class, then, consists of three categories that were reduced from a six-fold subjective class scheme in the dataset (see Table 5.2). Respondents were asked to place themselves in either the (1) lower class, (2) working class, (3) lower middle class, (4) middle class, (5) upper middle class or (6) upper class. Consistent with the material class operationalization, I distinguish between the subjective working class (lower class, working class and lower middle class), subjective middle class (middle class), and subjective higher class (upper middle and upper class). To test the validity of this schema, I conduct several robustness checks with different operationalisations.

TABLE 5.2 Subjective social class positions

Condensed classification	Survey Self-placement	Great-Britain	United States
Subjective Working Class	Lower Class	21 (2.9%)	51 (3.8%)
	Working Class	291 (39.7%)	493 (36.5%)
	Lower Middle Class	138 (18.9%)	184 (13.6%)
Subjective Middle Class	Middle Class	250 (34.2%)	527 (39.1%)
Subjective Higher Class	Upper Middle Class	31 (4.2%)	83 (6.2%)
	Higher Class	1 (0.1%)	11 (0.8%)
Chi ²	23,606**	732	1349

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009 * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

To study the relationship between class discordance and political preferences in Great-Britain and the United States, I cross the three subjective with the three material class positions, leading to nine categories, as highlighted in Table 5.3. This schema consists of the three concordant class positions representing a coinciding material and subjective

class. Further, I have 3 inflated class positions which means the respondent identifies with a higher social class than the class sociologists ascribe them to. The last three categories are the deflated class positions which means that respondents identify with a class lower than their material class. Table 5.3 illustrates that respectively 47% and 45.2% of the people in the United States and Great-Britain have a concordant class combination.

5.3.3 Dependent variable

Because of my interest in the relevance of differences between Great-Britain and the United States in regards to political preferences, I study attitudes on economic redistribution. These were questioned in the survey using the following 5- point Likert-items (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree):

- The differences in income in Great-Britain/The United States are too large;
- It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in incomes between people with high incomes and people with low incomes;
- The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed;
- Do you think people with high incomes should pay a larger share of their income in taxes than those with a low income?³¹

The result of an exploratory factor analysis with Varimax-rotation demonstrated that these items form a unidimensional scale while a reliability test showed a Cronbach's alpha correlation of 0.700 in Great-Britain and 0.681 in the United States, illustrating an internally consistent scale. Based on this scale analysis, a five-point scale was constructed ranging from 1 to 5 where a lower score means economic attitudes more favourable towards economic redistribution while a higher score implies the opposite.

5.3.4 Control variables

I control the analysis for a number of variables that have previously shown to explain political preferences³². First of all, since religious cleavages can cross-cut class cleavages I control for *religious denomination* (Nieuwbeerta 1996). Here I distinguish between (1) Not religious (reference), (2) Christian and (3) Other. Since political preferences are sometimes linked to the importance of traditional family values (Huber et al. 1993), I control for *marital status*, distinguishing between those married (reference) and those not-married. Because women are slightly more inclined to prefer the economic left

31. Here respondents could answer much larger share, larger share, the same share, smaller share or much smaller share.

32. Because of endogeneity issues I control for political orientation in a robustness check but do not present this in the models.

(Welch et al. 1992), I control for *gender*, with men as reference category. Additionally, I control for *family income* divided by 1000, because it is possible for people to have a higher/lower income than others in a higher/lower class (Braverman 1998). Further, I control for *education*, which is measured by the level of education (primary, secondary or tertiary education) a respondent completed. Additionally, I control for *age*. Finally, I am not able to control for ethnicity since this is not measured in the British sample, however in a robustness check I validate my American findings by controlling for ethnicity. Descriptive statistics of the control variables can be found in Appendix Table A5.1.

5.3.5 Method

To test my expectations on the impact of material and subjective class on attitudes towards economic redistribution in the United States and Great-Britain separately I use multivariate linear regression models. In a second step, I combine the two countries in one analysis in order to estimate potential differences. Further, I conduct several robustness checks to validate the findings.

5.4 RESULTS

5.4.1 Descriptive and bivariate exploration

Before turning to the multivariate results, Table 5.3 shows the occurrence of class concordance and discordance in the United States and Great-Britain. In the first hypothesis, I expected the degree of class discordance to be higher in the United States than in Great-Britain. While Table 5.3 does not confirm this, the table does show that difference between both countries is very minor. A bit more than half of the population in both countries does not identify as part of their material class. Next, the results of two Anovas show on the one hand material social class to have a stronger relation to attitudes on redistribution in Great-Britain ((df (2,731)=7.899, p=0.000) than in the United States (df(2,1348)=1.545, p=0.294). Subjective social class on the other hand has discriminatory power in both Great-Britain ((df (2,731)=21.020, p=0.000)) and the United States (df(2,1348)=27.742, p=0.000).

5.4.2 Multivariate findings

Turning to multivariate analyses, Models 1a-1b of Table 5.4 show a relationship between material class and preferences towards economic redistribution to be absent in both the United States and Great-Britain. Thus I find no confirmation for my second hypothesis

where I anticipated material social class to be of importance in Great-Britain. Although the Anova-analysis indicated a significant difference between material social classes in Great-Britain, this effect disappears when controlling for potential confounders³³.

TABLE 5.3 Distribution of class combinations by country

	United States	Great-Britain
Concordant		
Working concordant	311 (23.0%)	176 (24.0%)
Middle concordant	282 (20.9%)	142 (19.4%)
Higher concordant	42 (3.1%)	13 (1.8%)
Subtotal	635 (47.0%)	331 (45.2%)
Inflator		
Working to middle	104 (7.7%)	40 (5.5%)
Working to higher	9 (0.7%)	5 (0.7%)
Middle to higher	43 (3.2%)	14 (1.9%)
Subtotal	156 (11.6%)	59 (8.1%)
Deflator		
Middle to working	343 (25.4%)	237 (32.3%)
Higher to working	74 (5.5%)	37 (5.1%)
Higher to middle	141 (10.5%)	68 (9.3%)
Subtotal	558 (41.4%)	342 (46.7%)
N	1349	732
Chi ² : 22.148**		

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009

When introducing subjective class however, Models 2a-2b illustrate that this is important since a higher subjective class is associated with more rightist attitudes, conform to my third hypothesis. When adding interactions in Model 3 of Table 5.4 it is clear that both countries do not differ significantly from each other. The higher people subjectively place themselves, the more to the right their economic attitudes in both countries are. Or in other words, the less support for economic redistribution. The absence of a significant difference between the countries in Model 3 of Table 5.4 accentuates the idea that there is no difference regarding the relevance of subjective class on economic attitudes, just as there was no difference found regarding material class.

33. In Models 1a-1b and 2a-2b Christians and those who had a secondary or tertiary education in the US have attitudes more towards the right, just as those with a higher income in both countries.

Models 1-2 of Table 5.5 then, partially show that - as anticipated in the fourth hypothesis - material class is only relevant for understanding economic attitudes when it coincides with subjective class³⁴, or in other words in the case of class concordance. The results show -when controlling for potential confounders³⁵- a moderating effect of subjective class identity on material class, especially for those materially part of the working class. People who materially belong to the working class but think that they are part of the middle or higher class linearly have attitudes more to the right than their counterparts who concordantly see themselves as working class. In both Great-Britain as the United States, the material working class is less in favour of redistribution when they identify as part of a higher class. These analyses furthermore show that those who identify as working class have similar economic attitudes, regardless of their diverse material class background. Additionally, mainly in Great-Britain it is clear that those identifying as part of the middle class have similar estimates more towards the right, regardless of their material class background. Such pattern does not emerge for those identifying as part of the higher class, possibly due to the very small cells.

Finally, Model 3 of Table 5.5 again refutes the concept of Great-Britain being a society with a strong impact of class and the United States being a society without an importance of class. There are no significant differences between the class combinations and their relationship with economic attitudes. This finding complements the earlier findings in Model 3 of Table 5.4 and shows that when studying attitudes towards economic redistribution I find no indications of differences between Great-Britain and the United States when it comes to the impact of material and subjective class.

34. Re-estimating the models with middle concordant and higher concordant as reference category shows a consistent effect of those identifying as working class being more in favor of economic redistribution, thus corroborating the findings in Table 5.4. Those identifying as higher or middle class do not significantly differ from each other, further indicating their attitudes to be close to each other.

35. Christians and those who enjoyed secondary education in the US hold attitudes more reluctant towards economic redistribution, or in other words more to the right, while American women have attitudes more towards the left. In both countries a higher income is associated with attitudes more to the right.

TABLE 5.4 Material and subjective class regressed on economic attitudes

	Model 1a: United States	Model 2a: Great-Britain	Model 1b: United States	Model 2b: Great-Britain	Model 3: United States & Great-Britain
Constant	2.412 (0.14)***	1.736 (0.17)***	2.471 (0.15)***	1.774 (0.18)***	2.692 (0.11)***
Material Class					
Working (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	0.003 (0.06)	0.046 (0.06)	-0.034 (0.06)	0.028 (0.06)	-0.032 (0.05)
High class	-0.049 (0.07)	0.090 (0.08)	-0.108 (0.07)	0.025 (0.09)	-0.077 (0.06)
Subjective Class					
Working (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	0.204 (0.05)***	0.250 (0.10)**	0.204 (0.05)***	0.218 (0.06)***	0.252 (0.05)***
High class	0.330 (0.09)***	0.381 (0.12)**	0.250 (0.10)**	0.381 (0.12)**	0.330 (0.09)***
Religion					
Not-religious (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Christian	0.161 (0.06)**	0.060 (0.05)	0.156 (0.06)**	0.066 (0.05)	0.100 (0.04)*
Other	-0.172 (0.11)	0.122 (0.12)	-0.204 (0.11)	0.122 (0.13)	-0.146 (0.08)
Marital status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	-0.048 (0.05)	0.064 (0.05)	-0.050 (0.05)	0.072 (0.05)	-0.069 (0.03)*
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	-0.104 (0.05)*	0.037 (0.05)	-0.097 (0.05)*	0.042 (0.05)	-0.057 (0.04)
Income	0.004 (0.00)***	0.013 (0.00)***	0.003 (0.00)***	0.011 (0.00)***	0.192 (0.04)***
Education					
Non-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Secondary education	0.162 (0.07)*	0.059 (0.08)	0.149 (0.07)*	0.048 (0.08)	0.113 (0.05)*
Tertiary education	0.176 (0.08)*	-0.085 (0.06)	0.135 (0.08)	-0.113 (0.07)	0.069 (0.05)
Age	0.000 (0.00)	-0.001 (0.00)	-0.001 (0.00)	-0.002 (0.00)	-0.003 (0.00)

TABLE 5.4 (Continued)

	Model 1a: United States	Model 2a: Great-Britain	Model 1b: United States	Model 2b: Great-Britain	Model 3: United States & Great-Britain
Country					
US (Ref.)					-
GB					-0.355 (0.07)***
Material class * country					
Working*GB					-
Middle*GB					0.114 (0.11)
High*GB					0.081 (0.08)
Subjective class * country					
Working*GB					-
Middle*GB					-0.034 (0.08)
High*GB					0.121 (0.16)
R ²	6.0%	9.8%	7.1%	12.0%	11.3%
N	1349	732	1349	732	2081

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

TABLE 5.5 Class combinations regressed on economic attitudes

	Model 1: United States	Model 2: Great-Britain	Model 3: United States & Great-Britain
Constant	2.444 (0.15)***	1.725 (0.18)***	2.448 (0.12)***
Class combination			
Working concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-
Working to middle	0.238 (0.09)**	0.303 (0.12)**	0.244 (0.08)**
Working to high	0.601 (0.26)*	0.983 (0.30)**	0.596 (0.25)*
Middle to working	-0.010 (0.07)	0.084 (0.07)	-0.014 (0.06)
Middle concordant	0.172 (0.07)*	0.248 (0.09)**	0.165 (0.07)*
Middle to high	0.225 (0.13)	0.304 (0.19)	0.202 (0.12)
High to working	-0.067 (0.10)	0.033 (0.12)	-0.081 (0.10)
High to middle	0.114 (0.085)	0.299 (0.11)**	0.117 (0.08)
High concordant	0.080 (0.14)	0.360 (0.20)	0.046 (0.13)
Religion			
Not-religious (Ref.)	-	-	-
Christian	0.153 (0.06)**	0.055 (0.05)	0.095 (0.04)*
Other	-0.199 (0.11)	0.121 (0.13)	-0.143 (0.08)
Marital status			
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-
Not-married	-0.047 (0.05)	0.076 (0.05)	-0.020 (0.04)
Gender			
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-
Female	-0.097 (0.05)*	0.039 (0.05)	-0.052 (0.04)
Income	0.003 (0.00)***	0.011 (0.00)***	0.004 (0.00)***
Education			
Non-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-
Secondary education	0.150 (0.07)*	0.053 (0.08)	0.105 (0.05)*
Tertiary education	0.139 (0.08)	-0.111 (0.07)	0.045 (0.05)
Age	-0.001 (0.00)	-0.002 (0.00)	-0.002 (0.00)
Country			
VS (Ref.)			-
GB			-0.301 (0.08)***
Class combination * country			
Working concordant*GB (Ref.)			-
Working to middle*GB			0.500 (0.42)
Working to high*GB			0.066 (0.15)
Middle to working*GB			0.125 (0.09)
Middle concordant*GB			0.126 (0.10)
Middle to high*GB			0.245 (0.24)
High to working *GB			0.175 (0.16)
High to middle*GB			0.233 (0.13)
High concordant*GB			0.389 (0.25)
R ²	7.0%	12.3%	12.3%
N	1349	732	2081

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

5.5 ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

To check the validity of my found results I conducted several robustness checks. First, I tested whether including the subjective class category 'lower middle class' from the dataset in the subjective middle class instead of in the subjective working class would influence the results. Doing so did not substantially alter the estimates. Second, I included the subjective class category 'upper middle class' in the subjective middle class instead of in the subjective higher class. Doing so, rendered the effect of the subjective high class in Great-Britain non-significant which is logical due to the extremely small remaining sample. This illustrates that those identifying as 'upper middle class' indeed distinguish themselves as being higher in the stratification than the middle class and behave in a different way. This is further confirmed when conducting similar robustness checks on the class combinations since including subjective upper middle in the subjective middle class renders the estimates for those inflating to the higher class non-significant. Moreover in Great-Britain, there is no-one identifying as part of the subjective upper class. This shows that the findings in Tables 5.4 and 5.5 regarding the subjective higher class can be ascribed to respondents identifying with the upper middle class (which is in those models part of the higher class). Further, testing the validity of the material class schema, I re-estimated the models with the higher class including both higher and lower controllers. Doing so did not substantially alter the results although the moderating effects become clearer. Thus the presented results are more conservative than when using a class schema with a broader higher class.

Next, as previously mentioned in the introduction, one might argue that controlling for income or educational attainment when studying material social class is controlling for part of the class-effect. While excluding educational attainment from the model does not substantially impact the estimates of material or subjective social class, excluding income renders the effect of the material higher class significant. However, the effect is smaller than this of subjective class identity while the model fit decreases illustrating that including income, educational attainment and both measures of class better explains the economic attitudes people hold. Furthermore, I re-estimated the models while controlling for the status of the occupation of the father and the political orientation of the respondent (on a five-point scale expressing voting choice, ranging from far-left to far-right). While the former has no significant effect and results in a lower R^2 , the latter does play a mediating role. Mainly in the United States, those voting more towards the right tend to be less in favour of economic redistribution while those voting for the left do so more, indicating that a class identity is more a political identity in the United States than in Great-Britain. Finally, while ethnicity is not included in the British sample I estimated the American models while controlling for ethnicity and found no

substantial impact. While both Black Americans as other ethnic minorities are more in favour of economic redistribution, the results on material and subjective class, or the class combinations did not alter substantially.

5.6 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I studied the relationship between material and subjective social class and attitudes on economic redistribution in Great-Britain and the United States. As suggested by Alford (1963a) and others, Great-Britain is a society where social class is important while this is much less the case in the United States. This in turn results in a stronger bond between class and political preferences in the former country than in the latter (Andersen et al. 2012; Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999). According to others this perceived difference does not exist (Vanneman et al. 1987; Kelley et al. 1995; Devine 1997).

Most research studying possible differences between both countries focuses solely on material social class positions while these do not necessarily coincide with subjective class identification, which can have consequences for comprehending political preferences (D’Hooge et al. 2018a; Evans et al. 2017; Sosnaud et al. 2013). The idea, following on the Thomas theorem, is that the economic attitudes people have, are more rooted in the social class they perceive themselves in than being rooted in the social class they are categorized in by social scientists. My study not only digs into the consequences for attitudes on redistribution of concordant and discordant class positions – distinguishing further by looking at deflated and inflated class positions – but also addresses the existence of social-class differences between Great-Britain and the United States.

Analyses of the 2009 International Social Survey Programme allow to make a few conclusions. First and foremost, the idea that social class has a different importance in Great-Britain and the United States is nuanced by my findings. My results show that more than half of the people in both countries perceive their social class as different from their material social class. Furthermore, my results clearly show the importance of this subjective class perception while the role of material social class is absent when it comes to attitudes on redistribution. The latter form of social class is only relevant when it coincides with the subjective perception of class position. More concretely, people who subjectively perceive themselves as part of the working class (concordant or discordant) have congruent attitudes towards the left while those materially part of the working class who perceive themselves as middle or higher class have attitudes

more towards the right. Similar patterns emerge for the subjective middle class in Great-Britain. My findings partially underscore a pattern of economic attitudes more to the right when people believe that they are part of a higher social class. As proposed by Savage (2001) and confirmed by my findings, a subjective class identity is related to economic preferences since it is based on social differentiation across social-economic cleavages. My study does not confirm the idea of economic right-wing preferences by the material higher class in Great-Britain (e.g. Devine 1997; Domanski 2008; Houtman et al. 2009); but rather illustrates how subjective perceptions of class are of importance in both the United States and Great-Britain.

The discovered similar relationship between class perception and economic attitudes in Great-Britain and the United States, raises questions regarding the often-made division between societies with or without a strong importance of social class. The idea of Great-Britain as a society with a profound importance of social class on political preference (Alford 1963; Andersen et al. 2012) and the United States as the opposite (Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999) doesn't play out in my study. According to my results, subjective social class is not related differently to economic attitudes in the two countries, thus questioning earlier found differences in regards to class and political preferences between the United States and Great-Britain. My findings further expand earlier studies claiming that subjective class is important in both countries (Devine 1997; Kelley et al. 1995; Vanneman et al. 1987; Vanneman 1980; Evans et al. 2017), by showing how in both the United States and Great-Britain the economic attitudes people hold are linked to their own perception of their place in society and not to their ascribed position. In light of the ongoing relevance of the democratic class struggle, my results indicate that social class still is very relevant in both countries. But instead of focusing on material social class, subjective perceptions thereof are important and should receive ample attention as well.

Of course, my approach comes with some limitations that should be addressed. While my findings shed some light on the intricacies of class politics, due to data constraints I was limited in the analyses. Although the previous chapter showed a strong link between class discordance and cultural voting to be absent in Europa, I could not test this in regards to cultural attitudes. Furthermore, there are also other important forms of political attitudes which could be related to class discordance (e.g. environmental, trust in institutions). Additionally, my focus on two countries could be seen as a limitation, but this does not need to be the case. Although Great-Britain and the United States are in the literature often seen as being representative for countries with respectively a high importance and a low importance of social class (Nieuwbeerta 1996; Vanneman et

al. 1987; Kelley et al. 1995; Devine 1997), the findings in this chapter and the previous one (D'Hooge et al. 2018a) demonstrate a fairly consistent pattern of economic voting according to class identity across Europe.

With the finding that material and subjective social classes often do not coincide in both the United States and Great-Britain, I propose a research agenda that goes beyond attitudes on economic distribution or broader political preference. Not only the question on what these results mean for the democratic class struggle arises, but also the question how class discordance is related to differences between people in regards to behaviour and inequalities outside of the political sphere emerges. While chapters 4 and 5 have political behaviour as the focal point of attention, in the following chapters I extend my focus towards musical and health-related behaviour and inequalities.

CHAPTER 6

Class, class identity, and musical omnivores

A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal

ABSTRACT

Research on musical consumption laid out a pattern of musical omnivores in the higher social classes, i.e. having an open, diverse musical taste, contrasted by univores in the lower social classes. I study the role of subjective class identity, since a substantial part of the American population does not identify with their material social class. In doing so, I employ the traditional measurement of musical omnivorism, with a focus on the volume of musical tastes, next to paying attention to musical omnivorism as defined by the breadth of musical preferences. I look into this by using the General Social Survey 1993, one of the prime sources of detailed musical consumption, and employ a material and subjective class scheme consisting of the working class, middle class and higher class. My results show that material social class indeed bears some importance when it comes to the traditional measurement of omnivorism, but when focusing on the cultural distance between musical tastes a different pattern emerges with subjective class identity having more discriminatory power. In the discussion I try to explain this difference by arguing that omnivorism measured by the breadth of musical taste is predicted by class identity because this is a conscious process of musical choices in order to gain acceptance within the social group while excluding others belonging to different social groups. While omnivorism as defined by the volume of musical preferences could be influenced by the cultural capital and resources people have while serving less of a role in the building and maintenance of social boundaries.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

From the earliest days of sociological research to contemporary studies, a consistent pattern of differing cultural behaviour according to social positions has been found (Veblen 2009; Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Daenekindt et al. 2011; 2014). Although the two previous chapters mainly found a relationship between class discordance and economic-political preference, with the findings on the socio-cultural influence on class discordance in chapter 2 in mind, in this study I aim to assess whether a class identity is mainly prominent regarding economic issues (as argued by Dahrendorf 1959; Savage 2001) or whether it goes beyond and is associated with cultural preferences as well.

As shown by Bryson (1996) one of the most prominent examples of the relationship between class and cultural preference is the music people prefer and consume. Several studies have found a correlation between social class positions and musical consumption, in that sense that the lower classes have a different consumption pattern compared to the higher classes. While some studies argue that those with a higher class background (or higher social status) prefer musical genres with a higher cultural status while those with a lower class background (or lower social status) prefer the opposite (Bourdieu 1984; Dimaggio & Mukhtar 2004), recent research nuances this. Rather, those higher in the social stratification are expected to be so-called *omnivores* in contrast to more narrow-minded *univores* in the lower social classes (Alderson, Junisbai & Heacock 2007; Chan et al. 2007; Chan 2010; Peterson 1992; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016).

These disparate musical consumption patterns mainly follow from two major reasons. On the one hand the financial and cognitive resources people have influence their musical taste (Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Peterson & Simkus 1993). On the other hand musical preferences serve as a cultural marker maintaining a social distinction between different socio-economic groups, thus linking musical preferences and power (Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Peterson & Kern 1996; Hazir & Warde 2016; Graham 2009; Sonnett 2004; Tampubolon 2008; Van Eijck & Lievens 2008). This phenomenon of musical dispositions acting as a marker of social distinction is fueled and maintained by socialization processes in which members of a particular social class adopt cultural preferences, including musical taste, associated with social class in order to help establish their membership and acceptance within a particular social class position (Dimaggio & Useem 1978; Dimaggio et al. 2004).

Although this line of research has yielded considerable insights about the significance of cultural differences between social classes, there are empirical challenges to the idea that higher social classes only prefer musical genres with a high status which enables

them to distinguish themselves from others in lower status positions who consume musical genres with a lower status (Bourdieu 1984). More recent studies, starting from Peterson et al. (1992), have debunked this idea by arguing that those within the higher classes do not prefer certain high-brow genres as Bourdieu (1984) argues, but rather have an open taste and are so-called 'omnivores' when it comes to their musical consumption in contrast to more narrow-minded univores in the lower social classes (Peterson 1992; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016). Furthermore, there is a growing number of studies focusing not on class differences but rather on status distinctions between people in order to understand their cultural consumption (see for example Alderson et al. 2007; Chan et al. 2007; Chan 2010).

As these studies show, a higher socio-economic position is not associated with a sole preference for certain elite musical genres, but their preference entails favorable opinions of several musical genres. Lower material class positions on the other hand are associated with a rather narrow selection of musical genres that are appreciated. While these patterns differ from the patterns described by Bourdieu (1984; 2011), the logic remains the same; i.e. the musical omnivorism of the higher classes is a form of embodied and institutionalized cultural capital, which means that omnivorous preferences among the higher classes are recognized as symbols of higher status while univorous preferences are taken as indications of lower status.

In this study I raise a concern regarding the current state of research on social position and musical preference. In general, research focuses on the importance of material socio-economic position, be it class or status, as an indicator of (musical) lifestyle (Alderson et al. 2007; Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016; Graham 2009; Tampubolon 2008; Van Eijck et al. 2008). I argue however that it is not occupying a material (class) position in itself that causes individuals to share similar musical preferences, but rather *identifying* as such since musical consumption plays a role in the acceptance of people into their material class (Jackman & Jackman 1973; Jackman 1979). While several studies have illustrated social class to be of importance (Bourdieu 1984; Dimaggio et al. 1978), recent insights have shown that about half of the population does not identify as part of their material social class (Sosnaud et al. 2013; D'Hooge et al. 2018a). By studying the importance of subjective class identity I aim to contribute to the existing body of research on omnivorism by assessing the extent in which symbolic boundaries established through group behavior are related to class identity rather than class itself.

Furthermore, in research on musical consumption there is discussion on how to exactly measure musical omnivorism (Purhonen, Gronow & Rakhonen 2010). While

most research tends to zoom in on the *number* of musical genres people prefer or dislike in order to measure omnivorism (Bryson 1996; Graham 2009; Lizardo & Skiles 2016; Peterson et al. 1996; Van Eijck et al. 2008³⁶), other empirical studies point to the relevance of the composition or *breadth* of taste rather than the volume in order to measure omnivorism (see Purhonen et al. 2010; Warde, Wright & Gayo-Cal 2007). This is important since as proposed by Peterson (2005, p. 264) 'Breadth and volume of activity may be correlated but they need not be'. Consequently, I analyze the role of material and subjective social class in understanding musical preferences operationalized in two distinct ways. First, by looking at the number of consumed musical genres and second, by zooming in on the breadth of this consumption which can but does not need to be the same.

To empirically test the role of subjective class identity on musical omnivorism I use the General Social Survey of 1993, a survey conducted in the United States in which respondents were asked to give their opinion on 18 different musical genres. I use these data since, despite its age, it is still the most detailed available source on musical consumption allowing to build on Bryson (1996) and expanding research on how social class and class identity are related to the musical preferences individuals hold.

6.2 SUBJECTIVE SOCIAL CLASS AND MUSICAL OMNIVORISM

For decades, cultural preferences and consumption have been shown not to be randomly distributed amongst individuals, but rather to be structured along socio-economic lines (Bourdieu 1984; Chan 2010; Gans 1985; 1999). In this field of study, there are however two lines of research highly important. On the one hand, there is the more traditional idea that due to differences in economic and cultural capital, class differences exist regarding the volume and types of cultural influences individuals are exposed to and consume (Bourdieu 1984; 2011). Due to these differing cultural patterns, the musical choices individuals make act as a vital marker of inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu 1989; Parkin 1981; Willis 1977). In essence, the existing differences between the higher and lower social classes, as a prime example of socio-economic inequalities, are maintained by means of cultural, including musical, behaviour and consumption (Bourdieu 1984; Parkin 1981).

36. While these authors use a somewhat different approach by employing factor analysis in order to identify dimensions concerning musical taste rather than just counting the number of genres, the basis of their empirical scrutiny are clusters of preference rather than actually measuring the distance between consumed genres.

More recent studies however, have shown this pattern of a higher material social position being related with a more elite musical taste in contrast to the lower social positions preferring their own musical genres to be losing relevance (Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1996; Van Eijck 2000). Instead of a pattern of specific musical genres that are being preferred by certain social class, these studies demonstrate the higher social classes to be *omnivores*. This means that their musical taste is not distinct from the lower classes in a sense of preferring exclusive genres, but rather by having an open taste where a lot of musical genres are positively assessed and consumed. This in contrast with the lower social classes where a more narrow focus on certain 'lower' musical genres is common (Peterson et al. 1996; Van Eijck 2000).

The common ground between all these studies is the idea that the musical choices individuals make, act as a vital marker of inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu 1989; Bryson 1996; Parkin 1981; Willis 1977, also see Sonnett 2004). In essence, the existing differences between the higher and lower social classes, as a prime example of socio-economic inequalities, are maintained by means of cultural, including musical, behavior and consumption (Bourdieu 1984; Parkin 1981). For example, the higher social classes having a more open musical taste translates in social boundaries with groups that do not have such open taste (Peterson et al. 1993; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016; Sonnett 2004; Van Eijck 2000). While these boundaries are not physical or tangible, Bryson (1996) describes them as symbolic boundaries following from social actions, such as musical preference, in order to create a division between groups. Peterson et al. (1993) explains this further as the elites expressing their higher volume of embodied cultural capital translating in institutionalized cultural capital since listening to a plethora of musical genres acts as a way of earning status while at the bottom of society the opposite occurs (Throsby 1999; Bourdieu 2011).

This relationship between socio-economic position and musical consumption creating and maintaining social boundaries is however less evident than often assumed. Since having an open musical taste acts as a marker of social inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016; Graham 2009; Van Eijck et al., 2008), it is quintessential to note the difference between *being part* of a higher social class and *feeling part* of it. Theoretically, in order for musical taste to serve as a marker of distinction between material classes, it is necessary that people are not only part of a certain class but rather that they are *aware* of their membership. This can be explained by the fact that individuals within a particular occupational class are anticipated to display behaviour that is (perceived to be) fitting to that social class in order to enhance their acceptance in the group (Bourdieu 1989; Christensen et al. 2004; Parkin 1981; Stringhini et al. 2011; Willis 1977). The underlying idea in research

on musical consumption creating social boundaries, is that individuals are aware of their social position since identity and cultural behavior are intertwined in order to gain acceptance in a social group (Bourdieu 1984). Empirical studies indeed illustrate that it is mainly *identification with a social class* that has a profound effect on people's behavior rather than material *membership* thereof (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Calhoun 1982; Centers 1949; Evans et al. 2017; Jackman et al. 1973; Jackman 1979; Robinson et al. 2017).

In order to study this importance of material class and class identity I will measure omnivorism in two distinct ways since there is some discussion and ambiguity regarding the measurement of the concept (see Peterson 2005; Purhonen et al. 2010). While most studies (Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Peterson et al. 1996; Hazir et al. 2016; Graham 2009; Van Eijck et al. 2008; Warde et al. 2007) have provided important insights in how musical consumption is related to socio-economic differences by studying the number of musical genres people prefer, there are indications that zooming in on the breadth of consumption could generate distinct insights (Purhonen et al. 2010). As proposed by Peterson (2005, p. 264) 'Breadth and volume of activity may be correlated but they need not be'. While Peterson (2005, p. 263) also implies that focusing on the spread of musical preferences does not necessarily entail a more precise measurement of omnivorism compared to studying the number of tastes, Purhonen et al. (2010) do empirically illustrate the merit of using both approaches, inspiring me to assess the importance of subjective class identity in understanding differences regarding both the volume and breadth of musical taste.

To summarize, I expect class identity to be related to musical omnivorism rather than material social class since awareness of that class position is pivotal in creating and maintaining social boundaries. To answer my research question, following the debate in the literature, I zoom in on musical omnivorism as defined by a greater *number* of musical tastes as well as having a *broader* musical taste.

6.3 DATA AND METHODS

6.3.1 Sample

For this chapter, the General Social Survey from 1993 will be used. I use this dataset, inspired by Bryson (1996), since it is to my knowledge despite its age one of the most detailed datasets on the preferences and dislikes of respondents on 18 musical genres³⁷

37. Gospel, Country, Heavy Metal, Opera, Bluegrass, Folk, Musical, Pop-Rock, Rap, New Age, Bigband, Reggae, Classical, Latin-Salsa, Oldies, Show Tunes, Blues, Jazz.

and thus allows for precise measurements of musical consumption. After excluding missing values because of people not answering questions concerning their occupation, class identification or musical consumption, I use 1370 respondents for the analyses.

6.3.2 Dependent variable

To study how material class and subjective class identity is associated with musical consumption, I conduct two separate measurements. First of all, I analyze the impact of material class and subjective class on how musical consumption is traditionally measured (Bryson 1996; Peterson 1992), by looking at the number of musical genres respondents are favorable towards. Respondents were asked to answer on a 5-point Likert scale whether they (1) Very much like, (2) Somewhat like, (3) Neither like or dislike, (4) Somewhat dislike or (5) Very much dislike the respective 18 musical genres in the dataset. I recoded these answers to 18 dichotomous variables where respondents either dislike or like a respective musical genre. A neutral response is coded as a missing value. From these dichotomous variables I constructed a scale counting the number of genres individuals like, where a higher score consequently implies a higher number of liked musical genres, while a lower score implies the opposite thus measuring musical omnivorism.

In the second measurement, I measure musical consumption in an according to me conceptually more fitting way to assess a narrow or open musical taste since I account for the *distance* between the liked genres with the highest and lowest status. In order to attribute a cultural status to a musical genre I use the educational composition of the group of individuals liking a specific genre, an approach suggested in previous research (see Bryson 1996; Purhonen et al. 2010)³⁸. This allows to take the crossing of symbolic boundaries between high-brow and low-brow culture into account (Purhonen et al. 2010; Van Eijck et al. 2008). To do so I use the average educational composition of an audience preferring a musical genre to assign a certain cultural status to said genre.

In my study, I calculate the percentage of those with a bachelor or master degree within the group liking a specific genre. This provides the opportunity to ascribe a cultural status to each musical genre, which can be found in Table 6.1. The cultural status of musical genres, theoretically ranges from 0 to 100 since none of those preferring a genre or all of those preferring a genre can be higher educated. The genre with the lowest cultural status, derived from the percentage of those who like it with a higher education, is Heavy Metal with a score of 15,2 while the genre with the highest cultural

38. In a robustness check (see section 6.5) I did a similar exercise with the average occupational prestige (as suggested by Peterson et al. (1992).

status is New Age with a score of 35. Next, I calculate for each respondent the difference between the liked musical genre with the highest status and the lowest status. In this measurement, except for the minimum of two liked musical genres, the number of genres people like is not important. The lowest possible distance a respondent can have is 0.3 when only listening to Rap and Country, while the widest possible score is 19.8 when respondents prefer both Heavy Metal and New Age music.

TABLE 6.1 Percentage of higher educated people by musical genre

Musical genre	% Higher educated
New Age	35
Classical	34.3
Opera	32.7
Latin/Salsa	30.5
Musical	30
Reggae	28.5
Folk	28.4
Jazz	26.6
Bigband	26.4
Pop-rock	26.3
Blues	25.7
Oldies	25.3
Easy listening	22.8
Bluegrass	20.7
Gospel	18.3
Country	16.1
Rap	15.8
Heavy Metal	15.2

Source: General Social Survey 1993

6.3.3 Independent variables

To study the impact of material and subjective social class, I divide both measurements of social class in three categories: working class, middle class and high class. The three material social classes are derived from the ISCO88-information in the dataset resulting in the following 7 categories: higher controllers, lower controllers (incl. non-manual self-employed), routine nonmanual & lower sales service, skilled workers (incl. manual supervisors & manual self-employed), unskilled workers, farm workers and farm owners

from which I derive three material classes: higher class (higher controllers), middle class (lower controllers, routine nonmanual workers/lower sales service and farm owners) and the working class (skilled, unskilled and farm workers).

TABLE 6.2 Material social class positions

Condensed Material Social Class	Survey Categories	N (%)
Working Class	Farm workers	17 (1.2%)
	Unskilled workers	256 (18.7%)
	Skilled workers	184 (13.4%)
Middle Class	Farm owners	14 (1.0%)
	Manual supervisors	17 (1.2%)
	Routine non-manual	205 (15.0%)
	Lower sale service	157 (11.5%)
	Lower controllers	340 (24.8%)
Higher Class	Higher controllers	180 (13.1%)
Total		1370

Source: General Social Survey 1993

Subjective social class identification, then, consists of three categories reduced from four categories with which respondents could identify in the survey (see Table 6.3): (1) Lower class, (2) Working class, (3) Middle class and (4) Upper class. Here I distinguish between the working class (lower class and working class), the middle class, and higher class respectively making up 51.8%, 45.3% and 2.9% of the sample.

TABLE 6.3 Subjective social class positions

Condensed Subjective Social Class	Survey Categories	N (%)
Working Class	Lower class	82 (6.0%)
	Working class	628 (45.8%)
Middle Class	Middle class	620 (45.3%)
Higher Class	Upper class	40 (2.9%)
Total		1370

Source: General Social Survey 1993

6.3.4 Control variables

Finally, because of their relationships with the cultural capital people have (Brown 1995; Lamont & Lareau 1998; Nora 2004; Reay 2004), I add the educational attainment and

income of respondents to my models in order to estimate their potentially mediating impact on differences concerning musical omnivorism. By controlling for income and educational attainment, a remaining effect of material social class would indicate that material classes indeed exist as imagined communities and thus play a role in musical consumption creating and maintaining social boundaries. However as explained in the previous chapters, since one might argue, especially from a Weberian perspective, that these factors are part of one's material class, I conduct robustness checks concerning these control variables in which I estimate models excluding income and/or educational attainment to assess their potentially mediating impact on the role of material and/or subjective social class.

Further, I control for ethnicity and religious denomination since both can be associated with certain musical preferences (Bryson 1996; Burge, Goldblat & Lester 2002; Dimaggio & Ostrower 1990; Pulido 2009; Stack 1998; Travis 2013). Lastly, I also control for age and gender. The descriptives of both the dependent and independent variables can be found in Table A6.1 in the Appendix.

6.4 RESULTS

6.4.1 Musical omnivorism measured by number of tastes

Before turning to the multivariate results, the bivariate results of two Anovas show the stronger discriminating power of material class over subjective class identity in regards to musical consumption measured by *volume* (material social class (df(2,1367)=112,6, p=0.005) and subjective class identity (df (2,1367)=46,957, p=0.113).

When observing the multivariate results presented in Table 6.4, Models 1 and 2 indicate that both being part of the material middle class and subjectively identifying as such are similarly associated with liking more musical genres while being part of the higher material class or identifying as such does not matter. In regards to the volume of musical genres that individuals consume, I expected their material class to be important rather than their class identity. While Model 3 partially confirms this by showing how the earlier found effect of class identity in Model 2 disappears, the effect is limited to the material middle class and itself disappears when controlling for potential confounders³⁹ in Model 4. Here the alternative indicators of cultural capital such as mainly one's income are related to the number of musical genres preferred. In a robustness check where I stepwise introduce controls for income and educational attainment, I find that income

39. Women tend to listen to more genres than men. Ethnicity or religious background do not have an effect on the number of musical genres people listen to. The older people are, the less musical genres they prefer.

explains away the impact of material class which indicates that the number of musical genres people prefer is mainly related to the (financial) resources they have rather than their material class position or class identity. Consequently, since I find no indication of material class or class identity existing as imagined communities in regards to the volume of musical taste, my results cannot confirm that omnivorism defined by volume plays a role in building and maintaining social boundaries.

6.4.2 Musical omnivorism measured by breadth of taste

In order to further study the openness of musical consumption, I conducted analyses on the *breadth* of the musical genres individuals prefer. Instead of looking at how many types of music they like, I analyze the cultural distance between their preferred genre with the highest status and the lowest status in Table 6.1. In order to do so, I attributed a cultural status to each musical genre based on the percentage of those consuming the genre having a bachelor or master degree. Here I expected subjective class identity to be of importance since one's social identity is vital in regards to the cultural choices people make. Before observing the multivariate results, the results of two Anovas do verify the importance of subjective class identity and show it to have more discriminating power ($df(2, 1367) = 180,55, p=0.000$) than material class ($df(2, 1367) = 195,46, p=0.000$).

Further, the multivariate results in Models 1 and 2 of Table 6.5 indicate that both a higher material social class and a higher subjective identity are separately associated with a more open musical taste. Both when people have a higher material class as when they perceive their class to be higher, this results in a broader musical preference with a greater distance between the musical genres they like. The separate effect of both material class and subjective class identity is further illustrated in Model 3. But, when controlling for potential confounders⁴⁰ in Model 4, however, as expected the effect of subjective class identity remains while this of one's material class background disappears. While identifying as part of the middle or higher⁴¹ class results in a more open musical taste, the same does not occur for actually being part of a higher material social class. Furthermore, as was the case for omnivorism measured by volume, the results in Model 4 show that alternative indicators of socio-economic position such as income do play a role. Belonging to a higher income group, but not to a middle income group, results in a more omnivorous taste than those in the lower income group. While a robustness check on the impact of income and educational attainment revealed that

40. Women have a broader musical taste than men, just as those who are not religious compared to Protestants. The older people are, the less open their musical consumption is.

41. While the unstandardized effect of subjective class identity shows a linear increase according to a higher class identity, this does not occur for the unstandardized effect. This can be explained by the fact that the t-value is smaller and consequently the p-value of the higher subjective class is higher due to the smaller sample size.

TABLE 6.4 Material class and class identity regressed on the volume of musical preferences

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	7.428 (0.38)***	-	7.486 (0.38)***	-	7.362 (0.39)***	-	6.141 (0.57)***	-
Material Social Class								
Working Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middle Class	0.512 (0.20)*	0.078			0.438 (0.21)*	0.067	0.236 (0.22)	0.036
Higher Class	0.482 (0.29)	0.050			0.337 (0.30)	0.035	-0.023 (0.32)	-0.002
Subjective Social Class								
Working Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middle Class			0.387 (0.18)*	0.047	0.297 (0.19)	0.045	0.138 (0.20)	0.021
Higher Class			0.918 (0.53)	0.059	0.832 (0.53)	0.043	0.532 (0.54)	0.027
Gender								
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.332 (0.19)	0.050	0.456 (0.18)*	0.069	0.354 (0.19)	0.054	0.428 (0.19)*	0.065
Age	-0.013 (0.01)*	-0.065	-0.016 (0.01)**	-0.078	-0.015 (0.01)**	-0.073	-0.010 (0.01)**	-0.049
Ethnicity								
White (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black							0.383 (0.30)	0.035
Other							0.218 (0.42)	0.014
Religious denomination								
Protestant (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Catholic							0.393 (0.22)	0.050
Other							0.328 (0.44)	0.021
Not religious							0.183 (0.32)	0.016
Income group								
Low Income (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middle Income							0.644 (0.44)	0.075
High Income							0.915 (0.41)*	0.117

TABLE 6.4 (Continued)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Educational								
Lower educated (Ref.)							-	-
Higher educated							0.545 (0.24)*	0.072
R ²	1.5%		0.9%		1.7%		2.3%	

Source: General Social Survey 1993 ° 0.05 < p > 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

TABLE 6.5 Material class and class identity regressed on the breadth of musical preferences

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	17.130 (0.34)***		17.204 (0.34)***		17.005 (0.34)***		15.896 (0.51)***	
Material Social Class								
Working Class (Ref.)								
Middle Class	0.658 (0.18)***	0.111			0.506 (0.18)**	0.086	0.323 (0.19)	0.055
Higher Class	0.940 (0.26)***	0.108			0.648 (0.17)*	0.073	0.339 (0.28)	0.039
Subjective Social Class								
Working Class (Ref.)								
Middle Class			0.787 (0.16)***	0.133	0.648 (0.17)***	0.109	0.507 (0.17)**	0.085
Higher Class			1.332 (0.47)**	0.076	1.195 (0.48)*	0.068	0.944 (0.48)*	0.054
Gender								
Male (Ref.)								
Female	0.238 (0.17)	0.040	0.370 (0.16)*	0.062	0.277 (0.17)	0.047	0.385 (0.17)*	0.065
Age	-0.018 (0.01)***	-0.099	-0.022 (0.01)***	-0.124	-0.021 (0.01)***	-0.117	-0.016 (0.01)*	-0.089

TABLE 6.5 (Continued)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Ethnicity								
White (Ref.)		-		-		-		-
Black		0.090 (0.27)		0.009		0.090 (0.27)		0.009
Other		0.014 (0.38)		0.001		0.014 (0.38)		0.001
Religious denomination								
Protestant (Ref.)		-		-		-		-
Catholic		0.251 (0.20)		0.035		0.251 (0.20)		0.035
Other		0.073 (0.39)		0.005		0.073 (0.39)		0.005
Not religious		0.779 (0.28)**		0.076		0.779 (0.28)**		0.076
Income group								
Low Income		-		-		-		-
Middle Income		0.512 (0.39)		0.066		0.512 (0.39)		0.066
High Income (Ref.)		0.763 (0.36)*		0.109		0.763 (0.36)*		0.109
Educational								
Lower educated (Ref.)		-		-		-		-
Higher educated		0.464 (0.21)*		0.068		0.464 (0.21)*		0.068
R ²	2.4%		3.1%		3.6%		4.4%	

Source: General Social Survey 1993 ° 0.05 < p > 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

the (financial) resources people have, explain away any effect of material or subjective class when it comes to omnivorism measured by volume, the same cannot be said for subjective class identity and omnivorism measured by breadth. Here I do find that when excluding educational attainment the effect of material class is rendered significant entailing that a higher material class is associated with a broader musical preference. However, including income and educational attainment improves the model fit and shows that apart from the importance of one's resources, subjective class identity is related to musical omnivorism when measured by breadth but not when measured by volume. When individuals perceive their social class position as higher, the range of their musical preferences is broader in a linear way. Those identifying as middle class have a more open taste than those perceiving themselves as working class while this effect is almost double for those identifying with the high class. A lower perception of one's position consequently is associated with a more narrow musical taste.

6.5 ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

In order to test the validity of my results I conducted a number of robustness checks. First of all, I did not assign a cultural status to a musical genre based on the average occupational attainment of those consuming a specific genre, but rather based on the average occupational prestige of those liking a genre as proposed by Peterson et al. (1992). I did so in order to see whether using a generally stable cultural marker over time such as educational attainment affects my estimates differently than a more fluid over time cultural marker such as occupational prestige. This was not the case, since the results did not substantially alter. Furthermore, inspired by Bryson (1996) I also used average educational attainment on a 5-point scale in order to assign a cultural status to each musical genre. Doing so substantially yields the same results although the p-values are lower. This means that my reported results are more conservative.

In a final robustness check, I analyzed a potential moderating role of subjective class identity on the effect of material class/educational level/income on musical preferences since next to material class position the level of education of respondents and their income are related to their cultural capital (Brown 1995; Lamont et al. 1998; Nora 2004; Reay 2004). Both for omnivorism measured by volume as breadth, no such moderating role was found.

6.6 DISCUSSION

In this chapter I studied how subjective class perceptions help explain differences regarding the musical preferences people have since these perceptions are expected to play a role in creating and maintaining social boundaries (Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996) where awareness of one's class position is vital. In doing so, inspired by Peterson (2005) and Purhonen et al. (2010) I asked whether focusing on the breadth of musical consumption to measure a narrow or open musical taste yields different results than when assessing the volume of musical consumption (see Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1996; Peterson et al. 1992; Van Eijck 2000).

Linear regression analyses on the 1993 General Social Survey, to my knowledge despite its age one of the most detailed sources of musical consumption, allow me to make a few conclusions concerning the importance of material class and subjective class identity in understanding musical preferences. Contrary to my expectations, my results do not show higher subjective social classes to be omnivores when measured by consuming a greater number of musical genres, nor does this emerge for higher material classes as suggested by previous research (Peterson et al. 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Van Eijck 2000). I do however find that income and educational level have a stronger predicting power of consuming a greater volume of musical genres than material or subjective social class. While Bryson (1996) does not find income to be of importance in explaining the number of genres people dislike, it is together with educational attainment an important factor concerning differences in the number of genres people do actually like.

My analyses on the breadth of musical consumption (Purhonen et al. 2010) yield substantially different results than when using the measurement of volume (Bryson 1996; Graham 2009; Peterson et al. 1996; Van Eijck et al. 2008) and confirms Petersons (2005) argument regarding the volume of musical preferences not needing to mean the same as the breadth. Contrary to my first measurement, I find that omnivorism is associated with a higher class identity showing that it is mainly the awareness of an individual's social position that results in being a musical omnivore or not. Since having a narrow or open musical taste functions as a social marker, in which awareness of that social position is necessary in order for it to work (Peterson et al. 1996; Peterson et al. 1993; Van Eijck 2000), it is logical that class identity is more important than material position itself. Not being part of a social class but more so feeling part of it motivates people to adhere to the musical expectations of that group in order to achieve and maintain a positive assessment of that particular social class they feel themselves being part of (Tajfel 1974). Doing so strengthens the social ties within the group and in turn

marks of the boundaries with other groups (Turner 1985; Turner et al. 2006). While earlier studies (Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996; Peterson et al. 1996) do stress the importance of social identity, they do not account for the magnitude of Americans perceiving their social class as different from what it materially is (Sosnaud et al. 2013).

My study does however show remarkable differences concerning the impact of material class and subjective class identity depending on the specific measurement of omnivorism. When measured by volume neither class nor class identity play a role while I find that class identity is important when measured by breadth. In addition I find that for both measurements a higher income is associated with being omnivorous. A possible explanation for the different outcomes dependent on the measurement of omnivorism could be that consuming a higher volume is related to greater exposure and access to music. This idea is further corroborated by the finding that a higher income is associated with a higher volume of musical genres consumed. Indicating that the more material resources people have, the more musical genres they can consume (Bourdieu 1984; Warde et al. 2007). However, since material nor subjective social class have an impact and consequently do not exist as imagined communities, a higher volume of tastes does not seem to fulfill a function in establishing social boundaries, which is one of the key functions of being an omnivore or univore (Byrson 1996). A broader musical taste on the other hand is associated with subjective social classes acting as imagined communities with its members sharing similar omnivorous preferences (Peterson 2005). Since material class position is not of importance while other material resources, such as income and educational attainment, individuals have (Peterson 1992; Sintas & Alvarez 2004) do play a role, my study suggests that the breadth of musical taste rather than the volume acts as a marker of distinction and as such generates and maintains social boundaries (Bourdieu 1984).

Furthermore, on a broader theoretical note, the findings in this chapter on musical preferences underscore the broad relevance of accounting for subjective class identity when studying the role of class inequalities in understanding behavioral differences. Whereas chapters 4 and 5 show this relevance to be prominent in regards to voting behaviour and attitudes towards economic redistribution, the findings in this chapter corroborate the findings from chapter 2, namely that there is a vital cultural component when it comes to class identity. Whereas in chapter 2 I demonstrate this by illustrating how belonging to certain minority groups influences one's class identity, this chapter on musical preferences underscores how the class identity people hold, can aid them in establishing, maintaining and building cultural boundaries between those who are perceived as alike and those who are seen as distinct. While the class identity people

have is indeed in part an economic identity, it goes far beyond that both in regards to the factors contributing to the formation of one's class identity as well as the consequences it has concerning behavioural patterns and differences.

To conclude, while there has been discussion about the relevance of musical and cultural behaviour as social markers being in decline (Dimaggio et al. 2004), my study brings home that first of all, musical consumption is still associated with group differences and can thus exist as a relevant social marker (Peterson 2005) and secondly, that the way people perceive themselves in society is important in understanding their musical preferences and openness. While my restriction to data from 1993 might be a liability, it provides the opportunity of studying the importance of class identity in relation to musical omnivorism. In future research however I would argue that it seems promising to incorporate both more recent data and more non-American data in order to further disentangle the specifics of several measurements of musical omnivorism and its relation to social class and class identity across space and time. To conclude, while my study focuses on one aspect of cultural consumption, it would be a relevant endeavor to extend this focus to other forms of cultural behaviour such as the consumption of and participation in other forms of art and culture. However, as mentioned before, in order to provide a broad overview of the consequences of class discordance I will focus on the relationship between class discordance on the one hand and health and dying on the other hand in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER 7

It's all in the mind? The impact of subjective social status on health inequalities and health behaviours

A slightly different version of this chapter is published as:

D'Hooge, L., Achterberg, P., & Reeskens, T. (2018). Mind over matter. The impact of subjective social status on health outcomes and health behaviors. *PLOS ONE*, 13(9), e0202489. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0202489

ABSTRACT

Recent insights have shown subjective status to impact health and health behaviour. It is however unclear how this exactly happens. In this study I explore two mechanisms: this of a direct, mediating effect of subjective status explaining the impact of material class on health inequalities and behaviour and an indirect, moderating impact on the relationship between material class and health inequalities and behaviour. To test this empirically I conduct two studies, focusing on Great-Britain, using survey-data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (N: 2709-3588) and the Whitehall II-study (N: 6275-6467). The linear and logistic regression analyses show that subjective status plays a mainly direct, mediating role for health inequalities and has both a direct, mediating and indirect, moderating impact on health behaviour. In the conclusion of this chapter I reflect on the theoretical reasons why subjective status has a direct impact in certain cases, while playing an indirect role in other cases.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

For several decades, studies found a positive relationship between socio-economic positions and health (Brown et al. 2016; Elo 2009; Turra & Goldman 2007; Turner, Brown & Hale 2017; Singh-Manoux, Adler & Marmot 2003; Marmot et al. 1997) and what the literature refers to as health lifestyles (Christensen et al. 2004; Dhurandhar 2016; Kaiser, Smith & Allison 2012), described as “*collective patterns of health-related behaviour based on choices from options available to people according to their life chances*” (Cockerham, Rütten & Abel 1997, p. 124). Theoretically, this link should be strong and robust because social positions are grounded in the relationship between the individual and the market; as such, social classes combine people with shared market positions and, concomitantly, similar life chances (Giddens et al. 1982; Holton et al. 2010; Weber 2009). Partly due to their less favorable life chances, those lower in the hierarchy tend to lead unhealthier lives than their counterparts higher up (Williams 1995; Pinxten & Lievens 2014). This social gradient is a cumulative process over the life course and is not limited to only the poorest; also the middle class is more affected by poorer health than those at the top of the socio-economic ladder (Adler et al. 1994; Adler & Ostrove 1999; Mackenbach et al. 2015; Haas 2008).

Although research on these material class positions has delivered seminal insights into inequalities in health (Hämmig et al. 2013; Haas 2008) and health behaviours (Christensen et al. 2004), researchers increasingly point at the relevance of subjective class identification as a relevant predictor (Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux, Marmot & Adler 2005). While this idea in itself is promising, no previous studies have focused on disclosing *how* subjective perceptions of one's social position exactly play a role. Demakakos and colleagues (2008) suggest that a priority for further research should be to further clarify the (causal) pathways through which a cultural interpretation of social position influences the relationship between material class and health/behaviour. In this chapter I aim to contribute to filling this black box in two ways. First of all, I focus on *how* subjective perceptions exactly play a role, precisely because the pathways through which material and subjective positions are related to health inequalities have not been adequately explored. In contrast with the previous chapters, studying a moderating effect of class identity by means of class discordance, following the current scholarship on subjective status and health, here I also study the possibility of a mediating effect. Secondly, I aim to extend research on the importance of subjective social status further by also focusing on health behaviours since earlier studies (Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005) mostly tapped into the possible relevance of subjective perceptions in regards to health itself.

I propose two distinct mechanisms through which subjective status plays a role. Firstly, subjective status can have a *direct, mediating* effect on health and behaviour as a consequence of an individual's material position (Jackman et al. 1973; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005). Several studies argue that the structural or material aspect of class influences the cultural part, meaning that subjective perceptions are a consequence of material positions (Williams 1973; 1991). Since people often do not perceive their position as it materially is (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Sosnaud et al. 2013), subjective status can be a predictor of health and health behaviour since it mediates the role of material class. While this mediation has received some attention in earlier research on health (Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005), I also propose a second mechanism through which subjective status can play a role. Inspired by the idea put forward by Calhoun (1982) entailing that only when individuals *believe* they belong to a material class this class can be of importance, I expect one's material class position only to be influential when that person perceives it in a similar way. This means that subjective status can *indirectly* affect health and behaviour by *moderating* the relation between one's material class and health/behaviours.

This is fundamentally different from the first mechanism since it focuses on *when* material class and subjective perception are important rather than solely on whether subjective status explains (part of) the effect of material class. In this moderating pathway, material class plays a role when people perceive their position as such while it loses its importance when this is not the case. Where the first mechanism expects subjective status to explain (part of) the importance of material class, the second mechanism anticipates a situation in which the health or behavioural inequalities differ *within* a material class according to one's perceptions of their status.

To empirically test these two mechanisms I conduct two distinct studies. This set-up is preferred over one methods and results section in order to make my findings more comprehensible. Because there is no overarching dataset answering all of my research questions available, I use two distinct data-sources and consequently describe the specifics, used methods and found results separately instead of in one section, in order to grant the reader a clearer view on the specific variables and results in regards to health inequalities and health behaviours. In study 1, I focus on a number of biomarkers, where higher levels indicate a higher risk on developing cardiovascular diseases (systolic and diastolic blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides, high-sensitivity C - reactive protein (hs-CRP) and high density lipoprotein (HDL)-cholesterol) from the English Longitudinal Study of Aging (ELSA) which includes information of 3,559 British people over 52 on a number of health indicators in addition to material and subjective social position. Since the ELSA-data does not contain adequate information on health-related lifestyle I use

data from the Whitehall II survey in the second study, which contains information on 6,501 civil servants regarding their material and subjective social position in addition to health behaviour (alcohol consumption, exercise, smoking, and food choices). While the ideal empirical set-up would include information from representative samples for the whole population, by focusing on two distinct subsections – the elderly and civil servants from London – I cannot give a complete view; nevertheless, in the absence of such ideal sources both used datasets are unique because of their inclusion of material class, subjective status and detailed information on health biomarkers/behaviours.

7.2 THE IMPACT OF MATERIAL CLASS AND SUBJECTIVE STATUS ON HEALTH AND HEALTH BEHAVIOUR

While genetic and personal circumstances are important when it comes to predispositions in health outcomes (Hamilton et al. 2008), social science research untangled that two aspects of social position play a vital role, too, namely material class and subjective status. The material conditions in which people live their lives impact health outcomes (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Dalstra et al. 2005; Lundberg 1991) causing those lower in the social hierarchy to have more health problems, while those higher up demonstrate the opposite (Adler et al. 1999; Marmot et al. 1991; Marmot 2006). This difference is not limited to those with a lack of means to buy appropriate medicine or undergo treatment but affects all layers of society (Adler et al. 1999). Not only are the poor in a more precarious condition than the rich; also those in the middle differ from those lower or higher up in society (Adler et al. 1994; Lundberg 1991; Mackenbach et al. 2015). Furthermore, the social gradient in health not only appears in biomarkers, but is also present in health behaviours. Studies show a pattern of unhealthier lives with more alcohol abuse, more smoking, less exercise and unhealthier food in the lower material classes (Schrijvers et al. 1999; Pekkanen et al. 1995). Whereas healthy or unhealthy life choices are noticeable at any given age, the social gradient regarding health is more discernible at later age (Haas 2008). While childhood influences future health (Forrest & Riley 2004; Hayward & Gorman 2004), circumstances later in life during adulthood have a fundamental impact (Kuh & Shlomo 2004; Marmot et al. 1991). Health is thus a result of an aggregate process of contextual influences people undergo in their lives (Halfon & Hochstein 2002).

While the social gradient in (cardiovascular) health has been a robust finding in previous research (Marmot 2004; Leinsalu, Vågerö & Kunst 2003; Herd, Goesling & House 2007; Schnittker 2004; Elo 2009); recent studies indicate that the causal mechanism goes beyond monetary explanations and should be found in cultural reasons as well. The

scholarly attention for subjective social positions has been somewhat lacking (Van der Waal & De Koster 2015) making its role in the social gradient in health and health lifestyle to be not fully disentangled. However, not solely one's material position but also the personal perception of it can have a profound effect on one's life (see also Centers 1949; Evans et al. 2017; Jackman et al. 1973 Robinson et al. 2017). Indeed, these subjective perceptions relate to health (Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005) and health lifestyle (Bratanova et al. 2016; Cardel et al. 2014; Cheon & Hong 2017), yet the pathways through which this happens are not fully clear. As elaborated on before, individuals tend to attach an emotional significance to the perception of their social position motivating them to display similar behaviour as others with a similar perception, including similar health behaviour (Christensen et al. 2004; Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005; Stringhini et al. 2011; Turner 1975; Turner et al. 2006). Consequently, lower perceptions of one's social status results in health inequalities and behaviour in accordance with individuals with a similar subjective status irrespective of one's same material class (Singh-Manoux et al. 2005; Wilkinson 2002). People who perceive their social position in a certain way, irrespective from the class they materially belong to, will have different health outcomes and behaviour than others in their material class with a different perception. The perception people have concerning their social status does not only influence explicit aspects such as their health behaviour, because they follow what they expect is the norm of the group they feel they belong to, but also extends a more subtle influence on the way they handle information, seek treatment and follow advice from medical professionals resulting in better or worse health (Halfon et al. 2002; Morris, Sutton & Gravelle 2005).

In regards to research on health, however, some studies indeed do suggest subjective perceptions to be important regarding disparities in health (Adler et al. 2000; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003; Demakakos et al. 2008; Marmot et al. 1997; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003) but it is unclear in which way this occurs and whether this extends to health behaviours. The fact that subjective social status could impact health both through a mediating (see Demakakos et al. 2008) and possibly moderating pathway is the basis of my empirical scrutiny. Additionally, I extend my focus towards health lifestyle where experimental studies indicate subjective social status to be of importance (Bratanova et al. 2016; Cardel et al. 2014; Cheon et al. 2017).

I propose two distinct mechanisms offering an explanation; first, there are scholars describing one's material position to play a definite role in how people see their social position in society, i.e. their subjective status (Mann 1973; Savage 2001; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003). Since people form an idea of their place in the social stratification by comparing themselves with others (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008), by means of mediation

subjective status is expected to act as a predictor of health and behaviour next to material class since the previous chapters show that a significant part of the population perceives their position as different from what it is (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Sosnaud et al. 2013). Secondly, a cultural sociological approach states that subjective status can have a meaning on its own regardless of material positions (Alexander et al. 2001). Implying the possibility that subjective status moderates the influence of material class on health and lifestyle since in order for material social position to be of importance people need to subjectively believe that they occupy such social position (Calhoun 1982). According to this logic the subjective status individuals have is not necessarily influenced by their material class but rather impacts the relationship between material class and health/behaviour since people adapt to what they believe are the expectations of the social position they perceive themselves to be part of (Christensen et al. 2004; Stringhini et al. 2011). Where the first mechanism anticipates subjective social status to explain (part of) the role of material class, the second mechanism anticipates how subjective social status impacts the relationship between material social class and health inequalities/behaviours.

Following the Thomas theorem and the literature (Adler et al. 1999; Bourdieu 1984; Marmot et al. 1991, Williams 1995), I formulate two distinct sets of hypotheses. First, concerning health biomarkers I expect *those with a lower material social class to be unhealthier*. I do however expect subjective social status to be important through two pathways. On the one hand I expect *subjective status to mediate the effect of material class, with a higher subjective status resulting in better health and a lower subjective status being associated with worse health*. On the other hand, I anticipate *subjective social status to moderate the role of material social class resulting in better health within a material class when one's subjective status is higher, and worse health within a material class when one's subjective status is lower*.

Regarding health behaviour I expect *those with a lower material class to display unhealthier behaviour, but when accounting for subjective social status I expect the latter to mediate the impact of the former, expressing itself as those having a higher subjective status acting healthier and those with a lower subjective status doing the opposite*. Furthermore, I again have an alternative cultural sociological hypothesis where I anticipate *the effect of material social class on health behaviour to be influenced by subjective social status. While those with a lower material class will display more unhealthy behaviour, this can be counteracted by a higher subjective social status. On the other hand, those with a higher material class are expected to display less healthy behaviour when their subjective status is lower*.

7.3 STUDY 1

7.3.1 Data and methods

7.3.1.1 Sample

In the first study, data from the second (2004/2005) and sixth (2012/2013) wave of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing is used to assess health by means of blood pressure and several biomarkers (cholesterol, triglycerides, hs-CRP and HDL-cholesterol) in the blood of the respondents. Information on material class, measured through occupation, and subjective status from the second wave (2004/2005) is used to predict health inequalities, 8 years later, measured in wave six (2012/2013). I use a time lag because of the potentially delayed impact of material and subjective position on health, while additionally I also conduct a robustness check using only data from wave six. The correlation between material class in wave 2 and wave 6 is 0.90, while the correlation between subjective social status in these two waves is 0.60, illustrating some change for the latter. The distribution/average and standard deviation for both, however, is virtually unchanged meaning that only few people have changed their material class position while for subjective social status some people have increased their subjective status while for others it has decreased. The data was collected by face-to-face interview and nurse visits. In the first table estimating the effect of material class and subjective social status on my health index, I use 3,588 cases. While the number of cases is the same within each set of Models, they can differ upon the specific dependent variable. The exact number of cases is mentioned in the tables for each dependent variable.

7.3.1.2 Independent variables

In the ELSA-sample, *material class* is measured by a five-category scheme measuring occupation distinguishing between (1) Managerial and professional occupations, (2) Intermediate occupations, (3) Small employers and own account workers, (4) Lower supervisory and technical occupations and (5) Semi-routine occupations. As indicated in Table A7.1, I reduce these five categories to three material classes: (1) the higher class (managerial and professional occupations), (2) the middle class (comprising of intermediate occupations, small employers and own account workers and lower supervisory and technical occupations) and (3) the lower class or working class (semi-routine occupations). Those who had never worked, were long time unemployed and housewives are excluded from the analyses. About 37.5% of the sample is higher class, while respectively about 34.5% is middle class (13.5% intermediate occupations, 11.2% small employers and own account workers and 9.9% lower supervisory and technical occupations) and about 28% working class.

Subjective social status is measured by the MacArthur scale of subjective social status (see Adler et al. 2008; Goodman et al. 2003) asking individuals where they place themselves on a ladder ranging from 0-10 with those worst off in society at the bottom and those best off at the top. In my study I reverse this scale so that a higher score implies a lower subjective status and a lower score implies a higher status. I do so in order to have the indicators of material class and subjective class both coded in the same direction, making interpretation easier. I test this potential role of subjective social status both in a linear way as well as in a categorical way where I trichotomize the MacArthur scale in three groups each containing approximately one third of the sample. This allows in the first place to assess whether subjective social status has a linear effect or not and secondly when estimating a potentially moderating role of subjective social status this allows to match these groups with the material social classes. This helps to assess whether subjective social status has a different effect for those whose subjective social status is concordant versus non-concordant. The descriptives of all variables are presented in Table A7.1.

7.3.1.3 Dependent variables

Health is measured by the following biomarkers: measured systolic and diastolic blood pressure, total cholesterol, HDL-cholesterol, hs-CRP and triglycerides. These biomarkers are found in blood samples obtained by a visiting nurse and are dichotomized as being healthy (0) or unhealthy (1). In doing so I follow earlier studies using these biomarkers who dichotomize these variables since a linear effect is hard to interpret in terms of being healthy or unhealthy. As a robustness check I do however estimate these models with linear variables. The cut-off points derived from earlier studies (Demakakos et al. 2008; Dich et al. 2015), are >140mmHG for systolic blood pressure, >90mmHG for diastolic blood pressure, >6.2mmol/l for cholesterol, <1.03mmol/l for HDL-cholesterol, >3mg/l for hs-CRP and >2.26 mmol/l for triglycerides. When respondents take medication to control their blood pressure or total cholesterol levels, they are categorized as unhealthy for those biomarkers.

In a first step, I construct an index of health where a higher score implies poorer health and a lower score acts as an indication of better health. Here the score a respondents gets ranges between 0 and 6, where the former refers to respondents with no biomarkers above the respective unhealthy thresholds and the latter refers to individuals with all biomarkers above the respective unhealthy thresholds. In a second step, I analyze the biomarkers separately to provide a more nuanced view on how material class position and subjective social status are related to these health inequalities.

7.3.1.4 Control variables

I control the analyses for *level of education* since higher educated individuals tend to be healthier (Andrews, Hill & Cockerham 2017; Leinsalu et al. 2003). Here I distinguish between (0) people without a post-secondary education or (1) people who do have a post-secondary education. Furthermore, I control for *gender*, *marital status* and *age*. Since *cholesterol medication* can also (unintentionally) lower the levels of triglycerides, hs-CRP and HDL, I control for this (McTaggart & Jones 2008; Branchi et al. 1999; Ridker et al. 2008)⁴².

7.3.1.5 Method

First, when testing the index of health in Table 7.1 I use multivariate linear regression models. Second, in Table A7.2 I estimate models for the separate health biomarkers, where I use binomial logistic regression models to measure how material class and subjective status impact them, since these are dichotomized to healthy or unhealthy. When doing so I look at both a direct, mediating and an indirect, moderating effect of subjective status. To test this mediating effect I use the Karlson-Holm-Breen Method (Karlson, Holm & Breen 2012) as a significance test for the potentially confounding effect of subjective social status on the relationship between material class and health. While this method was originally not developed for linear regression models, the KHB-package by Kohler & Karlson (2015) adds this possibility and allows to decompose the effect of a variable, material and subjective class in my case, in a direct and an indirect or spurious effect that can be attributed to the z-variable. If mediation occurs, this technique allows to test the % of the variation that is explained by mediation and whether this is significant.

7.3.2 Results

In my study on health measured by biomarkers indicating cardiovascular health, I formulated two hypotheses on alternative mechanisms explaining the role of subjective status. On the one hand, I expected a mediating relationship with health, explaining the effect of material class. Moreover I anticipated a moderating effect where subjective social status alters the effect of material class.

The results on the index of health in Table 7.1 remarkably show no association between material class position and health. Model 2, however, shows this to be the case for subjective social status, since a lower status is associated with poorer health. Model 3, further illustrates that there is mainly difference between those in the highest and

42. While I do not do add this control in the version of this chapter published in PlosOne, this yields no substantially different results on the effect of subjective social status or material class.

lowest subjective status group, with the latter having a poorer health. Additionally, I also zoomed in on the relationship between material class and subjective status and found a weak correlation of 0.30, explaining why material class bears no importance while subjective social status does. Remarkably, I find a moderation effect of those in the middle class being slightly less unhealthy, or in other words healthier when their subjective status is lower. I also find a small moderating effect in Model 5, where it becomes clear that those assessing their status to be lower regardless of whether they are materially part of the working or higher class are equally unhealthier compared to those materially part of the higher class who assess their subjective status to be high.

The results in Models 1A-6A of Table A7.2 somewhat nuance the findings in Table 7.1 by showing that the social gradient does exist, but not for all biomarkers. Those in the working class are more likely to have an unhealthy systolic and diastolic blood pressure, next to having unhealthy levels of hs-CRP. No relationship is found with cholesterol, triglycerides and HDL-cholesterol. Furthermore, Models 1B and 4B show a significant mediating effect of subjective social status on the likelihood of having an unhealthy systolic blood pressure or an unhealthy level of triglycerides although in the latter case there is no significant main effect of material class. Additionally, as Model 6B illustrates, while there is no impact of material class, a lower subjective status is associated with a higher likelihood of unhealthy levels of HDL-cholesterol. Neither material class nor subjective status is related to overall cholesterol-levels. Furthermore, the earlier found small moderating effect of subjective social status does emerge for several of the specific biomarkers (except cholesterol).

To summarize, my results confirm a higher subjective social status to be associated with better health although the more nuanced models show this to depend on the exact biomarker. Remarkably, when assessing health I do not find a relationship with material social class, meaning that I do not find the social gradient to be confirmed. However, again, in the more nuanced analyses in Table A7.2 it becomes clear that the existence of the social gradient depends on the specific biomarker. In certain cases subjective social status mediates the role of material social class, while for some biomarkers there is a small moderating role as well.

To validate my results further I conducted three robustness checks. Firstly, I redid the analyses on the level of triglycerides, hs-CRP and HDL-cholesterol without controlling for taking cholesterol medication. Doing so did not substantially alter the estimates. Secondly, I analyzed each biomarker as a linear effect instead of a dichotomous variable. This also did not substantially alter the results. Thirdly, I used material and subjective position from the same wave (being wave 6) as when the biomarkers are measured. This

TABLE 7.1 Material class and subjective social status regressed on health biomarkers

N: 3588	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	0.415 (0.18)*	0.242 (0.19)***	0.375 (0.18)*	0.151 (0.20)	0.361 (0.18)*
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	0.052 (0.05)	0.015 (0.05)	0.020 (0.05)	0.268 (0.13)*	
Working class	0.092 (0.05)	0.056 (0.05)	0.067 (0.05)	0.124 (0.15)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	-0.057 (0.04)	-0.041 (0.04)	-0.043 (0.04)	-0.047 (0.04)	-0.049 (0.04)
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	-0.218 (0.05)***	-0.165 (0.06)**	-0.181 (0.06)**	-0.158 (0.06)**	-0.176 (0.06)**
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	0.057 (0.04)	0.037 (0.04)	0.045 (0.04)	0.038 (0.04)	0.044 (0.04)
Cholesterol medication					
No (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	0.792 (0.07)***	0.810 (0.07)***	0.807 (0.07)***	0.814 (0.07)***	0.810 (0.07)***
Age	0.015 (0.00)***	0.016 (0.00)***	0.015 (0.00)***	0.015 (0.00)***	0.015 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.004 (0.00)**		0.007 (0.00)**	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			0.028 (0.05)		
Lower status			0.119 (0.05)*		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle X Subj Status				-0.006 (0.00)*	
Working X Subj Status				0.002 (0.00)	

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)

N: 3588	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Higher class-Middle status					0.001 (0.08)
Higher class-Lower status					0.295 (0.08)***
Middle class-Higher status					0.129 (0.07)
Middle class-Middle status					0.103 (0.08)
Middle class-Lower status					0.075 (0.07)
Working class-Higher status					0.039 (0.09)
Working class-Middle status					0.158 (0.09)
Working class-Lower status					0.225 (0.07)**
R²	5.31%	5.74%	5.62%	5.87%	5.58%
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class					-
Middle Class		58.05%***	46.35%*		
Working Class		43.22%***	30.66%*		

Source: Wave 2 and 6 of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing * p > 0.10 ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01, **** p < 0.001.

yields the same results except for a significant effect of subjective social status on hs-crp and a small moderating effect of subjective status for HDL-cholesterol. In the former case, a lower subjective status is related to a higher chance of unhealthier levels of hs-crp, while in the latter case people in the working class are more likely to have unhealthy levels of HDL-cholesterol when their subjective status is lower. It is however unclear whether those people have unhealthier hs-crp and HDL-levels because of their lower subjective status or whether those who are unhealthier have a lower subjective status.

7.4 STUDY 2

7.4.1 Data and methods

7.4.1.1 Sample

In the second study I use data from the fifth wave (1997-1999) of the Whitehall II-survey to analyze health behaviour (alcohol consumption, exercise, food habits and smoking). This survey is a longitudinal cohort study of British civil servants that started in 1984 and consists of eleven waves. While this data-source only includes residents of London, it is to my knowledge one of the best data-sources regarding health behaviour. The data were collected by face-to-face interviews. Whitehall II data are available to bona fide researchers for research purposes. Please refer to the Whitehall II data sharing policy at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/whitehallII/data-sharing>. In the first table estimating the effect of material class and subjective social status on the index of health lifestyle, I use 6,467 cases. While the number of cases is the same within each set of Models, they can differ upon the specific dependent variable. The exact number of cases is mentioned in the tables for each dependent variable.

7.4.1.2 Independent variables

In the sample *material class* already consists of the Administrative class, the Professional/Executive class and the Clerical/Support class. About 45% of the sample belongs to the Administrative class, while respectively 44% and 11% make up the Professional/Executive class and the Clerical/Support class.

Subjective status is again measured by the MacArthur scale (see Adler et al. 2008; Goodman et al. 2003) where individuals place themselves on a ladder ranging from 0-10 with those worst off in society at the bottom and those best off at the top. Respondents could also place themselves halfway between two ladders. As in the first study I reverse the scale so that a higher score implies a lower subjective status and a lower score

indicates a higher status. Further, again following my first study, I also trichotomize subjective social status allowing to cross these groups with the material classes. The descriptives of all variables can be found in Table A7.1.

7.4.1.3 Dependent variables

To study *health behaviour*, following Sabia et al. (2009), I construct an index of several health behaviours ranging from 0 to 5. A lower score implies a healthier lifestyle while a higher score indicates an unhealthier lifestyle. In this index, I assess *alcohol consumption* by looking at the units of alcohol, wine and beer consumed per week since higher alcohol consumption is seen as unhealthier (Rehm et al. 2003). I use a cut-off point of 14 units a week to label respondents as drinking too much alcohol since drinking more has been linked to higher chances of several health issues (Hart et al. 1999; Kanis et al. 2005). Because exercising is healthy (Penedo & Dahn 2005), *exercise* is measured through the self-reported amount of hours per week spent on moderate and vigorous exercise. I recode moderate and vigorous exercise into one variable measuring whether people exercise too little (less than 3 hours of moderate exercise or less than 1 hour of vigorous exercise (Sabia et al. 2009)) or whether they exercise enough. Further, unhealthy food choices are measured by looking at whether respondents prefer *whole wheat* bread over unhealthier options and whether they daily consume *fruits and vegetables* (Kaur & Kapoor 2001). Finally, because of the negative health implications (Fielding 1985) I assess the likelihood of *smoking*. Respondents who don't smoke or who have smoked in the past but stopped are coded as non-smokers, while those who currently smoke are coded as smokers. As a robustness check, I redid the analyses while coding those who had smoked in the past as smokers.

7.4.1.4 Control variables

I also include some control variables, namely *level of education* since schooling is related to knowledge about healthy living (Andrews et al. 2017). I distinguish between those (0) without post-secondary education and (1) with post-secondary education. Furthermore, I control for *gender*, *marital status* and *age*.

7.4.1.5 Method

I use two kinds of analyses to assess the role of subjective status. I use linear regression models to analyze the models on health behaviours in general. Further, to study in a more nuanced way how material class and subjective social status are related to the separate indicators of health behaviour I use binomial logistic regression models. To

estimate whether subjective social status has a mediating effect on the relationship between material class and the index of health lifestyle and the separate health lifestyles, I again employ Karlson-Holm-Breen Method (Karlson et al. 2012).

7.4.2 Results

In the second study I had two hypotheses concerning health behaviour. First, I expected people with a lower material class to display unhealthier behaviour but when accounting for subjective social status I expected the latter to mediate the effect of material class. Second, I formulated a cultural sociological hypothesis expecting the effect of material social class on health behaviour to be influenced by subjective social status, through a moderating pathway.

In the results in Table 7.2, studying health lifestyle in general, I see in Model 1 that, contrary to the results on the health biomarkers, a lower material social class is associated with an unhealthier lifestyle confirming my expectation. Further, when assessing the relationship between material class and subjective social status I find a moderately strong connection of 0.56 while Models 2 and 3 show that subjective social status significantly mediates the effect of material social class, expressed by an unhealthier lifestyle for people who perceive their subjective status to be lower. Model 3 further illustrates that this is mainly a difference between those with a high status living healthier compared to those with a lower status living an unhealthier life, while those in the middle do not differ. Models 4 and 5 further illustrate a moderating effect of subjective social status since Professionals and Clericals live an unhealthier lifestyle when their status is lower and consequently live a healthier lifestyle when their status is higher.

Furthermore, I studied the indicators of health lifestyle separately as well and when observing the Models in Table A7.3 these nuance the findings in Table 7.2. These models illustrate how the social gradient does not exist for every indicator of health lifestyle in the same direction. In some cases a lower material class position is associated with a higher likelihood of unhealthy behaviour while in other cases the opposite happens.

In all Models a higher score on each dependent variable indicates unhealthier behaviour. Models 1A-7A show differentiation between material classes. In Models 1A-4A it becomes clear that there is unhealthier behaviour in the lower material classes regarding exercise, healthier food and smoking. When it comes to drinking too much alcohol however, models 5A-6A demonstrate how those in a lower material class are less likely to consume too much alcohol in general or too much wine, while Model 7A shows those in the professional class are more likely to have an excessive beer consumption.

The Administrative class in general lives a healthier lifestyle in regards to exercise and food choices, but is more likely to make unhealthy choices in regards to alcohol consumption. These findings nuance the findings on the social gradient in Table 7.2: whereas the social gradient clearly exists in regards to health behaviour, it is in certain cases, related to alcohol, opposite to what one would expect.

Further, Models 1B-4B show that a lower subjective social status is associated with a higher likelihood of too little exercise, smoking, not eating daily fruits or vegetables or not consuming whole wheat bread. For all these health indicators, subjective social status significantly mediates the impact of material class. Furthermore, a lower subjective status is associated with a lower likelihood of too much alcohol and wine consumption, again significantly mediating the impact of material class. When subjective status has an effect on health behaviour it as expected explains part of the effect of material class, confirming a mediating effect.

But subjective social status can also play a moderating role in regards to health lifestyle. Models 1D/E-2D/E illustrate how respondents, mainly in the Professional class, are more likely to have too little exercise when subjective status is lower. This shows that the effect of exercising less when having a lower material class is counteracted when one's subjective social status is higher since a higher status is consequently associated with more time spent on exercising. Further, Models 5D/E and 6D/E provide another clear example of the moderating role of subjective social status on the effect of material class since these models illustrate how those in the lower material classes are more likely to consume too much alcohol when their subjective status is lower and consequently less likely to do so when their subjective status is higher. This is highly remarkable since a higher subjective status in itself is associated with a higher likelihood of drinking too much while the opposite happens in an interaction. Finally, in regards to healthy food choices, only a small moderating effect is found.

Finally, I conducted four robustness checks to validate my findings. First, I analyzed moderate and vigorous exercise separately and found no substantially different results. Second, in regards to smoking I re-estimated my models by coding those who had smoked in the past as smokers as well. This again did not substantially alter my findings. Third, in regards to alcohol (in general, beer and wine) I re-estimated the models by including alcohol consumption not as a dichotomized variable including drinking too much or not, but rather in a linear way. Again, this did not substantially alter the estimates. Finally, I included mild exercise in the index of health lifestyle, and again found no substantial differences. I do not include this measure in the final models because it is not necessarily an indicator of exercise or sports.

TABLE 7.2 Material class and subjective social status regressed on unhealthy behaviours

N: 6275	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	3.191 (0.12)***	3.034 (0.12)***	3.190 (0.12)***	3.279 (0.16)***	3.196 (0.12)***
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	0.111 (0.03)***	0.044 (0.03)	0.052 (0.03)	-0.226 (0.09)*	
Clerical/Support Class	0.257 (0.04)***	0.154 (0.05)**	0.166 (0.05)**	-0.120 (0.17)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	-0.373 (0.03)***	-0.366 (0.03)***	-0.370 (0.03)***	-0.366 (0.03)***	-0.371 (0.03)***
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	-0.122 (0.03)***	-0.099 (0.03)***	-0.108 (0.03)***	-0.110 (0.03)***	-0.108 (0.03)***
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	0.120 (0.03)***	0.100 (0.03)**	0.104 (0.03)**	0.097 (0.03)**	0.102 (0.03)**
Age	-0.018 (0.00)***	-0.019 (0.00)***	-0.019 (0.00)***	-0.019 (0.00)***	-0.019 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.048 (0.01)***			
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)			-		
Middle status			0.046 (0.03)		
Lower status			0.168 (0.04)***		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				0.064 (0.02)**	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				0.061 (0.03)*	

TABLE 7.2 (Continued)

N: 6275	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					0.059 (0.04)
Administrative-Lower status					0.048 (0.07)
Professional-Higher status					0.019 (0.05)
Professional-Middle status					0.085 (0.04)*
Professional-Lower status					0.235 (0.04)***
Clerical-Higher status					0.304 (0.16)
Clerical-Middle status					0.155 (0.08)
Clerical-Lower status					0.336 (0.05)***
R ²	4.14%	4.53%	4.48%	4.70%	4.57%
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		58.55%**	-		
Middle Class		40.92%***	52.00%**		
Working Class			33.42%***		

Source: Wave 5 of the Whitehall II Study ° p > 0.10 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

7.5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter I studied the relationship between material class and health inequalities/health behaviour by focusing on two specific mechanisms through which subjective social status plays a role. Following on the Thomas theorem and the finding that people often do not perceive their social position as similar to their material class (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Sosnaud et al. 2013), the implication is that subjective status can explain differences in health and behaviour. While earlier studies hinted at an importance of subjective social status in regards to health (Adler et al. 2000; Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003; Marmot et al. 1997; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005), the pathways through which this works and whether this effect extends to health behaviours has not been examined while experimental studies have shown this to be potentially relevant (Bratanova et al. 2016; Cardel et al. 2014; Cheon et al. 2017). In this study I focus on how exactly subjective status plays a role while also focusing on health behaviour next to health inequalities.

Regression analyses on a combined dataset of the second (2004-2005) and sixth wave (2012-2013) of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing and data from the fifth wave (1997-1999) of the Whitehall II survey show that subjective status plays a role in predicting both health (measured through biomarkers indicating cardiovascular health) and health behaviour. I expected two mechanisms to be at play. Firstly, subjective status was expected to mediate the effect of one's material class on health and behaviour (Singh-Manoux et al. 2005). Secondly, following the argument by Alexander et al. (2001) regarding the potential autonomous importance of the cultural aspect of social position, subjective status was expected to have a moderating impact by influencing the relationship between material class and health/health behaviour. The results on two indices of health and health behaviours and their respective separate indicators allow me to make several conclusions. First, somewhat remarkably I find no confirmation of the social gradient in regards to material social class when it comes to health biomarkers while it does exist in regards to health lifestyle. Subjective social status on the other hand is important in both cases, in that sense that a lower subjective status is associated with worse health and an unhealthier lifestyle. However, when assessing the separate indicators two conclusions regarding the social gradient can be drawn. While research often confirms the social gradient between material class and health (Marmot 2004; Leinsalu et al. 2003; Schnittker 2004; Elo 2009), my findings nuance this. While the social gradient occurs in regards to both cardiovascular health as well as for health behaviours, this does not occur for every health biomarker. Further, while the social gradient exists for all indicators of health lifestyle, this is not always in the expected direction of a higher material class being associated with healthier lifestyle-choices.

Further my findings confirm the relevance of both my expected mechanisms of subjective social status in regards to health and behaviour, although with some differences. Concerning health inequalities, I remarkably find that those in the middle class with a lower subjective status are healthier compared to their middle class peers with a higher status. While unclear why this occurs, a possible explanation could be the fact that a higher subjective status could be associated with more stress which is related to cardiovascular problems (Watson & Pennebaker 1989). When observing the separate models this does not re-appear for one of the specific biomarkers. Here, there is only a mediating and small moderating effect of subjective status for some biomarkers. This mediating effect of subjective status however, emerges more clearly when it comes to health behaviour. A higher subjective status is related to more exercise, lower chances of smoking and less unhealthy eating, which is in line with behaviour expected of the higher material class (Darmon & Drewnowski 2008). What may be remarkable at first sight is that those with a higher material class or higher subjective status are more likely of drinking too much alcohol and wine, while less risk behaviour is expected from them (Bartley 2016; Schrijvers et al. 1999; Pekkanen et al. 1995). While a higher material class or subjective status is related to a higher likelihood of drinking too much (Bartley 2016), problematic consequences of alcohol consumption are more visible lower in the social stratification (Norström & Romelsjö 1998). I also find confirmation of a moderating effect when it comes to health lifestyle since on the one hand individuals with a lower material position exercise more when their subjective status is higher. This makes sense because people with a higher social position tend to exercise more (Karen & Washington 2015) and those perceiving themselves as having a higher position want to maintain a positive social identity (Tajfel 1974; Abrams et al. 2006; Turner 1975). In order to do so they follow what they believe is normal for a higher social position (Christensen et al. 2004; Stringhini et al. 2011). Sports participation has been shown to play a role in peer acceptance (Daniels & Leaper 2006), so in order to be accepted, individuals within the lower material classes exercise more when their subjective status is higher.

On the other hand, regarding alcohol consumption, another social form of health behaviour, the trends found are opposite to what I expected and somewhat more paradoxical at first sight. While people in the higher material class are more likely to consume too much alcohol (Bartley 2016), just as those with a higher subjective status, this trend is exactly the opposite when those with a lower material class have a higher subjective status. Although they are expected to adapt to the behaviour of a higher social position (Christensen et al. 2004), they do the opposite by drinking even less (and consequently being less likely to consume too much alcohol) when their subjective social status is higher. While overall, a lower subjective status is associated with a lower chance of drinking too much, it is related to a higher chance of doing so in the lower

material classes. This can be explained by the fact that people often think that alcohol abuse occurs more in the lower classes (Harrison et al. 1999; Norström et al. 1998), and since people often have a social circle consisting of others with a similar material position (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008), this generates the idea for those within the lower classes with a higher subjective status that alcohol consumption all together is negative because they see more alcohol abuse. As a consequence they associate reducing alcohol consumption with behaviour fitting to a higher subjective status, while in reality the opposite occurs both in the higher material classes and for those with a higher subjective status.

To summarize, my findings show that the social gradient does not exist for all health biomarkers while it consistently emerges for health lifestyle. Further, subjective social status has some importance for health itself, but has a more prominent mediating and moderating impact on health lifestyle. This difference may be remarkable but in reality isn't since the lifestyle people lead is in essence a choice they make, albeit often in part an unconscious one (Andrews et al. 2017; Bourdieu 1984; Cockerham et al. 1997). Health itself is influenced by this lifestyle people lead (Halfon et al. 2002; Morris et al. 2005) but is to a certain extent also a consequence of genetic predispositions as well (Hamilton et al. 2008). While both material class and subjective social status play a role in explaining differences regarding health and health lifestyle, this genetic component of the former can help explain the difference in findings.

While my two studies extend research on the importance of subjective status in understanding differences in health and health behaviour while at the same time assessing the mechanisms through which this happens, there are some limitations to my approach. First, because of data reasons, I use the Whitehall II Study, conducted amongst British civil servants, to study health behaviour. While this study is a very rich source with detailed information on several health related behaviours it is not necessarily representative for the British society, since the participants are all urban residents of London. Although different types of material class backgrounds are part of the survey, including manual and non-manual workers, it is possible that there are differences with manual and non-manual workers outside of the Civil Service and the city of London. Due to an overrepresentation of non-manual workers, my findings are potentially conservative since unskilled workers or the true underclass are not present. A second limitation of my study is the fact that again because of data limitations I used two separate studies to look at health and health behaviour. While both used data sources are highly qualitative it seems relevant in follow-up research to look at how health and health behaviour influence each other since health is a consequence of a cumulative process (Adler et al. 1994; Haas 2008; Mackenbach et al. 2015). Furthermore, using a longitudinal approach towards subjective status and potential changes within

it can add to our understanding of health differences. Finally, I am able to control quite extensively for the social background of people by including their class, their subjective identity and their level of education but other confounders such as their parent's class, ethnicity or religious denomination could play a role. While the data does not allow to include these, it is relevant in future research to see whether these are important.

To conclude, my study illustrates how subjective status is important for understanding health inequalities and health behaviour. The importance of subjective social status in understanding the relationships between material class on the one hand and health or health behaviour on the other hand has not often been studied, especially not in the case of health behaviour. However, the findings in this chapter again show how subjective social status can help explain differences in both cases since people can be motivated by their social identity to adapt to what they feel as being expected from them. One's perception of reality and social identity can strongly influence one's behaviour. In the penultimate chapter of this dissertation I will zoom in on the impact of subjective perceptions of social position and class discordance in the final life stages by assessing its relation with the likelihood of dying prematurely and the age of death itself. By further disentangling this relationship between material position and subjective perception, I aim to contribute to a better understanding of the material and cultural processes in health and death.

CHAPTER 8

The class of death: a study into material social class, subjective class identification, and the age of death in the United States

A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in a peer-reviewed journal

ABSTRACT

Previous studies on the social gradient regarding death suggest that material and subjective class are important for the age at which people die. I focus on how these two aspects of social class play a role. To study this I use data from the General Social Survey 1988-2002 linked with the records of the National Death Index. My results estimated by Cox's proportional hazard and multivariate linear regression models show that subjective class identity mediates the role of material social class while itself being associated with differences regarding the age at which people die. When an individual subjectively identifies with a higher social class, death occurs at a later age. Further, material class only predicts the age at which people die when it coincides with subjective class. This importance of subjective class cannot be explained by certain, risk-related, causes of death which suggests that one's social class identity influences one's lifestyle resulting in an earlier or later age of death.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the few experiences every single individual undergoes is dying, which is why the concept of death plays a central role in society (Berger 1969; Durkheim 1912; Walter 2008). The current body of sociological research focuses mainly on the study of certain rites concerning death and bereavement by means of qualitative methods (see for example Howarth 2007; Thompson & Cox 2017; Walter 2005). Yet scholarship on inequalities in the age of death is growing rapidly the last couple of decades (e.g. Davey et al. 1998; Kalediene & Petrauskiene 2000; Smith et al. 1997; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017).

There is a broad body of research informing of the existence of a robust relationship between social inequality and health (Brown et al. 2016; Elo 2009; Turra et al. 2007; Turner et al. 2017; Singh-Manoux, et al. 2003; Marmot et al. 1997). In these studies, scholars find a positive relationship between the socio-economic position one occupies and their health. Those individuals higher in the social hierarchy tend to be healthier than those lower in the social hierarchy. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as the social gradient is not limited to only the lowest and highest in society; also the middle class is affected by poorer health than those at the top of the socio-economic ladder (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Mackenbach et al. 2015; Haas 2008).

Fairly recently, scholars started to pay more attention to important questions regarding whether a social gradient in the age of dying may be seen as another reflection of this social gradient on health. In fact, these studies find strong indications that, indeed, the social gradient also exists in regards to the age of death (Davey et al. 1998; Kalediene et al. 2000; Smith et al. 1997; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017). Both when studying material differences concerning socio-economic status (Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017) or occupational social class (Davey et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1997), these studies indicate that people die prematurely when they occupy a lower socio-economic position as opposed to those in higher positions.

However, as discussed in the previous chapter recent scholarly literature studying the social gradient in health shows that subjective perceptions of one's class position, or class identification, is a vital factor for health differences as well, even when taking material social position into account (Cundiff & Matthews 2017; D'Hooge, Achterberg & Reeskens 2018b; Demakakos et al. 2008; Singh-Manoux et al. 2005). Remarkably, they find that one does not necessarily have to occupy a lower class position, but that the mere subjective identification with such a position can result in poorer health. This suggests that class perceptions may also be an important factor for the age at which

people die, which is the basis of my empirical scrutiny in this chapter. Given that studies on the age of death have demonstrated the social gradient to exist between social classes (Davey et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1997; Stringhini et al. 2017), the aim of my study is to investigate whether and how subjective class identity affects the age of death. Until recent, this has not been a feasible subject of study as suitable data containing information on material and subjective class positions and causes and age of death of people was not available (cf. Muennig et al. 2011). To answer my research question I use linked American data from the combined 1988-2002 General Social Survey and the National Death Index containing the needed information.

In my study I aim at expanding current scholarship on the relationship between social class and age of death in two ways. In a first step, I employ survival models to assess the association between material and subjective class position and the hazard ratios of dying at a later age. In a second step, I use a sub-sample of those respondents who have died and study the impact of material and subjective class position on the age at which people die and assess to what extent the cause of death can explain the relationships between material class, subjective class identity and age of death.

8.2 MATERIAL SOCIAL CLASS, SUBJECTIVE CLASS IDENTIFICATION, AND THE AGE OF DEATH

As indicated above, sociological scholarship on ties between socio-economic background and the age at which people die has developed rapidly in the past few decades (see Davey et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1997; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017). Furthermore, literature suggests that the social gradient found in health research (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Dalstra et al. 2005; Lundberg 1991) also extends to the age at which people die. While I do not have the possibility of studying whether health differences translate into differences regarding the age of death, theoretically one can expect the same mechanisms to exist. Individuals in a lower material class position die at an earlier age than those in the higher material classes. This phenomenon is not limited to only those at the bottom and the top of society, since those in the middle tend to live longer than those at the bottom, but die earlier than those at the top of the social stratification (Davey et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1997; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017). One of the few studies zooming in the relationship between material class and the risk of early death by Smith and colleagues (1997) indeed shows how people who are part of the manual social classes, die prematurely compared to those who do not.

However, recent studies on the social gradient (Adler et al. 2000; Operario, Adler & Williams 2004; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003; Demakakos et al. 2008; Marmot et al. 1997; Miyakawa 2012) have shown that not necessarily only material class positions are a vital contributor to differences between individuals, but rather the subjective perceptions people hold regarding their place in the social stratification play an important role as well. Not only the 'real' (materialistic) place in the social stratification people occupy has an impact on their lives, but how they perceive this reality can be related to health differences as well. This is a consequence of people's lifestyles, which is related to their subjective perceptions of their social position (Cockerham 1997; Cockerham et al. 1997; Christensen et al. 2004). In my study I aim to verify whether this mechanism also exists when it comes to the age at which people die.

As in the previous chapters of this dissertation, the reason why I anticipate subjective class identity to play a role in the age at which people die, can be explained by the fact that the in general positive assessment people have of the group they subjectively identify with, in this case their subjective class identity, motivates them to behave in a way that is fitting to that group (Tajfel 1974). In contrast to the chapters on political, musical, or health behaviour, I do not expect people with a similar class identity to die at a similar age being they choose to do so out of self-interest or in order to be accepted in the social class they perceive themselves to be part of. But rather because, next to material class differences being important for the age of death because of differences in resources (Bourdieu 1984; Giddens et al. 1982; Holton et al. 2010; Weber 2009), subjective class identity is related to lifestyle disparities throughout people's lives, having as a consequence an earlier or later age of death.

Class identities often do not align perfectly with material class positions (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Sosnaud et al. 2013). It therefore could well be the case that each of the two indicators independently affect the age at which people die. Based on findings concerning the importance of subjective social position in regards to health (Adler et al. 2000; Operario et al. 2004; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003; Demakakos et al. 2008; Marmot et al. 1997; Miyakawa 2012), I expect this to be of importance when it comes to the age at which people die as well. More precisely I anticipate class identification to affect the age of death in two ways. On the one hand, there are scholars describing one's material position to play an important role in how people see their social position in society, i.e. their subjective class identity (Mann 1973; Savage 2001; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003). This identity is formed through social comparison with others (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008). However it often does not correspond with one's material class position (D'Hooge et al. 2018a; Sosnaud et al. 2013), leading me to anticipate subjective class to mediate the impact of material class position on the age of death.

On the other hand, subjective class can have an importance on its own and as a consequence can also moderate the influence of material class on the age at which people die. In this logic, subjective class is expected to be of importance apart from material class (Calhoun 1982, also see Alexander et al. 1990). The subjective class identity people hold is thus not necessarily influenced by material class but rather affects the relationship between material class and their age of death. This happens because the age at which people die is the result of how people spend their lives (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Mackenbach et al. 2015; Haas 2008) which itself is influenced by what they perceive to be the expectations of the social class they identify with (Christensen et al. 2004; Stringhini et al. 2011).

This idea of subjective perceptions, even when disparate from reality, influencing an earlier death also emerges in the work of David P. Phillips (Phillips, Ruth & Wagner 1993; Phillips et al. 2001). These studies assess whether the meaning people ascribe to the reality surrounding them plays an important role when it comes to dying prematurely or not. While the original findings have been nuanced (see Smith 2002), these studies are amongst the first to make the important connection between reality, the perception thereof and the impact this has on the age of death. By doing so, they explore the potential importance of the Thomas theorem when it comes to differences regarding the age at which people die.

Furthermore, in this chapter I assess whether specific causes of death can explain the anticipated impact of subjective class since the age of death is influenced by the lifestyle of people (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Mackenbach et al. 2015; Haas 2008). In doing so, I distinguish between the following causes of death: cardiovascular conditions, cancer, mental conditions, other diseases, accidental death, suicide and assault. There are some causes of death which are more influenced by people's risk behaviour or aversion (Beirness & Simpson 1988; Nofziger & Kurtz 2005), such as assault, and to a lesser extent accident and suicide. Next to causes of death strongly influenced by both genetic disposition towards developing certain diseases and conditions, such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, general diseases and mental conditions (Bennermo et al. 2004; Bertram et al. 2007; De La Chapelle 2004; Kriege et al. 2004; Eysenck, Grossarth-Maticek & Everitt 1991) and lifestyle factors (Ornish et al. 1990; Vemuri et al. 2012). Although all causes of death are a composition of genetic causes, bad luck, and the lifestyle people have lived, the data does not allow to disentangle these. Nonetheless, I expect those causes of death where lifestyle plays a bigger role such as assault or accident to explain more of the effect of subjective class identity on age of death than those causes of death more influenced by genetic predispositions, both for those dying at a younger as an older age.

There are however also reasons to assume that the age at which people die is a result of a cumulative process of healthier and unhealthier behaviours throughout their lives (Adler et al. 1994; Adler et al. 1999; Mackenbach et al. 2015; Haas 2008). While the earlier life stages are important in shaping the conditions leading to one's death (Forrest et al. 2004; Hayward et al. 2004; Luo & Waite 2005), these negative effects of an unhealthier life become more visible later in life (Halfon et al. 2002; Kuh et al. 2004; Marmot et al. 1991). In relation to subjective class identity, this would mean that risk-related deaths, regardless of age, do not explain why subjective class might play a role. Instead, I expect that the role of class identity emerges as a consequence of a cumulative lifestyle mainly for those who die at a later age while it expectedly is absent for those who die at a younger age.

To summarize, I have four hypotheses on the relationship between material class position, subjective class identity and the age at which people die. First, I have two hypotheses on how material class and subjective class identity play a role for the age of death. In hypothesis 1 I expect that *subjective class identity mediates the impact of material class position on the age of dying*. In hypothesis 2, I expect that *material class position only is important for age of dying when individuals also identify with that same class position*. When these two do not overlap, material class position is not expected to have an impact in regards to the age of dying. Finally, I have two contradicting hypotheses on the role of the cause of death. In hypothesis 3a I expect that *causes of death related to lifestyle (partially) mediate the impact of subjective class identity on the age at which one dies*. In hypothesis 3b, I anticipate *subjective class identity to be related to differences regarding the age of death for those who die at a later age while being absent for those who die at a younger age because its impact is a cumulative consequence of a health-related lifestyle that needs time to develop*.

8.3 DATA AND METHODS

8.3.1 Sample

To study whether subjective class identity is a predictor of the age at which people die, next to material class position, I use data from the combined General Social Survey-National Death Index. Through the social security number of the respondents, this datasets links the information of the General Social Survey-waves from 1988 to 2002 with death records up to 2008 from the National Death Index (Muennig et al. 2011). This allows to study how the survey-information respondents provided on their material class and subjective class identity is related to their death. First, I estimate survival models including both those who are alive as well as those who have died where I selected

17,878 respondents participating in one of the 10 cross-sectional waves between 1988 and 2002 for the analyses. In a second step, I only included those respondents who are deceased, resulting in 3,372 cases.

8.3.2 Dependent variable

The dependent variable measures the age at which participants in the General Social Survey have died. This variable was construed by linking the death records from the National Death Index up to 2008 with the repeated cross-sections of the General Social Survey 1988-2002. In a first step, I study the proportional hazard ratios of being dead, distinguishing between those respondents who were still alive in 2008 and those who were not. In a second step, I select on the dependent variable and only include those 3372 cases who have an age of death.

8.3.3 Independent variables

To study the correspondence between people's material social class and their subjective class identification, I need to rely on overlapping definitions, in casu working class, middle class and higher class. The three material social classes are derived from the ISCO681-information in the dataset and by using a Stata-package developed by John Hendrickx (2004). As indicated in Table 8.1, this results in the following nine categories: higher controllers, lower controllers, routine non-manual and lower sales service, manual supervisors, self-employed, self-employed farmers, skilled workers, semi-unskilled workers and farm workers from which I derive three material classes: higher class (higher controllers), middle class (lower controllers, routine non-manual workers & lower sales service, manual supervisors and (self-employed) farmers) and the working class (skilled and semi-unskilled workers, farm workers). About 6% of the respondents belong to the higher class, while more than half of the respondents can materially be classified as middle class and around 40% as material working class.

Subjective social class identification, then, consists of three categories reduced from four categories in the survey: (1) Lower class, (2) Working class, (3) Middle class and (4) Upper class. Coherent to the material class operationalization, I distinguish between the working class (lower and working class), the middle class and higher class. Only 3-4% of the respondents classify themselves as part of the higher class while about 46-50% and 41-46% perceive themselves to be part of respectively the middle and working class.

TABLE 8.1 Material social class in the United States 1978-2002

Condensed classification	Survey categorization	Full sample		Reduced sample	
		N	%	N	%
Higher class	Higher Controllers	1,156	6.5	202	6.0
Middle class	Lower Controllers	5,705	31.9	839	24.9
	Routine Nonmanual & Lower Sales Service	4,031	22.5	723	21.4
	Manual Supervisor	312	1.7	75	2.2
	Self-employed	87	0.5	14	0.4
	Self-employed Farmer	172	1.0	67	2.0
Working class	Skilled Worker	2,076	11.6	477	14.2
	Semi-unskilled Worker	4,145	23.2	928	27.5
	Farm Laborer	194	1.1	47	1.4
Total		17,878	100	3,372	100

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index

TABLE 8.2 Subjective social class identification in the United States 1978-2002

Condensed classification	Subjective social class	Full sample		Reduced sample	
		N	%	N	%
Higher class	Upper class	593	3.3	112	3.3
Middle class	Middle class	8,155	45.6	1,676	49.7
Working Class	Working class	8,271	46.3	1,366	40.5
	Lower class	859	4.8	218	6.5
Total		17,878	100	3,372	100

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index

Further, I cross the three subjective classes with the three material class positions, leading to 9 categories. This scheme consists of the 3 concordant class positions which represents that the respondents' material and subjective class coincide. Next to these three concordant positions, I have 6 discordant class positions of which 3 positions refer to the respondent identifying as part of a higher social class than their material class. The remaining three positions refer to those respondents identifying with a class lower than their material class. The percentage of respondents with concordant and discordant class combinations are highlighted in Table 8.3. About 55% of the sample identifies with the class position they materially belong to, while about 45% does not.

TABLE 8.3 Class combinations in the United States 1978-2002

	Full sample		Reduced Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Concordant				
Working concordant	4,291	24	871	25.8
Middle concordant	5,301	29.7	976	29.0
Higher concordant	102	0.6	21	0.6
Subtotal	9,694	54.2	1,868	55.4
Discordant				
Working to middle	2,031	11.4	551	16.3
Working to higher	93	0.5	30	0.9
Middle to working	4,608	25.8	681	20.2
Middle to higher	398	2.2	61	1.8
Higher to working	234	1.3	32	1.0
Higher to middle	820	4.6	149	4.4
Subtotal	8,184	45.8	1,504	44.6
N	17,878	100	3,372	100

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index

To test whether certain causes of death mediate the relationship between material and subjective social class on the one hand and the age of death on the other, I recoded the ICD9 and ICD10 codes to 7 categories, namely: death by disease, cancer, cardiovascular condition, mental condition, accident, suicide or assault. Apart from the ICD9 and ICD10-codes not using the same letter and number combinations to refer to a certain group of conditions, they are substantially the same. While not often used in sociological research, I rely on epidemiological and medical studies who group certain conditions together to study cancer or neoplasms (Giardiello et al. 2000), cardiovascular conditions (Birman-Deych et al. 2005), mental conditions (Seal et al. 2007), accidents (Alexander, Rivara & Wolff 1992), suicide (Bertolote & Fleischmann 2015), and assault (Fanslow, Norton & Spinola 1998). The remaining causes of death related to disease, after excluding the cases where the cause of death was unclear, are grouped as 'diseases'. Table 8.4 illustrates how these diagnostic codes are reduced to a scheme consisting of 7 categories, together with the frequencies.

TABLE 8.4 ICD9 and 10- categories recoded in a reduced scheme of causes of death

Condensed cause of death	Cause of death	N	ICD9-codes	ICD10-codes
Disease	Infectious and parasitic diseases	164 (4.9)	001-139.8	A00-B99
	Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases, and immunity disorders	148 (4.4)	140-239.9	E00-E89
	Diseases of the blood/blood-forming organs	11 (0.3)	280-289.9	D50-D89
	Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	99 (2.9)	320-389.9	G00-H95
	Diseases of the respiratory system	256 (7.5)	460-519.9	J00-J99
	Diseases of the digestive system	132 (3.9)	520-579.9	K00-K95
	Diseases of the genitourinary system	70 (2.1)	580-629.9	N00-N99
	Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue	6 (0.2)	680-709.9	L00-L99
	Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	14 (0.4)	710-779.9	M00-M99
	Cancer	Neoplasms	878 (26.1)	140-239.9
Mental condition	Mental, behavioural and neurodevelopmental disorders	62 (1.8)	290-319.9	F01-F99
Cardiovascular condition	Diseases of the circulatory system	1,224 (36.4)	390-459.9	I00-I99
Accidental death	Accidental deaths (transport, falls, fire, natural and environmental factors, etc.)	192 (5.7)	E8120-E949.9	V00-X58 Y11-Y14 Y608-Y839
Suicide	Suicide and self-inflicted injury	65 (1.9)	E950-E959	X61-X83
Assault	Homicide and injury purposely inflicted by other persons	51 (1.5)	E960-E969	X92-Y09

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index

8.3.4 Control variables

Furthermore, I control the models for potential confounders. First, I add gender to the models because women tend to live longer than men (Schünemann, Strulik & Trimborn 2017). I also control for marital status since being single or not can affect the chances of premature death (Felder 2006). Furthermore, I control for race because minorities tend to die sooner (Crimmins & Saito 2001; Danaei et al. 2010). Next, I control for income because studies have shown that some groups in the material middle class have a lower income than skilled workers, which could influence my estimates (Braverman 1998; Klein et al. 1989; Lohmann 2008)⁴³. Furthermore, I control for whether a respondent has a tertiary educational attainment or not because a higher education tends to correlate with a longer life span (Crimmins et al. 2001). Lastly, in my first models estimating the hazard ratio of being alive or death I also control for the year of birth. In the models studying the actual age of death of the deceased sample this is not possible because of the very high (negative) correlation (-0.961) with the dependent variable.

8.3.5 Method

To study whether subjective class identity helps understand differences concerning the age at which people die, I use a two-step approach due to the nature of the data. In the sample the longest possible follow-up time is from 1988 to 2008 (20 years) which means that a major part of the sample does not get the outcome (dying) within the period of study. First, I use Cox proportional hazards models (Muennig, Rosen & Johnson 2013) since these are suited to estimate hazard ratios of having died or not, despite the right censored data. In these survival models I include both respondents who have died as well as the respondents who are still alive, allowing to estimate the likelihood of material and subjective social class being associated with an earlier or later death. In these models 17,878 respondents are included of which 3372 are failures on the dependent variable, meaning that they have died before 2008. Those who are not failures were still alive in 2008. Next, I only select the 3372 deceased individuals and focus on disparities concerning their age of death by using multivariate linear regression models while adding a dummy variable for each survey-wave in addition to clustered robust standard errors (Bertrand et al. 2004). Doing so has the added value of allowing me to estimate whether certain causes of death explain (part of) the relationships between material/

43. Due to the sub-optimal measurement of income consisting of almost 40 per cent of the respondents being coded in the group with the highest family income and 60 per cent in 11 groups of lower incomes rather than the actual income expressed in dollars, I distinguish between having a lower and higher income. Further, I include income since not doing this lowers the fit of the models.

subjective class and death. To estimate this, I use the Karlson-Holm-Breen Method by means of the Stata KHB-package by Kohler et al. (2015), which allows to express the mediated effect in a percentage of the total effect (Karlson, Holm & Breen 2012).

8.4 RESULTS

8.4.1 Likelihood of earlier death

The results in Table 8.4⁴⁴—when controlling for potential confounders⁴⁵— show that material class is not associated with a significantly lower or higher hazard regarding death. In this table the estimated hazard ratios can be interpreted as the likelihood of dying per time unit, or in this specific case the likelihood of respondents being deceased by the next cross-sectional wave after their own participation. However, in Model 2, it is clear that identifying as part of the subjective higher class, compared to identifying as part of the subjective working class is associated with a lower hazard ratio, which means that it is for them less likely to be deceased compared to those with a lower class identity. This model indicates that those identifying as part of the higher class are 0.829 times as likely to have died. Model 3, where I also control for material class background, confirms this finding and shows that the effect of subjective class remains when taking material class into account. Finally, Model 4 shows a small moderating effect of subjective class to exist as well, partially confirming my second hypothesis. Those part of the higher class who also identify as such are less likely to have died. Further, those identifying as part of the subjective working class do not significantly differ from each other further underscoring how a shared subjective class identity, regardless of material class background, is associated with similar outcomes. Using the group of middle class concordant or higher class concordant as the reference group shows a similar trend, with mainly those both materially and subjectively part of the higher class having lower odds of death compared to the rest.

44. Tests of the proportional-hazards assumption show that the hazards are proportional

45. Women are less likely to die earlier while black people die sooner. A higher income is associated with a lower hazard ratio of dying sooner just as a higher educational degree. Those who are widowed or divorced are more likely to live longer. This can be explained by the fact that it is more likely for these people to already be older. Finally, those who were born later, and are consequently younger, have a lower hazard ratio of being deceased.

TABLE 8.5 Cox's proportional hazard model showing hazard ratios of dying in the United States 1988-2002.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Material Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class	0.956 (0.05)		0.957 (0.05)	
Higher class	1.125 (0.09)		1.131 (0.09)	
Subjective Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class		1.014 (0.36)	1.014 (0.03)	
Higher class		0.834 (0.06)*	0.829 (0.06)*	
Gender				
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Female	0.812 (0.03)***	0.799 (0.03)***	0.811 (0.03)***	0.801 (0.03)***
Year of Birth	0.945 (0.00)***	0.945 (0.00)***	0.945 (0.00)***	0.944 (0.00)***
Degree				
Lower than high school (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
High school	0.927 (0.05)	0.919 (0.05)	0.926 (0.05)	0.930 (0.05)
Junior college	0.978 (0.11)	0.970 (0.10)	0.977 (0.11)	1.004 (0.11)
Bachelor	0.799 (0.06)**	0.808 (0.05)***	0.808 (0.06)**	0.847 (0.06)*
Graduate	0.727 (0.07)***	0.751 (0.07)**	0.735 (0.08)**	0.795 (0.07)*
Ethnicity				
White (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Black	1.256 (0.05)***	1.269 (0.05)***	1.261 (0.05)***	1.264 (0.05)***
Other	1.042 (0.11)	1.046 (0.11)	1.045 (0.11)	1.044 (0.11)
Marital Status				
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Widowed	0.750 (0.06)***	0.750 (0.06)***	0.751 (0.06)***	0.750 (0.06)***
Divorced	0.839 (0.06)**	0.836 (0.06)**	0.837 (0.06)**	0.741 (0.06)**
Separated	1.039 (0.08)	1.034 (0.08)	1.035 (0.08)	1.039 (0.08)
Never married	0.963 (0.05)	0.960 (0.06)	0.964 (0.06)	0.967 (0.05)
Income				
Lower income (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Higher income	0.737 (0.02)***	0.737 (0.02)***	0.738 (0.02)***	0.747 (0.02)***
Social Class Combinations				
Working concordant (Ref.)				-
Working inflated to middle				1.004 (0.04)
Working inflated to higher				1.062 (0.22)
Middle deflated to working				1.057 (0.06)
Middle concordant				1.002 (0.09)
Middle inflated to higher				0.623 (0.16)
Higher deflated to working				0.850 (0.07)
Higher deflated to middle				0.959 (0.07)
Higher concordant				0.764 (0.08)*
-2LL	-29873.61	-29873.99	-29871.39	-29867.93

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. The results were estimated using a two tailed test

8.4.2 Age of death

In the second step of the set of analyses I only study those respondents who have died in order to estimate the differences concerning their age of death. Before turning to the multivariate analyses, the results from two Anovas indicate the discriminatory power subjective class identity ($df(2, 3372) = 55.75, p = 0.000$) has in regards to the age of death, while this effect is absent when it comes to material class position ($df(2, 3372) = 2.48, p = 0.084$).

The results of the multivariate models in Table 8.6 further show the role material and subjective social class have when it comes to differences in the age of dying⁴⁶. In Model 1, one can see that -when controlling for potential confounders⁴⁷ - material class position is related to the age at which people die. Compared to those materially part of the working class, those part of the material middle and higher class respectively live about 2.4 and 3.6 years longer. This partly corroborates the earlier findings in Table 8.5 since the material middle class is more likely to live longer. Further, Model 2 shows, again controlling for potential confounders, how a higher subjective class identity also results in a longer lifespan corroborating the findings on the full sample. Compared with those perceiving themselves to be part of the working class, those subjectively identifying as part of the middle or higher class live longer, on average respectively 5.8 and 6.5 years longer. Further, in Model 3, where both aspects of class are added to the model, as expected subjective class identity indeed mediates 37.90% of the effect material social class has. While the effect of material class from Model 1 decreases substantially, the impact of subjective class identity remains fairly stable thus confirming my first hypothesis.

Furthermore, in Model 4 I added the combinations between material and subjective social class instead of both separately and see a fairly consistent pattern of people living longer when they identify as part of a higher social class. Model 4 thus confirms my second hypothesis by showing how those who identify with the working class (working concordant, middle deflated to working and higher deflated to working), regardless of their material background, do not differ from each other in terms of their age of death. To a large extent, similar patterns on the age of death according to subjective class identity and not material class position emerge for the material middle and higher class. For both material classes, there is a linear tendency towards a longer life when people identify as part of a higher social class. Those materially part of the middle or

46. As in the models on the full sample, I also tested all models here with the material or subjective middle class, or the group of middle concordant as reference category and found no substantially different results.

47. People from an ethnic minority die sooner. Further, those with a lower income or the lowest educational attainment again live the longest, just as widowed respondents.

higher class, die respectively about 7 and 9-10 years later when they identify as part of the middle class or higher class compared to their material peers identifying with the working class. Across subjective social classes fairly similar estimates emerge when it comes to the age of death, regardless of whether people materially belong to the working, middle or higher class, except for those materially part of the working class identifying as higher class. This can however be ascribed to the small size of this group (only 30 cases). In general, except for those in the material working class identifying with the higher class there is a linear trend towards a later age of death when people identify as part of a higher class, albeit with an absence of an effect for those in the material working class identifying with the material higher class.

Additionally, I formulated a hypothesis on the potentially mediating role of certain lifestyle-related causes of death on the relationship between subjective class identity and the age of death. In Table 8.6, I again used the Karlson-Holm-Breen-method, which allows to disentangle the direct and indirect, or spurious, effect of material and subjective class while controlling for the same confounders as in the models of Table 8.5. Doing so allows to see which percentage of the effect of material and subjective social class actually runs through another pathway via a certain cause of death. I also tested the same models while treating the categorical variables as categorical but since doing so did not yield substantially different effects, I present the simplified results in Table 8.7. These results, however, show that none of the causes of death have a significant mediating effect on either the role of material or subjective class thus rejecting the hypothesis expecting (part of) the effect of subjective class identity on the age of death to be explained by risk-related causes of death.

TABLE 8.6 Material and subjective social class regressed on the age of death in the United States 1978-2002

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	73.594 (0.32)***	72.029 (0.52)***	71.601 (0.46)***	72.152 (0.52)***
Material Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class	2.392 (0.47)**		1.831 (0.49)**	
Higher class	3.594 (0.88)**		2.348 (0.88)*	
Subjective Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class		5.791 (0.66)***	5.607 (0.69)***	
Higher class		6.527 (1.82)**	6.301 (1.79)**	
Gender				
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Female	-0.215 (0.68)	-0.143 (0.68)	-0.430 (0.70)	-0.357 (0.68)
Degree				
Lower than high school (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
High school	-6.302 (0.67)***	-6.094 (0.70)***	-6.518 (0.68)***	-6.574 (0.71)***
Junior college	-9.649 (1.33)***	-9.456 (1.30)***	-10.117 (1.31)***	-10.229 (1.45)***
Bachelor	-7.585 (1.25)***	-7.826 (1.18)***	-8.869 (1.22)***	-9.157 (1.08)***
Graduate	-4.774 (1.05)**	-5.315 (1.07)**	-6.524 (1.08)***	-6.892 (1.04)***
Ethnicity				
White (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Black	-5.201 (0.76)***	-4.813 (0.79)***	-4.489 (0.81)***	-4.393 (0.78)***
Other	-14.158 (1.76)***	-13.252 (1.73)***	-13.151 (1.74)***	-13.204 (1.78)***
Marital Status				
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Widowed	13.148 (0.70)***	12.339 (0.66)***	12.365 (0.68)***	12.396 (0.68)***
Divorced	-2.436 (0.91)*	-1.793(0.80)	-1.851 (0.81)*	-1.789 (0.82)
Separated	-7.117 (1.53)**	-6.467 (1.40)**	-6.551 (1.42)**	-6.489 (1.39)***
Never married	-12.295 (1.02)***	-11.789 (1.06)**	-11.771 (1.04)***	-11.735 (1.04)***
Income				
Lower income (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Higher income	-5.898 (0.42)***	-6.455 (0.42)***	-6.604 (0.44)***	-6.637 (0.48)***
Social Class Combinations				
Working concordant (Ref.)				-
Working inflated to middle				4.248 (0.76)**
Working inflated to higher				1.713 (2.96)
Middle deflated to working				0.418 (0.72)
Middle concordant				7.715 (0.56)***
Middle inflated to higher				9.179 (2.03)**
Higher deflated to working				2.889 (2.30)
Higher deflated to middle				7.151 (0.80)***
Higher concordant				9.925 (2.85)**
R ²	34.90%	36.89%	37.10%	37.30%
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation analysis				
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social class			37.90%***	

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. The results were estimated using a two tailed test

TABLE 8.7 Karlson, Holm, Breen-method entangling the direct and indirect effect of material and subjective social class on the age of death by cause of death. Controlled for gender, educational degree, ethnicity, marital status and income.

		Material Social Class	Subjective Social Class
Accident	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.068	0.018
	% variance through mediator	56.88%	0.27%
Suicide	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.067	0.018
	% variance through mediator	56.07%	0.27%
Assault	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.034	0.139
	% variance through mediator	563.28%	0.27%
General Disease	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.067	0.018
	% variance through mediator	56.27%	0.26%
Cancer	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.065	0.018
	% variance through mediator	55.06%	0.26%
Cardiovascular disease	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.063	0.016
	% variance through mediator	53.17%	0.24%
Mental condition	Direct effect	-0.119	6.766***
	Pathway through...	-0.066	0.018
	% variance through mediator	55.42%	0.26%

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. The results were estimated using a two tailed test

Finally, I tested the last hypothesis anticipating the impact of subjective class identity to occur for those dying at a later age while being absent for those who die at a younger age, because of the age of death being the end result of a cumulative process of health related behaviours. In Table 8.8 I split-out the sample between those who died before the age of 50 and those who did at an age of 51 and above. Where 717 respondents belong to the former group, 2656 respondents belong to the latter. The results in Table 8.7 underscore that the earlier found effects in Table 8.5 indeed exist in a substantially identical way for those who died aged 51 and above while it is absent in the younger group. Logically the estimates are smaller than when using the full sample because of the more limited range of the dependent variable here, but the found trends are very similar. This combined evidence from Tables 8.7 and 8.8 demonstrates that people with a lower class identity die at an earlier age, but without an impact of certain causes of death. While these people die sooner, they die from a plethora of causes and not necessarily more often by certain (lifestyle-related) causes than others.

TABLE 8.8 Material and subjective social class regressed on the age of death in the United States 1978-2002 split out between respondents who died aged 50 and below and those who died 51 and older

	Died aged 50 or before		Died after the age of 51	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	40.154 (0.96)	40.624 (0.90)***	75.669 (0.39)***	75.959 (0.52)***
Material Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class	-0.241 (0.69)	-	1.574 (0.26)***	-
Higher class	1.216 (1.15)	-	1.484 (1.06)	-
Subjective Class				
Working class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Middle class	-0.507 (0.45)	-	4.178 (0.58)***	-
Higher class	-0.737 (1.74)	-	4.918 (1.27)**	-
Gender				
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Female	0.929 (0.46)	0.982 (0.45)	-0.332 (0.69)	-0.315 (0.68)
Degree				
Lower than high school (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
High school	0.840 (0.90)	0.862 (0.95)	-4.060 (0.50)***	-4.100 (0.50)***
Junior college	1.736 (0.72)*	1.701 (0.70)*	-6.512 (1.52)**	-6.550 (1.52)**
Bachelor	2.091 (1.24)	1.840 (1.26)	-5.627 (1.06)***	-5.748 (1.05)***
Graduate	2.842 (1.43)	2.311 (1.48)	-4.042 (0.93)**	-4.795 (0.99)**
Ethnicity				
White (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Black	0.836 (0.56)	0.909 (0.54)	-3.914(0.72)***	-3.906 (0.73)***
Other	-3.058 (1.24)*	-2.937 (1.28)*	-7.750 (1.68)**	-7.873 (1.71)**
Marital Status				
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Widowed	1.993 (1.88)	1.915 (1.89)	7.873 (0.48)***	7.887 (0.48)***
Divorced	2.342 (0.60)**	2.384 (0.57)**	-2.995 (0.58)**	-2.964 (0.59)**
Separated	1.339 (0.74)	1.456 (0.95)	-3.945 (1.211)*	-3.942 (1.23)*
Never married	-3.954 (0.90)**	-3.894 (0.90)**	-0.045 (0.84)	-0.016 (0.81)
Income				
Lower income (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Higher income	-0.654 (0.31)	-0.639 (0.32)	-5.936 (0.46)***	-5.922 (0.47)***
Social Class Combinations				
Working concordant (Ref.)	-	-	-	-
Working inflated to middle	-	-2.158 (1.48)	-	3.485 (0.88)**
Working inflated to higher	-	-2.753 (2.76)	-	4.458 (2.45)
Middle deflated to working	-	-.064 (1.10)	-	0.929 (0.60)
Middle concordant	-	-0.598 (0.77)	-	5.751 (0.51)***
Middle inflated to higher	-	-1.461 (3.20)	-	5.561 (1.98)*
Higher deflated to working	-	-2.525 (2.42)	-	0.523 (2.01)
Higher deflated to middle	-	1.092 (1.32)	-	5.227 (1.09)**
Higher concordant	-	2.634 (2.38)	-	8.753 (1.05)***
R ²	15.76%	16.87%	30.68%	30.78%

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. The results were estimated using a two tailed test

8.5 ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

In order to test the validity of the results I conducted several robustness checks on both the Cox's hazard models and the regression models presented in Tables 8.5 and 8.6. In a first step, I estimated these models without marital status and educational degree to assess whether these influence the effect of material and/or subjective social class. Deleting these variables separately or together decreased the fit of both the Cox's models and the regression models and had no impact on the effect of subjective social class. Furthermore I estimated models to assess whether income and/or educational attainment mediate the effect of material class. I do so since theoretically material class can be of importance because of the accompanying resources and the fact that it is associated with shared group behavior. The results of these robustness checks show that when not controlling for income and/or educational attainment, subjective class identity mediates the impact of material class although a small remaining effect exists. When including income and educational attainment, this effect renders insignificant while the importance of subjective class remains. Again, as in several previous chapters, including income and educational attainment improves the fit of the models. Summarized, these results illustrate that the effect of shared class behavior is associated with class identity and not necessarily class membership itself.

In a second step I conducted several robustness checks testing the validity of the material class scheme. First, I included the ISCO2-category of the lower controllers in the higher class which had no substantial effect. Except for the models on the sub-sample where the group of people materially part of the middle class identifying with the higher class no longer having a significant effect. This means this group is mainly comprised of those with a lower controller-occupation. In addition, I included the routine non-manual and lower sales service-occupations in the working class because these include occupations of the working poor (Braverman 1998; Klein et al. 1989; Lohmann 2008). Doing so yielded no substantially different results nor did excluding income from the models in a separate robustness check. Further, including the group of manual supervisors in the working class did not yield substantially different estimates. Next, while the data is not suited to test other class schemes, I included whether respondents are self-employed or not in order to get some indication, within the scope of possibilities with the data, whether alternative class schemes putting more emphasis on ownership and exploitation would yield different results. I do so because in the used class scheme these respondents are either classified as middle or working class depending on whether their occupation is manual or not. While those who are self-employed as the owner of a company are classified in the higher class. I find that those who are self-employed in general do not differ significantly from those who are not, while including this variable

does not increase the fit of the model. Consequently, I do not include it in the final, presented models. Whether people have an occupation with a supervisory role and the number of employees respondents possibly supervise is not measured accurately in the data, apart from the occupational information, and could not be tested.

Furthermore, I conducted an additional set of robustness checks on the analyses in Table 8.6 studying the sub-sample of people who have died. In order to account for the possibility that people who know they are close to death, for example those terminally ill, underestimate their material class because of their situation, I conduct a robustness check where I respectively exclude those people who died within 3 and 5 years of their participation in the GSS. In these analyses I respectively exclude 740 and 1196 of the 3372 cases in these models. While in both analyses the significant effect of the material higher class disappears, the effects of subjective class identity and the class combinations do not substantially differ. However, in the most restricted model, one can see that those materially part of the middle class identifying as working class do live slightly longer than their peers identifying as such. Despite these small differences, it can be safely assumed that subjective class influences the age at which people die while an impact of being terminally ill on subjective class identity does not seem to occur in the models.

8.6 DISCUSSION

In this study I first assessed the impact subjective class identification has on the likelihood of people dying at a later age and in a second step zoomed in on the actual age at which people die through two different pathways, namely by means of mediating and moderating the role of material social class. Secondly, for the sample of people who had died I assessed whether certain causes of death could explain away part of this impact or whether the impact of subjective class is limited to those dying at a later age. This two-step approach allows to see on the one hand whether these two aspects of class play a role in premature death and whether premature death can be attributed to certain causes or whether it is randomly distributed across a wide array of causes of death as the result of a cumulative process.

While a growing scholarship on the age of death found disparities between material social positions, with those lower in the social stratification dying at an earlier age (Davey et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1997; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017), recent insights on the social gradient concerning health found subjective perceptions of these social positions to have an important impact (Adler et al. 2000; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003;

Demakakos et al. 2008; D'Hooge et al. 2018b; Marmot et al. 1997; Miyakawa 2012). Whether this mechanism extends to differences concerning hazard ratios of dying at a later age or the actual age at which people die is however unclear. Theoretically, since the age of dying is the end result of a cumulative process of health problems (Halfon et al. 2002; Kuh et al. 2004; Marmot et al. 1991), it is plausible that the role of subjective class identity is indeed similar in regards to the social gradient in health.

Regression analyses on the General Social Survey-National Death Index-dataset, where the GSS survey results between 1988 and 2002 are linked to the age and cause of death up until 2008 show that indeed subjective class identity plays an important role in explaining differences concerning an earlier or later death. Having a higher class identity results in people dying at a later age, while those with a lower class identity are more likely to die sooner. I expected two mechanisms to be at work and find confirmation of both. Firstly, I anticipated subjective class identity to mediate the impact material class position has (Mann 1973; Savage 2001). My findings as expected show that although those part of a higher social class are more likely to live longer while those who have died have indeed actually lived a greater number of years, in both cases subjective class identity mediates this effect. Material social class is only to a smaller extent associated with differences regarding the age of death, while subjective class identity is very much so. When people identify as part of the subjective middle or higher class there is a linear trend of a later age of death compared to those identifying with the working class, especially when zooming in on those who have died. Consequently, this entails that material social classes do not exist as imagined communities, which are associated with differences regarding death, while this is the case for subjective class identity. Secondly, inspired by Calhoun (1982) I expected subjective class identity to play a moderating role, entailing that material class positions only have an impact when people actually identify as such. My findings confirm this second anticipated mechanism by showing that people who identify as part of the working class do not differ from each other when it comes to their hazard ratio of death and concerning their actual age of death. This means that regardless of their material class background, they show a very similar outcome because they identify in the same way. Mainly in regards to the actual age of death, similar patterns emerge for the subjective middle and higher class. This underscores a consistent pattern of people dying at a later age when they subjectively identify as part of a higher social class while dying sooner if they identify with a lower class, regardless of what their material class background is. My study consequently nuances the earlier findings of material class (Smith et al. 1997) or social position (Davey et al. 1998; Stephens et al. 2017; Yang 2017) playing a vital role in understanding why some people die sooner than others. This does not mean that the material resources people have are not important since I find educational attainment and income to play

a role as well, but rather that shared class behaviour resulting in an earlier or later death is mainly explained by class identity rather than by material class position. My findings further underscore that subjective class identity plays a role because of its cumulative effect of the associated lifestyle (Halfon et al. 2002; Kuh et al. 2004; Marmot et al. 1991) since its effect is prominent when it comes people dying at the age of 50 or above but absent for those dying at a younger age.

In an additional step I assessed for the sub-sample who had died whether a lower class identity being related to dying at an earlier age could be contributed to a tendency towards certain causes of death. Since people with the same class identity tend to display more risk behaviour (Beirness et al. 1988; Nofziger et al. 2005) I explored the possibility of causes of death more related to risk to explain part of the role of subjective class identity. My results do not find confirmation of this and give more credibility to the idea that individuals perceiving their class to be lower live unhealthier lives (Singh-Manoux et al. 2005). Given that my findings indicate the role of subjective social class to be prominent for those dying at a later age, my findings give suggestion to the idea that an unhealthier life cumulates in an earlier death from a broad array of causes (Halfon et al. 2002; Kuh et al. 2004; Marmot et al. 1991). On a higher level, in the light of current debates about the so-called 'death of class' (Pakulski et al. 1996; Clark et al. 1991; Houtman et al. 2009), the finding that there are subjective classes of death, surely speak to the continued relevance of the concept of class.

My study does, however, come with some limitations. First of all, while the used data is unique and its creation has generated an array of options to study death (Muennig et al. 2011), it comes with fairly small sample sizes for certain causes of death. While I reduce the ICD9 and ICD10 codes to 7 general causes of death and find it to have no mediating role, a greater sample size would allow to nuance and clarify this further. Additionally, regarding data two other issues come forward. First, while the causal mechanisms of class identity impacting the age of death run through lifestyle, since people with a shared group identity tend to share similar health behaviour (Bratanova et al. 2016; Cardel et al. 2014; Cheon et al. 2017), I am due to data reasons limited to assess whether the cause of death rather than actual lifestyle has a mediating impact on the role of subjective class identity (D'Hooge et al. 2018b). Further, given that I use repeated cross-sectional data in the absence of longitudinal, panel data I cannot take into account what happens if respondents are socially mobile or identify with a different social class before or after their survey participation. While studies show a class identity to be strongly influenced by the earlier life stages (Savage 2001; Stuber 2005) while remaining generally stable even after retirement (Devine 1992; MacKenzie et al. 2006), further panel-data analysis could shed more light on this.

When it comes to further research, my study clearly demonstrates how class identity plays a vital role in understanding differences concerning the age of death. However, next to the robust sociological scholarship on health differences and the growing body of research on death, a third important field is this empirically studying healthy life years (see for example Jagger et al. 2009). A promising further endeavor would be to assess the extent in which subjective social class is important in understanding differences not only regarding the age of death but also regarding healthy life years. Perhaps those with a lower class identity do not only die sooner, but also have a longer period of health issues. Or those with a higher class identity perhaps die at a later age but have a longer period of unhealthy years before. Addressing these issues in future research could contribute to our understanding of the relationships between material social class, subjective class identity and several issues regarding health and death.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion: causes and consequences of class discordance

9.1 CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF CLASS DISCORDANCE

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.” - Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels (1948, p. 14)

With this bold statement Marx and Engels argue that the biggest constant in written human history has been the existence of antagonistic social classes, constantly in conflict with each other. According to them, this has culminated since the Industrial Revolution in a strong divide between those who own the means of production and those who do not, or in other words between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. According to Marx and Engels this strong divide is reflected in all other non-economic aspects of social life and motivates these groups to hold different beliefs and display different behaviour.

Over the last 170 years this idea by Marx and Engels of a different material background generating different values, attitudes, preferences and behaviour has been a vital paradigm inspiring social scientists studying social stratification. While their concept of two big antagonistic social classes has been strongly appended and nuanced, the underlying idea has continued to stand firm throughout time (see for instance: Durkheim 1893/2014; Giddens et al. 1982; Weber 1922).

Over the last decades, however, an increasing number of academic voices declared the declining or even disappearing importance of class (see for instance Clark et al. 1991; Pakulski et al. 1996; Scott 2014). A too pessimistic view? As argued in the introduction, studies on the importance of class often overlooked the possibility of class identity bearing importance apart from material class position itself, or as Alexander et al. (2001) would argue, for it to have cultural autonomy. While recent studies have clarified the continuing relevance of class identity for people to define who they are compared to others (Robinson et al. 2017; Evans et al. 2017), additional empirical insights have shown these subjective perceptions of class to frequently differ from material class positions (e.g. Andersen et al. 2012; Curtis 2014; Evans et al. 2004; Evans et al. 2017). In addition, Sosnaud et al. (2013), who introduce the term ‘class discordance’ referring to this mismatch, argue that this could very well be of striking importance in understanding behavioural differences. It is not necessarily material class position itself that generates similarities and differences regarding the beliefs and behaviour of people, but rather it is the perception of that position acting as the driving force.

Since class discordance is an understudied but potentially vital phenomenon in understanding behavioural differences, further academic attention was essential. Therefore, in this dissertation the overarching research question was: *What are the causes of class discordance, and what are its attitudinal and behavioural implications?* To answer this research question a broad approach towards the causes and implications of class discordance was used in order to untangle both what makes some people be discordant next to clarifying what its implications are for understanding attitudinal and behavioural differences between people.

In this study I developed a framework of certain individual and (to a lesser extent) societal characteristics causing class discordance to exist. Specifically, I assess how one's socio-economic background and social mobility predict class discordance, while next I verified how the other potentially cross-cutting social identities people hold impact their chances of experiencing class discordance. Additionally, I studied how class discordance helps to uncover differences between people in regards to political attitudes and voting, musical consumption, health lifestyles and inequalities, and ultimately the age at which they die.

In this conclusion, first, I summarize the results of the studies presented in this dissertation. Consequently, I relate these results to the theoretical debates on what causes class discordance to occur in both Europe and the United States. Next, I discuss the meaning of the results in light of the broader theoretical debates on social class and discuss the implications of my findings in regards to the role of social class in contemporary society. Next, I discuss the limitations of this study and suggest possibilities for future research.

9.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

After laying out an overview of the theoretical and empirical research explaining the relevance and necessity of the research question in this dissertation, the first two empirical chapters focus on identifying socio-economic causes of class discordance, in addition to the impact of interfering social identities. Chapter 2 identifies several aspects of one's socio-economic background which play a role in the occurrence of class discordance, next to assessing how other salient social identities may impact one's class identity. In doing so I further extend on earlier studies indicating an importance of both factors. The main conclusion of this chapter is twofold, on the one hand I find that a class identity is influenced by one's socio-economic characteristics, supporting the idea of a class identity being mainly an economic identity. On the other hand, the additional salient social identities individuals have also play a substantial role. The analyses show

that when an individual's material class position is accompanied by a non-corresponding educational attainment or income, or in other words when status inconsistency occurs, people are more likely to either overestimate or inflate or rather underestimate or deflate their class position. Concretely, for those in the material working class, having a higher income or being higher educated makes them more likely to inflate compared to their peers. Those in the material middle and higher class are more likely to deflate in contrast to their peers when they have a lower income or lower educational attainment. Additionally, this chapter extends research on class identity and discordance further by showing that a class identity goes beyond merely being an economic identity since the other social identities people hold also influence their chances of class discordance. This chapter shows how Republicans belonging to the material working or middle class are more inclined to overestimate their class position, while union members and Black Americans tend to underestimate their class position and identify as part of a lower class.

In chapter 3, I further extend the previous findings from chapter 2 by focusing on how social mobility, across both time in the United States and space in Europe, has implications for class discordance. While research on social mobility traditionally studies its importance on behaviour, this chapter innovates current scholarship by illustrating how social mobility also affects one's identity. The findings demonstrate how socially mobile people do not fully adapt to their class of destination by identifying as part of it, but rather to a certain extent remain influenced by the social class context they grew up in. Those who are upwardly mobile in contrast to non-mobile individuals remain more likely to deflate their class position by identifying as part of their class of origin while those downwardly mobile, contrasted with the non-mobile, are more likely to inflate their class position by identifying as part of their higher, former, material class. This tendency however is stronger for those upwardly mobile than those downwardly mobile since the former group is more often confronted with social closure. Since people tend to maximize their status, being a member of a social group higher in the stratification is experienced as a scarce good resulting in more social closure for such a group, which is much less the case for social positions lower in the social stratification. When socially mobile individuals are upwardly mobile they are more likely to be confronted with such closure and consequently have more difficulties in feeling accepted, while those downwardly mobile do not face this problem.

While chapters 2 and 3 zoom in on the factors contributing to the occurrence of class discordance, chapters 4-8 study a broad array of consequences ranging from political behaviour, over musical preference to health lifestyle and inequalities. First, chapter 4 studies how class discordance plays a role in understanding patterns in general,

economic and cultural voting behaviour in 18 European countries. While class identity is often overlooked in the class politics literature, my analyses in an initial step show how subjective class identity is an important predictor of voting behaviour, especially when it comes to general and economic left-right voting. In a second step, it becomes clear that class discordance plays a vital role: material class positions only play a role in predicting economic voting behaviour when people also subjectively identify as part of that class. This chapter clearly illustrates that people who have an underestimated or deflated class identity are more likely to vote for the economic left, regardless of their material class background. On the other hand, those who overestimate or inflate their class identity are more likely to vote for the economic right, again regardless of their material class background. In regards to cultural voting however, no relationship with material or subjective class was found.

In chapter 5, the relevance of class discordance is further clarified in understanding political preferences by comparing its importance in explaining economic-political attitudes in Great-Britain and the United States, respectively examples in the literature of a class-based society and a non-class-based society. The results in this chapter show that the earlier findings in chapter 4 on voting preferences also extend to economic-political attitudes towards economic redistribution since subjective class predicts economic-political attitudes in both countries, while this is not the case for material social class. Those who subjectively identify with a lower social class have attitudes more supportive of economic redistribution while those who identify higher in the hierarchy have attitudes more towards a laissez-faire economy, consequently regardless of their material class background. This chapter further underscores that the importance of class discordance in understanding political preferences is not limited to European societies but also extends to the American context, since the effect does not differ between the studied countries in chapter 5. The implication of this is that the often made division between the two countries as societies with a very different importance of class does not hold anymore when taking class perceptions into account.

In chapters 6 and 7, the role of class discordance is further established by zooming in on its effect on cultural behaviour by studying musical consumption and health. Chapter 6, first, pushes forward current scholarship on musical omnivorism by studying the importance of subjective class identity for the musical preferences people hold. More specifically, I study omnivorism measured by volume and breadth. This chapter shows that, while neither material nor subjective class plays a role in explaining the volume of musical genres Americans consume, subjective class identity is strongly related to musical omnivorism measured by breadth of preference. A higher class identity is associated with a more open or diverse musical consumption pattern while a lower

class identity is associated with a narrower, less diverse taste. This finding indicates that musical consumption can act as a marker of inclusion and exclusion but rather between subjective social classes than between material ones. My findings show that the perceptions people have concerning the group they do belong to and the groups that are different from their own is related to the musical preferences they have, which consequently can act as a marker of distinction.

Further, chapters 7 and 8 illustrate that class discordance is also related to differences concerning health lifestyle, cardiovascular health and even the age at which people die and innovates current scholarship by further clarifying the pathways through which subjective perceptions are of importance. Chapter 7 shows that subjective status attenuates the effect of material class on both health lifestyles and cardiovascular health. When people perceive their social position to be higher, this is reflected in a better cardiovascular health and healthier behaviour. Furthermore, these perceptions do not only explain (part of) the role material social class plays, but can also impact it. When it comes to the more social forms of health behaviour such as alcohol consumption and exercise, the effect of material social class depends on how people perceive their social status to be. This happens because people act upon what they assume to be expected of them in association with their higher subjective status in order to gain acceptance.

Finally, in the last empirical chapter I show how class discordance even has an impact on the age at which people die. Taking material class and other resources into account, this chapter illustrates how in spite of a similar material class background, individuals who identify differently die at very different ages. This occurs because their class identity motivates them to live a certain lifestyle which eventually culminates in an earlier or later death compared to their peers in the material class living a different lifestyle because of a different class identity. This happens unrelated to one cause of death or another but rather exists because a lower class identity often is coupled with an unhealthier way of life culminating in an earlier death, while a higher class identity exactly results in the opposite.

The results of the 7 empirical chapters show that class discordance is a multifaceted phenomenon, both in regards to the causes as the consequences. It has its roots in the cradle, since the socio-economic circumstances of one's childhood play a vital role, and it continues to influence the behaviours individuals display until the grave, since it generates strong differences concerning the age at which people die.

9.3 WHAT DOES CLASS DISCORDANCE MEAN FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIETY?

“For it all depends on how we look at things, and not on how they are in themselves. The least of things with a meaning is worth more in life than the greatest of things without it.”

Carl Jung ([1933] 2014, p.67)

What can now be concluded concerning the causes and consequences of class discordance in the United States and Europe? What do these findings contribute to our understanding of how people compare themselves with others and consequently form an identity related regarding their class situation? And on a broader theoretical level: how does my dissertation extend the current sociological scholarship on the importance of class and class identity?

As argued in chapter 1, despite the long research tradition on material social class, over the last decades scholars (see Clark et al. 1991; Pakulski et al. 1996; Scott 2014) found a diminishing role of class in understanding differences between individuals. By demonstrating the existence of class discordance in the United States, Benjamin Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) started a groundbreaking new approach towards the study of class differences and its meaning in understanding behavioural differences. While their findings show about half of the American population to identify with another social class as the one they materially belong to, this dissertation expands this to the European context.

As already described before, my dissertation can be divided in two main parts: chapters 2 and 3 focusing on the causes of discordance and chapters 4-8 studying several implications of it for understanding differences in attitudes and behaviours.

9.4 WHY MATERIAL CLASS POSITIONS OFTEN DO NOT TRANSLATE IN A CORRESPONDING CLASS IDENTITY

In the first part of the dissertation, chapters 2 and 3 focusing on the importance of one's socio-economic background, social mobility and social identity on class discordance help further our understanding of the reasons why people do or do not identify as part of their material social class. Scholars on class, inspired by Marx and Weber, often assumed that shared occupational circumstances form the basis of a shared subjective class identification leading to the idea of a class identity being an economic identity (Centers 1949; Dahrendorf 1959; Jackman et al. 1973; Savage 2001). However, throughout this dissertation I find that, across countries and time, a particular material

class position is often not translated in a corresponding class identity. While some studies show Americans to have a tendency to place themselves in the middle class (Kelley et al., 1995; Vanneman, 1980; Evans et al., 2004; Sosnaud et al., 2013), they are unable to explain my findings on how class discordance occurs in all possible directions, including away from the middle class.

The first main finding of this dissertation is that status inconsistency is a factor in the occurrence of class discordance. This phenomenon in essence entails that people believe that their material class position does not correspond with what is expected of their other socio-economic characteristics such as their income or educational attainment (Hodge et al. 1968; Hout 2008; Sosnaud et al. 2013). I show that these other socio-economic aspects are strongly related to the way in which people perceive their social class position. While research has shown that people subjectively form an idea about social classes through social comparison mainly with their own networks (Curtis 2014; Hout 2008; Nakhaie 1992; Robinson et al. 2017), my results indicate that when people perceive certain aspects of their socio-economic circumstances to be lacking compared to what they expect to be the norm for themselves and their reference group, this entices them to deflate or underestimate their social class position. Additionally, status inconsistency can also motivate people to overestimate or inflate their class identity, when they perceive themselves to be better off than their material class peers.

In this dissertation I further demonstrate that class discordance is not only fueled by socio-economic discrepancies through status inconsistency but also through social mobility. While some scholars claim that socially mobile people identify with their current class of destination (Goodman et al., 1978; Paterson, 2008), I show that one's class of origin continues to exert an influence on how people identify. This happens through the habitus, which entails that people form their whole set of attitudes, values and preferences during their childhood (Daenekindt et al. 2014; Bourdieu 1984; 1987; Weakliem 1992, Lopreato, 1967). This dissertation shows that while class discordance occurs for both upwardly as well as downwardly mobile people by respectively being more likely to deflate and inflate, the former group has a stronger tendency to do so because they are confronted with social closure (Gorman 2000; Gray et al. 2013; Zhao et al. 2017).

This notion of material class position translating in a corresponding class identity is further broken down by the second main finding of this dissertation demonstrating how competing social identities break down the relationship between class and class identity. Inspired by earlier research highlighting the importance of salient social identities (Achterberg et al. 2009; Doane 1997; Hout 2008; Lewis 2004; Knowles et al.

2005) I show how these salient identities can obstruct concordant class identification. When people belong to a marginalized minority they are often inclined to bond across class boundaries, impacting their class identity (Massey et al. 1993; Pattillo 2013). This does however not necessarily mean that their class identity bears no importance to them but rather that they perceive it as different from what it materially is.

To summarize, in the field of class studies scholars have often assumed it logical that individuals feel part of the material class they belong to, based on their occupation (Aronowitz 1992; Centers 1949; Evans et al. 2004; Eyerman 1981; Giddens et al. 1982; Lukacs et al. 1971; Jackman et al., 1973; Jackman 1979; Kelley et al. 1995; Wolff et al. 2010). This notion did not arise out of thin air, but was inspired by the ideas of the founding fathers of sociology such as Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, who saw class identity as a consequence of occupying a particular class position having no real importance of its own outside of the connection with that particular class position. This idea is strongly nuanced by the initial two main findings of this dissertation showing how on the one hand socio-economic discrepancies through status inconsistency and social mobility impact the occurrence of class discordance. While on the other hand, by extending the findings of Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) on the importance of the other salient social identities individuals hold, I show how these also extend an influence on the prevalence of class discordance. Having certain social identities can motivate people to identify across class boundaries with their group peers, instigating them to identify higher or lower than their material class position. This shows that while socio-economic circumstances definitely have their impact on the class identity people have and their chances of class discordance, my findings on the role of competing identities illustrate that a class identity is indeed in part an economic identity, but at the same time goes beyond that. Not only the broader socio-economic context of individuals' lives and the perceptions they have play a role in how they identify, but also other salient aspects of their lives outside of the economic realm have an impact.

9.5 THE ROLE OF CLASS DISCORDANCE IN UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOUR AND INEQUALITIES

The finding that material class position does not evidently result in a corresponding class identity allowed me to raise questions on studies indicating a declining importance of class (Clark et al 1991; Pakulski et al. 1996; Scott 2014). These critical studies are a response to the traditional notion of sociological scholarship arguing that shared behaviour follows from a shared material class position (Breen 2005; Giddens et al.

1973; Giddens et al. 1982; Holton et al. 2010; Weber 2009). However, the underlying mechanism in this field of studies is that not the material class position itself instigates shared behaviour, but rather the conscious membership thereof (Evans et al. 2017; Jackman et al. 1983; Marcuse 1968; Robinson et al. 2017). This suggests a potential importance of, the empirically verified occurring, class discordance in understanding attitudinal and behavioural differences.

In the second part of my dissertation I argue that those proclaiming the death of class start out from the same erroneous claim as Marx, Weber and Durkheim: namely that class identity has no importance apart from simply being the awareness of being in a material class position. In the empirical chapters 4-8 I argue and demonstrate that class in the sense of class identity is still important in understanding differences between people in three traditional domains of class research, namely political (Lipset 1963; Oesch 2008; Van der Waal et al. 2007), and cultural behaviour (Veblen 1899; Bourdieu 1984; Bryson 1996), next to health lifestyles, inequalities and ultimately age of death (Elo 2009; Marmot et al. 1997; Smith et al. 1997; Turner et al. 2017). Relevant to note is that there are some differences between the different chapters in regards to the theoretical set-up concerning the pathway through which class identity is of importance. While in chapters 4-5 I theoretically expected a moderating impact of subjective class and by and large find confirmation of this, in chapters 6-8, inspired by contemporary scholarship on cultural and health differences, I theoretically anticipated a mediating impact of subjective social status as well. While further studies could and should additionally clarify these mediating and moderating mechanisms, the vital conclusion of the second part of my dissertation is the consistent finding of class identity and discordance being a main contributor in differences regarding attitudes, behaviours, health and dying.

As explained in the introduction, it is theoretically logical that class identity and discordance (be it through mediation and/or moderation) is a main contributor in these differences since one's class identity is an important part of one's social identity (see Evans et al. 2017; Robinson et al. 2017) and people strive at maintaining a positive social identity. This entails that they assess the class they identify with as positive and as a result have less favorable feelings towards classes they do not consider themselves as being part of (Abrams et al. 2006; Turner 1975). When people feel part of a certain group they are more likely to follow the norms, values and behavioural expectations of that group. This awareness and accompanying positive assessment of subjective class identity is important because those who are strongly attached to a certain group are more likely to adhere to the norms and values of that group (Christensen et al. 2004; Huddy et al. 2007). The findings in these chapters show that subjective social classes exist as imagined communities (Anderson 1991) since, despite not knowing all others

members, people with a similar class identity share similar behaviour. My findings on political, cultural and health behaviour confirm the importance of the Thomas-theorem ("if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas et al. 1928, p. 572, in Merton 1995, p. 380)), given that not only the material 'reality' of one's class position shapes behaviour but the perception of that material reality as well. Or in other words, when people perceive their material class position as different from what it is, it often is rather this perception that shapes their behaviour than their material position itself.

Furthermore, my findings provide evidence that the class identity people hold goes beyond merely being an economic identity (Dahrendorf 1959; Savage 2001). This emerges both in the chapters where I study the sources of class discordance, where next to one's socio-economic circumstances the other salient social identities people have are of importance. The idea of a class identity being in part a cultural identity as well is further supported by my findings on the consequences of class discordance, where both economic reasons and cultural reasons for shared behaviour emerge.

Summarized, in the empirical chapters focusing on the consequences of class discordance I show that the shared behaviours and outcomes are not formally agreed upon amongst members of the imagined community that subjective classes form, but exist through several mechanisms ranging from being economically motivated to culturally motivated, over to being an unintended consequence of these two. First, especially in the case of voting and political attitudes, people with a shared subjective identity share a similar (perceived) self-interest (Houtman et al. 2009; Middendorp 1991) echoing the idea of class identity being an economic identity since individuals mainly vote or hold attitudes related to their perceived economic interests. By means of economic-political attitudes on redistribution I further elaborate in chapter 5 that this mechanism of political preferences as an expression of perceived economic interests reveals itself in a very similar way in the United States and Great-Britain, thus nuancing the frequently made distinction between the two countries as textbook examples of respectively a non-class based society (Ogmundson et al. 1982; Manza et al. 1999; Sombart 1906; 1976) and a class based society (Alford 1963a; 1963b; Andersen et al. 2012).

Secondly, displaying certain behaviour can act as a way of distinction from those who are perceived as belonging to a different social class; a pattern emerging mainly in regards to musical consumption and health behaviour underscoring a class identity being a cultural identity as well. In order to ease acceptance in the social class people subjectively identify with, they display behaviour that is (perceived to be) fitting to that

social class (Bourdieu 1989; Christensen et al. 2004; Daniels et al. 2006; Parkin 1981; Stringhini et al. 2011; Willis 1977). Lastly, and the least conscious of these mechanisms, differences regarding cardiovascular health and the age at which people die, are not there because of (perceived) self-interest or attempts at inclusion and distinction but exist as a consequence of these two mechanisms. The attitudinal and behavioural choices people make have a cumulative effect (Halfon et al. 2002; Kuh et al. 2004; Marmot et al. 1991) during their lifetime and reflect later in life in differences concerning their cardiovascular health and ultimately the age at which they die.

9.6 CLASS DISCORDANCE AND CLASS STUDIES

Two main, overarching conclusions come forward in this dissertation: first, class discordance is important in understanding differences between people in regards to both attitudes and behaviour. And second, class discordance has its roots in people's youth and exerts its influence until death. A further conclusion, next to these two empirically tested ones, is the fact that my findings do not coincide with a majority of class studies focusing solely on material social class and consequently nuance the ideas put forward in this dominant scholarly tradition. Or in others words, taking subjective perceptions of class into account yields different results when it comes to understanding behavioural differences than using the common approach of studying material class positions through the occupational activities of people. My findings consistently illustrate how the way in which people perceive their social position to be, is of importance in understanding differences in attitudes and behaviours. As already mentioned in the introduction, this strong emphasis on material social class has been central in the different sociological traditions stemming from the ideas of the founding fathers of sociology, i.e. Marx, Engels and Weber with respect to social class, who all reach a similar conclusion when it comes to material class and subjective class identity. Entailing that it is material class itself that generates different behaviours while people are expected to identify with that class, with very little leeway for the possibility of class discordance bearing any importance. First, the Marxist tradition, inspired by the visions of Marx and Engels in regards to the importance of material and subjective social class can be summarized with the following quotes:

"...men must come to see it and to find their way from false to true consciousness, from their immediate interests to their real interest." (Marcuse 1968, p.44)

"The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." (Marx & Engels [1859] 1970)

My findings give indications of the opposite, namely that not solely people's material place in social stratification determines what they think and do but rather in regards to political, cultural and health related attitudes and behaviours their consciousness determines their social being as well. Evidently, I do not argue that material resources play no role whatsoever in the choices people make and the behaviour they display since throughout this dissertation income and educational attainment are often of importance. But rather, based on my empirical findings, I show that measuring social class by only studying the material aspects without taking the perceptions people have thereof into account is not the most efficient way of studying differences concerning attitudes and behaviours. Whether this is true or false consciousness is not the important matter, what is important is that this consciousness, if it is distinct from the 'real' material class context, still has real consequences.

As described in the introduction, this lack of attention for class discordance is not limited to the Marxist tradition on social class and class identity. A second godfather of sociology, Max Weber, also sets aside the basic principles of his method of *Verstehen* when it comes to the concept of social class. As noted by Frank Parkin (2002), despite Weber being one of the first cultural sociologists paying attention to the meaning people ascribe to their social context in order to explain their behaviour, he does not extend this train of thought to class and class identity.

While these classical ideas have been appended and nuanced through time, their foundational concepts regarding social class have continued to play a prominent role in later class studies by acting as an inspiration to several class schemes aimed at capturing social class differences. Prominent, more classical, examples are the further Marxist adaptations by Erik Olin Wright (1989) and colleagues (1982) or the Weberian-inspired Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero class scheme (Ganzeboom et al. 1996). While in the former there is a stronger emphasis on ownership and exploitation, the latter places more insistence on the degree of authority and autonomy in occupations (Ganzeboom et al. 1996). As argued in the introduction, these more traditional conceptualizations of social class are not blindly followed in the field of class studies since scholars have put a lot of effort in adapting these class schemes to align with changes in the occupational structure resulting in detailed, more modern class schemes (see Bol et al. 2014; Güveli et al. 2012; Wacquant 1991; Wright 2005; Wodtke 2016). A relevant example is the work of

Wodtke (2016), where more attention is paid to the role of ownership and supervision in defining social class, without the strong emphasis on exploitation which plays a central role in the work of Erik Olin Wright (1982). A further novel approach is the work on micro-classes (Weeden & Grusky 2004; 2005; Weeden et al. 2007), turning away from the big material social classes in which numerous occupations are clustered. In their method, they try to explain social stratification by studying the particular differences between occupations instead of clusters of occupations. Interestingly, they do this with the same motivation as I do in my dissertation, namely they argue that if people are materially part of an aggregate class, such as the middle class, they do not necessarily behave in a similar way (Grusky & Weeden 2001). They criticize the more traditional approaches towards social class and underscore the necessity of taking into account what they call the 'gemeinschaftlich' character of social positions, which echoes the idea of identity:

"Although these approaches have yielded new and important results, it is nonetheless troubling that they typically conceal or ignore the gemeinschaftlich character of disaggregate occupations. If modern closure is indeed secured principally at the detailed occupational level, then the resulting restriction of social interaction will generate and maintain occupational subcultures that are correspondingly disaggregate." (Grusky et al. 2001 pp. 205-206).

If scholars want to study disparities in behaviour as a consequence of class differences, Grusky and Weeden (2001) claim that we need to shift our focus from the big classes towards groupings that have meaning for people. However, they do not study subjective perceptions or identity but rather focus on identifying similarities between occupations and clarifying differences within material classes rather than between them. In doing so, despite their novel approach, they make the same fallacy of implicitly ascribing to people how they experience their class position rather than asking them.

Despite these often very distinct differences in approach, the common ground in all these conceptualizations of social class, from Marx to Weeden, is the focus on material social positions and very limited attention for the possibility of subjective perceptions meaning something, apart from these materialistic aspects. While Marx and Weber did not pay a lot of attention to a potential importance of class identity apart from class itself, in part because of the very limited means of empirically testing the role of class discordance, this is much less a problem in contemporary sociology. The modern scholarship on class studies, however, has by following these classical ideas neglected the possibility of cultural autonomy and in turn the importance of class discordance.

My dissertation underscores cultural autonomy to be a highly relevant phenomenon in understanding the associations between class identity and discordance on the one hand and attitudes, behaviour and health inequalities on the other. While class identity and discordance are partly influenced by inconsistencies and changes in the socio-economic structure, my findings illustrate how class identity on a broad array of domains can be of vital importance apart from the class structure. Rather than one's position in the class structure resulting in a corresponding class perception, which consequently affects how people behave or think, I show that the structural aspect of class only has meaning in the case of class concordance. This is however not through a shared material class position (apart from the associated resources) generating group behavior but rather through a shared identity doing so. When there is class discordance, and consequently no corresponding class position and identity, class perceptions often play an autonomous role regardless of material class. In the introduction I explained how this similar behaviour can exist through two distinct pathways. On the one hand, inspired by Weber, a conscious process of self-interest could be the main mechanism while on the other hand class identity could exert an unconscious influence, indicating that subjective class exists as a social fact (Durkheim 1982). As Bourdieu (1979) and Lizardo (2017) argue to be the case for material class, I find that subjective classes exert both a conscious and unconscious influence on individuals. Whereas the association with voting and attitudes could be seen as a conscious process, the relationship between class identity and dying illustrates how these subjective classes can exist as a social fact whose influence individuals undergo. To conclude, when Clark and Lipset in *Are Social Classes Dying* (1991) argued that class differences are not an adequate focal point to explain differences in behaviour because of new emerging forms of stratification, they probably did not have class discordance and the cultural autonomy of subjective class in mind. However, in this dissertation I show that an important form of class stratification exists in the minds of people, with a robust relationship with their attitudes, behaviours and ultimately inequalities between people. Class and class studies is far from dead, but there are other roads beyond the trodden paths to further explore.

9.7 SOCIAL CLASS AND EVERYDAY SOCIETY

The findings in this dissertation are primarily aimed at making a contribution to the field of class studies, by giving indications on how class discordance can be of importance in understanding attitudinal and behavioural differences between people. The concept of social class, however, also resonates outside of the academic world and is often referred to in political and societal debates making it highly relevant to reflect on how my findings can help contextualize current developments.

While academic research (Robinson et al. 2017; Evans et al. 2017) demonstrates people using the concept of social class as a marker to distinguish between those who are seen as alike and those who are seen as different, governmental reports and academic studies underscore fundamental changes in the material class structure. Most prominently visible by the dwindling or even disappearing middle class and the moves towards a dichotomy between the lower and higher classes, a trend noticeable in the United States as well as in European societies (Pew Research Center 2016; Engbersen et al. 2017; Vaughan-Whitehead 2016). This empirically verified disappearance of the middle class and growing divide between those at the bottom of society and those at the top, or between the haves and the have-nots, is stronger in some countries compared to others. My findings however give rise to some questions regarding whether these changes in the class structure extend an impact on how people think and act. Sosnaud and colleagues (2013) already illustrated how American people often perceive their class position to be different from what it materially is, a finding further corroborated for the European context in my dissertation. Additionally, in the empirical chapters using repeated cross-sections, there is no trend of a dwindling *subjective* middle class noticeable nor is there a trend of a fundamentally changing subjective class composition. Consequently, while the material class structure may be changing, my findings do not support the idea of this also occurring in the minds of people.

Since several behavioural differences are related to these subjective perceptions of class, the question arises whether social changes such as the dwindling material middle class have a substantial impact on how people act. This dissertation illustrates how people do not only base their attitudes and behavioural choices on their material social class, but rather to a substantial degree on their perception of it. Since some reports and studies indicate the material class structure to have changed, mainly by a dwindling material middle class, my findings do not show something similar for the subjective middle class. While in my dissertation I do not make any normative claims regarding what is positive or negative behaviour, mainly in regards to health, there are numerous efforts by governments to stimulate healthy behaviour. Next to its academic contributions, one of the more evident contributions to society of this dissertation could be that it helps provide more insights into social determinants related to healthy or unhealthy behaviour.

Hopefully this dissertation can help contextualize the meaning of changes in the social class structure and act as an inspiration to reflect on the needed attention for class identification next to material class itself, not only in the academic sphere but also in the public debate on social class and its consequences for behavioural and lifestyle differences.

9.8 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As is the case with most if not all research, this dissertation has some limitations. Additionally, the main findings in this dissertation generate new research questions. While both the limitations and suggestions for additional research are touched upon in the separate chapters, I discuss some overarching issues in this conclusion.

9.8.1 Data and methods

A number of cross-sectional data sources have been used in this dissertation, ranging from international surveys (EES, ISSP) to surveys containing specific information on American (ANES, GSS) and British society (Whitehall II, ELSA). These surveys allowed to examine both the causes and consequences of class discordance. While these data sources were selected because they contain the needed information, at the same time they bring some limitations. Before discussing the limitations related to specific chapters, one potential overarching limitation could be the use of a threefold EGP-class scheme throughout the empirical chapters. As mentioned in the previous chapters, using such an aggregated class schema instead of a more nuanced version should however not be a problem (see Evans et al. 1998; 2000).

Further, some limitations related to the respective chapters come forward. In chapter 2, analyzing the impact of interfering social identities on class discordance next to the role of status inconsistency, the used data allowed to study the importance of political, religious and ethnic group membership but does not extend this possibility towards gender, sexual, or national identity which could also be of importance. Related, I assessed the potential impact of political, religious and ethnic group membership at the macro-level which did not yield any significant result. This does however not exclude the possibility of the ethnic, religious, or political composition of a country playing a role since in this chapter I was only able to study the United States over time. Since these macro-indicators vary more between countries than they do over time in the United States, further research can help clarify this. Next, in the same chapter, regarding status inconsistency, there are indications that spousal class could be of importance as well (Baxter 1994; Erikson 1984). However, again the data does not allow to adequately test this and limits to controlling for marital status. Furthermore in regards to chapters 6-8, respectively studying musical preferences, health (inequalities and lifestyle) and the age at which people die, the data that are used only allowed to focus on respectively the United States and Great-Britain. Unfortunately, no adequate data-sources allowing for longitudinal or comparative research on musical preferences or health and dying are to my knowledge available. Should such data-sources become available in the future, such longitudinal and/or comparative research could further contribute to our

understanding of class discordance and its implications. Doing so would allow to further study for example whether the same dynamics concerning musical consumption acting as a marker of distinction between subjective classes emerge in a European context. Or it could help clarify how one's health is influenced by personal changes regarding material class position or subjective class identity throughout the life course instead of focusing on differences between individuals.

9.8.2 Causality and meaning of class identity and discordance

While this dissertation empirically shows how both the causes and consequences of class discordance are multifaceted, since the origins are found in people's youth while extending an influence until their death, some further limitations regarding both the substantial meaning of class identity and the causality of the found relationships arise.

Although some studies (Robinson et al. 2017; Evans et al. 2017; Irwin 2018) recently affirmed that class identity actually means something in people's lives, one could question when respondents answer a survey-question whether this actually means something to them or not. While the findings in this dissertation strongly hint that class is salient for (most) individuals since it is associated with several aspects of their lives, a qualitative approach using structured interviews could further tap into this salience and add to the current scholarship. Furthermore, qualitative methods could also shed more light on the causality between class identity, and in consequence class discordance, and behavioural differences. While there are theoretical reasons, supported by my empirical findings, that class identity shapes people's political, cultural and health behaviour, there is the possibility that the reverse relationship also exist. Evidently, people who have died cannot base their subjective class identity on whether they are dead or alive, but it could be possible that people assess their class situation for example partially based on their musical consumption or political preference. Through qualitative methods the extent to which for example people identify as part of the working class because they vote in a certain way, or because they have certain musical preference could be further clarified.

9.9 THE FUTURE OF CLASS STUDIES

To conclude, the last question to ask is what the findings in this dissertation mean in light of the future of class studies. Ever since the dawn of sociology as a social science, scholars have been preoccupied with studying how the class stratification exists, changes and generates differences concerning belief systems and behaviour. In this respect my dissertation can also be seen as an attempt to validate the often presumed translation of material class positions in a corresponding class identity. Given the

prevalence of class discordance and the importance of subjective class identity and said discordance, my research as expected does not validate the relationship between material and subjective class. However, at the same time the findings in this dissertation also nuance recent claims of class being an artefact of the past, having lost all relevance in the contemporary Western world. While indeed material class positions alone do not adequately explain differences between people regarding their behaviour, this is not the same as the whole concept of class becoming irrelevant. Rather on the contrary, this dissertation shows that how people assign meaning to their class position, regardless of whether this coincides with their material class position or not, is vital in understanding their behavioural choices.

Consequently the overarching main finding of this dissertation is that the future of class studies is not bleak and grim, but rather full of opportunities for further research. While my research illustrates that the way in which people perceive the world and their place within it can help explain different behaviour on a wide array of domains, much more work is needed to understand both the mechanisms causing class discordance next to the implications it has. While this dissertation provides a starting point by examining some factors influencing class discordance next to tapping into certain consequences, this is only the tip of the iceberg. What lies further beneath the water, is yet to be explored.

S

Samenvatting (Dutch Summary)

1. INLEIDING

In de media, het politieke debat en zelfs conversaties tussen mensen wordt vaak verwezen naar het concept 'sociale klasse'. Deze aandacht is ook zichtbaar in de academische sfeer aangezien sociale klassen sinds het ontstaan van de sociologie als wetenschap een prominente plaats als studieobject hebben gehad. Deze materiële sociale klassen zijn gegrond in de relatie tussen individuen en de markt en verenigen mensen met een gedeelde marktpositie, waardoor gelijkaardige levenskansen en gedrag ontstaan. Sociologische klassenschema's delen, ondanks hun onderlinge diversiteit, steeds dezelfde twee kernaspecten, namelijk enerzijds dat materiële sociale klassen bestaan en anderzijds dat ze belangrijk zijn om gedragsverschillen tussen mensen te verklaren. Maar toch zijn deze niet afdoende gebleken om verschillen tussen mensen te verklaren omdat ze er allemaal impliciet vanuit gaan, maar niet in vraag stellen, dat het niet het lid zijn van een klasse op zich is dat gelijkaardig gedrag binnen die klasse stuurt maar wel het bewustzijn van dat lidmaatschap.

Recent introduceerden Benjamin Sosnaud, David Brady & Steven M. Frenk in *Class in Name Only: Subjective Class Identity, Objective Class Position, and Vote Choice in American Presidential Elections (2013)* het idee dat mensen zich vaak niet identificeren met de klasse waartoe ze materieel gezien behoren, wat zij *klasse-discordantie* noemen, en dat dit van vitaal belang kan zijn om hun keuzes en gedrag te begrijpen. Individuen in eenzelfde klasse vertonen namelijk gedeeld gedrag omdat materiële klassen bestaan als *verbeelde gemeenschappen*. Dit omvat dat leden van dergelijke gemeenschap de andere leden niet allemaal kennen en dit nooit zullen doen, maar dat ze wel een gemeenschappelijk idee hebben omtrent wat lid zijn van die klasse inhoudt. Concreet wil dit zeggen dat wanneer mensen zichzelf subjectief zien als lid van een specifieke sociale klasse, ze zich ook daadwerkelijk gedragen als lid van die klasse. Maar als die identiteit afwijkt van hun materiële klasse-positie neemt het belang van die laatste af. Materiële klasse-posities hebben bijgevolg vooral een impact op de keuzes die mensen maken en het gedrag dat ze vertonen als mensen ook daadwerkelijk geloven dat ze zich in die klasse-positie bevinden. In het geval van klasse-discordantie kunnen mensen vervolgens verwacht worden zich verschillend te gedragen dan anderen met dezelfde materiële klasse-achtergrond maar andere identiteit. De grote tekortkoming in hedendaags klasse-onderzoek is echter dat heel vaak niet in vraag gesteld wordt of de ontologische classificaties in klassenschema's ook daadwerkelijk overeenkomen met subjectieve percepties waardoor verschillen tussen mensen mogelijk niet adequaat gemeten worden.

In dit proefschrift probeer ik te verklaren waarom klasse-discordantie voorkomt en bestudeer ik de mate waarin dit fenomeen verschillen met betrekking tot attitudes, gedrag en uitkomsten kan verklaren. Hiermee ambieer ik een bijdrage te leveren aan het debat omtrent de afnemende of zelfs verdwijnende relevantie van sociale klasse door te onderzoeken of klasse-discordantie nieuwe inzichten kan opleveren. Waar traditioneel onderzoek focust op waarom mensen wel identificeren met hun materiële klasse, start ik vanuit de vraag waarom sommigen dit niet doen en focus ik op de oorzaken, prevalentie en repercussies van het niet identificeren met de overeenkomende materiële klasse.

Allereerst focus ik in hoofdstukken 2 en 3 op verschillende economische en culturele redenen waarom mensen discordant zijn in de Verenigde Staten en Europa. Hierbij kijk ik naar de rol van statusinconsistentie en sociale mobiliteit naast de invloed van andere sociale identiteiten. In een tweede stap focus ik in hoofdstukken 4-8 op de relevantie van klasse-discordantie om verschillen qua attitudes, gedrag en uitkomsten te begrijpen. Hierbij selecteerde ik enkele onderwerpen die vaak centraal staan in onderzoek naar klasse: namelijk politieke voorkeuren, culturele consumptie, gezondheid en levensstijl en finaal leeftijd van overlijden.

2. VERKLAREN KLASSE-DISCORDANTIE: SOCIAALECONOMISCHE ACHTERGROND OF SOCIALE IDENTITEIT?

In hoofdstuk 2 staat de vraag centraal hoe iemands sociaaleconomische achtergrond en sociale identiteit kan bijdragen aan het voorkomen van klasse-discordantie. Sommige studies gaan er van uit dat een klasse-identiteit een economische identiteit is waardoor statusinconsistentie, wat verwijst naar discrepanties in iemands sociaaleconomische achtergrond, een reden kan zijn voor het voorkomen van klasse-discordantie. Verder zijn er ook redenen om aan te nemen dat de andere sociale identiteiten die belangrijk zijn voor een individu een belangrijke rol kunnen spelen in het al dan niet overeenkomen van materiële klasse en subjectieve klasse-identiteit. Wanneer mensen tot een minderheid behoren en niet tot de dominante sociale groep, wordt deze groepsidentiteit vaker belangrijk, wat leidt tot het identificeren met de rest van de gemarginaliseerde minderheidsgroep over klassegrenzen heen en bijgevolg een hogere waarschijnlijkheid tot klasse-discordantie.

De resultaten in dit hoofdstuk bevestigen dat klasse-discordantie beïnvloed wordt door zowel statusinconsistentie als andere sociale identiteiten. Wanneer mensen die materieel gezien tot de middenklasse of hogere klasse behoren lager opgeleid zijn of

een lager inkomen hebben dan andere leden van die respectievelijke klassen wordt de kans groter dat ze hun eigen positie onderschatten en lager identificeren. Omgekeerd is het zo dat individuen in de arbeiders- of middenklasse net hoger identificeren wanneer hun opleidingsniveau of inkomen hoger is dan anderen in die specifieke klasse.

Verder komt met betrekking tot andere sociale identiteiten vooral naar voren dat zwarte Amerikanen in de middenklasse of hogere klasse zoals verwacht over klassegrenzen heen identificeren met andere zwarten die zich vooral in de materiële arbeidersklasse bevinden. Hetzelfde patroon komt ook terug met betrekking tot katholieken, maar minder sterk aangezien deze (in de VS) vaker geografisch verspreid wonen waardoor de band over klassegrenzen heen minder sterk is. Verder zijn vakbondsleden geneigd om hun positie te onderschatten wanneer ze niet tot de arbeidersklasse behoren terwijl Republikeinen vaker hun klasse te overschatten.

Samengevat is het dus zo dat de resultaten rond statusinconsistentie en sociale identiteiten aantonen dat een klasse-identiteit niet enkel een economische identiteit is aangezien mensen zich op basis van zowel economische en niet-economische indicatoren vergelijken met anderen rondom zich en op basis daarvan zichzelf een positie in de sociale stratificatie toekennen.

3. VERKLAREN KLASSE-DISCORDANTIE: DE ROL VAN SOCIALE MOBILITEIT

In hoofdstuk 3 wordt, geïnspireerd door de bevindingen in het vorige hoofdstuk, verder ingegaan op de impact van economische discrepanties door de rol van sociale mobiliteit te onderzoeken. Terwijl uit het vorige hoofdstuk duidelijk werd dat de sociaaleconomische achtergrond van mensen belangrijk is, focust de centrale vraag hier op wat er precies gebeurt met iemands subjectieve klasse-identiteit als mensen tijdens hun jeugd opgroeiden in een andere klasse-context dan diegene waar ze zich nu, tijdens hun volwassen leven, in bevinden.

Sociaal mobiel zijn kan iemands klasse-identiteit op twee verschillende, maar gerelateerde, manieren beïnvloeden. Enerzijds is er de verwachting dat sociaal mobiele individuen zich aanpassen aan de klasse waar ze deel gaan van uitmaken door de normen, waarden en attitudes van hun nieuwe klasse over te nemen. Hierbij is het niet zo dat de hele set waarden, attitudes en voorkeuren die mensen vormen tijdens hun kindertijd onbelangrijk is maar eerder dat mensen deze achterlaten en zich hersocialiseren naar de verwachtingen van hun nieuwe klasse en zich daar bijgevolg mee identificeren wat impliceert dat klasse-discordantie niet beïnvloed wordt door

sociale mobiliteit. Een tweede mechanisme legt echter uit hoe mobiliteit net wel van vitaal belang kan zijn aangezien een uitgebreide reeks studies aantonen hoe individuen zich van de ene klasse naar de andere kunnen begeven maar toch blijven vasthouden aan de identiteit geassocieerd met hun originele klasse.

De resultaten in dit hoofdstuk bevestigen dat sociaal mobiele mensen doorheen de tijd in de Verenigde Staten en over landen heen in Europa inderdaad deels blijven vasthouden aan een klasse-identiteit gelinkt aan hun klasse van oorsprong. Hierbij is het zo dat opwaarts mobielen een grotere kans hebben dan neerwaarts mobielen om klasse-discordantie te vertonen omdat ze meer moeite hebben om aanvaard te worden in hun klasse van bestemming. Waar hoofdstuk 2 aantoont dat verschillende aspecten van iemands sociale identiteit naast discrepanties qua sociaaleconomische achtergrond belangrijk zijn om klasse-discordantie te begrijpen, toont hoofdstuk 3 dat ook het bewegen tussen klasse-posities door middel van intergenerationele sociale mobiliteit een belangrijke factor is.

4. KLASSE-DISCORDANTIE EN POLITIEKE VOORKEUR

Waar hoofdstukken 2 en 3 ingaan op de rol van verschillende economische en niet-economische factoren om klasse-discordantie te begrijpen, focussen de verdere hoofdstukken op de gevolgen die discordantie heeft om verschillen qua attitudes, gedrag en uitkomsten te begrijpen. In hoofdstukken 4 en 5 onderzoek ik allereerst de relatie tussen discordantie en respectievelijk stemgedrag in Europa en economisch-politieke attitudes omtrent herverdeling in zowel Groot-Brittannië als de Verenigde Staten.

In hoofdstuk 4 verduidelijk ik in welke mate discordantie belangrijk is om verschillen met betrekking tot economisch en cultureel stemgedrag te begrijpen in 18 Europese landen. Aangezien mensen stemmen vanuit hun (perceptie omtrent) eigenbelang, wat niet noodzakelijk gebaseerd is op hun klasse-lidmaatschap maar eerder het bewustzijn hiervan, was de verwachting dat discordantie een belangrijke factor kon zijn. Gebaseerd op eerdere bevindingen rond het bestaan van een economische en culturele dimensie in politieke overtuigingen maak ik hierbij een onderscheid in de analyses. De resultaten tonen aan dat discordantie zoals verwacht een vitale factor kan zijn om verschillen qua stemgedrag te begrijpen. Waar er slechts een beperkte relatie is tussen klasse, klasse-identiteit of klasse-discordantie en cultureel stemgedrag, is deze relatie er wel duidelijk betreffende economisch stemgedrag. Europeanen vertonen een robuuste link tussen hun subjectieve klasse-identiteit en de economische stemkeuzes die ze maken,

terwijl verder blijkt dat klasse-discordantie een grote impact heeft. Wanneer mensen zichzelf zien als deel van de arbeidersklasse, los van hun materiële klasse, stemmen ze eerder voor economisch linkse partijen terwijl ze, opnieuw los van hun materiële klasse, economisch lineair rechtser stemmen wanneer ze zichzelf zien als deel van de middenklasse of hogere klasse. Concreet wil dit zeggen dat mensen met een compleet verschillende beroepssituatie heel gelijkaardig stemmen als ze op eenzelfde manier identificeren, terwijl anderzijds individuen met een gelijkaardig beroep (en bijgevolg klasse) totaal verschillend stemmen als ze zich met een verschillende klasse identificeren. Materiële klasse is bijgevolg enkel belangrijk met betrekking tot stemgedrag als mensen daadwerkelijk zich ook identificeren als lid van die klasse.

Opvallend aan deze bevindingen omtrent de relatie tussen discordantie en economisch stemgedrag én de quasi afwezigheid van een relatie met cultureel stemgedrag is dat dit aantoonde dat, althans met betrekking tot stemgedrag, een klasse-identiteit vooral een economische identiteit is. Terwijl in hoofdstuk 2 onder andere naar voren komt dat iemands klasse-identiteit deels gestuurd wordt door andere niet-economische, culturele identiteiten, blijkt dit geen impact te hebben op cultureel stemgedrag.

In hoofdstuk 5 onderzoek ik vervolgens de relatie tussen discordantie en politieke voorkeur verder door Groot-Brittannië en de Verenigde Staten te vergelijken met betrekking tot attitudes omtrent economische herverdeling. Aangezien in eerder onderzoek frequent beweerd wordt dat klasse belangrijker is in Groot-Brittannië dan in de Verenigde Staten, werp ik de vraag op of dit ook zo is voor subjectieve klasse-identiteit en bijgevolg klasse-discordantie. Uit dit hoofdstuk komt naar voren dat in zowel Groot-Brittannië als de Verenigde Staten materiële klasse slechts een heel beperkte relatie kent met economische attitudes, terwijl dit voor subjectieve klasse-identiteit wel het geval is. Individuen die zichzelf zien als deel van de arbeidersklasse hebben linksere economische attitudes waarbij ze economische herverdeling steunen terwijl diegenen die zichzelf zien als lid van de middenklasse of hogere klasse eerder weigerachtig tegenover herverdeling staan. Deze bevindingen verschillen niet significant tussen beide landen waardoor het idee dat klasse(-identiteit) minder belangrijk is in de Verenigde Staten kan ontkracht worden.

Samengevat tonen de resultaten, net als in hoofdstuk 4, aan dat mensen met eenzelfde klasse-identiteit gelijkaardige attitudes hebben ongeacht een mogelijks totaal verschillende materiële klasse-positie. Hierbij wordt opnieuw duidelijk dat als mensen zich identificeren met de arbeidersklasse, ongeacht of ze arbeider, bediende of manager

zijn, op eenzelfde manier positief staan tegenover herverdeling. Terwijl diegenen die identificeren met een hogere klassen, ongeacht hun materiële achtergrond, minder steun verlenen aan economische herverdeling.

5. KLASSE-DISCORDANTIE EN MUZIKALE VOORKEUR

Naast de veelvuldig onderzochte relatie tussen klasse en politieke voorkeur, hebben onderzoekers ook uitgebreid aandacht besteed aan het verband tussen sociale positie en cultureel gedrag waarbij één van de meest prominente voorbeelden onderzoek naar de relatie tussen klasse en muzikale voorkeur is.

Hoewel traditioneel uitgegaan wordt van een voorkeur voor 'hogere' cultuur bij hogere sociale klassen in tegenstelling tot een preferentie voor 'lagere' cultuur bij de lagere klassen, tonen recente studies aan dat een hogere klasse-positie vooral geassocieerd is met een bredere muzieksmaak, ook wel omnivoriteit genoemd. Dit in contrast met de lagere sociale klassen, waar vooral een nauwere of univore muzieksmaak wordt vastgesteld. Deze verschillen qua muzieksmaak bestaan omdat omnivore muziekvoorkeuren gebruikt worden als een symbool van een hogere status terwijl een univore muziekconsumptie een teken is van een lagere status. Deze keuzes qua muzikale consumptie worden vervolgens door mensen gebruikt als indicator of signaal om een onderscheid te kunnen maken tussen verschillende sociale klassen.

In dit hoofdstuk bekritiseer ik het bestaande onderzoek omwille van het gebrek aan aandacht voor klasse-identiteit. Als muziekvoorkeur een manier is voor individuen om (mentale) grenzen af te bakenen tussen verschillende sociale klassen, is opnieuw bewustzijn van die klasse-positie van vitaal belang. In mijn analyse maak ik bovendien een onderscheid tussen omnivoriteit gemeten door middel van het *aantal* muzikale voorkeuren enerzijds en de *breedte* tussen iemands muzikale voorkeuren anderzijds. De resultaten tonen aan dat de achterliggende mechanismen met betrekking tot de twee aparte metingen van omnivoriteit heel verschillend zijn. Waar materiële klasse niet belangrijk blijkt te zijn, komt naar voren dat klasse-identiteit van belang is om verschillen qua de breedte van muziekconsumptie te verklaren. Aangezien een brede smaak dient als indicator van status en dientengevolge grenzen tussen sociale groepen afbakt blijkt bewustzijn van lidmaatschap hier van belang. Mensen die zichzelf als lid zien van een hogere klasse consumeren een breder scala aan muziekgenres aangezien dit passend is bij het hogere prestige van die klasse en acceptatie faciliteert terwijl bij een lagere klasse-identiteit het omgekeerde voorvalt. Opvallend aan deze bevindingen is dat in tegenstelling tot bij politieke voorkeuren, klasse-identiteit hier wel een

duidelijke relatie kent tot cultureel gedrag. Dit kan verklaard worden door het feit dat in het geval van stemgedrag mensen vooral keuzes maken op basis van hun (perceptie omtrent hun) economische eigenbelang, terwijl culturele keuzes ingegeven worden door de drang van individuen om een onderscheid te maken tussen diegenen die ze als gelijkaardig zien en diegenen die als anders gezien worden.

6. DISCORDANTIE EN GEZONDHEIDS-LEVENsstIJL, CARDIOVASCULAIRE GEZONDHEID EN STERFleeFTIJD

In hoofdstukken 7 en 8 onderzoek ik vervolgens hoe klasse-discordantie een rol speelt in het begrijpen van verschillen met betrekking tot iemands levensstijl omtrent gezondheid enerzijds en hoe het anderzijds geassocieerd is met verschillen qua cardiovasculaire gezondheid en de leeftijd waarop mensen sterven. Opvallend is dat de gezondheidssociologie één van de weinige domeinen is waar een aantal studies reeds ingaan op het belang van subjectieve percepties van materiële posities, vaak door middel van subjectieve status, in plaats van een focus louter op materiële posities. Ondanks deze aandacht is het zo dat er amper ingegaan wordt op het precieze mechanisme via welk subjectieve percepties belangrijk zijn.

De resultaten van mijn onderzoek tonen allereerst aan dat eerdere bevindingen over het belang van materiële klasse in relatie met cardiovasculaire gezondheid genuanceerd dienen te worden. Een hogere materiële klasse is voor sommige indicatoren (zoals bloeddruk) geassocieerd met een betere gezondheid, maar afwezig voor anderen (zoals cholesterol). Verder speelt ook subjectieve status een rol, vooral met betrekking tot bloeddruk, in die zin dat een hogere subjectieve status geassocieerd is met een gezondere bloeddruk.

Verdere resultaten tonen aan dat subjectieve status vooral belangrijk is met betrekking tot levensstijlen het effect van materiële klasse wegverklaard. Mensen met een hogere status-perceptie leven immers gezonder met betrekking tot alcoholconsumptie, rookgedrag, voedingskeuzes en sport. Daarnaast beïnvloedt status het effect van materiële klasse bij de eerder sociale vormen van levensstijl zoals sport en alcoholconsumptie, hetgeen zich uit als individuen in de materiële lagere en middenklasse die de neiging hebben om gezonder te leven naarmate ze hun subjectieve status hoger inschatten.

Aangezien gezondheid en uitiem de leeftijd waarop mensen sterven het eindresultaat zijn van enerzijds genetische predisposities, maar anderzijds ook van het cumulatief effect van levensstijl onderzoek ik in hoofdstuk 8 hoe klasse-discordantie helpt om verschillen qua sterfleef tijd te begrijpen. In het beperkte aantal eerdere studies komt

naar voren dat een hogere klasse-positie gelinkt is aan een langere levensduur. Mijn resultaten illustreren echter dat opnieuw klasse-discordantie een vitale factor is in het begrijpen waarom sommigen eerder sterven dan anderen. Wanneer in een eerste stap zowel de overleden als levende respondenten geanalyseerd worden blijkt dat een gedeelde klasse-identiteit zorgt voor gelijkaardige vooruitzichten qua sterfleefijd, ongeacht de materiële achtergrond. Als mensen op eenzelfde manier identificeren hebben ze dezelfde kansen om vroeger of later te sterven, ongeacht of ze materieel gezien tot de arbeiders-, midden- of hogere klasse behoren, wat zich uit in een hogere kans om later te sterven in het geval van een hogere klasse-identiteit. Dit wordt verder uitgediept in een tweede analyse met enkel de overleden respondenten waaruit naar voren komt dat mensen die zichzelf identificeerden met de middenklasse of hogere klasse toen ze nog leefden, significant langer geleefd hebben dan diegenen die zichzelf zagen als lid van de arbeidersklasse, opnieuw ongeacht hun materiële klasse. Deze verschillen kunnen niet verklaard worden door bepaalde (risico-gerelateerde) doodsoorzaken en komen enkel bij mensen die stierven na hun zestigste. Dit toont aan dat de relatie tussen klasse-discordantie en sterfleefijd het ultieme eindpunt is van het leven dat mensen geleid hebben. Aangezien uit de eerdere hoofdstukken naar voren komt dat klasse-identiteit en bijgevolg discordantie van vitaal belang zijn om verschillen omtrent gedrag te begrijpen, waaronder iemands levensstijl omtrent gezondheid, is de leeftijd waarop mensen sterven het gevolg van het hele scala aan (on)gezonde keuzes die individuen maakten tijdens hun leven.

7. OORZAKEN EN GEVOLGEN VAN KLASSE-DISCORDANTIE

Op basis van de bevindingen rond de factoren die bijdragen aan klasse-discordantie in hoofdstukken 2 en 3 en de analyses naar de relaties tussen discordantie en attitudes en allerhande vormen van gedrag in hoofdstukken 4-7 en vervolgens de uitkomsten qua gezondheid en dood in hoofdstukken 7 en 8, wordt uiteindelijk in hoofdstuk 9 de balans opgemaakt: welke factoren dragen bij aan het bestaan van klasse-discordantie en wat betekent het om verschillen tussen mensen te begrijpen en te verklaren?

Tijdens de voorbije decennia kwamen in de academische wereld verschillende stemmen op die de klassieke visies op het belang van sociale klasse in twijfel trokken. Een mogelijke verklaring voor dit afnemend belang kwam van Benjamin Sosnaud en collega's die aantoonde dat iemands materiële klasse en subjectieve klasse-percepties vaak niet overeenkomen terwijl deze subjectieve percepties belangrijk zijn voor mensen.

In mijn proefschrift lag doorheen de verschillende hoofdstukken de nadruk op het verklaren van het bestaan van discordantie, naast het onderzoeken van de gevolgen. Hierbij komt naar voren dat discordantie door verschillende factoren beïnvloed wordt en daarnaast van vitaal belang is om verschillende politieke, culturele en gezondheidsgerelateerde attitudes en gedragingen te begrijpen. Uit hoofdstukken 2 en 3 blijkt allereerst dat een klasse-identiteit deels een economische identiteit is aangezien statusinconsistentie en sociale mobiliteit beiden gelinkt zijn aan hogere kansen tot discordantie. Maar de subjectieve klasse-identiteit van individuen gaat verder dan enkel een economische identiteit en wordt ook mede gestuurd door andere (culturele) identiteiten die mensen hebben. Uit de bevindingen blijkt dat het deel uitmaken van bepaalde etnische, religieuze of politieke groepen geassocieerd is met een (veel) hogere waarschijnlijkheid dat iemand klasse-discordantie vertoont.

Uit hoofdstukken 4-8 komt vervolgens naar voren dat discordantie een factor is om verschillen tussen mensen te begrijpen betreffende een breed scala aan attitudes, gedragingen en uitkomsten. Hoewel in sommige gevallen de materiële klasseachtergrond een (beperkte) invloed heeft toont de algemene trend dat de manier waarop mensen hun klasse subjectief percipiëren gerelateerd is aan hun politieke attitudes en stemkeuzes, muzikale consumptie, gezondheids-levensstijl en zelfs hun cardiovasculaire gezondheid en leeftijd van overlijden.

Samengevat is de centrale conclusie in dit proefschrift dat de manier waarop mensen hun positie in de stratificatie waarnemen en ervaren een belangrijke factor is in het begrijpen van verschillen qua attitudes, gedrag en uitkomsten. De reden waarom dit zo is, is driedelig. Een eerste verklaring die vooral geldt met betrekking tot stemgedrag en economisch-politieke attitudes is dat subjectieve klasse-identiteit een rol speelt omdat mensen hun politieke voorkeur laten afhangen van wat ze denken dat in hun eigen belang is. Met betrekking tot de politieke voorkeuren die individuen hebben blijkt hun klasse-identiteit vooral een economische identiteit te zijn. Een tweede verklaring voor het belang van subjectieve percepties toont echter dat economisch eigenbelang niet altijd de motivatie is en illustreert hoe een klasse-identiteit ook deels een culturele identiteit is. Waar politieke voorkeuren ingegeven zijn door hoe mensen hun eigen belangen ervaren, is het zo dat met betrekking tot de relatie tussen klasse-identiteit en discordantie enerzijds en muzikale consumptie en gezondheidsgedrag anderzijds het achterliggende mechanisme gaat over het aanvaard worden in een specifieke sociale groep. Wanneer mensen hun sociale positie op een bepaalde manier ervaren, handelen ze op een manier die overeenkomt met de normen en verwachtingen van die groep waar ze aspireren deel van uit te maken om op die manier acceptatie in die groep te faciliteren. Hoewel dit ook een vorm van eigenbelang is, is het anders gemotiveerd en

geuit dan bij politieke voorkeur waar het om louter economisch zelfbelang gaat. Het derde, en minst bewuste, mechanisme omtrent de rol van klasse-discordantie komt naar voren in hoofdstukken 7 en 8 rond cardiovasculaire gezondheid en sterfleefijd. Hier is het over het algemeen zo dat individuen met een hogere subjectieve perceptie gezonder zijn en langer leven terwijl het omgekeerde geldt voor een lagere perceptie. Net als in de eerdere hoofdstukken blijkt ook hier opnieuw dat de impact van subjectieve identificatie en discordantie gelijkaardig is over materiële klasse-achtergronden heen wat verder bevestigt dat discordantie reële gevolgen heeft. De mindere gezondheid en lagere sterfleefijd bij een lagere identiteit en betere vooruitzichten bij een hogere identiteit zijn in tegenstelling tot de eerdere hoofdstukken geen bewuste keuze op basis van iemands eigenbelang of een poging om acceptatie in een sociale groep te faciliteren, maar net een (vaak onbedoeld) gevolg van deze twee mechanismen. De (on)gezonde keuzes die mensen maken, hebben doorheen de levensloop een cumulatief effect hetgeen op latere leeftijd resulteert in substantiële verschillen met betrekking tot cardiovasculaire gezondheid en de leeftijd waarop ze sterven.

8. DE TOEKOMST VAN KLASSE-ONDERZOEK

Uit mijn dissertatie komt als overkoepelend resultaat prominent naar voren dat het te kort door de bocht is om klasse volledig af te schrijven. Hoewel het inderdaad zo is dat enkel rekening houden met materiële klasse niet afdoende is om verschillen qua attitudes, gedragingen en gevolgen tussen mensen te begrijpen, wil dit niet zeggen dat het hele concept klasse irrelevant geworden is. Integendeel, in het hoofd van mensen blijkt klasse nog steeds heel belangrijk te zijn aangezien de attitudes die ze hebben en de keuzes die ze maken in sterke mate gelinkt zijn aan hoe ze zelf hun eigen klassepositie inschatten. Ongeacht iemands materiële klasse komt naar voren dat attitudes omtrent economische herverdeling, naast (economische) stemkeuze, muziekvoorkeur en gezondheidskeuzes duidelijk gestructureerd zijn volgens de subjectieve klassepercepties die mensen hebben, om vervolgens ook een impact te hebben op de effectieve gezondheid en sterfleefijd van individuen.

Samenvattend kan besloten worden dat klasse niet irrelevant geworden is en bijgevolg de toekomst van klasse-studies niet onzeker is, maar eerder verschillende mogelijkheden voor verder onderzoek bevat. Mijn proefschrift toont aan dat de manier waarop individuen hun plaats in de samenleving waarnemen en ervaren beïnvloed wordt door verschillende factoren in hun sociaaleconomische en sociaal-culturele achtergrond

en vervolgens een vitale rol speelt in een brede waaier aan sociale fenomenen. Mijn bevindingen tonen echter nog maar het topje van de ijsberg. Wat nog onder het water ligt kan en moet toekomstig onderzoek verder uitwijzen.

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A

Appendix

TABLE A2.1 Descriptive values of the sample.

	Working Class		Middle Class		Higher Class	
	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)
Discordance						
Concordant (Ref.)	0/1	4780 (68.9)	0/1	5392 (47.3)	0/1	234 (6.8)
Inflator	0/1	-	0/1	362 (3.2)	0/1	-
Deflator	0/1	2159 (31.1)	0/1	5635 (49.5)	0/1	3196 (93.2)
Degree						
Non-tertiary (Ref.)	0/1	6593 (95.0)	0/1	8074 (70.9)	0/1	1454 (42.4)
Tertiary	0/1	346 (5.0)	0/1	3315 (29.1)	0/1	1976 (57.6)
Residence						
Big City (Ref.)	0/1	1306 (18.8)	0/1	2579 (22.6)	0/1	810 (23.6)
Suburb	0/1	1511 (21.8)	0/1	2333 (20.5)	0/1	741 (21.6)
Small City	0/1	2069 (29.8)	0/1	3986 (35.0)	0/1	1300 (37.9)
Countryside	0/1	2053 (29.6)	0/1	2491 (21.9)	0/1	579 (16.9)
Family type						
Couple (Ref.)	0/1	4314 (62.2)	0/1	6873 (60.4)	0/1	2320 (67.6)
Single	0/1	1898 (27.3)	0/1	3057 (26.8)	0/1	864 (25.2)
Single parent	0/1	404 (5.8)	0/1	933 (8.2)	0/1	138 (4.0)
Other	0/1	323 (4.7)	0/1	526 (4.6)	0/1	108 (3.2)
Income (standardized)	-1.07/6.14	-	-1.08/4.03	-	-1.36/2.56	-
Age (standardized)	-1.66/3.08	-	-1.63/3.16	-	-1.96/-3.42	-
Ethnicity						
White (Ref.)	0/1	5224 (75.3)	0/1	9233 (81.0)	0/1	2982 (86.9)
Black	0/1	1237 (17.8)	0/1	1476 (13.0)	0/1	237 (6.9)
Other	0/1	478 (6.9)	0/1	680 (6.0)	0/1	211 (6.2)
Born in the USA						
Yes (Ref.)	0/1	6297 (90.7)	0/1	10432 (91.6)	0/1	3066 (89.4)
No	0/1	642 (9.3)	0/1	957 (8.4)	0/1	364 (10.6)

TABLE A2.1 (Continued)

	Working Class		Middle Class		Higher Class	
	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)
Parents Origin						
Born in the USA (Ref.)	0/1	5807 (83.6)	0/1	9495 (88.4)	0/1	2743 (80.0)
Mother born in the USA	0/1	164 (2.4)	0/1	344 (3.0)	0/1	107 (3.1)
Father born in the USA	0/1	136 (2.0)	0/1	271 (2.4)	0/1	106 (3.1)
Both foreign born	0/1	832 (12.0)	0/1	1279 (11.2)	0/1	474 (13.8)
Religious denomination						
Protestant (Ref.)	0/1	4112 (59.3)	0/1	6440 (56.6)	0/1	1733 (50.5)
Catholic	0/1	1611 (23.2)	0/1	2752 (24.2)	0/1	809 (23.6)
Non-Religious	0/1	910 (13.1)	0/1	1336 (11.7)	0/1	529 (15.4)
Other	0/1	306 (4.4)	0/1	861 (7.6)	0/1	359 (10.5)
Union Membership						
Not a member (Ref.)	0/1	5659 (81.5)	0/1	10193 (89.5)	0/1	3186 (92.9)
Member	0/1	1280 (18.5)	0/1	1196 (10.5)	0/1	244 (7.1)
Political Identification						
Democratic (Ref.)	0/1	3347 (48.2)	0/1	5380 (47.2)	0/1	1483 (43.2)
Republican	0/1	2153 (31.0)	0/1	4270 (37.5)	0/1	1531 (44.6)
Independent	0/1	1337 (19.3)	0/1	1583 (13.9)	0/1	339 (9.9)
Other	0/1	102 (1.5)	0/1	156 (1.4)	0/1	77 (2.3)
Gender						
Male (Ref.)	0/1	4555 (65.6)	0/1	3174 (27.9)	0/1	2145 (62.5)
Female	0/1	2384 (34.4)	0/1	8215 (72.1)	0/1	1285 (37.5)

Source: General Social Survey 1987-2014

TABLE A3.1 Descriptive values of the American and the European sample.

United States	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Europe	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)
Class discordance			Class discordance		
Concordant (Ref.)	0/1	9325 (48.2)	Concordant (Ref.)	0/1	9458 (56.6)
Inflated	0/1	2434 (12.6)	Inflated	0/1	2822 (16.9)
Deflated	0/1	7590 (39.2)	Deflated	0/1	4426 (26.5)
Social Mobility			Social Mobility		
Not mobile (ref.)	0/1	8521 (44.0)	Not mobile (ref.)	0/1	8194 (49.0)
Upwardly	0/1	6255 (32.3)	Upwardly	0/1	6414 (38.4)
Downwardly	0/1	4573 (23.6)	Downwardly	0/1	2098 (12.6)
Religion			Religion		
Protestant (Ref.)	0/1	10990 (56.8)	Not-religious (ref.)	0/1	13122 (78.5)
Catholic	0/1	4621 (23.9)	Religious	0/1	3584 (21.5)
Not religious	0/1	2507 (12.9)			
Other	0/1	1231 (6.4)			
Education			Education		
No tertiary education (ref.)	0/1	14750 (76.0)	Basic (ref.)	0/1	2802 (16.8)
Tertiary education	0/1	4644 (24.0)	Secondary	0/1	8315 (49.8)
			Post-secondary	0/1	2378 (14.2)
			University	0/1	3211 (19.2)
Marital Status			Marital Status		
Married (ref.)	0/1	9769 (50.5)	Married (ref.)	0/1	9639 (57.7)
Unmarried	0/1	9580 (49.5)	Widowed	0/1	1399 (8.4)
			Divorced	0/1	1436 (8.6)
			Separated	0/1	312 (1.9)
			Unmarried, single	0/1	3920 (23.5)
Gender			Gender		
Male (ref.)	0/1	8789 (45.4)	Male (ref.)	0/1	7747 (46.4)
Female	0/1	10560 (54.6)	Female	0/1	8959 (53.6)

TABLE A3.1 (Continued)

United States	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Europe	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)
Age	18-89	47.36 (17.07)	Age	15-98	48.68 (16.04)
Share of the population that is socially mobile	52.30-58.70	55.80 (1.50)	Share of the population that is socially mobile	38.7-64.3	51.06 (6.10)
Share of the population that has discordant class combinations	48.60-59.60	52.50 (1.99)	Share of the population that has discordant class combinations	34.4-49.9	43.31 (4.08)
Share of the population that is unemployed	3.99-9.62	5.84 (1.34)	Share of the population that is unemployed	1.60-14.80	6.45 (3.28)

Source: General Social Survey 1988-2014 & International Social Survey Programme 2009

TABLE A4.1 Descriptive values of the used variables

Variables	Range	N (%) Mean (SD)
Voting behaviour		
Left-right scale	-47.93-47.89	-6.030 (14.98)
Economic scale	-3.10-4.88	-1.713 (7.79)
Cultural scale	-1.71-7.79	-3.099 (4.88)
Class combinations		
Working class concordant	0/1	1224 (13.3)
Working class inflator to middle class	0/1	1376 (14.9)
Working class inflator to high class	0/1	113 (1.2)
Middle class deflator to working class	0/1	718 (7.8)
Middle class concordant	0/1	3173 (34.4)
Middle class inflator to high class	0/1	647 (7.0)
High class deflator to working class	0/1	144 (1.6)
High class deflator to middle class	0/1	1368 (14.8)
High class concordant	0/1	459 (5.0)
Religious denomination		
Not religious (Ref.)	0/1	3512 (38.1)
Catholic	0/1	4080 (44.2)
Protestant	0/1	1630 (17.7)
Religiosity	0-10	4.45 (3.01)
Marital status		
Married (Ref.)	0/1	6324 (68.6)
Not married	0/1	2898 (31.4)
Gender		
Male (Ref.)	0/1	4346 (47.1)
Female	0/1	4876 (52.9)
Both parents born in the country		
Yes (Reference)	0/1	8339 (90.4)
No	0/1	883 (9.6)
Union membership		
Not a member (Ref.)	0/1	6061 (65.7)
Member	0/1	3161 (34.3)
Age when ended full time education	0-59	20.42 (5.81)
Age	18-96	53.08 (14.97)

Source: European Elections Study (2009)

TABLE A4.2 Relationship between class combinations and voting by country

	General left-right	Economic left-right	Cultural left-right
Austria	+/-	+/-	-
Belgium	+/-	-	+/-
Czech Republic	+	+	+
Denmark	+	+	+/-
Finland	+	+/-	+/-
France	+/-	+/-	-
Germany	+/-	+/-	-
Hungary	-	-	-
Ireland	-	+/-	-
Luxembourg	-	-	-
The Netherlands	+	+	-
Poland	+/-	+/-	+/-
Portugal	+/-	+/-	-
Slovakia	-	+/-	-
Slovenia	-	+/-	-
Spain	-	+/-	+/-
Sweden	+	+	+
Great-Britain	+	+/-	-

Source: European Elections Study 2009. -: no relationship, +/-: weak relationship, +: strong relationship

TABLE A5.1 Descriptive values of the British and American sample.

	Great-Britain		United States	
	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)	Range	N (%) / Mean (SE)
Material Class				
Working (ref.)	0/1	221 (30.3)	0/1	424 (31.5)
Middle class	0/1	393 (53.6)	0/1	668 (49.5)
High class	0/1	118 (16.1)	0/1	257 (19.1)
Subjective Class				
Working (Ref.)	0/1	450 (61.5)	0/1	728 (53.9)
Middle class	0/1	250 (34.2)	0/1	527 (39.1)
High class	0/1	32 (4.4)	0/1	94 (7.0)
Education				
Non-secondary (Ref.)	0/1	377 (51.5)	0/1	156 (11.6)
Secondary	0/1	106 (14.5)	0/1	428 (31.7)
Tertiary	0/1	249 (34.0)	0/1	765 (56.7)
Gender				
Male (Ref.)	0/1	320 (43.7)	0/1	635 (47.1)
Female	0/1	412 (56.3)	0/1	714 (52.9)
Marital status				
Married (Ref.)	0/1	333 (45.5)	0/1	680 (50.4)
Not-married	0/1	399 (54.5)	0/1	669 (49.6)
Religion				
Not-religious (Ref.)	0/1	367 (50.1)	0/1	229 (17.0)
Christian	0/1	336 (45.9)	0/1	1051 (77.9)
Other	0/1	29 (4.0)	0/1	69 (5.1)
Income	2-59	28.18 (18.17)	0.5-160	58.80 (43.02)
Age	18-92	49.73 (16.19)	20-89	49.19 (16.42)

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 2009

TABLE A6.1 Descriptive values of the dependent and independent variables

	Range	N(%) / Mean (SD)
Volume of omnivorism	2.00-18.00	11.57 (3.50)
Breadth of omnivorism	0.02-19.8	17.1 (3.05)
Material Social Class		
Working Class (Ref.)	0/1	457 (33.4%)
Middle Class	0/1	733 (53.5%)
Higher Class	0/1	180 (13.1%)
Subjective Social Class		
Working Class (Ref.)	0/1	710 (51.8%)
Middle Class	0/1	620 (45.3%)
Higher Class	0/1	40 (2.9%)
Gender		
Male (Ref.)	0/1	619 (45.2%)
Female	0/1	751 (54.8%)
Age	18-89	45.45 (16.53)
Ethnicity		
White (Ref.)	0/1	1165 (85.0%)
Black	0/1	141 (10.3%)
Other	0/1	64 (4.7%)
Religious denomination		
Protestant (Ref.)	0/1	877 (64.0%)
Catholic	0/1	306 (22.3%)
Not-religious	0/1	187 (13.7%)
Income group		
Low Income (Ref.)	0/1	74 (5.4%)
Middle Income	0/1	242 (17.7%)
High Income	0/1	1154 (76.9%)
Educational level		
Lower educated (Ref.)	0/1	1033 (75.4%)
Higher educated	0/1	337 (24.6%)
Class combinations		
Working concordant (Ref.)	0/1	313 (22.8%)
Working inflated to middle	0/1	134 (9.8%)
Working inflated to higher	0/1	10 (0.7%)
Middle deflated to working	0/1	225 (16.4%)
Middle concordant	0/1	161 (11.8%)
Middle inflated to higher	0/1	7 (0.5%)
Higher deflated to working	0/1	172 (12.3%)
Higher deflated to middle	0/1	325 (23.7%)
Higher concordant	0/1	23 (1.7%)

Source: General Social Survey 1993

TABLE A7.1 Descriptive values of the ELSA and Whitehall II-sample

	Range	Study 1	Study 2
Independent variables			
Material Class			
Higher Class (Ref.)	0/1	1345 (37.49%)	2802 (44.65%)
Middle Class	0/1	1242 (34.61%)	2737 (43.62%)
Working Class	0/1	1001 (27.90%)	736 (11.73%)
Gender			
Male (Ref.)	0/1	1648 (45.93%)	4538 (72.32%)
Female	0/1	1940 (54.07%)	1737 (27.68%)
Education			
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	0/1	2980 (83.05%)	4031 (64.24%)
Post-secondary education	0/1	608 (16.95%)	2244 (35.76%)
Subjective Social Status Groups			
Higher Status	0/1	1378 (38.41%)	2048 (32.64%)
Middle Status	0/1	986 (27.48%)	2327 (37.08%)
Lower Status	0/1	1224 (34.11%)	1900 (30.28%)
Marital Status			
Married (Ref.)	0/1	2370 (66.05%)	4958 (79.01%)
Unmarried	0/1	1218 (33.95%)	1317 (20.99%)
Class-Status Combinations			
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)	0/1	751 (20.93%)	1596 (25.43%)
Higher class-Middle status	0/1	337 (9.39%)	992 (15.81%)
Higher class-Lower status	0/1	257 (7.16%)	214 (3.41%)
Middle class-Higher status	0/1	405 (11.29%)	416 (6.63%)
Middle class-Middle status	0/1	385 (10.73%)	1179 (18.79%)
Middle class-Lower status	0/1	452 (12.60%)	1142 (18.20%)
Working class-Higher status	0/1	222 (6.19%)	36 (0.57%)
Working class-Middle status	0/1	264 (7.36%)	156 (2.49%)
Working class-Lower status	0/1	515 (14.35%)	544 (8.67%)
Taking cholesterol medication			
No (Ref.)	0/1	3310 (92.25)	
Yes	0/1	278 (7.75)	
Age	60-90/45-69/	71.51 (7.88)	55.78 (6.01)
Subjective Status	100-5/10-0.5	42.09 (16.33)	4.58 (1.61)
Dependent variables			
Health	0-5	1.76 (1.04)	
Health lifestyle	0-7		2.506 (1.07)
Too little exercise/week			
No (Ref.)	0/1		525 (8.37%)
Yes	0/1		5750 (91.63%)
Too much alcohol/week			
No (Ref.)	0/1		4640 (74.50%)

TABLE A7.1 (Continued)

	Range	Study 1	Study 2
Yes	0/1		1588 (25.50%)
Too much wine/week			
No (Ref.)	0/1		5940 (95.38%)
Yes	0/1		288 (4.62%)
Too much beer/week			
No (Ref.)	0/1		6023 (96.71%)
Yes	0/1		205 (3.29%)
Eating whole wheat bread			
No (Ref.)	0/1		2373 (38.32%)
Yes	0/1		3819 (61.68%)
Eating daily fruits and vegetables			
No (Ref.)	0/1		4604 (74.10%)
Yes	0/1		1609 (25.90%)
Smoking			
No (Ref.)	0/1		5621 (90.02%)
Yes	0/1		623 (9.98%)
Systolic blood pressure			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	1474 (42.75%)	
Too high	0/1	1974 (57.25%)	
Diastolic blood pressure			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	2017 (58.50%)	
Too high	0/1	1431 (41.50%)	
Cholesterol			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	1786 (64.45%)	
Too high	0/1	985 (35.55%)	
Triglycerides			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	2385 (88.04%)	
Too high	0/1	324 (11.96%)	
High sensitivity c-reactive protein			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	1965 (72.51%)	
Too high	0/1	745 (27.49%)	
HDL-cholesterol			
Not too high (Ref.)	0/1	2518 (92.25%)	
Too high	0/1	191 (7.05%)	

Source: Wave 2 and 6 of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing & Wave 5 of the Whitehall II Study

Confirmatory factor analysis on the index of health biomarkers shows that not all variables load in a single factor nor is there a clear structure of several underlying factors, except for the two measurements of blood pressure loading similarly, while the Cronbach's alpha is 0.48. Since this illustrates that the several health biomarkers are not strongly related to each other, I present the following separate analyses on each of the biomarkers to further show how material class and subjective social status are associated with health outcomes.

TABLE A7.2 Material class and subjective social status regressed on the separate health biomarkers

Systolic blood pressure (N: 3448)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Constant	0.020 (0.01)***	0.015 (0.01)***	0.019 (0.01)***	0.036 (0.02)***	0.019 (0.01)***
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	1.016 (0.09)	0.983 (0.09)	0.987 (0.09)	0.740 (0.27)	
Working class	1.193 (0.12)*	1.115 (0.11)	1.131 (0.11)	1.181 (0.42)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.745 (0.06)***	0.750 (0.06)***	0.749 (0.06)***	0.747 (0.06)**	0.743 (0.06)***
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.780 (0.08)*	0.826 (0.09)	0.812 (0.09)*	0.824 (0.09)	0.811 (0.09)*
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.111 (0.09)	1.075 (0.09)	1.087 (0.09)	1.075 (0.08)	1.083 (0.09)
Age	1.063 (0.00)***	1.063 (0.01)***	1.062 (0.01)***	1.063 (0.01)***	1.062 (0.01)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.007 (0.00)**		1.008 (0.00)*	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			1.097 (0.10)		
Lower status			1.231 (0.11)*		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle X Subj Status				0.995 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				1.001 (0.01)	

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Systolic blood pressure (N: 3448)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Higher class-Middle status					1.051 (0.15)
Higher class-Lower status					1.452 (0.23)*
Middle class-Higher status					1.104 (0.15)
Middle class-Middle status					1.178 (0.17)
Middle class-Lower status					1.074 (0.14)
Working class-Higher status					1.036 (0.17)
Working class-Middle status					1.249 (0.20)
Working class-Lower status					1.507 (0.20)**
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-	-		
Middle Class		210.54%*	187.99%*		
Working Class		38.51%**	29.76%*		
Diastolic blood pressure (N:3448)					
Constant	0.024 (0.01)***	0.037 (0.01)***	0.023 (0.01)***	0.040 (0.02)***	0.023 (0.01)***
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	1.038 (0.09)	1.017 (0.09)	1.020 (0.09)	0.735 (0.27)	
Working class	1.280 (0.12)**	1.227 (0.12)*	1.235 (0.12)*	0.862 (0.30)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.733 (0.05)***	0.738 (0.05)***	0.738 (0.05)***	0.733 (0.05)***	0.733 (0.05)***
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.916 (0.10)	0.950 (0.10)	0.936 (0.10)	0.966 (0.11)	0.944 (0.10)

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Diastolic blood pressure (N:3448)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.215 (0.10)*	1.191 (0.09)*	1.197 (0.10)*	1.194 (0.10)*	1.194 (0.10)*
Age	1.049 (0.00)***	1.049 (0.00)***	1.049 (0.00)***	1.049 (0.00)***	1.049 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.004 (0.00)		1.008 (0.00)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)			-		
Middle status			1.010 (0.09)		
Lower status			1.144 (0.10)		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Middle X Subj Status				0.995 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				0.994 (0.01)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Higher class-Middle status					0.946 (0.14)
Higher class-Lower status					1.442 (0.23)*
Middle class-Higher status					1.122 (0.15)
Middle class-Middle status					1.145 (0.16)
Middle class-Lower status					1.074 (0.15)
Working class-Higher status					1.249 (0.21)
Working class-Middle status					1.313 (0.21)
Working class-Lower status					1.464 (0.19)**
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-	-		
Middle Class		54.48%	50.13%		
Working Class		17.05%	13.75%		

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Cholesterol (N: 2771)	3A	3B	3C	3E	3E
Constant	2.218 (0.90)*	2.474 (1.03)*	2.272 (0.92)*	2.417 (1.05)*	1.850 (0.80)
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	0.963 (0.10)	0.978 (0.10)	0.983 (0.10)	0.961 (0.41)	
Working class	0.898 (0.10)	0.930 (0.11)	0.929 (0.11)	0.840 (0.34)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	2.391 (0.21)***	2.387 (0.21)***	2.39 (0.21)***	2.386 (0.21)***	2.385 (0.21)***
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	1.017 (0.12)	0.990 (0.12)	0.987 (0.12)	0.995 (0.12)	1.000 (0.12)
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	0.833 (0.08) *	0.846 (0.08)	0.847 (0.07)	0.847 (0.07)	0.847 (0.08)
Age	0.975 (0.01)***	0.975 (0.01)***	0.976 (0.01)***	0.975 (0.01)***	0.975 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.997 (0.00)		0.997 (0.00)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			0.877 (0.09)		
Lower status			0.878 (0.09)		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle X Subj Status				1.000 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				1.002 (0.01)	

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Cholesterol (N: 2771)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Higher class-Middle status	1.024 (0.16)				
Higher class-Lower status	0.968 (0.18)				
Middle class-Higher status	1.098 (0.17)				
Middle class-Middle status	0.844 (0.14)				
Middle class-Lower status	0.936 (0.15)				
Working class-Higher status	1.084 (0.21)				
Working class-Middle status	0.858 (0.16)				
Working class-Lower status	0.837 (0.13)				
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class	-	43.02%	-	-	-
Middle Class	43.02%	-	52.22%	-	-
Working Class	32.48%	34.07%	-	-	-
Triglycerides (N: 2709)					
Constant	0.655 (0.37)	0.289 (0.18)*	0.384 (0.23)	0.230 (0.15)*	0.360 (0.22)
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	1.138 (0.17)	1.080 (0.16)	1.078 (0.16)	1.671 (0.67)	
Working class	1.017 (0.17)	0.914 (0.15)	0.922 (0.16)	1.283 (0.59)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.798 (0.10)*	0.807 (0.10)	0.807 (0.10)	0.798 (0.10)	0.796 (0.10)
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.635 (0.12)*	0.691 (0.13)	0.675 (0.13)*	0.710 (0.14)	1.341 (0.27)

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Triglycerides (N: 2709)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Marital Status					
Married (Ref)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.074 (0.14)	1.022 (0.14)	1.032 (0.14)	1.022 (0.14)	1.028 (0.14)
Cholesterol medication					
No (Ref)	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	1.337 (0.27)	1.351 (0.27)	1.344 (0.27)	1.363 (0.27)	1.341 (0.27)
Age	0.986 (0.01)	0.985 (0.01)	0.985 (0.01)	0.985 (0.01)	0.985 (0.01)
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.010 (0.00)*		1.017 (0.01)*	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			1.109 (0.18)		
Lower status			1.412 (0.21)*		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle X Subj Status				0.989 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				0.992 (0.01)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref)	-	-	-	-	-
Higher class-Middle status					1.019 (0.27)
Higher class-Lower status					2.072 (0.51)**
Middle class-Higher status					1.337 (0.31)
Middle class-Middle status					1.345 (0.32)
Middle class-Lower status					1.451 (0.33)
Working class-Higher status					0.948 (0.30)
Working class-Middle status					1.272 (0.35)
Working class-Lower status					1.359 (0.31)

Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

Triglycerides (N: 2709)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class	-	38.16%*	-	-	-
Middle Class	-	813.26%*	41.58%	-	-
Working Class	-	-	622.26%	-	-
High sensitivity c-reactive protein (N: 2710)					
Constant	0.0 (0.04)***	0.124 (0.06)***	0.085 (0.04)***	0.062 (0.03)***	0.084 (0.04)***
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	1.207 (0.13)	1.177 (0.13)	1.182 (0.13)	1.647 (0.49)	-
Working class	1.342 (0.16)*	1.271 (0.15)*	1.291 (0.16)*	1.574 (0.51)	-
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	1.197 (0.11)*	-1.204 (0.11)*	1.201 (0.11)*	1.194 (0.11)	1.198 (0.11)*
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.641 (0.09)**	0.670 (0.10)**	0.658 (0.09)**	0.681 (0.10)**	0.667 (0.10)**
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.154 (0.11)	1.125 (0.11)	1.137 (0.11)	1.125 (0.11)	1.133 (0.11)
Cholesterol medication					
No (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	0.970 (0.16)	0.976 (0.16)	0.974 (0.16)	0.982 (0.16)	0.667 (0.10)**
Age	1.018 (0.01)**	1.017 (0.01)**	1.017 (0.01)**	1.018 (0.01)**	1.017 (0.01)**
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.005 (0.00)		1.010 (0.01)*	

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

High sensitivity c-reactive protein (N: 2710)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)			-		
Middle status			1.071 (0.12)		
Lower status			1.153 (0.13)		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Middle X Subj Status				0.991 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				0.994 (0.01)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Higher class-Middle status					0.880 (0.17)
Higher class-Lower status					1.433 (0.28)
Middle class-Higher status					1.159 (0.20)
Middle class-Middle status					1.411 (0.24)*
Middle class-Lower status					1.262 (0.21)
Working class-Higher status					1.321 (0.28)
Working class-Middle status					1.452 (0.28)*
Working class-Lower status					1.443 (0.23)*
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-			
Middle Class		13.55%	11.32%		
Working Class		18.60%	13.30%		
HDL-cholesterol (N: 2709)	6A	6B	6C	6D	6E
Constant	0.158 (0.12) *	0.102 (0.08)	0.154 (0.12)*	0.076 (0.06)	0.141 (0.11)

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

HDL-cholesterol (N: 2709)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Material Class					
Higher class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle class	1.277 (0.24)	1.164 (0.22)	1.192 (0.23)	2.329 (1.20)	
Working class	1.161 (0.25)	0.987 (0.22)	1.041 (0.23)	1.386 (0.86)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.181 (0.03)***	0.183 (0.03)***	0.183 (0.03)***	0.181 (0.03)***	0.179 (0.03)***
Education					
Lower education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.622 (0.15)*	0.708 (0.17)	0.667 (0.16)	0.734 (0.18)	0.691 (0.17)
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.282 (0.22)	1.200 (0.21)	1.231 (0.21)	1.195 (0.21)	1.226 (0.21)
Cholesterol medication					
No (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	1.830 (0.43)*	1.873 (0.44)	1.84 (0.43)***	1.885 (0.44)**	1.815 (0.43)*
Age	0.996 (0.01)	0.995 (0.01)	0.995 (0.01)	0.977 (0.01)**	0.994 (0.01)
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.014 (0.01)**		1.023 (0.01)**	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			1.120 (0.23)		
Lower status			1.448 (0.28)		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Higher X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle X Subj Status				0.983 (0.01)	
Working X Subj Status				0.991 (0.01)	

TABLE A7.2 (Continued)

HDL-cholesterol (N: 2709)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Class-Status Combinations					
Higher class-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Higher class-Middle status					1.184 (0.39)
Higher class-Lower status					2.417 (0.75)**
Middle class-Higher status					1.840 (0.53)*
Middle class-Middle status					1.402 (0.45)
Middle class-Lower status					1.754 (0.50)*
Working class-Higher status					0.987 (0.44)
Working class-Middle status					1.814 (0.64)
Working class-Lower status					1.647 (0.49)
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-			
Middle Class		30.78%*		24.44%	
Working Class		110.20%**		71.34%	

Source: Wave 2 and 6 of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing ° p > 0.10 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. Entries represent the results of separate logistic regression models

As was the case in Study 1, confirmatory factor analysis on the index of unhealthy behaviour shows that not all variables load in a single factor nor is there a clear structure of several underlying factors while the Cronbach's alpha is low at 0.20. Since this shows that the several forms of unhealthy behaviour are not very related to each other, I present the following separate analyses further showing how material class and subjective social status are associated with several forms of behaviour.

TABLE A7.3 Material class and subjective social status regressed on unhealthy behaviours

Too little exercise (N: 6275)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Constant	23.492 (10.38)***	13.311 (6.30)***	21.102 (9.61)***	44.526 (26.69)***	22.618 (10.36)***
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	1.281 (0.13)*	1.014 (0.12)	1.020 (0.12)	0.436 (0.15)*	
Clerical/Support Class	1.868 (0.39)**	1.236 (0.28)	1.289 (0.29)	1.344 (1.108)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	1.874 (0.25)***	1.918 (0.26)***	1.905 (0.26)***	1.904 (0.26)***	1.892 (0.26)***
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	1.235 (0.13)*	1.349 (0.14)**	1.336 (0.14)**	1.307 (0.14)*	1.315 (0.14)*
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.219 (0.16)	1.152 (0.15)	1.165 (0.15)	1.148 (0.15)	1.159 (0.15)
Age	0.979 (0.01)**	0.978 (0.01)**	0.978 (0.01)**	0.978 (0.01)**	0.978 (0.01)**
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.188 (0.04)***		1.071 (0.05)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			1.434 (0.16)***		
Lower status			1.903 (0.28)***		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				1.224 (0.09)**	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				1.025 (0.14)	

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Too little exercise (N: 6275)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					1.391 (0.20)*
Administrative-Lower status					0.970 (0.22)
Professional-Higher status					0.769 (0.13)
Professional-Middle status					1.385 (0.20)*
Professional-Lower status					2.128 (0.35)***
Clerical-Higher status					3.015 (3.09)
Clerical-Middle status					1.294 (0.44)
Clerical-Lower status					2.463 (0.63)***
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-	-		
Middle Class		94.26%*	91.36%**		
Working Class		64.47%**	58.25%***		
No consumption of whole wheat bread (N: 6405)					
Constant	2.079 (0.53)**	1.698 (0.46)*	1.957 (0.51)*	2.237 (0.78)*	1.985 (0.52)**
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	1.203 (0.07)**	1.141 (0.08)*	1.173 (0.08)*	0.927 (0.18)	0.753 (0.05)***
Clerical/Support Class	1.425 (0.14)***	1.281 (0.14)*	1.344 (0.15)**	1.233 (0.47)	-
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.748 (0.05)***	0.757 (0.05)***	0.755 (0.05)***	0.756 (0.05)***	0.817 (0.05)**
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.809 (0.05)***	0.829 (0.05)**	0.819 (0.05)**	0.824 (0.05)**	0.826 (0.06)**
					0.997 (0.00)

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

No consumption of whole wheat bread (N: 6405)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	0.830 (0.05)**	0.818 (0.05)**	0.826 (0.06)**	0.817 (0.05)**	0.817 (0.05)**
Age	0.997 (0.00)	0.998 (0.00)	0.997 (0.00)	0.997 (0.00)	0.997 (0.00)
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.042 (0.02)*		1.016 (0.03)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)			-		
Middle status			1.029 (0.07)		
Lower status			1.083 (0.09)		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				1.050 (0.05)	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				1.017 (0.07)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					0.996 (0.08)
Administrative-Lower status					1.109 (0.17)
Professional-Higher status					1.087 (0.13)
Professional-Middle status					1.218 (0.10)*
Professional-Lower status					1.263 (0.11)**
Clerical-Higher status					1.919 (0.74)
Clerical-Middle status					1.377 (0.26)
Clerical-Lower status					1.406 (0.17)**
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-	-		
Middle Class		28.83%*	14.03%		
Working Class		27.16%*	12.19%		

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

No daily consumption of fruits and vegetables (N: 6430)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Constant	3.847 (1.11)***	1.893 (0.58)*	3.268 (0.97)***	11.837 (4.77)***	3.236 (0.97)***
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	1.435 (0.10)***	1.106 (0.08)	1.124 (0.09)	0.842 (0.20)	
Clerical/Support Class	2.734 (0.30)***	1.772 (0.22)***	1.855 (0.22)***	2.222 (0.91)*	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.436 (0.03)***	0.442 (0.03)***	0.436 (0.03)***	0.440 (0.03)***	0.432 (0.03)***
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.756 (0.05)***	0.820 (0.06)**	0.806 (0.06)**	0.815 (0.06)**	0.809 (0.06)**
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.450 (0.10)***	1.349 (0.10)***	1.372 (0.10)***	1.349 (0.10)***	1.367 (0.10)***
Age	0.957 0.00)***	0.957 (0.00)***	0.956 (0.00)***	0.957 (0.00)***	0.957 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.200 (0.03)***		1.145 (0.03)***	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			1.292 (0.10)**		
Lower status			1.959 (0.18)***		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				1.062 (0.05)	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				0.974 (0.07)	

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

No daily consumption of fruits and vegetables (N: 6430)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative-Middle status					1.415 (0.14)**
Administrative-Lower status					1.556 (0.27)*
Professional-Higher status					1.116 (0.16)
Professional-Middle status					1.394 (0.14)**
Professional-Lower status					2.372 (0.23)***
Clerical-Higher status					3.822 (1.42)***
Clerical-Middle status					2.334 (0.50)***
Clerical-Lower status					3.604 (0.47)***
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-	-		
Middle Class		70.29%***	66.26%***		
Working Class		41.55%***	36.01%***		
Smoking (N: 6467)					
Constant	0.454 (0.19)	0.283 (0.12)**	0.362 (0.16)*	1.009 (0.62)	0.363 (0.16)*
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	1.510 (0.16)***	1.252 (0.14)*	1.254 (0.14)*	1.286 (0.45)	
Clerical/Support Class	2.403 (0.35)***	1.837 (0.30)***	1.939 (0.31)***	1.288 (0.68)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.910 (0.09)	0.951 (0.10)	0.942 (0.10)	0.954 (0.09)	0.944 (0.10)

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Smoking (N: 6467)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.579 (0.06)***	0.616 (0.07)***	0.621 (0.07)***	0.614 (0.09)***	0.621 (0.07)***
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.580 (0.15)***	1.509 (0.15)***	1.537 (0.15)***	1.507 (0.15)***	1.538 (0.15)***
Age	0.970 (0.01)***	0.970 (0.01)***	0.970 (0.01)***	0.970 (0.01)***	0.971 (0.01)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		1.131 (0.03)***		1.106 (0.06)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)			-		
Middle status			1.445 (0.18)**		
Lower status			1.642 (0.23)***		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				0.998 (0.07)	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				1.062 (0.10)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					1.441 (0.24)*
Administrative-Lower status					1.609 (0.43)
Professional-Higher status					1.286 (0.28)
Professional-Middle status					1.816 (0.28)***
Professional-Lower status					2.027 (0.32)***
Clerical-Higher status					1.364 (0.85)
Clerical-Middle status					2.693 (0.71)***
Clerical-Lower status					3.240 (0.58)***
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Smoking (N: 6467)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class	-	41.68%***	-		
Middle Class		31.19%***	39.53%**		
Working Class			27.00%**		
Alcohol Consumption (N: 6429)	5A	5B	5C	5D	5E
Constant	2.702 (0.79)**	4.673 (1.46)***	3.612 (1.09)***	0.938 (0.37)	3.476 (1.05)***
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	0.763 (0.05)***	0.885 (0.06)	0.862 (0.06)*	0.642 (0.14)*	
Clerical/Support Class	0.354 (0.05)***	0.474 (0.08)***	0.431 (0.07)***	0.138 (0.09)**	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.308(0.03)***	0.301 (0.03)***	0.303 (0.03)***	0.303 (0.03)***	0.303 (0.03)***
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	1.008 (0.07)	0.949 (0.06)	0.950 (0.06)	0.933 (0.06)	0.958 (0.07)
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	1.184 (0.09)*	1.226 (0.10)*	1.205 (0.10)*	1.221 (0.10)*	1.204 (0.10)*
Age	0.970 (0.00)***	0.968 (0.00)***	0.968 (0.00)***	0.968 (0.00)***	0.968 (0.00)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.894 (0.02)***		0.821 (0.04)***	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			0.740 (0.05)***		
Lower status			0.717 (0.07)***		

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Alcohol Consumption (N: 6429)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)	-				
Professional/Executive X Subj Status	1.082 (0.05)				
Clerical/Support X Subj Status	1.249 (0.13)*				
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					0.806 (0.07)*
Administrative-Lower status					0.711 (0.12)*
Professional-Higher status					1.001 (0.13)
Professional-Middle status					0.632 (0.06)***
Professional-Lower status					0.632 (0.06)***
Clerical-Higher status					0.416 (0.26)
Clerical-Middle status					0.247 (0.08)***
Clerical-Lower status					0.343 (0.06)***
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class	-				
Middle Class	54.37%***		44.50%***		
Working Class	24.94%***		18.75%***		
Wine Consumption (N: 6429)	6A	6B	6B	6D	6E
Constant	0.096 (0.06)***	0.360 (0.23)	0.162 (0.10)**	0.007 (0.01)***	0.163 (0.10)**
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-				
Professional/Executive Class	0.470 (0.07)***	0.687 (0.11)*	0.618 (0.10)**	0.270 (0.13)**	
Clerical/Support Class	0.124 (0.05)***	0.242 (0.10)**	0.187 (0.08)***	0.009 (0.2)***	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-				
Female	1.760 (0.25)***	1.656 (0.24)**	1.663 (0.25)***	1.660 (0.25)***	1.669 (0.24)**

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Wine Consumption (N: 6429)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	1.725 (0.23)***	1.424 (0.20)*	1.492 (0.21)**	1.375 (0.19)*	1.493 (0.21)**
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	0.781 (0.13)	0.900 (0.15)	0.865 (0.15)	0.888 (0.15)	0.862 (0.15)
Age	0.989 (0.01)	0.984 (0.01)	0.984 (0.01)	0.983 (0.01)	0.984 (0.01)
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.750 (0.04)***		0.504 (0.11)***	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			0.578 (0.09)***		
Lower status			0.506 (0.10)**		
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				1.265 (0.14)*	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				1.834 (0.51)*	
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative-Middle status					0.596 (0.10)**
Administrative-Lower status					0.329 (0.14)**
Professional-Higher status					0.598 (0.15)*
Professional-Middle status					0.351 (0.07)***
Professional-Lower status					0.318 (0.07)***
Clerical-Higher status	-	-	-	-	-
Clerical-Middle status					0.139 (0.06)***
Clerical-Lower status					

Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Wine Consumption (N: 6429)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
% of Material social class mediated by Subjective social status					
Higher Class	-	49.39%***	-		
Middle Class		31.00%***	35.26%***		
Working Class			20.18%***		
Beer Consumption (N: 6429)	7A	7B	7C	7D	7E
Constant	1.744 (1.28)	1.896 (1.48)	1.692 (1.28)	1.361 (1.39)	1.666 (1.27)
Material Class					
Administrative Class (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Professional/Executive Class	1.440 (0.23)*	1.625 (0.29)**	1.646 (0.29)**	2.124 (1.12)	
Clerical/Support Class	0.781 (0.29)	0.974 (0.39)	0.971 (0.39)	1.222 (2.01)	
Gender					
Male (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Female	0.009 (0.01)***	0.009 (0.01)***	0.010 (0.01)***	0.010 (0.01)***	0.010 (0.01)***
Education					
No post-secondary education (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Post-secondary education	0.663 (0.11)*	0.677 (0.11)*	0.674 (0.12)*	0.684 (0.12)*	0.680 (0.12)*
Marital Status					
Married (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Not-married	2.669 (0.42)***	2.705 (0.44)***	2.701 (0.44)***	2.707 (0.44)***	2.691 (0.44)***
Age	0.932 (0.01)***	0.934 (0.01)***	0.933 (0.01)***	0.934 (0.01)***	0.933 (0.01)***
Decreasing Subjective Status		0.942 (0.05)		0.985 (0.10)	
Subjective Status Groups					
Higher status (Ref.)	-	-	-	-	-
Middle status			0.834 (0.15)		
Lower status			0.766 (0.17)		

TABLE A7.3 (Continued)

Beer Consumption (N: 6429)	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E
Material Class X Subjective Status					
Administrative X Subj status (Ref.)				-	
Professional/Executive X Subj Status				0.937 (0.11)	
Clerical/Support X Subj Status				0.947 (0.25)	
Class-Status Combinations					
Administrative-Higher status (Ref.)					-
Administrative-Middle status					0.902 (0.23)
Administrative-Lower status					0.890 (0.40)
Professional-Higher status					1.892 (0.53)*
Professional-Middle status					1.335 (0.31)
Professional-Lower status					1.358 (0.32)
Clerical-Higher status					-
Clerical-Middle status					2.038 (1.16)
Clerical-Lower status					0.546 (0.27)
Karlson, Holm, Breen-Mediation Analysis					
% of Material social class mediated					
by Subjective social status					
Higher Class		-			
Middle Class		-19.05%		-21.72%	
Working Class		83.33%		86.83%	

Source: Wave 5 of the Whitehall II Study. ° p > 0.10 * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. Entries represent the results of separate fixed effects logistic regression models

TABLE A8.1 Descriptive values

	Range	Full Sample N (%) / Mean (SE)	Deceased Sample N (%) / Mean (SE)
Age of death	20-104		67.71 (17.6)
Death			
Alive	0/1	14440 (80.8)	
Deceased	0/1	3441 (19.2)	
Cause of death			
Accident	0/1		192 (5.7)
Suicide	0/1		65 (1.9)
Assault	0/1		51 (1.5)
General disease	0/1		900 (26.6)
Cancer	0/1		878 (26.1)
Cardiovascular disease	0/1		1224 (36.3)
Mental condition	0/1		62 (1.8)
Year of birth	1899-1984	1950.22 (17.14)	
Gender			
Male (Ref.)	0/1	8176 (45.7)	1685 (50.0)
Female	0/1	9702 (54.3)	1687 (50.0)
Degree			
Lower than high school (Ref.)	0/1	2744 (15.4)	971 (28.8)
High school	0/1	9636 (53.8)	1669 (49.5)
Junior college	0/1	1226 (6.9)	167 (5.0)
Bachelor	0/1	2919 (16.3)	365 (10.8)
Graduate	0/1	1353 (7.6)	200 (5.9)
Ethnicity			
White (Ref.)	0/1	14745 (82.4)	2762 (81.9)
Black	0/1	2247 (12.6)	502 (14.9)
Other	0/1	886 (5.0)	108 (3.2)
Marital Status			
Married (Ref.)	0/1	9184 (51.4)	1658 (49.2)
Widowed	0/1	1520 (8.5)	751 (22.3)
Divorced	0/1	2721 (15.2)	483 (14.2)
Separated	0/1	613 (3.4)	114 (3.4)
Never married	0/1	3840 (21.5)	367 (10.9)
Income			
Lower income (Ref.)	0/1	10888 (60.9)	1540 (45.7)
Higher income	0/1	6990 (39.1)	1832 (54.3)

Source: 1988-2002 General Social Survey – 2008 National Death Index

D

Dankwoord

DANKWOORD

I faced it all and I stood tall and did it my way, aldus Frank Sinatra. Een uitspraak die ook toepasselijk is om de totstandkoming van een proefschrift te omschrijven. De voorbije vier jaar hebben mij geleerd dat het schrijven van een proefschrift gepaard gaat met ups en downs, met tegenslag en meeval, met periodes van stress maar ook ongeremde motivatie, maar bovenal met groei en zelfontplooiing. Toen ik in september 2014 aan dit avontuur begon had ik geen flauw idee hoe ik dit in godsnaam tot een goed einde moest brengen, met enkel als ruw idee dat dit proefschrift ongeveer 4 jaar later het eindresultaat moest worden. Nu dit effectief gelukt is ben ik heel blij dat ik de uitdaging aangegaan ben en wil ik enkele mensen bedanken die hier een belangrijke rol in gespeeld hebben.

Allereerst wil ik mijn promotor, Peter Achterberg, en co-promotor, Tim Reeskens, van harte bedanken voor de begeleiding van dit proefschrift en nog veel meer voor de heel aangename manier waarop dit gebeurde. Jullie scherpe inzichten, enthousiasme, en humor hebben vaak voor oplossingen gezorgd op momenten wanneer ik die zelf niet zag. Minstens even belangrijk zijn de kansen en steun die jullie mij gegeven hebben om mij ook verder als academicus te ontplooien door het bezoeken van conferenties, het begeleiden van studenten en het opdoen van ervaring als docent. En last but not least heb ik ook de hartelijke en informele manier van begeleiding, waarbij jullie deur steeds openstond, sterk geapprecieerd. Ook de vele gesprekken en bijeenkomsten waarbij mijn kennis van de betere Nederlandse schlagermuziek aangescherpt werd en waarvan sommige anderen niet voor publicatie vatbaar zijn, waren een zeer welkome afwisseling van de dagdagelijkse werkdruk.

Verder wil ik natuurlijk alle andere (oud)-collega's bedanken voor de aangename werksfeer, de behulpzame feedback, de gezellige en vaak grappige gesprekken en zeker ook de departementsuitjes. In het bijzonder wil ik ook Michiel, Klaus en Francesca, die mijn kamergenoten waren tijdens de laatste en meest stressvolle fase van dit proefschrift, vermelden. Tijdens dergelijke stressvolle momenten is het zeker een meerwaarde om hierover te kunnen praten met anderen aangezien gedeelde smart halve smart is. Bij deze; Hartelijk bedankt! Vielen dank! Grazie mille!

Vervolgens wil ik ook nog enkele mensen bedanken die buiten het werk om van vitaal belang zijn geweest. In eerste instantie zijn dit natuurlijk mijn ouders. Hoewel sociologie en de academische wereld jullie niet vertrouwd zijn, hebben jullie mijn keuzes qua studie en later promotie steeds gesteund. Daarnaast hebben jullie kosten noch moeite gespaard om mij deze keuzes te laten maken en ook steeds een helpende

hand verleend bij de praktische beslommingen omtrent het verhuizen voor mijn promotieonderzoek. In het kader hiervan verdienen ook mijn schoonouders, Jan en Katrien, een vermelding. Jullie erg behulpzame bijstand bij het verhuizen naar eerst Weelde en later Turnhout zorgden op deze drukke momenten voor heel wat mentale gemoedsrust bij zowel Marieke als mezelf.

Tenslotte wil ik natuurlijk ook Marieke bedanken. Liefste Marieke, om aan dit proefschrift te kunnen beginnen heb ik je gevraagd om van onder de kerktoren te verhuizen naar de exotische Kempen. Hoewel deze stap niet altijd even makkelijk is geweest, zou ik niet weten hoe ik dit tot een goed einde had kunnen brengen zonder jou. Wanneer werk te belangrijk leek te worden, slaagde je er met je onvoorwaardelijke steun steeds in om mij zowel een gebrek aan motivatie alsook ongebreidelde grootheidswaan te helpen relativeren. Ik hoop dat we de komende jaren nog vele obscure ex-Sovjetrepublieken, Arctische woestijnen en jungles samen kunnen verkennen!

Lorenzo, november 2018

C

Curriculum vitae

CURRICULUM VITAE

Lorenzo D'Hooge was born on September 30, 1990 in Bruges, Belgium. He started his study in History at Ghent University in 2008 and received his Master's degree in 2012. After that he started a preparatory program and Master in Sociology, which he obtained at Ghent University in 2014. In the same year he started as a PhD candidate at the department of Sociology at Tilburg University, writing his dissertation. He currently works as a lecturer and researcher in the academic bachelor and master program of Sociology at Tilburg University, in the Netherlands.

