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Class Salient Interactions and Selection Decisions: The Stratifying Power of Employers' Emotions

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Class Salient Interactions and Selection Decisions:
The Stratifying Power of Employers' Emotions

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by

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Abstract

Securing employment is critical to accessing labor market rewards such as a steady income, benefits, and advancement opportunities. However, an individual's social class—corresponding with their economic, social, and cultural capital—may advantage or disadvantage them in gaining employment. Indeed, it is well-evidenced that the lower social class experiences labor market disadvantage, and management scholars point to organizational selection processes as one lever of such inequality. Still, the role of class salient interactions—same- and cross-class interactions between an interviewer and interviewee— and, specifically, the role of the employer remains an open question. Understanding how class salient interactions impact selection is critical, not only because social class influences interpersonal exchanges but because employers control access to employment. Accordingly, this study adopts a Bourdieusian lens to investigate the following question: what is the effect of class salient interactions on employers' selection decisions? Employers strive to make rational decisions. Yet, evidence suggests something as simple as an affective "spark" impacts hiring recommendations—such a reliance on "chemistry" or "gut feelings" may systematically advantage certain job candidates. Accordingly, I integrate intergroup emotions theory with class-specific theorizing to suggest that class salient interactions elicit employers' discrete emotions (i.e., enthusiasm, anxiety, and compassion). Next, I draw on scholarship related to the action tendencies of emotions to argue that employers' emotional reactions, in turn, impact selection outcomes (i.e., assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards). To test the theoretical model, I conduct two studies using an experimental vignette model. The first study uses a sample of full-time employees with hiring experience, and the second study replicates the first study in a sample of human resource professionals, tests an additional moderator, and employs a non-obtrusive measure of emotions

(i.e., computer-aided analysis of facial expressions). Together, this study investigates the stratifying role of employers' emotions in maintaining social class inequality via selection decisions and, ultimately, contributes to research at the nexus of social class, affect in selection decisions, and the maintenance of inequality in organizational selection.

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We must make friends with the unknowing.
What you know is just ten thousand things.
But what you believe
is what you pay attention to,
what you care about,
what finally lives and matters in you.

- Richard Rohr, OFM

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Dedication

For my former students in Michigan and Arkansas, whose enthusiasm for understanding and loving the world sparked my own.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Securing employment is critical to accessing labor market rewards such as a steady income, benefits, and job security (United Nations, 2021). However, an individual's social class—corresponding with their economic, social, and cultural capital—may disadvantage them in securing employment and countering rising inequality (Pew Research Center, 2020). Indeed, work in sociology has long contended that the lower class experiences labor market disadvantage relative to the middle and upper classes (Bourdieu, 1986). Organizational selection may be one lever of such inequality: "hiring practices serve as gatekeeping mechanisms that facilitate career opportunities for some while blocking entry for others" (Amis et al., 2020, p. 4; Lee et al., 2021)—a claim evidenced in management sciences (Belmi et al., 2020; DeOrtentiis et al., 2021; Fang & Saks, 2021; Sharps & Anderson, 2021). Still, the role of class salient interactions during selection—defined as same- and cross-class interactions between employers and interviewees—and, specifically, the role of the employer remains an open question. Understanding how class salient interactions impact selection decisions is necessary, not only because social class is salient during interpersonal exchanges but because employers wield immense power over job seekers' employment prospects.

Employers control access to jobs and the income and opportunities employment affords (Baron & Bielby, 1980; Bills, 2003; Bills et al., 2017). However, current scholarship focuses on the interviewee during selection, examining job candidates' class-based behaviors or perceptions of a target's social class (Belmi et al., 2020; Fiske et al., 2002; Sharps & Anderson, 2021). Building on these findings, this study incorporates the role of employers—who impact careers by selecting, promoting, and assisting employees (Vinkenburg, 2017)—to investigate the interpersonal interactions between employers and interviewees. This approach is consistent with

scholarship that suggests microsocial interactions in the workplace help maintain social class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984; Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013) or, put differently, that "interactions across class boundaries generate larger patterns of inequality" (DiMaggio, 2012, p. 33). Accordingly, this study investigates the following question: what is the effect of class salient interactions during employment interviews on employers' selection decisions?

Selection decisions are often assumed to be rational, and employers are portrayed as "utility maximizers" concerned with efficiency, workplace productivity, and economic gain (Bills et al., 2017; Pager & Shepherd, 2008; Rivera, 2020; Tilly & Tilly, 1998). However, evidence suggests otherwise: something as simple as an affective "spark" between an employer and job candidate boosts hiring recommendations (Moss & Tilly, 2001; Rivera, 2015b) and simply liking a job candidate improves assessments of their hireability (Fox & Spector, 2000). Such a reliance on "chemistry" or "gut feelings" may systematically disadvantage certain job candidates over others (Imdorf, 2010), though organizational researchers' understanding of affect[1] in selection decisions is limited. Accordingly, this study focuses on employers' emotional reactions to class salient interactions as an explanatory mechanism in selection decisions. Specifically, this study integrates intergroup emotions theory (IET) (Smith, 1993) with several class-specific theories to suggest that same- and cross-class interactions elicit certain emotions in employers that, ultimately, have downstream consequences for selection decisions.

Cross-class interactions surface social class differences, calling into the question the relative privilege and status of both parties which, in turn, evokes anxiety (Gray & Kish-Gephart,

[1] Affect, the umbrella under which emotion falls, is a multi-faceted construct. It includes moods (i.e., states without a known cause that are both weaker in intensity and longer in duration), affective dispositions (i.e., stable feeling states, often studied as positive and negative affect), and, lastly, discrete emotions (i.e., transient states that are a triggered by a target or cause) (Grandey, 2008), the focus of this study. My intention is not to assert that emotions are the only important mechanism in selection decisions. Instead, to better understand this important phenomenon, I highlight the role of discrete emotions while also acknowledging they work in conjunction with other mechanisms, an area ripe for future research.

2013). Thus, I suggest that employers feel *anxiety* or "a state of distress and/or physiological arousal" during cross-class interactions (Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 44). Next, I draw on theory and qualitative evidence from sociology (Collins, 1990; Rivera, 2012, 2015b) to suggest that same-class interactions elicit *enthusiasm*, defined as "a feeling of excitement or passion for an activity, cause, or object" (APA, 2022). For example, having shared forms of cultural capital (e.g., leisure activities or cultural interests) with an interviewee fosters employers' excitement (Rivera, 2012). Finally, I introduce *compassion*, or "the feeling that arises in witnessing another's suffering," as an alternative emotion (Goetz et al., 2010, p. 2). Because compassion is probable when the target is relevant to the observer, often through group membership, I suggest that when employers from a lower social class interact with interviewees from the lower social class (a same-class interaction), compassion is stirred.

Anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion likely have meaningful consequences for selection decisions. Drawing on scholarship related to the action tendencies of emotions (Frijda, 1986), I tie the experience of each emotion to several selection outcomes: assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards (i.e., an employer's willingness to work with the job candidate) (Bowles et al., 2007). Anxiety is associated with avoidance tendencies, and as such, selection outcomes are expected to suffer as the employer distances themself from the interviewee. In contrast, enthusiasm motivates approach behavior; thus, selection outcomes may improve as the employer seeks to affiliate with the interviewee. Finally, compassion motivates employers to approach the interviewee through helping behavior, likely improving selection outcomes as they seek to help the job candidate.

The emotional reactions elicited by same- and cross-class relationships may depend on employers' characteristics or features of the role. For example, a hiring manager's experience

with those outside their social class via social mobility may shape how emotionally reactive employers are to class salient interactions. Likewise, a belief in meritocracy that legitimizes social hierarchy likely shapes whether an interviewee is viewed as a threat or a boon and, as a result, the extent to which certain emotions are elicited. Whether an interviewee's social class (and associated status attributions or stereotypes) "matches" the organizational role being filled may also change employers' emotional responses. Finally, the extent to which emotions drive selection outcomes may depend on whether employers are able to name and regulate their emotions via psychological flexibility.

To empirically test the theoretical model (see Figure 1), I use an experimental vignette model or "a short, carefully constructed description of a person, object, or situation representing a systematic combination of characteristics (Atmuller & Steiner, 2010, p. 128; Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Prior to testing the formal hypotheses, I conducted a validation study to assess the social class manipulation. Following, I tested the hypotheses with an experimental design using simulated interviews with an interviewee from a lower, middle, and upper social class in a sample of full-time employees with management experience. Study 1 focused on testing how class salient interactions impacted participants' emotional reactions, the downstream effects on selection decisions, and individual-level moderators. Study 2 served to replicate and extend Study 1 in a sample of full-time human resource employees and considered organizational role as a boundary condition. Likewise, Study 2 employed a non-obtrusive measure of participants' emotions by measuring their facial reactions associated with each emotion.

The findings of this study offer three main theoretical contributions. First, I contribute to social class literature by drawing on Bourdieu's theorizing around the reification of social class distinctions via interpersonal interactions to show how same- and cross-class interactions during

employment interviews contribute to labor market outcomes. To do so, I incorporate the role of the employer to demonstrate how interpersonal similarities and differences across lower, middle, and upper social class statuses impact decision making. Second, I draw from and incorporate intergroup emotion theory with class-specific theorizing to extend what is known about the role of emotions in class salient exchanges. In doing so, I advance the notion that stratification occurs based not only on resources (i.e., economic, social, and cultural capital) but also because of the discrete emotions triggered by same- and cross-class interactions. Finally, I build on research focused on affect in decision making to emphasize the role of emotions in selection, extending consideration beyond cognitive mechanisms to show how discrete emotions facilitate selection outcomes and, ultimately, underscore the potential stratifying power of emotion in hiring. Seen as a whole, I begin to uncover how same- and cross-class interactions contribute to class inequality during selection via employers' emotions and, more broadly, offer actionable insight into the microfoundations of inequality in organizations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following review aims to lay a foundation for investigating the effect of same- and cross-class interactions on organizational selection and, further, the explanatory role of employers' emotional reactions. The first section will discuss the construct of social class, including introducing a Bourdieusian perspective and detailing class salient interactions—interactions with those from a different social class (i.e., cross-class interactions) or similar social class (i.e., same-class interaction) (DiMaggio, 2012). The second section introduces organizational selection, specifically employment interviews, as a potential site for the reproduction of social class inequality. This section focuses on organizations as gateway institutions and highlights a need to focus on the role of employers and their decision making. As such, the third section reviews research on decision-making during selection, highlighting cognitive mechanisms and pointing to the need to understand affective mechanisms better. Finally, the fourth section outlines research on social class and the labor market, reviewing work focused on social class and selection, including employment interviews.

Social Class

Social class is one of the most used constructs in sociology and the social sciences (Levine, 2006) and, increasingly over the past decade, seen in management sciences as valuable to understanding people's work and working lives (Kish-Gephart et al., 2022). Yet, there is little agreement about the "essential properties" of social class. Further, scholars tend to rely on operational definitions that specify how class is measured instead of offering formal definitions (Côté, 2011, p. 45). When defining social class, definitions tend to correspond with scholars' paradigmatic approach or their foundational assumptions, interests, and beliefs.

First, scholars who assume an objective reality that can be captured and measured tend to define social class as the relative differences in an individual's resources and social rank: "social class comprises both an individual's material resources and an individual's perceived rank within social hierarchy" (Kraus et al., 2009, p. 992). This approach is beneficial in testing cause-and-effect relationships. However, a rank-based approach to social class overlooks the more "deep-seated, structural effects of social class" (Leavitt & Freberg, 2013, p. 120). Thus, a second set of scholars focuses on how an individual's sense of self is formed via their social class context (i.e., structural conditions, such as material resources or environmental setting) and within the bounds of social, historical, and political macro-forces (Stephens et al., 2012). In this approach, scholars often focus on participants' subjective experiences and emphasize how individuals adopt, value, display, or defend class-based identities (Lucas, 2011a, 2011b). Thus, social class, from this perspective, "refers to the behaviors, tastes, and values that are socially defined as appropriate and expected of individuals of a particular socioeconomic position. These symbolic behaviors confirm one's membership position in a particular social class" (Yodanis, 2002, p. 325-6).

In contrast to the first two approaches, a third set of scholars focused on understanding and revealing deep power structures tend to define social class as a function of organizational and societal structure (objective), as socially constructed (subjective), or as an interaction between both. The first approach emphasizes how individuals are constrained by structural relationships and economic systems (e.g., Marx, 1973; Weber, 1978) and defines class "in terms of [groups'] relationship to ownership and control of the means of production, and of their control over the labor of others" (Kohn et al., 1990, p. 965). The second approach stresses how individuals (their consciousnesses) are constrained by ideological structures derived from dominant power structures (e.g., Durkheim, 1965; Skeggs, 2004). In a third approach, Bourdieu

(1984) presented social class as an interplay of the subjective and objective, in which individual "practices are constitutive of structures as well as determined by them" (Swartz, 1997: 68), a perspective I turn to now.

A Bourdieusian Perspective of Social Class

At the center of Bourdieu's perspective of social class are three forms of capital: economic capital (e.g., wealth or income), cultural capital (i.e., education and cultural knowledge, skills, and tastes), and social capital (i.e., valuable social relationships) (DiMaggio, 2012; Friedman & Laurison, 2019). Broadly speaking, Bourdieu's work explores how social stratification— "the processes that sort individuals into positions that provide unequal levels of material and social rewards"—is reified via capital and its concomitant social distinctions (Rivera, 2015a, p. 2; DiMaggio, 2012). Bourdieu argues that social inequality is rooted in unequal distributions of capital; however, he does not view individuals as "simple reflections of overarching structures" (Swartz, 1997, p. 146). Instead, he contends that individuals also construct the social world or, more specifically, reproduce their class position. Bourdieu links structure and agency through a dialectical relationship: "objective structures tend to produce structured subjective dispositions that produce structured actions which, in turn, tend to reproduce objective structure" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 203).

Structure and agency undergird class reproduction via habitus, defined as individuals' "deeply structured cultural grammar for action" (Swartz, 1977, p. 102). Bourdieu emphasized habitus as a disposition with two essential components—structure and propensity (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz, 1997). Habitus is a product of individuals' early socialization experience in which their access to economic, social, and cultural capital during early childhood (structure) is internalized. In turn, individuals develop an inclination towards certain attitudes, expectations,

goals, and strategies that match their classed environment (propensity) (Swartz, 1977). In other words, habitus "tethers individuals to their class origin by guiding them to navigate their social environment in ways that will keep them in it" (Streib, 2020, p. 141). Individuals' expectations and aspirations are, in part, controlled by the necessity of habitus. Thus, there is a direct line between habitus and power insofar that "habitus involves an unconscious calculation of what is possible, impossible, and probably for individuals in their specific location in a stratified social order" (Swartz, 1997, pgs. 106-107; Bourdieu, 1990). Put simply, habitus sustains class reproduction.

One of the major critiques of Bourdieu's conception of habitus is that it may seem antithetical to social mobility (Friedman & Laurison, 2019), defined as an individual's change in social class standing from generation to generation (intergenerational mobility) or within one's lifetime (intragenerational mobility) (Phillips et al., 2020; Streib, 2014). That is, some scholars suggest that habitus is overly deterministic and does not account for the ability of individuals or groups to rise or fall in social class standing (Friedman & Laurison, 2019). However, when examined closely, Bourdieu conceptualized social class in a way that accounted for gradual (and limited) changes in social position over time (Friedman, 2015). Still, much of the nuance related to habitus being both durable and transposable—meaning individuals are predisposed to behave in a certain manner across time and environments—requires further examination of the forms of capital (Streib, 2020).

Economic, Social, and Cultural Capital

Bourdieu conceptualized capital in terms of its volume, composition, and trajectory. First, the *volume* of capital (economic, social, and cultural) marks the line between classes. For example, upper social class standing is distinguished by abundant economic, social, and cultural

capital. In contrast, on the other end of the spectrum, the lower social class is characterized as having minimal capital. Between these two is the middle social class, which holds adequate capital (Swartz, 1997). Class also relates to power, or the ability to "imply a certain claim to symbolic authority as the socially recognized power to impose a certain vision of the social world" (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 106). Relative to the lower and middle social classes, those in the upper social class experience historical privilege (Khan, 2011) and high levels of power: "These are the 'captains of industry'…whose decisions dominate the workplace and the economy, and whose economic power often translates into the dominant power in the realms of politics, culture, the media, and even religion" (Zweig, 2004: 4-5). In contrast, the middle social class experiences power over others yet is still subject to others' power (Resnick and Wolff, 2003), and the lower social class holds little power (Bourdieu, 1994). Over time, the lower, middle, and upper social classes contend for access to capital, over what is considered "legitimate" in society, and, more broadly, power (Swartz, 1997).

Next, differences in the *composition* of capital demarcate intraclass divisions. For example, writers and artists hold abundant cultural capital in the upper social class, while they may lack economic capital relative to business owners in their class strata. In the working class, relative discrepancies in capital can be found among those in skilled occupations versus those working in manual labor (Bourdieu, 1984; Swartz, 1997). In the middle social class, Bourdieu devotes special attention to the "new petite bourgeoisie," who are characterized as holding a copious amount of cultural capital but in less well-established areas (e.g., radio and TV producers, journalists, or tutors) (Bourdieu, 1984). Overall, in his analysis of the composition of capital, Bourdieu emphasizes differences in economic and cultural capital, leaving discussions of

social capital to the side ostensibly because it was harder to capture empirically at the time (Swartz, 1997).

Finally, Bourdieu highlights *social trajectories*, or how individuals' and groups' capital holdings may change in volume and composition over time. Bourdieu suggests that the amount of capital a group or individual inherits creates a limited "band of more or less probable trajectories" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 114) and, further, that the habitus is equipped with the resources necessary to achieve short-range mobility (Friedman, 2015). However, Bourdieu argues that long-range social mobility can be difficult for individuals or groups (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1977). This challenge is in part due to the complexity of cultural capital. Economic and social capital are typically transferred from parents to children, wherein economic assets and valuable social contacts are directly passed on to one's children and offer an advantage in fairly obvious ways. Both economic and social capital are more easily tracked than cultural capital. That is, one can assess a person's income or financial assets or their social connections and track changes in mobility over time. In contrast, inheriting cultural capital is more complex and harder to identify in everyday life than economic and social capital (Friedman & Laurison, 2019). A change in occupations may shift an individual's economic and social capital holdings, but it is less likely to affect their cultural capital. For this reason, Bourdieu noted it is important to differentiate between a shift in occupational status from a change in social class status and consider the role of cultural capital more closely (Swartz, 1997). Occupational shifts may increase an individual's income (i.e., their economic capital) or expand their network (i.e., social capital), but it does not guarantee the acquisition of new cultural capital, a topic turned to now.

Bourdieu outlines three forms of cultural capital. First, *institutionalized* cultural capital comes in the form of credentials and qualifications, such as earning an educational degree.

Second, *objectified* cultural capital comes in the form of possessing culturally valued objects such as books, paintings, or luxury items. Finally, *embodied* cultural capital—considered the most "fundamental" form of cultural capital—comes in the form of long-lasting dispositions. Gaining institutionalized or objectified cultural capital often depends on having embodied cultural capital, and, as such, embodied cultural capital is considered determinative in class reproduction (Friedman & Laurison, 2019). Attaining embodied cultural capital often requires time from parents, family members, or hired professionals to deliberately cultivate cultural distinctions in a child (Swartz, 1997).

Bourdieu proposed that embodied cultural capital manifests in bodily form and cognitive disposition, an idea similar to Aristotle's idea of *hexis* (DiMaggio, 2012). Related to the first form, exposure to certain volumes of capital during childhood is encoded in individuals' physical manners—in gestures, postures, dress, stride, and accent or inflection. Related to cognitive dispositions, embodied cultural capital manifests in certain ways of thinking or feeling—tastes, values, language, appreciations, or modes of reasoning or understanding—assigned a high value and signal cultural distinction (Bourdieu, 1984; Friedman & Laurison, 2019). In this sense, cultural capital—internalized through both a mental and corporeal process—offers individuals cultural legitimacy and, thus, a powerful position in the social world (Swartz, 1997).

The Impact of Social Class Origins

Society advances the notion that almost anyone can "pull themselves up by the bootstraps" and achieve the "American Dream"— the prevailing belief that through hard work, talent, and some luck, anyone can achieve nearly anything (Lucas, 2011b). Academic scholars have debated this notion, questioning the extent to which individuals' social class origins impact their ability to scale (or descend) social class strata and their subsequent behavior (Kish-Gephart

& Campbell, 2015; Martin & Côté, 2019; Phillips et al., 2020). Some researchers assert that individuals shed their social class origins during mobility, suggesting that "observed social class differences are likely learned and habituated, so they may be unlearned via changes in environment" (Phillips et al., 2020, p. 5). Within this framework, a major emphasis is on the resources that social transitioners—those who experience a transition between their class origin and destination—acquire during mobility (Martin & Côté, 2019). More specifically, this framework draws on Swidler's (1986, 2001) toolkit model, which suggests that individuals acquire new tools or resources during unsettled times (like during social mobility), to argue that individuals who experience high mobility are equipped with a broad cultural toolset that can be deployed strategically (Martin & Côté, 2019).

Bourdieu's perspective is similar to Swidler's model insofar that he emphasized actor agency and the practical features of culture. However, Bourdieu is more deterministic than Swidler—he emphasized group embeddedness and the power dimension of cultural resources (Swartz, 1997). From this perspective, social class leaves a lasting imprint on individuals or, in other words, "class is deeply rooted, retained, and carried through life rather than left behind (or below). In this sense, it is more like a foot which carries us forward than a footprint which marks a past presence" (Mahony & Zmroczek, 1997, p. 4). Research adopting this perspective emphasizes the durable characteristics of social class; how individuals behave in adulthood can be traced to their early classed experiences or, more precisely, their habitus (e.g., Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2015; Martin et al., 2016). This is in line with Bourdieu's argument that, while embodied cultural capital can be acquired to a small extent (often through education or work experience), those who are primarily socialized into embodied cultural capital during childhood

will "always possess a head start" and those who experience upward mobility must, even after conscious alignment, still "partially 'fake it'" (Laurison & Friedman, 2019, p. 202).

Because of Bourdieu's emphasis on the durability of social class across time, this study considers social class as "sticky" and considers the effects of individuals' childhood social class. As summarized by DiMaggio (2012): "class exerts much of its effect when people are very young. If that is the case, we must treat class as an analytic construct that shapes interactions through its early influence… it follows that subjects who have experienced social mobility should be categorized according to their class origin" (p. 28). Accordingly, throughout the remainder of the paper, social class is conceptualized as an individual's childhood social class (meaning when the term "social class" is used it refers to an individual's social class origins unless otherwise noted) and, when social mobility has occurred, it is theorized about and measured as a separate construct.

Field of Struggle for Power

Habitus and contaminant social mobility occur against the backdrop of field, or, in Bourdieu's (1980) words, "a certain distribution structure of some kind of capital" (p. 138-42). More explicitly, fields define the structure of a social setting, specifically which type or combination of capital offers legitimacy or symbolic value. Fields become a struggle for power in three ways (Swartz, 1997). First, fields are the location of the struggle for what is legitimate—what forms and combinations of capital are most valuable. For example, cultural capital is the key resource in intellectual fields, while economic capital is the most important in business. Second, actors (i.e., individuals, groups, organizations, or institutions) fill dominant and subordinate positions based on their capital holdings. In this sense, actors are relational in nature, where capital is unequally distributed and assessed in comparison to others. Those who

determine which types of capital are valuable and hold some power over its distribution are considered established agents. The struggle for position occurs when newcomers enter the field (Bourdieu, 1987). Finally, established agents and newcomers agree that the field is worth preserving, even if there is a struggle for control. Thus, to some extent, all actors accept the "rules of the game," even if the actors contest its legitimacy or rewards.

The idea of fields was critical to Bourdieu's conception of class reproduction because it "draws attention to the latent patterns of interest and struggle that shape the existence of these empirical realities" (Swartz, 1997, p. 119). Habitus is the outcome of early class socialization and is associated with certain capital holdings, yet habitus intersects with the structure of specific fields to produce action. Put simply, human action is a product of the "interrelationship" between habitus, capital, and field (Bourdieu, 1984). Thus, to understand social class as an organizing structure, Bourdieu would argue that one must also consider the underlying and often invisible relationships, namely power relationships, that shape human action. Specifically, it is necessary to consider who the dominant group is—who determines what forms or combinations of capital are considered legitimate, thereby establishing the game's unwritten rules (a topic discussed in more detail in the *Labor Market as Field* section). Often the capital associated with a privileged upbringing (e.g., a way of behaving or thinking, an aesthetic disposition, a cultural taste) is implicitly recognized as legitimate and valuable. Thus, those from a higher social class can "cash in" such cultural distinctions in settings spanning from educational institutions to labor markets to the workplace, among others (Friedman & Laurison, 2019, p. 201). To summarize in Bourdieu's own words, "the dominated fraction (clerics or 'intellectuals' and 'artists,' depending on the period) always tends to set the specific capital, to which it owes its position, at the top of the hierarchy of principles of hierarchization" (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 168)

Social Class Defined

For this study, I adopt Gray & Kish-Gephart's (2013) definition of social class: social class may be defined as "the relative social rankings of organizational members based on differences in their economic capital (i.e., wealth), social capital (i.e., networks and connections), and cultural capital (i.e., tastes and practices developed through educational and personal experiences)" (p. 671). This definition is appropriate for several reasons. First, the definition emphasizes the essential properties of social class, in contrast to the majority of social class definitions in management sciences that rely on operational definitions (Côté, 2011). Next, the definition is contextualized within an organizational setting and, thus, facilitates the development of arguments related to social class in organizations. Finally, and most notably, the definition reflects key Bourdieusian principles: the role of capital and habitus and the interplay of objective and subjective. In this way, the adopted definition lends itself to a critical framing of how social class influences microsocial interactions that, in turn, shape field-level phenomena.

In defining social class, it is necessary to offer several points of clarity. First, social class must be distinguished from status. Status and social class are both the basis for social hierarchy (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). However, while social class may confer status—or "the extent to which an individual or group is respected or admired by others"—it is not equivalent (Magee & Galinsky, 2008, p. 359). That is, status can be ascribed to an individual by others (at times, because of one's higher social class), whereas social class is constituted by an individual's capital holdings. In this sense, status is given by others, while social class is possessed by the individual. Employees may earn respect and admiration of others outside of reasons related to social class standing (e.g., leadership capabilities, achievements, or offering care for others). For example, status might be given to an individual because of a formal role in an organization, such

as supervisor, but it does not mean they are from a higher social class. As another example of the difference between the two, status may change across contexts, groups, or interactions (e.g., talking with a supervisor versus a subordinate) while social class does not (Côté, 2011).

Next, it is required to clarify class-related terminology. Social class and socioeconomic status (SES) are often used interchangeably, although SES tends to be a narrower construct. SES refers to an individual's "social position" and neglects the subjective experience of social class (DeOrientiis et al., 2021, p. 2). Scholars also use the terms blue and white collar interchangeably with social class, although these terms refer more specifically to occupational positions. Blue-collar positions are characterized by physical labor, being under others' supervision, and filling low-ranking positions (Lucas & Buzzanel, 2004). Like members of the lower social class, workers in blue-collar positions tend to lack a college degree and experience resource scarcity. White-collar positions often involve knowledge work, and thus they tend to be filled by individuals from the middle or upper social class who have earned a college degree (Lucas, 2011a, 2011b). Throughout this paper, I will use the term social class, explicitly following Bourdieu's conception of the lower, middle, and upper class unless referring to specific studies that use alternative terms, in which case I will use the authors' terminology.

Finally, it is essential to note that the experience of social class is not separate from the experience of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexuality, among other categories of difference. Indeed, Bourdieu's concept of class considered such distinctions as stratifying influences (Swartz, 1997). For example, Bourdieu writes, "the volume and composition of capital give specific form and value to the determinations which other factors (age, sex, place of residence, etc.) impose on practices" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 108). While his treatment of intersectionality leaves room for critique (e.g., McCall, 1992), it is notable that Bourdieu advances a

multidimensional conception of social class. Considering how social class intersects with other social distinctions to create complex inequalities is vital to understanding how privilege and disadvantage operate in organizations (Holvino, 2010). While this study does not directly address intersectionality in its theorizing, the intersection of social class with other categories of difference is a topic returned to in the *Discussion* section and, specifically, addressed as an essential future research direction.

Class Salient Encounters

Same- and Cross-Class Interactions

Organizations are one site for class salient encounters, defined formally as "encounters that evoke judgments by one or both members about the other's enacted social class habitus" (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013, p. 671). This study examines several types of class salient interactions. First, this study considers cross-class interactions between individuals from different social class backgrounds, including downward class interactions or when members of relatively higher social classes interact with individuals from relatively lower social classes and upward class interactions or when members of relatively lower social classes interact with individuals from a relatively higher social class. Next, this study considers same-class interactions, or when individuals from the same social class interact. Finally, and extending theorizing on classed interactions, this study also considers the role of the focal individual's (i.e., the employer) upward social mobility during classed-based interactions.

Theoretical Foundation of Class Salient Interactions

A theoretical principle advanced by early scholars (e.g., Bourdieu, Bernstein, and Collins) is that "class and social status have little meaning except insofar as they shape interaction and are reproduced face to face" (DiMaggio, 2012, p. 15). From this viewpoint, social

interactions are a key mechanism of class distinctions. Thus, it is critical to investigate how micro-level behaviors reify class structures within organizations (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Drawing on Bourdieu's work, DiMaggio (2012) summarizes the way social class may impact cross-class interactions: interaction lines may be undermined to the extent that there is a gap between the two individuals in cultural capital, linguistic capital, bodily hexis, or more generally, habitus. Put simply, habitus is particularly effective at drawing out class distinctions during interpersonal interactions (Swartz, 1997).

Drawing on Bourdieu's work, Gray and Kish-Gephart (2013) theorize how members of different social classes interact in the workplace to enact social class distinctions through class work. Class work may be defined formally as the "interpretive processes and interaction rituals [Goffman, 1967] that organizational members individually and collectively take to manage cross-class encounters" (p. 671). The authors outline how cross-class encounters generate anxiety which, in turn, leads to identity threat. Class work is a remedy to anxiety or a preventive measure to avoid cross-class encounters from the start. Class work that occurs at an intrapersonal level (e.g., minimizing class differences or denigrating other classes) or interpersonal level (e.g., distancing oneself or withdrawal) is institutionalized as collective class work via organizational practices and norms. In turn, collective class work operates as a tool of normative control and subjectification, requiring additional individual-level class work (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Overall, their theory of class work examines how micro-level interactions perpetuate social class inequality within organizations. In other words, class work theory points to how "interpersonal encounters between people from different sectors of society (for example, races, genders, social classes) play a powerful role in social stratification and inequality in society" (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012, p. 131). To this point, scholars have mainly emphasized cross-class interactions and how

differences in social class standing between two individuals reify class distinctions. Alternatively, and as will be done in this study, one could also consider same-class interactions and the mechanisms that help explain why these exchanges are more amiable (DiMaggio, 2012).

Class Dynamics During Interpersonal Interactions

Awareness of one's own and others' social class may occur at varying levels of consciousness (Fiske & Markus, 2012). That is, class differences may be conscious and thus elicit deliberate individual responses (e.g., conscious stereotypes or purposeful discrimination) and class action (e.g., organizing unions or driving political movements). Alternatively, awareness of class differences may be subconscious and trigger automatic responses (e.g., automatic stereotypes or stigma) (Fiske et al., 2002; Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). The focus of this study is the latter, where social class differences are implicit, and individuals' responses to their own and others' social class are automatic. In other words, this study focuses on social class dynamics that occur "almost entirely submerged beneath the surface of the encounter, obscuring their central importance for the unequal outcomes that people of different classes receive from their social encounters in gateway institutions" (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012, p. 147). While social class is salient, meaning that class differences are in play, they may not be explicitly thought about or stated aloud. In this sense, class salient encounters occur beneath the surface of conscious awareness and impact same- and cross-class interactions implicitly.

This clarification is particularly relevant because of scholarly conversations around class consciousness. Marx (1978) argued that a social class had to be conscious of its own needs and aware of itself as an actor to act upon those interests. This perspective emphasizes class consciousness as occurring within a group that shares interests because of their martial position. In contrast, scholars have argued that class consciousness may also occur (and be measured) at

an individual level (Wright, 1985) and, further, that individuals do not have to be consciously aware of social class for it to manifest as a meaningful category of distinction and action. This set of scholars argues that there are many ways to be "aware" of social class and several ways to communicate social class, many of which are implicit or expressed through cultural markers (Fantasia, 1995). For instance, social class can be communicated through statements such as "she comes from a good family," through identifying a parent's educational background or occupation, through the display of cultural artifacts like books or art, or through bodily actions such as the knowledge which fork or knife to use at a formal dinner (Bell, 2004). Bourdieu (1984) adopts a similar view that signals of social class can function "below the level of consciousness and discourse" (p. 268). In her work, Reay (2005) also suggests that class consciousness exists beneath the surface:

> "Yet class consciousness as articulated in earlier sociological theory has always been problematic, seen narrowly in terms of a politicized understanding of class location (Marshall, 1997; Wright, 1979). Social class was abandoned as a category at precisely the point at which the working classes were seen to have sold out to the Right and therefore could no longer be said to have a class consciousness. As a result the emotional experience of being classed has never been satisfactorily addressed. Theories of class consciousness, which always focused on the working classes and apparently support working-class experience, could be said in retrospect to have failed to examine it at all. In contrast, I want to argue for a different kind of class consciousness, which, while often unrecognized, still pervades our inner worlds and outer practices; to recognize that class is always lived on both a conscious and unconscious level. My contention is that beneath socio-economic categorization, underneath class practices, lies a psychic economy of class that has been largely invisible in academic accounts and commonsense understandings." (p. 912)

Research from management and social psychology has contributed to the conversation about social class saliency, pointing to how social class distinctions (at times, without one's awareness) operate to maintain class distinctions. On the one hand, social class has been categorized as an "invisible identity" because it is not as easily distinguishable as gender or race (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012). From a research standpoint, at least, social class has been "invisible" in the sense

that it is less studied than gender or race in organizations (Bapuji, Ertug, & Shaw, 2020), while it has been evidenced to have, in some instances, more impact than other social categories of difference (Lareau, 2002). On the other hand, while social class may be harder to discern than gender or race visually, research has evidenced that social class signals can be perceived quickly and accurately during interactions (Becker et al., 2017; Bjornsdottir & Rule, 2017). Signs of social class include body cues (e.g., physical appearance, kinesic behavior), voice cues (e.g., linguistic style, vocabulary), or cultural cues (e.g., choice of leisure activities, preferences) (Kraus et al., 2017). For example, observers accurately distinguished participants' SES status from viewing a sixty-second video clip—correctly inferring the participant's family income, maternal education, and subjective SES (Kraus & Keltner, 2009).

Once social class signals are perceived (consciously or not), they may be used in several ways to sort individuals into social class categories, reinforcing group boundaries (Kraus et al., 2017). First, class signals reinforce group boundaries through stereotypes or "widely shared, socially sanctioned beliefs" about class groups (Bullock & Lott, 2010, p. 410). For example, studies indicate that the rich are viewed as high in competence but low in warmth, whereas the poor are seen as low in both competence and warmth (Durante et al., 2017; Fiske et al., 2002). Second, social class signals may also incite status hierarchies. Status beliefs may be defined as "widely shared cultural beliefs that people in one social group [for example, the middle class, whites, men] are more respected and diffusely more competent, especially at the things that matter in society" (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012, p. 136). Status hierarchies between class groups highlight the relative disadvantage and privilege of the parties. In organizations, encounters where status hierarchies are salient typically occur across occupational groups or job levels. Finally, social class signals may elicit microaggressions or classist attitudes—further augmenting

group boundaries. For example, using classist language (e.g., calling someone "white trash") or condescending language (e.g., complimenting someone from a lower social class on their common sense) are examples of microaggressions, a form of discrimination using indirect or nuanced means (Sue, 2010). As one example, classist attitudes include dehumanizing (i.e., scornful social judgments that discount individuals) the poor (Harris et al., 2008). Overall, social class is a significant factor that draws out-group distinctions during interpersonal interactions.

Organizational Selection as Field

Returning to Bourdieu's theorizing around fields, the following section considers how organizational selection acts as a site for the struggle for power between social class groups. This contestation occurs in three ways: (a) organizational selection acts as a site for the struggle over what forms of capital are most valuable; (b) individuals fill dominate and subordinate positions in selection processes based off of their capital holdings and, as newcomers enter the field, they struggle for the dominant position and opportunity to determine what forms of capital are valuable; and (c) individuals agree that organizational selection is worth preserving, even if there is struggle for control of power. The first section, *Organizational Selection as a Lever of Inequality*, underscores how workplaces, specifically employment interviews, are a context where certain forms of capital are more valuable than others and, further, how dominant groups control these processes. Next, the *Decision Making during Organizational Selection* section outlines literature focused on the decision-making processes of employers, who fill dominant positions in selection processes and specifically during employment interviews. The section first reviews several cognitive mechanisms that help explain employers' selection decisions. Next, the section introduces affect as a potentially important explanatory mechanism in selection decisions.

Organizational Selection as a Lever of Inequality

The outcomes of class salient interactions are particularly consequential when they occur in gateway institutions, defined as "public organizations such as education, workplace, and health institutions that mediate access to valued life outcomes by which we commonly judge inequality" (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012, p. 132). Because workplaces provide access to valuable outcomes, such as income, health benefits, retirement savings, and social connections, they are considered a gateway context that can either perpetuate or disrupt inequality (Stephens et al., 2014). However, workplaces are not class neutral. Following Bourdieu (1984), the context (or field) that class interactions occur within gives rise to what forms of capital are valuable, the rules for interaction, the predominant values accepted, and fodder for in-group attitudes and knowledge gaps. Broadly within the U.S., middle- and upper-class values of independence, freedom from constraint, achievement striving, and personal agency represent the "correct" or normatively appropriate way of thinking, feeling, and acting (Fiske and Markus, 2012; Stephens et al., 2014). These values have been imbued into organizations. Further, organizations demand middle- and upper-class forms of capital to be successful and are governed by the dominant classes' idea of what it means to be a "good" employee or colleague (Stephens et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the role of organizations in sustaining inequality is often overlooked:

> Organizations, and the people who work within them, remain largely invisible; when organizations are considered, they are mostly viewed as rational entities comprising neutral structures and practices. This is particularly problematic when considering inequality because organizations not only play a central role in all our lives but also demarcate employment and other opportunities that in turn define social and economic status for the vast majority of people. (Amis et al., 2020, p. 195)

Scholars have pointed to five specific organizational practices through which inequality may be reified: hiring, role allocation, promotion, compensation, and structuring (Amis et al., 2020). The first of these practices, hiring, is the focus of this study.

Organizations' hiring practices are one lever that can enable or constrain upward mobility: "hiring practices serve as gatekeeping mechanism that facilitate career opportunities for some while blocking entry for others" (Amis et al., 2020, p. 198). The literature points to three mechanisms through which hiring may reproduce inequality: evaluating candidates based on cultural similarities, ineffective recruitment tools, and reliance on informal networks (Amis et al., 2020). Each of these mechanisms may be classified as "demand-side factors," or employers' recruitment and selection processes. When it comes to management research, however, most studies focus on the supply side of hiring or conflate demand-side and supply-side processes (Bills et al., 2017). That is, research tends to focus on the job seeker as central, focusing on the impact of their characteristics, attitudes, or decision-making in obtaining employment. This pattern is true of social class research regarding selection; scholars tend to focus on individuals' class-based behaviors or others' perceptions of job seekers' social class status (e.g., Belmi et al., 2019; Sharps & Anderson, 2021).

In contrast to solely focusing on the job seeker, focusing on employers as the central agents can offer additional insight into the microfoundations of inequality within labor markets. Employers wield tremendous influence—they oversee who gains employment, who accesses specific organizational roles, and how much employees are compensated (Rivera, 2020). Thus, this study incorporates the role of organizational gatekeepers, formally defined as those in "positions of power who shape careers by selecting, promoting, and supporting organizational members" (Vinkenburg, 2017, p. 219). Specifically, this study considers the effect of same- and

cross-class interactions on employers' decision-making processes, such that employers are framed as agentic characters in selection outcomes.

Employment Interviews

Interviews continue to be one of the most popular methods used during selection (Levashina et al., 2014; Macan, 2009), to the point that some argue, "it is rare, even unthinkable, for someone to be hired without some type of interview" (Huffcutt & Culbertson, 2010, p. 185). Moreover, some scholars contend that interviews are the most critical factor influencing hiring outcomes (Dipboye, 1992). Formally defined, employment interviews are considered "a personally interactive process of one or more people asking questions orally to another person and evaluating the answers for the purpose of determining the qualifications of that person in order to make employment decisions." (Levashina et al., 2014, p. 243). Therefore, interviews require interpersonal interaction that is either synchronous (e.g., when employers and job applicants are face-to-face) or asynchronous (e.g., when interviews are recorded and watched later by an employer). They can occur at any point during selection—from the early screening of candidates up until the final step in decision-making—and are the preferred method of assessment by organizational decision-makers (Lievens et al., 2005; Topor et al., 2007). Applicants consider interviews as fair as other selection components (Hausknecht, Day, & Thomas, 2004), expect them (Lievens et al., 2003), and consider them integral to a successful job search (Saks, 2006).

Interviews are used to assess various applicant characteristics, including knowledge, ability, and personality, among others (Adkins et al., 1994; Cable & Judge, 1997; Huffcutt et al., 1996; Roth et al., 2005; Salgado & Moscoso, 2002). Interviews can be categorized as typically experience-based or situational. In the former, interviews focus on gaining information about

applicants' qualifications, such as education or relevant work experience. In the latter, interviewers ask job candidates to respond to hypothetical situations pertinent to the job they are applying for (McCarthy et al., 2010). Compared to other selection methods (e.g., cognitive ability tests or personality assessments), interviews have lower criterion-related validity (Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). However, research provides evidence that imposing structure (i.e., standardization of interview questions and response scoring) improves the psychometric properties of interviews, offering relatively high levels of validity (Levashina et al., 2014; Macan, 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010).

In 1997, Campion and colleagues proposed a typology of interview structures with two components: content and evaluation. Under the content component, there are seven dimensions: (a) grounding questions on a job analysis; (b) asking the identical questions of each job candidate; (c) limiting probing questions; (d) improving question types; (e) using lengthier interviews or more questions; (f) controlling ancillary information; and (g) not permitting questions from job candidate until after the interview. Under the evaluation component, there are eight dimensions: (a) rating each response or using several scales; (b) using anchored scales; (c) taking notes on the interview; (d) using multiple evaluators; (e) using the same evaluator(s) across all job candidates; (f) withholding from discussion between interviews; (g) providing training for evaluators; and (h) using statistical prediction. While imposing structure on interviews may improve psychometric accuracy, research advances the notion that employment interviews' utility lies in the interpersonal interactions inherent in the method (Barrick, Swider, & Stewart, 2010; Swider, Barrick, & Harris, 2016).

Decision Making during Organizational Selection

Because early decision making models were based on economic theory, decisions were historically portrayed as rational within organizational literature. That is, individuals were assumed to evaluate the consequences of a decision and prioritize the action that maximized its utility (Loewenstein & Lerner, 2003)—as such, decision making was presumed to be entirely efficient. In the 1960s, rational decision-making theories began to be critiqued, and Herbert Simon presented the concept of bounded rationality, which introduced cognitive and situational constraints to decision-making models (Lerner et al., 2015). Specifically, bounded rationality advanced the idea that decision making may deviate from entirely rational processing because human beings have limits, including cognitive capacity, motivation, and contextual constraints. Cognitive influences are related to individuals' mental processes, including reason-based decision making or using heuristics such as stereotypes (Peters et al., 2006).

Despite a step away from a purely rational decision-making model with the introduction of bounded rationality, it was not until the early 2000s that research on affect and emotion in decision making took off (Lerner et al., 2015). This growth coincided with the "affective revolution" in organizational studies, wherein scholars and practitioners began to consider employee affect as a meaningful phenomenon in the workplace (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Scholarship related to affect in decision making within organizational sciences has primarily focused on the influence of positive and negative affect (Isen & Labroo, 2003), moods (George & Dane, 2016), the role of regret (Connolly & Zeelenberg, 2002), or the affective consequences of decision making (Wells & Iyengar, 2005). Discrete emotions, however, have received less attention or, in other words, within management sciences, "there has been less examination of

the influence of discrete emotions on decision-making" (Barsade & Gibson, 2007, p. 46; some exceptions include Andrade & Ariely, 2009; Fessler et al., 2004, Wiltermuth & Tiedens, 2011).

Within selection literature specifically, employers are often portrayed as rational decision-makers "who base decisions on systematic, even if flawed, cognitive calculations of worker skill and workforce productivity" (Rivera, 2020, p. 215). The lack of organizational scholarship focused on affective mechanisms in selection is reinforced by the paucity of research that considers employers' decision-making processes—scholarship instead focuses on the supply side of hiring and implicitly portrays employers as rational decision makers (Bills et al., 2017). As noted in an early review of employment interviews: "as it stands, the studies that have been conducted provide only a modest amount of insight into the interviewer's decision-making process" (Posthuma et al., 2002, p. 16). When employers are considered, research tends to focus on cognitive explanations such as stereotypes and expectancies or mental processes like the similarity-attraction paradigm (Posthuma et al., 2002), a topic turned to now.

Employment Interview Decisions – Cognitive Mechanisms

The following section reviews the cognitive explanations for hiring decisions most often included in selection research. These mechanisms are important to consider as they underscore the notion that employers are not entirely rational. Further, they point to the need to give empirical attention to other likely decision-making mechanisms (i.e., affect).

Similarity-Attraction. Drawing from the similarity-attraction paradigm (Bryne, 1971), scholars have advanced the idea that perceived similarity between an interviewer and interviewee impacts selection decisions. Overall, this model suggests that similarity (based on attitudes, demographic traits, or personality) between an interviewer and interviewee leads to perceived similarity, which, in turn, positively influences the interviewer's assessments of the interviewee

(Graves & Powell, 1995). Formally defined, perceived similarity may be considered "the overall perception that the interviewer has regarding the interviewer's resemblance with the applicant on a number of characteristics including demographics, human capital, and attitudinal features" (Garcia et al., 2008, p. 174). Broadly speaking, a similarity effect has been observed across populations and concerning several personality traits, attitudes, pastimes, leisure activities, and values (Montoya & Horton, 2012). A meta-analysis of the similarity effect that included over three hundred studies observed that similarity between two parties has a positive and moderately sized influence on attraction (Montoya et al., 2008). A second meta-analysis demonstrated that the extent to which two individuals were similar positively moderated the direct effect of similarity on attraction (Montoya & Horton, 2012). Related to hiring, researchers have proposed that interviewer-applicant similarity relates to an increased likelihood of hiring recommendations, while empirical results have been mixed (Graves & Powell, 1995; Howard & Ferris, 1996; Lin, Dobbins, & Farh, 1992; Prewett-Livingston et al., 1996). Overall, it appears that demographic similarity (e.g., gender or race) between an interviewer and interviewee yields small but inconsistent effects, while attitude similarities are more influential on the ratings of applicants (Posthuma et al., 2002).

The similarity-attraction principle is pertinent to one of the key theories of human capital, the attraction-similarity-attrition (ASA) model (Schneider, 1987). According to this model, it is through attracting prospective employees, selecting individuals, and retaining employees that organizations move towards homogeneity, specifically similarity related to knowledge, skills, abilities, and other competencies (KSAOs). In its earliest conception, the factors most relevant to ASA included personality, values, and attitudes—employers would select employees based on similarities in these areas. While not explicitly focused on social categories of difference, such as

social class, the ASA model highlights how selection choices may engender sameness in the workplace. A second theory, Kanter's (1977) theory of homosocial reproduction, specifically addresses the role of demographic similarities in creating similarity in the workplace. Kanter argued that sponsorship is a crucial mechanism in career outcomes, and because people tend to establish relationships with those like them, organizations tend to select and promote employees that share demographic similarities with those who are in management or supervisor positions, those who are in a position of power (Baldi, & McBrier, 1997; Nkomo & Cox, 1990). The ASA model and the theory of homosocial reproduction highlight how similarity between an interviewer and interviewee may drive outcomes at an organizational level.

Perceptions of Fit. Selection interviews are considered critical for assessing person-organization (PO) fit (Barrick & Parks-Leduc, 2019) or formally defined as "the compatibility between a person and an organization (e.g., its values and culture)" (Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011, p. 203; Kristoff, 1996). Indeed, employers often note that finding and selecting a job candidate who "fits" the organization is a key selection goal. Past research has demonstrated that perceptions of PO fit are separate from perceptions of general employability and that decision-makers assess PO fit according to the organizational, not personal, attributes (Rynes & Gearhart, 1990). Other research has offered conflicting evidence—interviewers have a similar-to-me bias when assessing interviewees for PO fit (Adkins et al., 1994). One study found that employers can accurately assess application-organization value congruence and that these subjective assessments of PO fit had a comparatively large effect on hiring recommendations and actual job offers relative to other individual characteristics (Cable & Judge, 1997).

Person-Job (PJ) fit also influences selection decisions. PJ fit is considered "the match between job requirements (i.e., KSAs) and applicant qualifications, or the match between the

needs of the applicant and the supplies from the job" (Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011). Past research has evidenced that subjective valuations of PJ fit related more strongly to hiring recommendations than an interviewee's objective qualifications (Kinicki et al., 1990). One study found that recruiters' assessments of PO fit and PJ fit explained unique variance in hiring recommendations (Kristof-Brown, 2000). While applicants' KSAOs are used to assess PJ fit, the applicant's personality and values are used more frequently to evaluate PO fit. Seen as a whole, research suggests that employers use assessments of both PO fit and PJ fit to assess job candidates, while the relative weightings of these two components may vary (Chuang & Sackett, 2005; Nolan et al., 2016; Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011; Van Vianen, 2018).

Stereotypes. Interviewers' expectations or stereotypes about interviewees may influence their judgments of employability and hiring recommendations (Posthuma et al., 2002; Schmitt, 1976). Formally defined, stereotypes are "category-based traits or attributes that are often applied to a group of people as a result of accepted beliefs about members of the group" (Koch et al., 2015, p. 129). Stereotypes, or heuristics more generally, are used by individuals to make more efficient judgments (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). More explicitly, stereotypes operate as a mental tool in decision-making that overlooks information to make a more efficient, rapid, or accurate decision than complex models of decision-making allow (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2001). Selection research has pointed to the use of stereotypes related to gender (Booth & Leigh, 2010; Carlsson, 2011; Chan & Wang, 2018; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Van Vianen & Willemsen, 1992) and race (Kacmar, Wayne, & Ratcliff, 1994) as influential in hiring decisions. For example, a recent meta-analysis of gender stereotypes in employment decision-making revealed that men were preferred for male-dominated jobs and that male raters demonstrated greater role-congruity bias than female raters, among other findings (Koch et al., 2015). While not considered in a

selection setting, research has found that social class categories consistently elicit stereotypes, such that members of the lower social class are typically stereotyped as less competent but warmer than members of the upper class (Durante & Fiske, 2017; Durante et al., 2017).

Employment Interview Decisions – Affective Mechanisms

Management sciences' emphasis on cognitive explanations for organizational behavior "can lead to theory and research that portrays organization members as cognitive stick figures whose behavior is unaffected by emotions" (Mowday & Sutton, 1993, p. 197; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Instead, it may be that interviewers' motivations are less rational and less cognitive—and more influential—than what is currently represented in literature. Indeed, work in psychology and behavioral economics underscore the importance of emotion in decision-making: "emotion does not simply make us feel good after we have made a decision; it serves as a fundamental basis by which we compare, evaluate, and select among alternatives in nearly all domains of social life" (Rivera, 2012, p. 223; Keltner & Lerner, 2010; Lerner et al., 2015). A growing number of researchers argue that emotions are the primary driver of most important decisions (Lerner et al., 2015). In fact, in a review of emotions and decision-making, Lerner and colleagues (2015) conclude that "emotions powerfully, predictably, and pervasively influence decision making" (p. 802).

An important clarification is what the term "affect" means, as it carries several connotations in organizational research. For this study, the term "affect" is an umbrella term that includes dispositional affect, moods, and discrete emotions. Dispositional affect has been typically studied as positive and negative affectivity (Staw et al., 1986; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and refers to individuals' relatively stable feeling states. Next, mood refers to state affect that does not have a known cause and is less intense and more prolonged in duration than

discrete emotions (Grandey, 2008; Russell & Barrett 1999). Finally, discrete emotions (which are referred to simply as "emotions" in this study) are a transient feeling state with an identified cause or target (Grandey, 2008). More explicitly, emotions tend to involve some or all the following elements: subjective feelings, psychological response, motor expression, action tendency, and evaluation or appraisal (Lempert & Phelps, 2016). Related to decision-making, affective processes include integral emotions or incidental affect. Integral emotions arise from the decision at hand. In contrast, incidental affect (including mood) arises from a situation that is not relevant to the decision yet is influential (Lerner et al., 2015). The function of integral emotions is to highlight the significance of a decision with the aim of guiding adaptive behavior (Frijda, 2007). Incidental emotions, in contrast, influence decision-making indirectly—stress, mood, affective priming, or one's dispositional affect change the baseline affective state, thus influencing decisions by implication (Lempert & Phelps, 2016).

Notably, in reviewing literature related to affect in selection processes, there is relatively less literature focused on employers' affect as compared to interviewees' affect, while both topics were uncommon. Considering the scarcity of research on affect in selection decisions alongside emerging research that points to affect as an influential force in decision making, it is important to account for what we do (and do not) know about the role of affect in employers' decision making. Accordingly, research on four topics related to interviewers, affect, and selection are outlined below: liking, trait affect, mood, and excitement.

Liking. Research has suggested that one outcome of shared similarities between an interviewer-interviewee is liking, or a low-arousal and generalized positive feeling towards another person (Byrne, 1971; Fox & Spector, 2000). Liking a job candidate means the employer feels positive affect toward them and often demonstrates affiliative behavior in response (Garcia

et al., 2008). Early research demonstrated that interviewers tend to like and prefer to hire applicants similar to themselves (Keenan, 1977). More recent research has supported the tie between liking and selection outcomes. When interviewees like job applicants, they tend to evaluate them more positively (Garcia et al., 2008; Howard & Ferris, 1996; Spector & Fox, 2000). Broadly, research points to how liking (disliking) is tied to more positive (negative) evaluations of workers (Cardy & Dobbins, 1986; Sutton et al., 2013)

Trait Affect. Individuals tend to experience certain kinds of dispositional affect (Watson et al., 1988). In organizational sciences, researchers typically consider dispositional affect by distinguishing between high and low levels of positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) and assessing these as a source of individual differences (Watson & Clark, 1984). Fox and Spector's (2000) study provides evidence that positive trait affect relates positively to assessments of similarity and liking, and that negative trait affect relates negatively to assessments of similarity. In turn, similarity and liking relate positively to the decision to hire a candidate, helping to explain the tie between positive and negative affect and hiring decisions. Outside of selection research, positive affect and negative affect have been shown to influence decision-making, wherein positive affect leads to better decision-making than negative affect (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005; Seo & Barrett, 2007; Staw & Barsade, 1993). Researchers suggest this is because a positive disposition allows the decision-maker to process information relevant to the situation at hand (Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

Mood. Related to mood, one study conducted a laboratory study to investigate how changes in undergraduate students' moods (positive or negative) related to assessments of applicants after mock interviews (Baron, 1993; c.f., Isen & Baron, 1991). The results showed that when the applicant's qualifications were ambiguous, interviewers with more positive moods

rated the applicant higher than interviewers in a negative mood. When an applicant appeared unqualified, interviewers in a positive mood rated the applicant significantly lower than interviewers in a negative mood. This study offers initial evidence that an employer's mood influence selection outcomes.

Excitement.[2] In a qualitative study of EPS firms in sociology, Rivera (2015b) highlights excitement as a key emotional mechanism explaining hiring decisions. Broadly, this study found that excitement, admiration/deference, and liking were the three most prevalent emotions reported by evaluators, with excitement prevailing as most important. Excitement is a "high-arousal, forward-looking state in which one anticipates receiving future social or material rewards," which contrasts liking insofar that liking is a lower-arousal state and involves more generalized feelings (Rivera, 2015b, p. 1356). Within the study, Rivera underscores how excitement contributes to emotional energy. That is, evaluators developed expectations around how emotionally rewarding an interview would be and energy impressions, largely through excitement, based on shared extracurricular interests and conversation (Rivera, 2015b). Within this qualitative probe, most interviewer-interviewee pairs included whites evaluating whites and males evaluating males; thus, Rivera does not draw a direct line between emotional responses and prejudicial decision-making. However, she notes that "incorporating emotional and interpersonal factors can help scholars more accurately model reality from the perspective of employers and better understand the mechanisms underlying the hiring decisions they make"

[2] For the purposes of this study, I use the term "enthusiasm" instead of the term "excitement" because the former term is more commonly used in psychology (Barrett, 1998; Coan & Gottman, 2007; Keltner & Lerner, 2010) and management sciences (Monnot & Beehr, 2014; Frijda et al., 1985). Likewise, the experience of enthusiasm is positively-valanced (Keltner & Lerner, 2010), while excitement has been argued to exist in both positively- and negatively-valenced states (Ekman, 1992). The definition used in Rivera's work closely resembles that of state expressions of enthusiasm—both are high-arousal, forward-looking states (Keltner & Lerner, 2010). Rivera conceptualizes excitement as a generally positively-valenced emotion throughout her work (Rivera, 2012, 2015ab), while this is not how it is always described in psychology literature (Ekman, 1992). It is also noteworthy that the two terms are often used interchangeably or when defining one another (Barrett, 1998; Ekman, 1992).

(Rivera, 2012, p. 1380). More specifically, she points to the likelihood that shared extracurricular or leisure activities (related to cultural capital) generate excitement and thus move interviewers to assess candidates with similar backgrounds as generally more hireable.

Overall, it is important to clarify that this study's aim is not to communicate emotions are the only important factor in hiring decisions or to propose a competing hiring theory. Instead, to better understand this important phenomenon, I highlight emotions while also acknowledging they work in conjunction with cognitive mechanisms. Ultimately, I aim to underscore how emotions play a role in the struggle for power underlying organizational selection or, in other words, argue that "emotions and psychic responses to class and class inequalities contribute powerfully to the makings of class" (Reay, 2005, p. 912). Put simply, emotions also contribute to the labor market disadvantage that individuals in the lower social class face.

As a foundation for this inquiry, the following section reviews literature about the influence of social class on the labor market, including the impact of social class on individuals' attitudes and expectations for work, their job-seeking strategies, their entrance into certain occupations, and differences in wages once employment has been secured. Next, the section summarizes literature that explicitly addresses the types of capital employers prefer or filter for during selection. Finally, this section introduces evidence from sociology and management sciences that individuals from the lower social class experience a disadvantage relative to those in higher social classes during employment interviews. This section offers evidence that social class plays a decisive role in the experience of individuals seeking to secure employment and points to the need to investigate further the role of class salient interactions during selection processes.

Social Class and the Labor Market

From early childhood, social class impacts people's job attainment (Kish-Gephart et al., 2022). Vocational scholars have stated that "if one were permitted only a single variable with which to predict an individual's occupational status, it surely would be the SES [socioeconomic status] of that individual's family of orientation [childhood family]" (Schulenberg et al., 1984, p. 130). First, social class relates to individuals' attitudes towards and expectations for work. Indeed, early family socialization influences everything from career self-efficacy (Thompson & Subich, 2006, p. 291) and the value or meaning attached to work (Streib, 2015) to preparedness for transitioning into the workplace (Blustein et al., 2002). Growing up in different households provides individuals with different ideas of what is possible based on a family's capital holdings (e.g., income that affords the achievement of educational qualifications, access to role models who attended college or obtained certain job roles) and socialization to certain class-specific work values (e.g., self-direction versus conformity) (Schulenberg et al., 1984).

Second, social class impacts how individuals search for work. In one study, Fang and Saks (2020) found evidence that the positive tie between job search intensity (i.e., the frequency of engaging in job search activities) and job search success depended on individuals' social class background, wherein differences in job search strategies helped to explain the moderating influence of social class. Social class related negatively to haphazard job search strategies (i.e., passively gathering information and using a more experimental approach), which made the tie between job search intensity and job search success weaker for those from the working class. However, an increase in psychological capital (i.e., "a higher order construct consisting of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism") helped move members of the working class away from using haphazard strategies (Fang & Saks, 2020, p. 1). In a related study, DeOrtentiis and colleagues (2021) found that social class standing was positively related to job-search self-efficacy and

perceived social support and negatively related to perceived financial hardship. However, only job search self-efficacy mediated the relationship between social class and job search intensity, wherein social class positively influenced job search self-efficacy, which drove job search intensity. Together these studies underscore the multifaceted role that social class plays in searching for work.

Third, social class relates to individuals' entry into specific occupations. For example, individuals from the lower social class were more likely to select a career in accounting because they preferred a low-risk professional that required minimal educational investment (Leiby & Madsen, 2017). As another illustration, members of the lower class were more likely to engage in entrepreneurship through self-employment relative to their middle-class counterparts, and members of the upper social class were more likely to engage in entrepreneurship through business ownership compared to the middle class (Su et al., 2021). Overall, individuals from upper social class backgrounds tend to work in occupations characterized by greater autonomy (e.g., financial bankers, medical scientists), whereas individuals from lower social class backgrounds, on average, pursue work in occupations described as more prosocial (e.g., nursing, social work) (Fang & Tilcsik, 2022).

At a broad level, research has pointed to the presence of a social class wage gap, or the difference in earnings between individuals from lower-class versus upper-class backgrounds (Fang & Tilcsik, 2022). Even after controlling for a myriad of factors—including educational background and occupational prestige—research shows that those who grow up in lower-class contexts earn less on average than those who grow up in upper-class contexts (Bartik & Hershbein, 2018; Friedman & Laurison, 2019). Further, when individuals from working-class backgrounds enter high-status occupations, they still earn 17% less than those from upper-class

backgrounds (Laurison & Friedman, 2016). Individuals may be attracted to occupations where their skills are valued (supply-side factors) while, at the same time, employers hire those with the most relevant skills (demand-side factors). Returning to the above research, one supply-side explanation for the class wage gap is that individuals from lower and upper social classes seek work in more autonomous or prosocial occupations, respectively, and therefore they are compensated differently. More autonomous occupations tend to be better paid than prosocial occupations; thus, occupational sorting contributes to the social class wage gap (Fang & Tilcsik, 2022). In contrast to supply-side factors, such as job seekers' behaviors or preferences, this study focuses primarily on demand-side factors or employers' role in selection.

Demand-Side Factors

One explanation for demand-side differences is that the norms and policies within certain firms or industries require or prefer certain types of capital that advantage certain social class groups. For example, members of the middle class had greater access to economic and social capital valued by the British film industry compared to their working-class counterparts. More explicitly, those in the middle class could accept short-term low or unpaid positions and had personal contacts in the industry that facilitated entrance into the field (Grugulis & Styanova, 2012). In another study, students from working-class backgrounds seeking a position in a top-five accounting firm lacked the cultural capital (and associated qualifications) that upper-class students had (e.g., summer work experience, leadership, or responsibility), disadvantaging them in securing a position (Jacobs, 2003)—likewise, lacking elite educational credentials and cultural capital disadvantaged job seekers from the lower social class. Companies sought employees with educational qualifications and experiences to communicate an elite image to clients (Ashley & Empson, 2013, c.f., McLeod et al., 2009). As an example of intersectional research, higher-class

men received more callbacks from resumes sent to U.S. law firms than both higher-class women and lower-class individuals. Highlighting the importance of considering the intersection of social class and gender, women from higher-class backgrounds were thought by employers to be less committed to their careers, offsetting any class benefits they may receive in hiring (Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016).

Focusing on the interpersonal dynamics behind selection decisions, Rivera (2015a), a sociologist, undertook a qualitative empirical investigation of EPS firms, including law firms, consulting firms, and investment banks. After conducting over 120 semi-structured interviews and completing participant observation over nine months, she determined that employers' decisions about who is talented are inextricably linked to job seekers' social class. As a foundation for her arguments, Rivera relies on Bourdieu's theorizing, outlining how elite employers define and evaluate merit according to upper-class standards of capital holdings. In this sense, merit is not value-neutral but reflects the values and qualities of those at the top of the social hierarchy—in this case, those who control the hiring process.

Specifically, Rivera's inquiry revealed that hiring decisions were based on elite forms of cultural capital (e.g., educational qualifications, certain extracurricular activities, or leisure pastimes). As she states, "at each state of the hiring process—from the decision about where to post job advertisements and hold recruitment events to the final selections made by hiring committees— employers use an array of sorting criteria ('screens') and ways of measuring candidates' potential ('evaluation metrics') that are highly correlated" with social class (Rivera, 2015a, p. 2). Underscored in this statement is the interpersonal nature of hiring—that is, decision-makers' active role in evaluating the merit of and selecting specific candidates. In a qualitative follow-up study, Rivera (2015a) found that those few members of the lower social

class that gained employment in EPS firms had either been able to mimic the elite cultural capital required during selection or were paired with an interviewer who acted as a sponsor, championing them in the selection process. Still, this research underscores how interpersonal dynamics are central to selection processes and the enormous barriers facing those from the lower social class seeking entry into elite firms.

Social class and Employment Interviews

Rivera's (2015a) qualitative probe revealed several themes specific to employment interviews in elite firms. First, interviewers sought to bring in candidates their firm desired; however, what was considered "desirable" was subject to the interviewers' interpretation and measurement. As interviewers determined what constituted merit and whether interviewees had it, they relied on their classed upbringings as a measuring stick. As opposed to focusing on a fit between the interviewee and organizational values, interviewers tended to focus on similarities in play styles or "how applicants preferred to conduct themselves outside the office—rather than in their work styles or job skills" (Rivera, 2015a, p. 136). That is, employers looked for similarities in upper-class markers of cultural capital.

Second, interviewers looked to applicants' life narratives as a measure of merit, focusing specifically on the ambition or drive a candidate had displayed in the past and their current interest in working with their firm. As interviewers assessed interviewees' personal narratives, they judged the interviewees' "polish" (e.g., confidence, ease of communicating, or conversational patterns) (Rivera, 2015a, p. 149), a function of distinct forms of habitus (Swartz, 1999). One outcome of a compelling narrative was that the interviewee would feel strong and positive emotions (e.g., awe, inspiration, or excitement) and reward the interviewee. Alternatively, if a story were assessed as uncompelling, the interviewee would be penalized.

Finally, interviewers evaluated interviewees based more on the interpersonal qualities demonstrated in conversation than on the interviewee's cognitive and technical skills. In the case of elite firms, interviewees typically had "made up their mind" by the time they began asking questions that got at intelligence or skill, relying on the interpersonal exchanges made during icebreaker questions focused on non-work-related activities or storytelling. Overall, Rivera's inquiry into the role of social class in selection, specifically her work focused on employment interviews, builds on research in management sciences that uses human capital to explain why occupational sorting occurs. However, Rivera's work extends conversations around human capital to consider interpersonal dynamics, specifically, the forms of capital associated with life in different social class groups.

To my knowledge, two studies from management sciences have directly focused on the influence of social class on hiring outcomes in job interviews (Rivera's [2015a] work comes out of the field of sociology). Sharps & Anderson (2021) drew on cultural mismatch theory to consider the effect of social class on hiring decisions via disjoint agentic behavior (e.g., assertive or confident behavior) displayed in interviews. In the study, college students from an elite institution headed into the workforce were videotaped during interviews and later evaluated by two groups. First, observers (i.e., Mturk participants) evaluated students from the working class as less intelligent and socio-emotionally skilled, and second, employers evaluated students from the working class as less hireable, even though there was no difference in intelligence or socio-emotionally skills between students from working-class and upper-class backgrounds. The relationship between interviewees' social class background and observers' estimates of intelligence and socio-emotional skills was explained by increased disjoint agentic behavior. Students from upper-class backgrounds displayed more confident, assertive behavior during the

interviews. Next, a sample of managers recruited via Prolific watched a selection of mock interview videos, and the organization's culture was manipulated. Half of the participants were told they worked in cooperative and team-oriented organizations, and half were told they worked in competitive and individualistic corporations. The effect of disjoint agency behavior was stronger in competitive cultures than in cooperative cultures, demonstrating that it may be possible to mitigate class bias against job seekers from lower social class origins through a change in organizational culture.

Another paper looked at the effect of social class on overconfidence and its downstream effects, including assessments of hireability (Belmi et al., 2020). Specifically, the authors theorize and find that social class relates positively to overconfidence and that this tie is explained by the desire to achieve social rank. After establishing these relationships, the authors tested how participants' social class affected their performance in mock interviews in a laboratory. Indeed, higher-class individuals appeared more confident than lower-class individuals, and, in turn, they were perceived as more competent. Raters considered those whom they perceived as more competent to be more hireable, though there were no differences in a trivia test scores between those from a lower versus higher social class. This study and the one before (Sharps & Anderson, 2021) focus on the supply side of selection processes. That is, they consider how others perceive interviewees based on their social class or its associated behaviors and how these perceptions of individuals influence selection outcomes.

Summary

Overall, this literature review reveals several theoretical and empirical openings related to social class's influence on selection. First, while social class theory has pointed to the importance of interpersonal interactions in reproducing inequality and has suggested several cognitive and

behavioral responses to class salient encounters, less attention has been paid to the role of emotions in class salient interactions. Next, research from sociology, psychology, and management sciences underscored the relative disadvantage faced by those from the lower social class in the labor market. However, management research on social class and employment interviews has, to this point, focused on the role of interviewees (i.e., their class-based behaviors during interviews) instead of highlighting the role of employers as potential gatekeepers. Thus, I adopt a Bourdieusian approach to emphasize the role of employers in maintaining class distinctions and consider the effect of same- and cross-class interactions. Additionally, no research focused on class salient encounters that I am aware of accounts for the influence of social mobility, and thus I consider the role of employers' social mobility and ultimately speak to conversations around how "sticky" social class is and its effect on workplace behaviors.

This review has also revealed that emotions are often overlooked in decision-making models and, more specifically, within literature focused on selection decisions. Research has primarily framed employers as rational and has relied on cognitive mechanisms in explaining hiring decisions (and any accompanying bias). Thus, I build on this research by considering the role of emotions in hiring decisions, drawing on theories related to social class (e.g., class work, cultural matching) to suggest that cross-class interactions elicit anxiety, whereas same-class interactions elicit enthusiasm. In addition, I consider how compassion may be felt under certain circumstances. More broadly, I hope to provide evidence that emotions—triggered by class salient interactions—act as a powerful stratifying tool in selection, maintaining social class inequality in the labor market.

Chapter 3: Theory & Hypothesis

Adopting a Bourdieusian perspective, the following chapter develops theory and hypotheses to explain the effect of same- and cross-class interactions on selection decisions via employers' emotions. I begin by introducing intergroup emotion theory (IET) as a foundation for understanding why same- and cross-class interactions elicit emotions. Next, and to make predictions specific to social class groups, I integrate several class-specific theories to argue for the rise of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion during class salient interactions. Next, I draw from theory related to the action tendencies of emotions (Frijda, 1986) to propose how this specific set of emotions drives employers' decisions related to several selection outcomes: assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards. Finally, I discuss several moderating influences—including individual characteristics of the interviewer and aspects of the organizational role being applied for—that may impact the proposed relationships. Overall, this section outlines how same- and cross-class interactions during employment interviews may reify class distinctions, explicitly depicting the stratifying role of employers' emotions and outlining several boundary conditions.

Class Salient Interactions and Employers' Emotions

Presented by Weis & Cropanzano (1996), Affective Events Theory (AET) posits that individuals' affective reactions to workplace events drive their subsequent attitudes and behaviors. While focused on the way employees' moods and emotions shaped their attitudes, specifically job satisfaction, AET advanced the notion that work events can act as the proximal cause of affective reactions, which then influence behavior: "a different paradigm for studying affect at work" (Weiss & Beal, 2005, p. 1). The following section considers how interpersonal

interactions—specifically those involving ingroup and outgroup members—operate as one such proximal event, triggering emotional reactions that, in turn, influence behavior.

Intergroup Emotion Theory

IET focuses on the "emotions that people experience based on their memberships in social groups" (Smith & Mackie, 2015, p. 349). This perspective contrasts early emotion scholarship, wherein emotions were most often described by their nonsocial function. For example, early emotion scholarship tended to offer prototypical examples of emotion that are nonsocial, such as encountering a snake while hiking or looking up to see a bus plummeting your direction (Smith & Mackie, 2016). This perspective also contrasts research that treats emotions as a purely individual-level experience wherein emotions only occur when an individual is directly influenced by an event (Smith & Mackie, 2015). Instead, IET joins recent scholarship that suggests "emotions involve socially constructed meanings and most often occur in a social context" (Smith & Mackie, 2016, p. 412). That is, IET focuses on the social aspect of emotions, explicitly on individuals' key social memberships and their influence on emotional experiences. Consequently, this theory lends itself to understanding how membership to a social class group (i.e., lower, middle, or upper) impacts individuals' emotional reactions. That is, when social class similarities or differences are (even implicitly) salient in interactions, they have the potential to shape the emotional experiences of the interaction partners.

The fundamental principles of IET are derived from social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), which emphasize how an individual's group memberships are incorporated into their sense of self. Group memberships—from race and gender to organizational and committee memberships, or in this case, social class—may be a means of social identification and so become a meaningful aspect of one's identity. This study

adopts a Bourdieusian perspective where social class membership is not only constituted by one's economic, social, and cultural capital but also constructed by individuals through their interactions in the social world. In Bourdieu's (1987) words: "constructed classes can be characterized in a certain way as sets of agents who, by virtue of the fact that they occupy similar positions in a social space (that is, in the distribution of powers), are subject to similar conditions of existence and conditioning factors and, as a result, are endowed with similar dispositions which prompt them to develop similar practices" (p. 6). In this sense, social class is both descriptive and prescriptive (with or without one's awareness): "social class is a significant and salient source of group processes and represents a meaningful form of group categorization for individuals" (Côté et al., 2017, p. 270).

Once incorporated into one's sense of self, social identities guide the way an individual thinks, feels, and behaves. Within social identity theory and self-categorization theory, members of the same group (i.e., ingroup) are perceived as similar, and those in other groups (i.e., outgroups) are perceived as dissimilar. Social identity theory emphasizes how group membership influences an individual's psychological self-concept and guides intergroup behavior (Tajfel, 1978), whereas self-categorization theory emphasizes how an individual may use social comparisons to reach positive evaluations of the ingroup by derogating the outgroup (Turner et al., 1987). Early work on social identity theory included the notion that when an individual incorporates group membership into their identity, that identity becomes a source of emotional significance (Tajfel, 1978). However, work on the emotional component of social identities is understudied compared to the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components (Smith & Mackie, 2016).

The core idea of IET is that when an individual identifies themselves in terms of membership to a certain social group, encountering an object, event, or person that affects the ingroup will elicit an emotional reaction because group membership has been incorporated into the person's identity (Smith & Henry, 1996). For example, intergroup emotions may target the individual's ingroup through feelings such as pride or respect, or they may target outgroups through feelings such as anger or anxiety towards another group. It is necessary to clarify that intergroup emotions are experienced by individuals (in contrast to some sort of "group emotion") when social identity is relevant: "group-based emotions are emotions that are elicited in an individual because of his or her identification with a group" (Niedenthal & Brauer, 2012, p. 269). Emotions may be categorized as intergroup emotions insofar that members of a social group would have a similar emotional response if put in the exact same intergroup situation (Simth & Mackie, 2016). Contextualized to social class groups: members of the same social class group will have a similar emotional response when put in similar same and cross-class situations.

IET is largely consistent with broader emotion theory. First, IET adopts the basic assumptions of appraisal theory by positing that when individuals are in an intergroup situation, objects, events, or people may be appraised in terms of an individual's group membership (Smith & Mackie, 2016). More explicitly, emotions caused by group-related triggers parallel individual-level triggers insofar that they impact individuals' appraisals of an event and states of action readiness (Frijda, 1986). For example, intergroup emotions likely lead to behavior directed at the intergroup context, including associating with ingroup members or avoiding outgroup members (Smith & Mackie, 2015, 2016). In this sense, IET may help shed light on how intergroup interactions (and the emotions they elicit via appraisals/action tendencies) drive individuals'

behavioral responses in intergroup situations, a topic returned to in further detail in *The Impact of Emotions on Hiring Outcomes* section.

Second, IET is consistent with the core affect model of emotion (Barrett, 2006; Russell & Barrett, 1999). A change in core affect—the two-dimensional axes of pleasantness and arousal—that is felt and attributed to a cause is considered an emotional episode. In this model, when core affect changes, an emotional representation of what occurred is created in real-time and in accordance with the situation's goals and constraints (Barrett, 2006). Through this categorization process, an individual identifies a discrete emotion to which the change in core affect is attributed. IET overlaps the core affect model of emotion in several ways: (a) core affect may change because of an intergroup situation (e.g., through changes in appraisals, such as feeling more pleasant and aroused when a group succeeds or unpleasant and aroused by an outgroup member intrudes socially), (b) changes in core affect may be attributed to group membership (e.g., attributing a lack of promotion to group prejudice) and, finally, (c) categorization processes may help individuals identify intergroup dynamics as the cause of certain feelings (e.g., feeling a sense of remorse over a group's historical actions or a sense of pride when a group member excels) (Smith & Mackie, 2016). In these ways, IET coincides with the core affect model, emphasizing the ways in which intergroup situations act as a meaningful social context during emotional episodes.

Seen together, IET lays a theoretical foundation for the rise of emotion in intergroup contexts. This perspective complements a Bourdieusian perspective as it emphasizes group membership as a relevant force in determining human experience and, further, because it stresses how group membership drives concordance with one's ingroup and conflict with one's outgroup. In other words, intergroup emotions can be seen as a vehicle for maintaining group distinctions.

This is an important point, as research tends to focus on ways of thinking (e.g., stereotypes or bias) or behaving (e.g., prejudicial behavior or microaggressions) that maintain group distinctions or, further, group inequality. Suggesting that group membership is fodder for specific discrete emotions, IET turns attention towards the affective component of social identities—one that has been overlooked regarding social class specifically (Reay, 2005).

Further, IET goes beyond a simple ascription of positive affect to ingroup interactions and negative affect to outgroup interactions but instead focuses "on the distinct and differentiated emotional reactions that both ingroups and outgroups provoke" (Mackie et al., 2008, p. 1876). That is, individuals do not simply feel more positively when interacting with those they share group membership with or more negatively when interacting with those outside of their group. Instead, the unique construction of social groups determines which specific emotions are felt in ingroup and outgroup interactions. For example, the specific emotions elicited in same- or cross-race interactions may be different than those elicited in same- or cross-gender interactions. IET underscores the importance of understanding the context of the social group to predict the "distinct" and "differentiated" emotions intergroup interactions evoke. This is a necessary point because it suggests that understanding emotional reactions based on group membership is not a "one size fits all" scenario but instead encourages a more complex understanding that incorporates the historical and cultural significance of membership to specific groups.

In sum, IET provides a necessary foundation for asserting that membership to a certain social class and associated same- and cross-class interactions are substance for discrete emotional reactions. Likewise, it points to the necessity of understanding the class-specific dynamics that constitute social group membership and practices. Accordingly, to hypothesize which discrete emotions can be expected as a results of class salient interactions, the following

sections integrates class-specific theories to suggest which specific emotions give way during same- and cross-class interactions during employment interviews.

Cross-Class Interactions and Anxiety

To consider employers' affective responses to cross-class interactions with interviewees, this section begins by returning to class work theorizing (detailed in the *Literature Review* chapter). At the start of the class work process, cross-class encounters give rise to status hierarchies, where the relative privilege or disadvantage of employees based on their group membership is called into question. That is, a cross-class encounter may "provoke consideration of the adequacy of one's own or the other's habitus" (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013, p. 671). For example, if an executive from an upper-class background worked late into the evening and, when the elevator doors open, she sees a member of the custodial staff from the lower social class with his cleaning supplies, she may feel awkward or uncomfortable stepping into the elevator. At this point, the executive has made a status attribution wherein she distinguishes herself from the member of the custodial staff based on group memberships—her own upper social class group membership contrasts his lower social class group membership. Perceiving class differences (though physical appearance, cultural knowledge, speech, or personal experience) and subsequently making a status attribution together constitutes a class triggering event—a process than can occur entirely below the surface of conscious awareness.

A class triggering event is theorized to lead to anxiety (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Anxiety is defined as "a state of distress and/or physiological arousal in reaction to stimuli including novel situations and the potential for undesirable outcomes" (Brooks & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 44), and it is appraised as both negatively-valanced and uncertain (Frijda et al., 1986) (see Table 1). In their work, Gray and Kish-Gephart (2013) argue that anxiety is a likely outcome

of cross-class interactions because class can be seen as a taboo topic (Sayer, 2005). Indeed, a predominant narrative is that the U.S. is a "classless" society (DiMaggio, 2012). As described by one documentary: "It's basically against the American principle to belong to a class. So, naturally Americans have a really hard time talking about the class system, because they really don't want to admit that the class system exists." (PBS, 2001). Or, as Reay (2005) asserts: "Class may be out there but individuals seem to believe it does not touch them personally. It has taken no hold inside. There may be class practices, and nearly all individuals can identify some, but there is often a staunch denial of class thinking and feeling, especially one's own." (p. 923). The notion that social class is taboo is supported by research on class-based discourse in higher education, which highlighted how, even after participating in an entire course focused on conversing about social class, students had difficulty discussing their own and others' social class (Sanders and Mahalingam, 2012). Cross-class interactions make salient one's own and an other's social class status—a taboo, thus potentially uncomfortable, matter.

The idea that anxiety is an outcome of class triggering events is also consistent with research related to intergroup anxiety—the sort of anxious feelings experienced when taking part in intergroup interactions or interpersonal exchanges with outgroup members (Stephan, 2014). Intergroup anxiety can manifest as a specific affective state (i.e., episodic intergroup anxiety), especially during actual interactions with outgroup members and specifically contingent on the quality of the exchange (Paolini et al., 2006). Research suggests that intergroup interactions elicit anxiety because outgroup members may be perceived as a threat to the ingroup's goals, motives, or experience (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Paolini et al., 2016; Plant & Devine, 2003; Smith, 1993; Stephan, 2014; Stephan & Stephan, 2000), a notion consistent with Bourdieu's theorizing around the struggle for power between social class groups (Swartz, 1997). Indeed, individuals

report feeling anxious when interacting with outgroup members (Mendes et al., 2002; Page-Gould et al., 2008; Stephan & Stephan, 1985, 1989) and, even further, when anticipating interacting with an outgroup member (Vorauer et al., 2000). For example, across three experiments that examined the interactions between white and Black college students, interactions with outgroup members were associated with heightened anxiety whereas ingroup interactions were not (Blascovich et al., 2001). As a social class-specific example, a qualitative study of college students found that minority students and students from a lower social class experienced identity threat and concomitant anxiety when engaging in cross-race and cross-class interactions (Gray et al., 2018). In sum, research provides evidence that "anxiety is common in initial encounters between groups, and it can spark negative reactions" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 71).

Notably, class work theorizing suggests that anxiety is a response to both upward and downward cross-class interactions—anxiety may occur when interacting with those of a relatively higher social class and with those of a relatively lower social class, respectively. This idea is consistent with research that has demonstrated that those in both dominant and subordinate groups feel anxious when interacting with outgroup members. For example, one study found that whites felt greater discomfort when interacting with Blacks and Asian Americans compared to other individuals who were white (Littleford et al., 2005). This idea is also supported by stereotype threat literature, which suggests that both members of subordinate and dominant groups may feel stereotype threat and, as a result, perform more poorly (Leyens et al., 2012). As an illustration of a downward cross-class interaction, if a manager from the upper social class enters a breakroom where a group of administrative assistants from the lower social class are eating lunch and discussing the near impossible challenge of paying for their children's college education, the manager may feel uncomfortable (perhaps implicitly) about her own

privilege. For her, paying for a child's college tuition is an easier undertaking because of her access to economic capital—her plentiful savings account and reliable, generous income. She may feel a sense of unease or uncertainty interacting with the administrative assistants because of social class differences—both appraisals tied to the emotional experience of anxiety. As an example of an upward cross-class interaction, an employee that comes from a lower social class may be invited to present an annual report to a group of executives who all come from higher social classes. When the executives are talking about their recent jet-setting to top-notch golf courses before the meeting kicks off, the employee (perhaps implicitly) may begin to feel uncomfortable about his humble roots, feeling a sense of unease or anxiety because of the distance between his and the executives' social class.

When it comes to employers' emotional reactions to upward and downward cross-class interactions, anxiety is expected. Perceived social class differences—detected through differences in bodily hexis, experience, or qualifications that reflect classed forms of cultural capital or classed ways of thinking or behaving—invoke status attributions (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). When status attributions are made, employers (perhaps subconsciously) draw a status distinction between themself and the interviewee. Accordingly, cross-class interactions during employment interviews constitute a class-triggering event, which ultimately is expected to result in anxiety. For example, when an employer from a lower social class interviews a job candidate from a higher social class, hearing how they learned about leadership during their summer sailing camp or their elite private education (i.e., markers of life in the upper social class) may give way (without noticing) to a sense of unease. Alternatively, when an employer from a higher social class interviews a job candidate from a lower social class, hearing about how they learned about leadership from working on their family farm during the summers or

their community college experience (i.e., markers of life in the lower social class) may elicit (without noticing) discomfort. Put simply, cross-class interactions are expected to generate anxiety. Formally hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between downward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.

Same-class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Negatively-valanced emotions (such as anxiety) are potent (Baumeister et al. 2001; Rozin & Royzman, 2001) and, therefore, typically used when explaining behavior in management sciences. While less studied than negatively-valanced emotions, positively-valanced emotions also help explain behavior and, increasingly, are recognized as necessary to understanding organizational phenomena (Diener et al., 2020). Thus, the following section turns towards same-class interactions and considers why these exchanges may lead to more amiable emotions. Specifically, this section considers why same-class interactions may facilitate experiences of enthusiasm or "a feeling of excitement or passion for an activity, cause, or object" (APA, 2022). In contrast to anxiety, enthusiasm is considered certain (Frijda et al., 1986), meaning it is appraised as predictable and comprehensible (Lerner et al., 2015). Further, it is positively-valanced, alerting, and important, ultimately drawing the individual to consider both the source of enthusiasm and future action (Frijda et al., 1986).

Work from sociology lends insight into the role of enthusiasm in interpersonal interactions, specifically those within employment interviews. First, in his work on interaction rituals, Collins (1990) argued that face-to-face interactions generate emotional energy that, in

turn, sustains social stratification. He began by theorizing that feeling positive emotions (e.g., enthusiasm, excitement, confidence) is rewarding, thus, individuals gravitate towards those that evoke such emotions. Over time and through repeated interactions, those who elicit these emotions in others are afforded greater opportunities and resources. Thus, positive emotions are potentially as powerful in structuring social life as structural or material resources. Collins (1990) specifically hypothesized that job interviews are a key context in which emotions facilitate social selection, wherein interviewers are drawn to interviewees that elicit a sense of emotional energy and deterred from those who do not. As initial evidence of Collins' theorizing, an in-depth qualitative study out of the field of sociology found that employers' feelings of excitement or enthusiasm were critical to evaluating interviewees and making selection decisions in elite firms (Rivera, 2015a). During participant interviews, excitement was mentioned over 120 times when interviewers reflected on how they felt about the candidate's initial impressions. Excitement contrasts liking, a lower-arousal sentiment, that was reported less than 40 times. Enthusiasm sparked during an interview carried through into decision-making—improving how interviewers evaluated, remembered, and rated interviewees (Rivera, 2015b).

Who then elicits enthusiasm in employers? Evidence from sociology suggests that candidates who are a "cultural match" elicit employers' enthusiasm. In an early paper, Rivera (2012) explicitly addresses the notion of cultural matching, in which employers seek "candidates who were not only competent but also culturally similar to themselves in terms of leisure pursuits, experiences, and self-presentation styles" (Rivera, 2012, p. 999). From this perspective, cultural similarities relate to a narrower set of compatibilities than typically theorized or assessed in organizational studies via similarity-attraction principles. First, evaluators focused on interviewees' play style or how they spent their time outside of the office, in contrast to assessing

similarities based on work styles or values. As one example, employers reported rejecting or favoring candidates based on which sports they played (e.g., lacrosse, squash, or crew). Second, evaluators assessed similarities in the background or common experiences, such as places they lived or shared interest in a sports team or art form. Finally, employers looked for similar styles of self-presentation, seeking out applicants whose demeanor matched their current employee pool (e.g., "intellectual," "white-shoe," or "country-club").

While social class was not directly addressed in either Rivera's 2012 or 2015(a) papers, she comments that "cultural similarity can thus be thought of as a form of capital that has economic conversion value [Bourdieu 1986] in labor markets" (Rivera, 2012, p. 1017). Of the three types of cultural similarities noted as important to employers in these studies, leisure activities can be categorized as a type of objectified cultural capital, and background experiences (e.g., attendance at the same higher education institution) could be classified as institutionalized cultural capital. Finally, presentation styles can be classified as a form of embodied cultural capital. Seen together, underlying employers' assessments of cultural similarities are distinct forms of cultural capital associated with membership in certain social class groups.

Employers' assessments of interviewees' cultural similarities affected selection decisions via organizational processes, cognitive processes, and affective processes (Rivera, 2012). Of the participants interviewed, 107 reported that cultural similarities affected candidate evaluations through affective processes, whereas only 94 reported cultural similarities affecting evaluations through cognitive processes (Rivera, 2012). In both Rivera's 2012 and 2015(a) papers, she notes that cultural similarities yielded feelings of enthusiasm in employers. For example, some interviewers described how they were "smitten" or "passionate" about an applicant with whom they shared cultural similarities; further, other interviewers used language related to love to

describe candidates they were culturally matched with (Rivera, 2012, p. 1015). Still, because most interviewer-interviewee pairs consisted of whites evaluating whites and men evaluating men, Rivera was unable to determine whether enthusiasm operated as a mechanism of discrimination based on gender or race, nor did she explicitly address social class as an organizing category in her 2012 or 2015(a) papers. However, in a later work Rivera (2015b) explicitly outlines the role of social class throughout organizational selection at EPS firms. In analyzing participant responses using a social class lens, she points to how interviewers assess candidate similarity using classed-based measurements: similarities in leisure activities and play styles that reflected upper-class pastimes and privilege; a narrative that reflected middle- and upper-class norms for independence, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation and to which the interviewer could relate; a "polish" that reflected upper-class styles of communication or interaction (e.g., a sense of poise, expressing the "correct" amount of emotion, ease navigating conversation and making the interviewer comfortable).

Considering the evidence that suggests cultural matching generates employer enthusiasm alongside the evidence that employers assess cultural similarities via classed metrics during employment interviews, it is reasonable to expect that when employers and interviewees share social class membership, enthusiasm is generated. For example, if an interviewee from a lower social class shares about earning an academic scholarship to attend college, an employer from a lower class is expected to feel enthusiasm—the two have similar cultural capital holdings exhibited through forms of institutionalized capital. As another example, when an interviewee and an employer share an interest in classical music, are avid violon players, and regard composers such as Mozart, it is likely the employer feels increased enthusiasm—in this example, objectified forms of cultural capital shared between the employer and interviewee generate

enthusiasm. Put simply, same-class interactions are expected to elicit enthusiasm. Accordingly, I suggest:

> *Hypothesis 3*: There is a positive relationship between same-class interactions and employer enthusiasm.

Specifying Relationships Between the Lower, Middle, and Upper Social Classes

Establishing a baseline effect of same and cross-class interactions offers insight, yet further understanding may be gained from considering the interactions between distinct social class groups. Social class theorizing often focuses on the lower or upper social classes, often comparing either of these groups to those outside of the group (e.g., comparing those in the lower social class to those outside of the lower social class) or, alternatively, collapses the middle- and upper-social class together into one bucket because of shared attributes (e.g., attainment of a college degree or resource adequacy) (Lucas, 2011b) or sociocultural similarities (Stephens et al., 2012). One consequence of these actions is that scholarly literature addressing the middle social class is scarce (for an exception, see Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2015). This is somewhat surprising as Bourdieu's (1984) theorizing specifies meaningful distinctions between the lower, middle, and upper social class by clearly differentiating between the capital holdings and power of each group (as is outlined in the *Literature Review* section). Further, a majority of those in the United States today are considered members of the middle social class (Pew Research Center, 2022) and, as such, further investigation is appropriate. The following hypotheses specify the expected relationships between the lower, middle, and upper social classes because of their theoretical and practical relevance.

Returning to the arguments around upward and downward cross-class interactions, the following hypotheses outline the expected outcome of class salient exchanges between members

of the upper and middle social classes and members of the lower social class separately. Both the upper and middle social classes view the lower social class as the "other" and presume the lower social class seeks to join the middle class (Skeggs, 2004), drawing a clear social class distinction. Likewise, those from the lower social class report feeling less comfortable and concealing their social class when interacting with members of higher social classes (Garcia et al., 2007), also drawing a clear distinction between class groups. Accordingly, and drawing on the logic that cross-class interactions elicit anxiety, I suggest:

Hypothesis 4A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.

Hypothesis 4B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.

Hypothesis 4C: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.

Hypothesis 4D: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.

Not addressed in the above hypotheses is the relationship between the upper social class and middle social class. As alluded to above, the role of the middle social class is somewhat contested. On one hand, Bourdieu (1984) and others (e.g., Gray & Kish-Gephart; Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2015) differentiate between the middle and upper social classes—pointing to differences in power and relative capital holdings. The middle-class has some power over others (i.e., the lower social classes) while they are still subject to others power (i.e., the upper social class). In contrast, the upper class is distinct because they are the primary powerholders (Resnick & Wolff, 2003)—they determine what capital is valuable and ultimately what is considered

"legitimate" in society (Swartz, 1997). On the other hand, the middle and upper social classes are often categorized together, both theoretically (Kraus et al., 2012; Stephens et al., 2012) and empirically (Côté et al., 2013; Dittman et al., 2020; Stephens et al., 2015). Scholars point to similarities in attributes between the middle and upper social classes, including the attainment of a college education and access to adequate resources (Lucas, 2011b). Others highlight how those from the middle and upper social classes share cultural norms, such as independent norms (Stephens et al., 2012) or agentic self-concepts (Kraus et al., 2012).

According to the logic that the middle and upper social class are distinct social class groups, interactions between members of these two groups would be classified as cross-class interactions and consequentially are expected to elicit anxiety. In contrast, if the logic holds that there is more in common between the two groups and thus no clear class distinction, then interactions between members of these two groups would be classified as same-class interactions and presumably generate enthusiasm. Considering the disagreement in current literature and, further, to elucidate the how members of the middle and upper social class relate to one another in the context of employment interviews, I offer competing hypotheses. Formally stated:

Hypothesis 5A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.

Hypothesis 5B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.

Hypothesis 6A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit enthusiasm.

Hypothesis 6B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit enthusiasm.

As a final specification, comparisons between the middle class with the upper class in upward cross-class interactions and comparisons between the middle class with the lower social class in downward cross-class interactions are examined. Research suggests that social categories are more distinct at the extremes of a continuum—in this case, for those in a lower social class and those in an upper social class (Côté et al., 2017). This may be partly because of the physical separation of those at the ends of the social class scale. Those from lower and upper social classes are unlikely to live next to, interact with, or work with one another. In contrast, those in the middle class may have more opportunities to cross class lines, whether it is in the workplace, neighborhoods, or school systems. More profound distinctions between the lower and upper social classes may also be due to the more drastic cultural differences between the two groups; each group has cultural symbols and interests that exclude the other (Kohn & Schooler, 1969). Together this suggests that when interacting with those at the other extreme of the social class spectrum, class saliency is likely more apparent and, consequentially, interactions more anxiety ridden. Formally stated:

> *Hypothesis 7A*: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.
>
> *Hypothesis 7B*: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.

Same-class Interactions and Compassion

Organizational scholars have suggested compassion is a key emotion in selection processes: "compassion probably enters organizational life most frequently in the context of hiring and firing employees" (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2003, p. 73), thus it is considered as a potentially important emotion in employment interviews. Indeed, organizational scholarship has

found compassion to be a powerful organizer within the workplace (Dutton et al., 2006; Dutton et al., 2014), influencing everything from employee creativity (Zabelina & Robinson, 2010) to burnout and stress (Boyatzis et al., 2006) and organizational commitment (Grant et al., 2008; Lilius et al., 2008). Compassion may be defined as "the feeling that arises in witnessing another's suffering and that motivates a subsequent desire to help" (Goetz et al., 2010, p. 2; see also Lazarus, 1991; Nussbaum, 1996). Lazarus' (1991) definition of compassion is similar: "being moved by another's suffering and wanting to help" (p. 289). Both definitions emphasize the recognition of another's needs and the motivation for targeted prosocial behavior. In the following section, I distinguish compassion from several related constructs, outline the intergroup conditions necessary to evoke compassion, and, finally, suggest which class salient interactions elicit compassion.

The above definitions conceptualize compassion as a discrete emotion that is defined by a subjective feeling and differentiate compassion from empathy—empathy involves a vicarious experience of another's emotional state, whereas compassion recognizes another's need but does not necessarily involve taking on the other's emotion (Lazarus, 1991). Some scholars consider empathy a tool of compassion (Brown, 2021) or an emotional consequence of compassion (Atkins & Parker, 2012). Compassion is distinct from distress, insofar that responding to another's need may be costly because the self is also experiencing hardship if distressed (Hoffman, 1981). In contrast, the individual who feels compassion is looking in from the outside and can assess the costs and benefits of offering help to another. Compassion is also distinct from sadness, as sadness is a response to one's own loss or suffering (Lazarus, 1991). Finally, a distinction may also be made between compassion and love because love centers on affection

and creating positive attachments to others; compassion responds to suffering and is not necessarily accompanied by love (Goetz, 2010).

While a powerful emotion in organizations, compassion is more or less likely under certain conditions (Atkins & Parker, 2012). First, compassion is more likely in the case that the person experiencing suffering is related to the observer, either genetically or through group membership (Henrich, 2004; Sober & Wilson, 1998). From an evolutionary theory perspective, compassion is argued to have emerged as an affective state oriented toward improving the well-being of those who suffer, specifically protecting one's offspring or the vulnerable (de Waal, 2009; Goetz et al., 2010; Keltner, 2009). In this sense, compassion involves an evaluation—does the target's well-being affect my own? At the same time, the observer must be able to draw a self-other distinction; otherwise, it is more likely the individual would feel distressed or empathetic sadness as they share the suffering of the target (Goetz et al., 2010). Second, the extent to which the person suffering is at fault for their position may also influence the likelihood of an observer feeling compassion—if the sufferer is to blame, then compassion is less likely. In contrast, if the sufferer is evaluated as not responsible for their hardship and as a potentially cooperative or altruistic partner, then compassion is more likely. Third, the ability of the observer to cope with the situation also affects whether compassion ensues. In other words, individuals are sensitive to the costs of helping others, so, therefore, weigh the extent to which helping would expose oneself to too much risk (Goetz et al., 2010; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Who then elicits compassion during employment interviews? Compassion requires that the target is in some sort of need or suffering (Goetz et al., 2010) and is often accompanied by a concern for those who are in need or face harm (Keltner & Lerner, 2010). Relative to their middle- and upper-social class counterparts, individuals from a lower social class, on average,

lack capital holdings (Bourdieu, 1984). They have experienced comparatively greater resource scarcity (Stephens et al., 2012) and have less of a safety net when it comes to job disruptions (Damaske, 2020). Individuals in the lower social class "suffer everyday hassles, harassment, and aggression [Fiske, 2010], and difficulties for people from lower social classes occur in almost every domain" (Fiske et al., 2012, p. 246). When those from a lower social class step into an employment interview, they are, arguably, those who would benefit the most from employment and the benefits it affords—accordingly, these are the interactions that are most easily appraised as involving underserved hardship (Keltner & Lerner, 2010).

Compassion is most intense when the individual who is suffering is somehow relevant to the individual, often through group membership or similarity (Goetz et al., 2010). In other words, compassion is expected to be particularly salient when the employer (the self) shares group membership with the interviewee from the lower social class (the target). Indeed, current work points to the "possibility that prosociality among lower-class individuals, if an adaptive strategy for building reciprocal relationships, may be preferentially directed to close others, ingroup members" (Piff & Robinson, 2017, p. 8; Jiménez-Moya et al., 2021). The notion that those in the lower social class offer help to similar others is consistent with research demonstrating individuals are more likely to feel compassion towards those they feel closely related (Cialdini et al., 1997) or with whom they share values, characteristics, or beliefs (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). In contrast, research has evidence that individuals are less likely to feel compassion when the individual is appraised as unrelated to the self (Batson et al., 2007).

Group membership in the lower social class is particularly salient for several reasons. First, those who share a lower social class background have struggled over similar things. For example, individuals from the lower social class have less access to the services, facilities, and

living conditions that promote overall health and well-being including access to parks, emergency care services and health services, transportation, educational practices, financial resources, community resources like fire or police departments, and healthy food (Stephens et al., 2012). Because of these constraints, members of the lower social class adjust to others and their social context, often working together for material assistance and support (Lareau, 2002).

Second, and relatedly, individuals from the lower social class have more interdependent models of self, meaning those from a lower social class tend to assume "that the normatively appropriate person should adjust to the conditions of the context, be connected to others, and respond to the needs of others" (Stephens et al., 2019, p. 68). In other words, those from the lower social class have a proclivity towards identifying themselves in terms of their social relationships and groups—they develop more communal self-concepts (Kraus et al., 2012).

Finally, research points to the tendency of those from lower status groups to turn towards one another for support and identity construction (van Laar et al., 2010). Individuals in low-status groups—in this case, those from the lower social class—may protect their identity by paying heed to the positive aspects of their group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; e.g., Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999; Kreiner et al., 2006). Further, receiving support from ingroup members often contributes to the pursuit of upward mobility: "upwardly mobile members of low-status groups who receive in-group support demonstrate higher well-being and perceive upward mobility as more feasible than those who do not receive such support" (van Laar et al., 2010, p. 613). Seen together, employers from lower social class backgrounds may be particularly attuned to their social class group membership and, as such, be increasingly likely to see interviewees from the lower social class as relevant to themselves.

When an interviewee from a lower social class walks into an employment interview with an employer from the lower social class, the employer is expected to identify with the interviewee through group membership. Beyond seeing their need for employment, they are connected to the interviewee through their social class background—they too understand what it means to grow up in an environment with scarcer access to resources, where individuals turn to one another for help and a sense of identity. While compassion in this context may depend on employers' individual characteristics, a topic addressed in the *Manager and Job Characteristics* section, it is expected that, on average, same-class interactions generate compassion. Simply put, same-class interactions for employers from the lower social class stir up compassion as they see the interviewee as needing help and relevant to themselves through group membership. As such, I hypothesize:

> *Hypothesis 8*: For employers from the lower social class, same-class interactions elicit compassion.

The Impact of Emotions on Hiring Outcomes

Relational Action Readiness

Emotions motivate specific patterns of behavior: "emotions not only make us feel something, they make us feel like doing something" (Gross & Thompson, 2007, p. 5; Scarantino, 2016). More explicitly, emotional processes begin with a trigger—an event, behavior, situation, interaction, or memory. In response, an individual appraises the trigger, which, in turn, gives rise to a state of action readiness to change one's relation to the object of appraisal (Scherer & Moors, 2018). In this sense, emotions can be described as "modes of relational action readiness, either in the form of tendencies to establish, maintain, or disrupt a relationship with the environment or in the form of mode of relational readiness as such" (Frijda et al., 1986, p. 71).

The first form of relational action readiness is that of action tendencies, or states of readiness to act in a way that is consistent with some goal. For example, impulses to "move towards," "move away," and "move against" a person or object are action tendencies (Davitz, 1969). Or as another example, the impulse for flight or fight is also considered action tendencies (Frijda et al., 1989). Action tendencies can be felt like an implicit inclination towards action or experienced as a mental image of what to do next (Ridderinkhof & Brass, 2015). The second form of action readiness, "readiness as such," refers to either "null states" or "activation modes" (Frijda, 1986). These states describe a general sense of readiness or unreadiness to interact with one's context, where the former describes a state of inhibition, and the latter describes activated states. For example, in a relational null state, such as when one feels sadness, individuals feel a relative absence of relational motivation. Alternatively, in an activated state, such as when one feels joy, there is free activation or a readiness to interact with one's environment while not necessarily targeted at any one object.

The motivation for action that emotions confer is accompanied by control precedence. In other words, emotions include a "persistence of action over time until a particular end state has been reached, and the resumption of actions in spite of interruptions and obstacles" (Frijda et al., 2014, p. 1). Control precedence can interrupt other processes—meaning emotions can prevent access control from other stimuli and other targets. Control precedence can also command energy—meaning emotions can reserve and invest control with some degree of speed and flexibility (Scarantino, 2016). This idea complements the view that emotions are best conceived in terms of goals and action control rather than as a level of incipient or reflexive action. As Frijda and colleagues (1989) comment: "states of action readiness generally are viewed as relational goals put in readiness for execution, or as modification in the degree to which such

goals are present at all. That, in turn, fits with the general property of states of action readiness: that [emotions] tend to assume control over action and thought" (p. 213). In this sense, emotions motivate individuals to act in certain ways towards the target of emotion and, secondly, interact with other forms of behavioral regulation, such as cognitive mechanisms.

What behavior occurs is largely determined by appraisal criterion and their associated action tendencies. For example, appraisal criterion includes assessments of pleasantness (i.e., the extent to which an occurrence is positive or negative), certainty (i.e., the degree to which an outcome is likely to occur), arousal (i.e., the extent to which an event is activating), or control coping (i.e., the degree to which an individual can control the outcomes of an event) (Grandey, 2008; Keltner & Lerner, 2010). Accordingly, I outline the action tendencies of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion and detail how these emotions impact several selection outcomes: assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards.

Hireability is defined as "suitability of a job candidate and probable interview outcome" (Stevens and Kristof, 1995, p. 592). Being hired confers rather obvious advantages, including employment and its associated benefits. Next, salary recommendations represent the salary amount (within a range) employers offer an incoming job candidate at the start of negotiations. Employers are commonly given a salary range they can negotiate (Malhotra, 2014). While assessing initial salary recommendations made by the employer does not capture the full negotiation process, it lends insight into one potential way interviewees are rewarded during selection. Finally, social rewards may be defined as employers' "willingness to work with the candidate" (Bowles et al., 2007, p. 90). Being evaluated as hireable and offered a generous starting salary does not mean that a candidate will be well-liked at work. Employers' assessment

of social rewards (versus social resistance) lends insight into the potential for differential treatment of individuals based on social class once inside an organization.

Anxiety

The anxiety elicited from cross-class interactions is appraised as unpleasant and activating, rendering it an emotion that is traditionally considered "negative" in organizational sciences (Grandey, 2008; Frijda et al., 1989). Uncertainty, an additional appraisal criterion, is considered the defining component of anxiety (Frijda et al., 1989), rendering anxiety's core appraisal tendency a threat to self (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001). From an evolutionary perspective, anxiety has long been considered one of the key emotions in adaptation, as it facilitates survival and flourishing by prompting individuals to be aware of and move away from sources of danger. In organizations, scholars have suggested that "anxiety remains one of the major emotional consequences of organizational life" (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001, p. 66).

In response to anxiety, individuals are motivated to reduce uncertainty through moving away from the target of anxiety (Lerner & Keltner, 2010). Indeed, feeling anxious narrows an individual's attention towards threats or danger (Mathews & MacLeod, 1994; Mineka et al., 2003) and elicits a tendency towards protecting oneself and avoidance (Frijda et al., 2010). Accordingly, it is reasonable to expect that when employers experience anxiety, they are motivated to put distance between themselves and the target to reduce uncertainty—in this case, the interviewee that stimulates anxiety. An interviewee that elicits anxiety is likely rated as less hireable, as the hiring manger appraises them as a source of threat and acts to puts distance between themself and the target. Rating someone lower on hireability is a way to ensure they do not share a workplace. Likewise, anxiety is expected to be related to a lower salary recommendation. Again, when a hiring manger is motivated to protect oneself, it is reasonable

that they would lower the salary amount offered, rendering the opportunity less attractive to the interviewee and, again, ensuring distance between the two. Finally, because anxiety motivates individuals to avoid the source of threat, it is expected that employers will be less willing to work with the interviewee. Seen together, increased anxiety is expected to be associated with lower ratings of interviewees' hireability, lower salary recommendations, and less willingness to work with the interviewee. Formally, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 9A: Anxiety negatively relates to assessments of hireability.

Hypothesis 9B: Anxiety negatively relates to salary recommendations.

Hypothesis 9C: Anxiety negatively relates to social rewards.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is appraised as pleasant, activating, and important (Frijda et al., 1989). The experience of enthusiasm differs from anxiety in its valence (i.e., pleasant vs. unpleasant) and its certainty (certain vs. uncertain). That is, in contrast to anxiety, enthusiasm is appraised as comprehensible and predictable—future events seem within the individual's control and understandable (Lerner et al., 2015). Enthusiasm motivates individuals to act in a certain way. Specifically, the associated action readiness mode of enthusiasm is to move towards the target through approach behavior (Frijda et al.., 1989). For example, enthusiasm leads employees towards affiliative behavior, such as maintaining warm, friendly interpersonal connections (Côté et al., 2017; Lazarus & Cohen-Charash. 2001). The motivation towards approach behavior mirrors Collin's (1990) theorizing that posited when individuals encounter others that elicit enthusiasm or excitement, they are drawn towards them—individuals gravitate towards those they find emotionally energizing.

Enthusiasm motivates action—inspiring individuals towards approach behavior (Depue & Collins, 1999; Berridge & Robinson, 2003). In employment interviews, enthusiasm is expected to motivate employers to move towards the interviewee in several ways. First, enthusiasm is expected to link to increased ratings of hireability—a means of affiliating with the interviewee. Second, enthusiasm towards an interviewee likely leads to increased salary recommendations, another approach behavior that makes a job offer more attractive. Finally, when hiring mangers feel enthusiastic about a specific interviewee, it is expected that they express a greater willingness to work with the employee—there is a draw to be coworkers with the person. These suggestions are consistent with Rivera's (2015b) qualitative findings that excitement motivates positive evaluations of interviewees throughout the job interview, from when employers begin to form expectations to when they deliberate and make decisions about job candidates. Seen together, when enthusiasm is elicited, employers are motivated to affiliate with the job candidate—offering increased ratings of hireability, higher salary recommendations, and greater social rewards. As such, I suggest:

Hypothesis 10A: Enthusiasm positively relates to assessments of hireability.

Hypothesis 10B: Enthusiasm positively relates to salary recommendations.

Hypothesis 10C: Enthusiasm positively relates to social rewards.

Compassion

Like anxiety and enthusiasm, compassion is appraised as activating and important (Frijda et al., 1989). Similar to anxiety, compassion is negatively-valanced and relates to feelings of distress (Goetz et al., 2010). However, consistent with the appraisal of enthusiasm, it is appraised as certain because the target of suffering is not oneself but another person or target, thus the future seems both predictable and comprehensible (Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001). A key

component of the appraisal criterion for compassion is that of undeserved suffering or recognition of the hardships or disadvantages others experience. Therefore, the associated action readiness mode of compassion is to move towards another to help, a fundamentally prosocial approach (Goetz et al., 2010; Keltner & Lerner, 2010). From an evolutionary perspective, compassion motivates individuals to care for those they share genetics or group membership with, with the goal of ensuring survival (Goetz et al., 2010).

When it comes to selection outcomes, increased compassion is expected to motivate prosocial behavior wherein the employer seeks to help the interviewee through their selection decisions. Indeed, one study of compassion in negotiation found that when individuals felt compassion toward the other, they were more willing to cooperate and reached agreements that better benefited both parties (Allred et al., 1997). When it comes to assessments of hireability, compassion is expected to relate to higher assessments of interviewees' hireability. That is, by suggesting the interviewee ought to be hired, employers are able to effectively "help" by increasing the likelihood that the job seeker gains employment. Similarly, compassion may relate to increased salary recommendations, another expression of approach behavior that is prosocial in nature and, specifically, that addresses the needs of an interviewee. Finally, when employers feel compassion towards an interviewee, it is likely they express more of a willingness to work with them. Each of these three actions assists the target, who is presumably experiencing hardship. Formally hypothesized:

Hypothesis 11A: Compassion positively relates to assessments of hireability.

Hypothesis 11B: Compassion positively relates to salary recommendations.

Hypothesis 11C: Compassion positively relates to social rewards.

Employers' Affect as an Explanatory Mechanism

The first set of hypotheses predicts a relationship between same- and cross-class interactions and employers' emotions during employment interviews, and the second set of hypotheses predicts a relationship between employers' emotions and selection outcomes. Together, these hypotheses specify a mediation model, where class salient interactions indirectly influence selection outcomes through employers' emotions. Therefore, I suggest:

Hypothesis 12A: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' downward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.

Hypothesis 12B: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' upward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.

Hypothesis 12C: Employers' enthusiasm helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.

Hypothesis 12D: Employers' compassion helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.

Employer and Job Characteristics

This section considers how characteristics of the employer or job position may change the relationship between same- and cross-class interactions and anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion or the relationship between these emotions and selection outcomes. Related to employers' characteristics, this section considers how upward mobility, social dominance orientation, and psychological flexibility may influence the main relationships. Next, this section considers how the position's organizational role (e.g., managerial versus non-managerial role) may influence the effect of class salient interactions on employers' emotions. Overall, this section points to several factors that may amplify or attenuate the labor market disadvantage experienced by those from the lower social class via employers' emotions, ultimately identifying

several points for potential organizational interventions, a topic that will be returned to in the *Discussion* section.

Upward Mobility

One outcome of upward social mobility (e.g., moving from the lower social class to the upper social class) is increased contact with outgroup members (Fiske et al., 2012). That is, as individuals are socially mobile, they interact with those outside of their social class origins—at work, in neighborhoods, and in institutions like churches or social clubs (Fiske et al., 2012). Intergroup contact, defined as contact with outgroup members, has consequences for how outgroup members are perceived. Neutral or positive intergroup contact—in this case, with someone from a different social class—can provide increased knowledge about the outgroup, may change negative expectations or stereotypes, and has the potential to undercut negative attitudes (Stephan, 2014). Particularly if intergroup contact occurs over an extended period, with several outgroup members, and in various social contexts, it has the potential to increase understanding of outgroup members—shifting one's automatic emotional reactions to those from a different social group.

Evidence suggests that outgroup contact reduces anxiety (Barlow et al., 2009; Swart et al., 2010). Specifically, the process of revising one's affective responses to outgroup members because of new experiences is termed "anxiety learning" (Paolini et al., 2016). Anxiety learning, in turn, improves judgments about outgroup members (Pettigrew & Troop, 2006). For example, outgroup prejudice was reduced through cross-community friendships in Northern Ireland, an effect mediated by declines in intergroup anxiety (Paolini et al., 2004). Moreover, even indirect contact with an outgroup member—through a friend of a friend or acquaintance—can reduce anxiety about outgroup members (De Tezanos-Pinto et al., 2010; Gómez et al., 2011; Turner et

al., 2007a, 2007b; Turner et al., 2008). Beyond reducing negative emotions toward outgroup members, scholars have found that establishing friendships with those from another social group can garner positive emotions toward outgroup members, including admiration and sympathy (Pettigrew, 1998).

Social mobility is one pathway to interacting with those in a different social class and, therefore, a means of shifting how individuals feel towards outgroup members. The notion that upward mobility offers individuals new insight into other cultural groups is consistent with Martin & Côté's (2019) theorizing around social class transitioners or those who have moved between social class groups. Social class transitioners may develop a new cultural toolkit, such that the broad cultural experiences and knowledge from their new environment (i.e., new social class context) can then be used to accomplish their work-related goals. One specific outcome of developing a cultural toolkit via social class mobility relates to interpersonal interactions. The authors theorize that "having an expanded class toolkit that includes navigating social context with different experiences, values, norms, and perspectives should facilitate making sense of how people interpret situations differently and helping people understand the frames through which those from different social classes might view issues." (Martin & Côté, 2019, p. 12). Implicit in this statement is the recognition that mobility experiences shift how individuals view members of their own social class and members of other social classes.

Together, this discussion highlights the ways that intergroup contact—in this case, interactions with members of higher social classes via upward mobility—has the potential to shift the emotions of employers. First, cross-class interactions may evoke less anxiety, as employers have had new experiences with members of higher social classes. Second, same-class interactions may elicit less enthusiasm as new knowledge about and experiences with outgroup

tempers the excitement of ingroup interactions. Put simply, employers' upward social mobility is expected to shift the affective experience of class salient interactions. Following research related to intergroup contact and social class transitioners, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 13A: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety.

Hypothesis 13B: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm.

One of the determinants of compassion is the extent to which an individual has the resources to care for the individual in need (Goetz et al., 2010). Because upward social mobility includes acquiring new resources—both material and potentially psychological (Martin & Côté, 2019)—it is expected that upward mobility will increase the experience of compassion in same-class interactions for employers from the lower social class. Employers' ability to enact prosocial behavior is improved through upward mobility, which has downstream consequences for enacting prosocial behavior. Accordingly, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 13C: Upward mobility strengthens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for members of the lower social class.

Social Dominance Orientation

Another factor that may influence the extent to which same- and cross-class interactions trigger certain emotions is employers' beliefs about social hierarchies. When an employer's beliefs reflect a desire to maintain social hierarchies (no matter their position on the social hierarchy), it is likely that same- and cross-class interactions are more salient to employers as they threaten or reinforce the social hierarchy. First, interactions with interviewees from the lower social class may "be particularly threatening and resource depleting for individuals high in

prejudice or harboring intolerant ideologies… making their intergroup encounters [for members of dominant groups] objectively less fluid and pleasant" (Paolini et al., 2018, p. 5). Second, interacting with interviewees from higher social classes is reinforcing for those who hold hierarchy-legitimizing beliefs, making same-class interactions more enjoyable for employers at the top of the social hierarchy and cross-class interactions more enjoyable for employers at the bottom of the social hierarchy. For both groups, there is a desire to maintain the status quo.

This discussion addresses an interesting question: do individuals from the lower social class contribute to social class inequality? This question mirrors discussions of the "queen bee" effect, where women seek to distance themselves from other women because of gendered stereotypes and internalized patriarchal beliefs and, in doing so, may legitimize gender inequality (Derks et al., 2016). The propensity for individuals from the lower social class to differentiate themselves from other members of the lower social class would be considered "self-group distancing" (van Veelen et al., 2020). When individuals internalize negative stereotypes about their own group, they may "seek to improve their personal situation by distancing from their stigmatized ingroup and by moving closer to the high-status outgroup" (van Veelen et al., 2020, p. 2). Thus, one explanation for employers from the lower social class reacting more negatively towards ingroup members and more positively towards outgroup members may be that they hold hierarchy-legitimizing beliefs, ultimately driving them to put distance between themselves and ingroup members. In this sense, they endorse and legitimize the current social hierarchy through their treatment of another member of the lower social class.

According to Social Dominance Theory, individuals with high social dominance orientation (SDO) endorse systems, practices, and policies that maintain inequality across social groups (Son Hing et al., 2011). For example, high-SDO individuals endorse several ideologies

that support group-based hierarchies (e.g., racism, meritocracy, a belief that equal opportunity exists for all groups, and the Protestant work ethic) (Haley & Sidanius, 2006; Pratto et al., 1994). Desiring group-based dominance likely influences the extent to which employers feel anxious or enthusiastic during class salient interactions. When one believes that those with prestige, wealth, and power deserve their position in society, interacting with interviewees from a lower social class pursuing employment may be more potent—these job candidates are threatening to the social hierarchy and thus are appraised as a greater threat. In other words, "prejudiced members of dominant groups may be especially concerned about intergroup contact 'exposing' and challenging their in-group's privileges" (Paolini et al., 2018, p. 5). In contrast, interacting with those at the top of the social hierarchy seeking employment is concordant—these job candidates are reinforcing the social hierarchy and thus elicit more amiable emotions. Formally hypothesized:

> *Hypothesis 14A*: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from higher social classes.
>
> *Hypothesis 14B*: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from higher social classes.
>
> *Hypothesis 14C*: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from the lower social class.
>
> *Hypothesis 14D*: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class.

A key factor in whether individuals experience compassion is the extent to which they believe an individual is responsible for their own hardship and suffering (Goetz et al., 2010). When individuals adopt hierarchy-endorsing beliefs, they likely hold those at the bottom of the

social hierarchy more responsible for their position in society—overlooking any structural influences on their social position. In contrast, they may attribute the interviewee's position on the social hierarchy to their poor work ethic or a propensity to be lazy—two negative stereotypes attributed to members of the lower social class (Lucas, 2011a, 2011b). Further, when one endorses hierarchy-legitimizing beliefs, they are motivated to put distance between themselves and members of the stigmatized group (Derks et al., 2016). Thus, when interacting with interviewees from the lower social class, the relevance of the interviewee via group membership grows less important, perhaps even the source of contempt. Accordingly, it is expected that an increase in SDO undercuts the likelihood of feeling compassion when interacting with interviewees from the lower social class. Therefore, I suggest the following:

> *Hypothesis 14E*: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class.
>
> *Hypothesis 14F*: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and compassion for employers from the higher social classes.

Psychological Flexibility

Individuals' emotions need not automatically drive behavior. Instead, individuals can develop skills that help them slow down and evaluate whether they should act on what they are feeling. An employer's ability to name their emotions, accept them, and commit to their goals may influence the extent to which they allow the experience of anxiety or enthusiasm to drive their selection decisions. In other words, if an employer can identify what they are feeling and reassess if their emotions support their goals, they may be less likely to act on the anxiety or enthusiasm stemming from same- or cross-class interactions. Such an ability has been termed

psychological flexibility or formally defined as "a set of skills that facilitates an individual to move toward what is important to her or him, and to cognitively regulate emotions that might hold her or him back" (van Hugten et al., 2021, p. 2). The notion of psychological flexibility was developed as a part of cognitive-behavioral therapy, specifically Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Bond et al., 2006), which advances the idea that individuals can have agency over their emotions and behaviors.

The main premise of psychological flexibility is that individuals may be constrained by internal events (i.e., emotions) in a way that disrupts their goals—an idea consistent with control precedence over emotions (Scarantino, 2016). When individuals act to minimize unpleasant emotions or amplify positive emotions in a way that interrupts the primary goal—in this case, selecting employees that are best qualified for the role—it can be considered disruptive. In contrast, when individuals have higher levels of psychological flexibility, they can accept their emotions and recenter on the goal at hand (Bond & Bunce, 2003). Instead of acting on their emotions, individuals "treat their thoughts and feelings as automatic chatter… such that they will remain aware of their thoughts and feelings, but base their actions upon their values and goals, not upon the vagaries of their internal events" (Biron & van Veldhoven, 2012, p. 1264). Psychological flexibility reduces the focus on self-oriented emotions to concentrate on the current situation (Atkins & Parker, 2012), and thus managers with increased psychological flexibility are expected to be less susceptible to acting on anxiety and enthusiasm when making selection decisions. Accordingly, I suggest:

> *Hypothesis 15A*: Psychological flexibility weakens the negative relationship between anxiety and selection outcomes.

Hypothesis 15B: Psychological flexibility weakens the positive relationship between enthusiasm and selection outcomes.

While psychological flexibility is expected to regulate anxiety and enthusiasm, it may amplify the relationship between compassion and selection outcomes. Theory suggests that psychological flexibility broadly facilitates compassionate behavior in organizations (Atkins & Parker, 2012). Instead of being overtaken by one's self-focused emotions, psychological flexibility helps individuals concentrate on others' concerns and experiences, as well as enhances individuals' appraisals of their ability to cope with a situation. Because extending compassion is dependent on an assessment of the costs and benefits of helping (Goetz et al., 2010), and psychological flexibility improves individuals' assessments of their ability to cope, it is expected that individuals will regulate their behavior towards compassionate action when they are more psychologically flexible. That is, employers may be more likely to offer positive selection outcomes to interviewees who elicit compassion because they have additional emotional resources to extend to the individual. Instead of allowing self-focused emotions to dictate their decisions, they tune into other-focused emotions like compassion. In sum, psychological flexibility is expected to amplify the effect of feeling compassion on selection outcomes. Formally hypothesized:

Hypothesis 15C: Psychological flexibility strengthens the positive relationship between compassion and selection outcomes.

Organizational Role

To this point, upward mobility and SDO have been considered factors that potentially change the relationship between class salient interactions and employers' emotions. However, it is likely that features of the formal role that the interviewee has applied to may also impact the

extent to which same- and cross-class interactions elicit emotions. Specifically, this study considers one characteristic of the role being filled—the level the position is at on the organizational ladder. Organizational roles are associated with both social positions and organizational status, as well as specific responsibilities and tasks (Miles et al., 1996). As an example of the latter category, individuals in a managerial role are expected to communicate and monitor information related to their subordinates, offer leadership and be a liaison, and make decisions related to their areas of oversight (Mintzberg, 1973). In contrast, individuals in lower organizational levels (i.e., non-managerial roles) are expected to execute their assigned tasks. Comparisons between managerial and non-managerial jobs occur frequently within management literature, mainly because they are considered qualitatively different (Miles et al., 1996). Accordingly, this study considers how applying for a managerial versus non-managerial role may shift employers' emotional reactions to class salient interactions.

Organizational scholarship points out that certain characteristics confer immediate status on their holders (Fiske, 2010). Specifically, status characteristics theory (Berger et al., 1972) suggests that high-status characteristics (e.g., being white, middle-aged, male, and middle- or upper-social class) convey societal status, which, in turn, shape expectations and behaviors on the part of both individuals (i.e., the target and the observer). That is, if an individual has a characteristic in one area that signals status, observers may attribute corresponding capabilities to other areas. For the observer, "nominal societal status conveys dispositional ability because people expect it. The characteristic is diffuse because it then spills over to areas beyond its relevance" (Fiske, 2010, p. 947). In this case, being from a middle or upper social class confers societal status, which is expected to spill over into improved judgments about the person's capabilities at work. This is consistent with literature suggesting that those from higher social

classes are stereotyped as more competent than those from a lower social class (Durante & Fiske, 2017; Durante et al., 2017). The status derived from a higher social class standing diffuses into assessments of the individuals' capabilities—they are considered more capable of filling a managerial role. At the same time, the lack of status and associated stereotypes about individuals from the lower social class (i.e., they are less competent or capable) diffuses into how the employer views the interviewee's capabilities—they are more suited to non-managerial roles.

The notion that those from a higher social class are more suited for managerial roles, whereas those from a lower social class are more suited for non-managerial roles is also supported by role congruity theory (Eagly, 1987). This theory outlines how "prejudice can arise from the relations that people perceive between the characteristics of members of a social group and the requirements of the social roles that group members occupy or aspire to occupy" (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 573-574). Members of the higher social classes demonstrate behavior that is more concordant with the metrics of performance that are common in workplaces today (Dittman et al., 2020), potentially casting them as more capable to fill higher-level roles. Further, those from higher social classes are more likely to emerge as leaders, although they may not be more effective (Martin et al., 2016). They display more confidence (Belmi et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2017) and embody more agentic behaviors (Sharps & Anderson, 2021)— attributes valued in organizations and expected of those in supervisory roles. When employees interview for a position that is "congruent" with the status conferred by their social class standing or the expectancy for what position they ought to aspire to, employers' affective responses are likely attenuated. A "match" is less threatening and more exciting, whereas a "mismatch" is more threatening and less exciting. Therefore, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 16A: Organizational role moderates the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety.

Hypothesis 16B: Organizational role moderates the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety.

Hypothesis 16C: Organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes.

Hypothesis 16D: Organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class.

Chapter 4: Methods & Results

This study investigates the effect of class salient interactions on selection outcomes, specifically considering the explanatory role of employers' discrete emotions. To empirically test the proposed hypotheses, I used an experimental vignette model (EVM) or "a short, carefully constructed description of a person, object, or situation representing a systematic combination of characteristics" (Atmuller & Steiner, 2010, p. 128; Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Before testing the formal hypotheses, I conducted a validation study to assess the social class manipulation using video vignettes in an online sample. Following, I tested the hypotheses with an experimental design using simulated interviews with job candidates from either a lower, middle, or upper social class (see Table 2 for an overview of hypotheses). Specifically, Study 1 tests the effects of class salient interactions on employers' discrete emotional reactions and their downstream effects on selection decisions in an online sample of employees with management experience. This study also examines individual-level moderators. Study 2 served to replicate and extend Study 1 using a sample of full-time employees in hiring roles, considered organizational role as a boundary condition, and introduced a non-obtrusive measure of employers' emotions.

Ethics Statement

IRB approval was received through the University of Arkansas' Institutional Review Board (Protocol # 2207409890 for Validation Study and Study 1 and Protocol # 2211438487 for Study 2; see Appendix A). Informed consent was provided in each survey. Participants for Study 1 remain anonymous through the online data collection platform as they are assigned a unique identification code that can be used to match participants' surveys. Participants in Study 2 recruited via a market research company were assigned a unique and random identification code.

Data Analysis

For all studies, descriptive statistics and correlations were calculated in the R environment. Hypotheses were tested using the LM function and PROCESS function in the R environment (Hayes, 2022). PROCESS uses a bootstrapping approach to mediation where 5,000 samples are created to estimate the indirect effect and obtain 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. PROCESS is the preferred method for mediation tests as it directly assesses the intervening effect and does not demonstrate issues related to power associated with a causal steps approach (Hayes, 2009; Hayes, 2022; Zhao et al., 2010).

Validation Study

Overview

The main goal of the validation study was to create and test a manipulation of job seekers' social class during employment interviews. This process included four main steps: (a) develop interview questions, (b) develop and validate scripts and signals that depict the lower, middle, or upper social class status of job seekers, (c) film and edit videos that portray the script, and (d) test the manipulation (Podsakoff et al., 2013).

Procedure

Development of interview questions. During the first step of this process, I developed questions consistent with current interview practices to use as a part of the script (see Table 3). To do so, I connected with professional staffing consultants and human resource professionals at several corporations, requested they share interview questions, and then compared across protocols to find the most frequently used questions. For example, I talked with three professionals at the director level or higher at Fortune 500 companies responsible for selection processes, including diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As another example, I connected with the head of a national staffing organization to understand their interview protocols when

screening applicants for job placements. In addition, I reviewed and incorporated questions from the Society of Human Resource Management "Job Interview Questions" resource page (SHRM, 2022). Consistent with past research (Podsakoff et al., 2011) and practice (Morgeson et al., 2005; Simola et al., 2007), I used both situational and behavioral question formats, having the interviewees describe what they have done in the past as well as something they would hypothetically do given a future scenario. This step bolsters the video vignette's ecological validity by mirroring current interview practices.

Development of candidate response scripts. Following the development of interview questions, I created an interview script for the lower, middle, and upper social class conditions for each interview question. The main goal of this step was to develop a script that captures the essential elements of social class while simultaneously refraining from capturing other constructs (see Table 4) (Podsakoff et al., 2013). To begin, I reviewed literature to generate over fifty items that represent signals of the lower, middle, and upper social classes. Next, I solicited feedback from ten subject matter experts (i.e., assistant and associate professors or late-stage doctoral students with expertise in the area of organizational behavior) who assessed the social class category each item was best aligned with: lower social class (1), lower-middle social class (2), middle social class (3), upper-middle social class (4), and upper social class (5). Each item was categorized based on its mean, with items ranging from 1 – 2.5 classified as a signal of lower social class, 2.6 – 3.5 classified as a signal of middle social class standing, and 3.6 – 5.0 classified as a signal of upper social class standing. All items incorporated into the script received consensus regarding what social class the signal best represented, as indicated by appropriate levels of interrater agreement (i.e., an r_{wg} greater than or equal to .80) (Lindell et al., 1999; Wagner et al., 2010).

Across the scripts, the aim was to be clear, use concrete language, and ensure as little variation as possible across conditions. For example, the scripts used a similar number of words in the response, ensuring they would be about the same time length (lower social class condition: 1150 words; middle social class condition: 1078 words; upper social class condition: 1089). In this step, I also clarified the video's recording environment (i.e., an office painted with in neutral color) and job candidate clothing (i.e., a black suit with white shirt and neutral tie), ensuring it would be as realistic as possible, thus allowing participants to take the scenario seriously and achieve psychological realism. Following the creation of the script, it was reviewed by a subject matter expert for feedback (i.e.., a faculty member with expertise in social class research).

Recording the video manipulations. In the third step, I hired a trained actor to perform the role of the interviewee. The interviewee was played by a White male in his early 20s. The film was edited, and the length was approximately six minutes. Interview questions were presented in writing on-screen during the recording and preceded the actors' responses. Past research using video vignettes has ranged from about five (Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013) to twenty-five minutes (Podsakoff et al., 2011). The average video recording across the lower, middle, and upper social class conditions was a little less than eight minutes long, with no more than a thirty-second difference. Regarding video length, the aim was to balance creating a salient manipulation while avoiding participant fatigue.[3]

[3] Between the first study and second study, two questions were dropped (question #3 and #6) from the recorded interview to decrease the video length; decreasing video length facilitates a shorter overall survey, which may help address issues with participant fatigue. These questions were identified by asking subject experts (i.e., late-stage doctoral students with expertise in organizational behavior) to identify questions that were the most realistic in an interview setting. The two questions that were dropped did not contain any signals of social class that were not presented elsewhere in the script. The average video time in Study 2 was about five minutes and ten seconds long, which remains consistent with past research.

Results

In the final step of the validation study, the manipulation was tested using an online sample of full-time employees. Highhouse (2009) has suggested that to demonstrate the validity of experimental manipulations, it is necessary that participants in the upper-class condition score significantly higher than those in the middle-class position, and that those in the middle-class condition score significantly higher than those in the lower-class condition. Thus, I conducted a manipulation check with a sample[4] of full-time employees recruited through the Prolific platform. First, 251 individuals completed a short screener survey in which demographic information was collected. Following, in the main survey, 125 participants were randomly assigned to one condition (lower social class condition: 39; middle social class condition: 44; upper social class condition: 42) and watched the corresponding video. After viewing the video, participants were asked several questions to determine the validity of the manipulation. All participants passed the attention check, and thus their data was included in the analysis.

Following past research (Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016), participants were asked about the job candidate's social class background. Specifically, they were asked to indicate, "which of the following do you think best describes the job candidate's family's social class while they were growing up?" (lower class - 1, lower middle class - 2, middle middle class - 3, upper middle class - 4, and upper class - 5). Analysis of this data supported the video vignette manipulations. The results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), $F(2, 122) = 136.3$, $p < .001$, on the ratings of videos depicting manipulations for the lower, middle, and upper social class conditions

[4] To determine sample sizes, I ran a power analysis using the G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007). A power analysis calculates the sample size needed given an expected effect size (.25), alpha (.05), and power (.8) (Cohen, 1988). Following, I increased the number by approximately 10% to account for incomplete or low-quality data (e.g., missing attention checks). Power analyses were run for the pilot study, study 1, and study 2 to determine sample size.

(lower social class mean: 2.08 and SD: 0.67; middle social class mean: 2.89 and SD: 0.62; upper social class mean: 4.36 and SD: 0.62) indicated that the participants perceived a significantly different level of job candidate social class. The means for the pairs of each condition were all significantly different from each other in the expected directions (all $p < .001$). Also confirming the manipulation was effective, when participants were asked, "what is the likelihood the job candidate is from a working-class family?" on a 1-7 scale ranging from "extremely unlikely" to "extremely likely," an ANOVA, $F(2, 122) = 107.8$, $p < .001$, indicated significant differences in the perception of job candidate social class (lower social class mean: 5.05 and SD: 1.37; middle social class mean: 3.05 and SD: 1.33; upper social class mean: 1.29 and SD: 0.60). Those in the lower social class condition rated the job candidate as more likely to be from a working-class family than those in the middle social class condition ($p < .001$) and the upper social class condition ($p< .001$). Likewise, those in the middle social class condition rated the job candidate as less likely to be from a working-class family than those in the lower social class condition ($p< .001$) but higher than those in the upper social class condition ($p< .001$). Together, this provides evidence of the validity of the experimental manipulation.

Qualitative questions pilot study. After completing the scale items, participants also answered several open-ended questions. The goal of asking these questions as a part of the validation study was to pilot the questions to use as a robustness check in Study 1. First, participants were asked to answer the following open-ended question in 4-6 sentences: "Oftentimes individuals feel differently after interacting with another person. After watching the interview, how do you feel about the job candidate?"; "What was your overall emotional reaction from watching the interview?"; "Please describe how you feel about the interviewee generally."; and "Please describe how you feel about the interviewee becoming a member of your

organization." The answers were reviewed for their quality and assessed based on whether they represented the desired information (i.e., whether the responses primarily centered on the participants' emotional reactions to the job candidate). Based on this information, two questions were updated to use in the following studies: "What 4-5 words (adjectives) would you use to describe how you feel about hiring the job candidate? Why did you choose these words?" and "After watching the interview, how do you feel about the job candidate? What is your 'gut reaction' about hiring him?" This step was beneficial to better understand what questions yield specific and complete information from participants.

Study 1: Method

Sample

The sample for Study 1 consisted of 414 full-time employees in management roles. Specifically, each participant had management experience, occupied a role with supervisor responsibilities, worked full-time, was a citizen or permanent resident of the United States or working in the United States, and had over a 95% approval rating on the online recruitment platform. This sample is appropriate for several reasons. First, it includes individuals who have experience making management decisions in the workplace. Second, because these individuals have occupied supervisor positions, they have experience making decisions that include personnel (e.g., scheduling, performance reviews, personnel selection). Third, the sample is restricted to those who are U.S. citizens or permanent residence who work in the U.S. because social class may be perceived or play out differently because of a country's unique culture and history. For the purposes of this study, theorizing occurred in a U.S. context. Finally, this sampling strategy ensured a certain quality of response based on past users' evaluations.

Procedure

Participants were recruited via Prolific, an online recruitment platform that caters to academic researchers (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Prolific has been shown to have data quality that matches or exceeds that of other online recruitment platforms (Peer et al., 2017, 2021). One advantage of Prolific is that it allows researchers to screen participants based on their answers to prior pre-screening questions provided by the platform (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Thus, I was able to screen for certain criteria through the Prolific platform (e.g., management experience, supervisory role, work hours, U.S. citizenship or residency status, and past ratings) and, additionally, use Prolific's tool to recruit a gender-balanced sample.

Given the eligibility criteria for this study, 951 participants were recruited via Prolific to participate in a five-minute screener survey that asked questions about current and childhood social class, management experience, supervisor responsibilities, job level, work hours, and citizenship status. Participants were compensated $0.80 for completing the screener survey. Those who meet the criteria (i.e., those who have management experience, occupy a role with supervisor responsibilities, work full-time, are a citizen or permanent residence of the United States or working in the United States, and have over a 95% approval rating) were invited via Prolific to complete an initial survey that collected individual measures (e.g., demographics, scales measures) and compensated $2.01 for their participation in an eight-minute study. While all eligible individuals were invited to participate, data was capped at 200 participants from the lower social class (200 responses collected), 250 participants from the middle social class (243 collected), and 200 participants from the upper social class (125 collected). Prolific has the capability to cap the number of participants within a survey based on a predetermined number.

One week later, participants who were eligible based on their responses to the screener survey and completion of the first survey were invited via Prolific to complete a second survey. Participants who completed this survey were compensated $4.39 for participating in an eighteen-minute study. Responses from 415 individuals were collected (164 in the lower social class; 164 from the middle social class; 87 from the upper social class). Seven individuals were removed for missing attention checks, bringing the total number of participants to 408 (158 from lower social class origins, 164 from middle social class origins, and 86 from upper social class origins).

During the second survey, each participant was randomly assigned to view the interview of the job candidate from either the lower, middle, or upper social class condition. As a part of the instructions, participants were told they were playing the role of a human resource specialist at a fictitious company and were responsible for providing selection decisions regarding an interviewee. Participants were told that the job candidate met all the qualifications for the position he was applying for. Next, participants were told that they are going to view a job candidate's recorded interview and, following, evaluate the candidate. Participants were instructed to watch the interview as if they were in the room with the interviewee, doing their best to picture themselves sitting across from the interviewee and listening intently to the questions and responses. Participants then viewed the video corresponding to their randomly assigned social class condition.

After watching the video, the participants completed measures related to each of the following (in order): emotional reactions measured using scale and qualitative formats, selection outcomes (i.e., assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards), and, finally, assessments and attributions related to the job candidate including fit, stereotypes, and

abilities. After finishing these measures, participants completed manipulation checks and quality control questions.

Measures - Screener Survey

Social Class. Participants' social class was measured using both objective and subjective indicators of their childhood social class. Objective and subjective indicators can be somewhat distinct from one another and have independent effects (Côté et al., 2021; Singh-Manoux et al., 2005; Sharps & Anderson, 2021). Therefore, capturing objective and subjective measures of childhood social class was important and enabled comparisons between the two. To capture objective income, participants reported household income while growing up (ages 0-18) on a scale from 1 (*Less than $25,000*) to 7 (*$150,000 or more*), where there is a $25,000 increase at every point (Sharps & Anderson, 2021). Next, the father's and mother's education were rated on a 1-5 scale with the following options: less than high school, high school or some university, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or PhD or professional degree (Côté et al., 2021).

Participants were also asked to indicate their subjective social class during childhood (ages 0-18) using two scales. First, participants rated their childhood social class using the MacArthur ladder (Adler et al., 2000): "Where would you place yourself on this ladder when you were growing up (i.e., the ladder rung you would consider most representative of your family background)?" Options range from 1 (*lowest rung*) to 10 (*highest rung*). Second, participants rated their childhood social class by selecting which of the following they belonged to while growing up: lower class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, or upper class (Côté et al., 2021).

Social Mobility. To capture participants' social mobility, the scales for childhood social class were adapted to represent participants' current social class, including objective and

subjective measures. Next, the difference between childhood and current social class was calculated for all indicators, resulting in social mobility measures. Participants were also asked to subjectively evaluate the extent to which they have experienced upward social mobility on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Not At All*) to 4 (*To A Great Extent*). For the purposes of controlling for social class mobility in this study, the difference between current and childhood subjective social class using the five-bucket measure was employed. For the purposes of investigating whether upward social class mobility acts as a moderator, a categorical variable was created wherein those who experienced upward mobility (i.e., a positive score on social mobility differences) were coded as 1 and all others (no mobility or downward mobility) were coded as 0.

Measures - Survey 1

Social Dominance Orientation. Measures of SDO were collected using Pratto and colleagues' (1994) 8-item scale ($\alpha = .96$). Participants responded to each item on a seven-point scale that ranged from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (S*trongly agree*). An example item is "It's OK if some groups have more of a chance in life than others." Another example item is, "All groups should be given an equal chance in life" (reverse coded).

Psychological Flexibility. Psychological flexibility was measured using a 6-item scale (Gloster et al., 2021; $\alpha = .86$) that ranged from 1 (*Very seldom*) to 5 (*Very often*). Participants were told that the "questions refer to your experience in general." Sample items include: "I can look at hindering thoughts from a distance without letting them control me" and "Even if I am somewhere else with my thoughts, I can focus on what's going on in important moments."

Measures - Survey 2

Emotions. *Anxiety*, *enthusiasm*, and *compassion* were measured using scale measures. For each measure, participants were asked, "Indicate the extent you feel this way right now, after

watching the job interview" (Barrett, 1998, p. 583) on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*A great deal*). First, anxiety was measured using a three-item scale that asked participants to rate their feelings of state anxiety using three adjectives (i.e., uncomfortable, nervous, and apprehensive) (Harrigan & O'Connell, 1995; $\alpha = .97$). Next, enthusiasm was measured using four adjectives (enthusiastic, excited, lively, and energetic) (Barrett, 1998; $\alpha = .87$). Finally, compassion was measured using three adjectives (compassionate, sympathetic, and moved) (Oveis et al., 2010; $\alpha = .93$). Discrete emotions were presented in a randomized order.

For use as a robustness test, individuals also answered several open-ended questions that tapped into their emotional reactions. Specifically, participants were asked to answer the two open-ended questions generated through the questions piloted in the validation study. Answers were coded using a closed-coding approach via Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC), a software program in which the codes are pre-established using validated LIWC dictionaries and, in this case, specifically focused on identifying the emotional content of participant responses (Boyd et al., 2022; Pennebaker et al., 2015). Specifically, the positive and negative affective content and the psychological drive content of each participant's qualitative responses was analyzed.

Hireability. Assessments of interviewees' hireability were measured using a scale based on Madera and colleagues' (2009) selection study ($\alpha = .97$). Participants rated the hireability of applicants on a four-item scale that ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 9 (*Very much*). Examples items included "To what extent is this a 'top notch' candidate" or "Is it likely this seeker will make an effective employee?"

Salary recommendation. The participant's recommendation for the interviewee's starting salary was collected using a single item: "If the candidate was selected for the position,

what salary would you suggest our company offer him?" (Podsakoff et al., 2011). The salary range was based on Georgetown University's 2015 report on "The Economic Value of College Majors." The report found that entry-level college-educated workers with a business degree earned a median of $37,000 annually. Thus, following Podsakoff and colleagues' (2011) example, participants were given seven options between $33,000 - $41,000, representing an interval of $1,000 in annual salary.

Social rewards. Participants' willingness to work with the interviewee was measured using a three-item scale based on Bowles and colleagues' 2016 study ($\alpha = .95$). Participants rated their willingness to work with a job candidate on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Extremely*). Example items include: "How beneficial would it be for you to have this person working for you" and "How much would you enjoy having this person working for you?"

Controls. Past research has pointed to several explanatory factors in hiring decisions, and therefore, they were collected as potential controls or explanatory variables (each of the following has been discussed in detail in the *Literature Review* section). Collecting these variables allows further examination of the tie between class salient interactions and selection outcomes in future analysis. First, similarity and liking were measured using subscales developed by Howard & Ferris (1996). Similarity was measured using a four-item scale ($\alpha = .94$) that ranged from 1 (Totally disagree) to 7 (Totally agree). A sample item is "This applicant reminds me of myself." Liking was measured on a four-item scale ($\alpha = .90$) that ranged from 1 (Totally disagree) to 7 (Totally agree), and an example item is "This applicant has qualities which I like." Both similarity and liking have been shown to increase the likelihood of hiring recommendations (Fox & Spector, 2000; Howard & Ferris, 1996). Observers also rated the job candidate on warmth and competence, two stereotypes that have been tied to social class (Durante & Fiske,

2017; Durante et al., 2017) and hiring decisions (Belmi et al., 2020; Cuddy et al., 2004). Participants were asked to rate the interviewee on four items related to competence (example include "capable" and "efficient"; α = .80) and warmth (example items include "good-natured" and "trustworthy"; α = .95) on a scale that ranged from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely) (Cuddy et al., 2004). When employers rely on heuristics during decision-making, perceptions of warmth and competence improve assessments of employees (Cuddy et al., 2004; Posthuma et al., 2002).

Several variables will be collected that have been shown to relate to interviewees' social class and hiring decisions. Collecting these items to include as potential controls is thus important, as they may be alternative explanations for selection decisions and may be required in future analysis. First, participants' attributions of interviewees' *socio-emotional skills* were collected using Sharps & Anderson's (2021) three-item measure (α = .92). Specifically, participants rated the employee on emotional intelligence, general intelligence, and interpersonal skill on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Worse than 99% of people*) to 100 (*Better than 90% of people*). Following past research (Sharps & Anderson, 2021), attributions of *cognitive ability* were collected by asking participants to rate the interviewee on their level of intelligence using a scale that ranged from 1 (*Worse than 99% of people*) to 100 (*Better than 90% of people*). Longstanding stereotypes often cast those from the lower social class as lacking intelligence or abilities (Durante et al., 2017; Fiske et al., 2002). Thus, it may be necessary to assess if perceptions of emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, or cognitive abilities are driving employers' emotions or selection decisions. Next, *disjoint agency* was collected using Sharps & Anderson's (2021) measure that asks participants to rate the interviewee on several attributes (α = .94), including "has strong leadership skills," "motivated" and "hard-working." Their research suggests that displaying assertive behavior plays an explanatory role in the relationship between

the social class of interviewees and selection decisions. All attributes were rated on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Extremely*). This scale also included one-item measures to tap into job candidate overconfidence (Belmi et al., 2020) and entitlement (Côté, 2021).

A measure of trait affect was included to assess the participant's *trait affective disposition*. Trait affect was measured using the short PANAS (Mackinnon et al., 1999) measure (trait positive affect: $\alpha = .93$; trait negative affect: $\alpha = .92$) that asks participants to rate "the extent you feel this way generally" on a scale that ranged from 1 (*very slightly to not at all*) to (*very much*). The scale included ten items, and sample items included "alert," "enthusiastic," scared," and "distressed." Trait affect has been shown to relate positively to similarity and liking, which in turn influence hiring decisions (Fox & Spector, 2000). Further, having a positive disposition has been shown to facilitate the processing of relevant information during decision making (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Trait compassion was measured using the five-item compassion facet of the DPES scale (Shiota et al., 2006; $\alpha = .90$). Participants rated their agreement on a scale that ranged from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). Example items include "It is important to take care of people who are vulnerable." Participants with a higher disposition toward compassion may also be more likely to experience a state of compassion, and thus it may be important to consider. Additionally, participant gender, age, and race were collected as control variables.

Manipulation check and psychological realism

At the end of the survey, participants were directed to reflect on the job candidate video they viewed and were asked questions regarding the social class of the job candidate. Specifically, they were first asked to the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with three statements: "the job candidate was from a wealthy family," "the job candidate was from a poor

family," and "the job candidate was from a middle income family." Next, to ensure psychological realism, the candidates answered four questions on a scale ($\alpha = .75$) that ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). Examples items included "I put great effort into putting myself in the role of someone making hiring decisions" and "the interview questions used seemed like questions an actual organization may use."

Study 1: Results

Manipulation Check, Participant Engagement, and Realism

Responses to the manipulation check about the job candidate's social class demonstrated an effective manipulation. Specifically, participants were asked to indicate, "which of the following do you think best describes the job candidate's family's social class while they were growing up?" (lower class - 1, lower middle class - 2, middle middle class - 3, upper middle class - 4, and upper class - 5). The results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), $F(2, 405) = 291.9$, $p < .001$, on the ratings of videos depicting manipulations for the lower, middle, and upper social class conditions (lower social class mean: 2.37 and SD: 0.62; middle social class mean: 2.95 and SD: 0.69; upper social class mean: 4.29 and SD: 0.78) indicated that the participants perceived a significantly different level of social class. Participants also reported being highly engaged in their role as an evaluator of the job candidate and believed that the interview questions reflected actual organizational processes. The means on a 7-point agreement scale were well above the midpoint for the following items: "I put great effort into putting myself in the role of someone making hiring decisions" ($M = 6.61$, $SD = 0.69$) and "The interview questions used seemed like questions an actual organization may use" ($M = 6.47$, $SD = 0.89$).

Operationalization of Social Class Similarities and Differences

As originally proposed and outlined in the *Measures* section, objective and subjective indicators of social class were collected from participants. Still, selecting an operationalization for the main hypothesis testing was necessary. Based on Côté's (2022) work that overviewed multidimensional nature of social class, specifically, work adopting an interpersonal perspective, the initial operationalization of class salient interactions was constructed using participants' perceptions of the job candidate's subjective childhood social class and their own subjective childhood social class. This is consistent with the principle that "perceptions of others' social class informs several judgments people make" (Côté, 2022, p. 16). Therefore, to create the same-class, upward cross-class, and downward cross-class variables, the difference between one's own subjective childhood social class and perceptions of the job candidate's subjective childhood social class was calculated (using the five-item scale described above). If there was no difference, the interaction was classified as a same-class interaction (n = 111). Upward cross-class interactions (n = 197) and downward-cross class interactions (n = 100) were classified according to the direction of the difference. Thus, three categorical variables were created to determine whether participants were in an upward cross-class, downward cross-class, or same-class interaction during the job interview video.

Several hypotheses make comparisons using the specific social class (i.e., lower, middle, or upper social class) of the candidate and the participant. To do so, the five-item scale of subjective childhood social class was used. Following Kish-Gephart & Campbell (2015), participant social class and perception of job candidate social class were bucketed into three categories, wherein an indication of lower or lower-middle social class was coded as lower social class, an indication of middle class was coded as middle class, and an indication of middle-upper

or upper social class was coded as upper class. This step allows for the interactions between specific social classes to be investigated more closely (see Table 5 to see sample size for each possible interaction between the lower, middle, and upper social classes). Additional operationalizations of same and cross-class interactions based on current subjective social class and parental education are included in the *Supplementary Analysis*.

Hypothesis Tests

Table 6 displays means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities of Study 1 variables.[5] Before testing the model, I assessed the measures (anxiety, enthusiasm, compassion, hireability, and social rewards) using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in the R environment using the lavaan package. The 5-factor model fit the data well ($\chi^2_{(109)}$ = 486.14, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .092, SRMR = .051). Thus, I proceeded with testing the hypothesized model.

A path. Hypothesis 1 (H1) suggests a positive relationship between downward cross class interactions and employer anxiety, and Hypothesis 2 (H2) suggests a positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety. However, results indicated no significant difference between downward cross class interactions, upward cross class interactions, and same-class interactions, failing to support H1and H2 (see Table 7). Of note, however, is that when in an upward cross class interaction, interacting with those in the upper class elicited more anxiety than when interacting with those in the middle class (β = .31, p = .04), which is consistent with the notion that the middle class is distinguishable from the upper class and that some upward cross-class interactions elicit anxiety (see Table 8). Hypothesis 3 (H3) posts that same-class interactions relate positively to enthusiasm. Results indicated that same-class interactions, relative to cross-class interactions, do indeed yield increased enthusiasm (β =

[5] In reporting the results of Study 1 and Study 2, unstandardized effect sizes are indicated in the tables and in-text.

.48, p = .01) (see Table 9). The first three hypotheses underscore the importance of considering the direction (upward or downward) and social class of the target in class salient interactions, as well as suggest that both positively and negatively valanced emotions necessitate consideration in the context of hiring.

The next set of hypotheses turns to consider the specific social class of both the employer and job candidate simultaneously, parsing apart specific relationships. Hypothesis 4A (H4A) suggests that for employers from the upper social class, job candidates from the lower social class elicit anxiety. The results indicated no difference between interacting with candidates from the lower class compared to those from the middle class (β = -.09, p = .75) for this group (see Table 10). However, and contrary to the hypothesis, when compared to lower class candidates, those in the upper class elicited increased anxiety for upper class employers at a marginal level (β = .53, p = .08). Hypothesis 4B suggests that, for employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety. Results demonstrated that, for those in the middle class, there was no difference in levels of anxiety when interacting with job candidates from the lower class compared to job candidates from the upper class (β = .20, p = .27) or candidates from the middle class (β = .16, p = .37) (see Table 11). As such, H4B was not supported. In Hypothesis 4C (H4C) and 4D (H4D), the experience of employers from the lower class was examined, specifically positing that those from the middle social class and upper social class elicit increased anxiety, respectively. The results indicated that, for participants from the lower class, interacting with a job candidate from the upper class relative to a job candidate from the middle class increased anxiety at a marginal rate (β = .36, p = .06) (see Table 12). There was no significant difference when comparing interactions with a job candidate from the middle class versus those from the lower class (β = .09, p = .66). Compared to interacting with a job candidate

from the upper class, interacting with a job candidate from the lower class elicited less anxiety, while not at a significant level (β = -.27, p = .15). These results indicate a lack of support for H4C and marginal support for H4D and, broadly, point to a distinction between the middle and upper social classes when employers are from a lower social class.

The next set of hypotheses considers the role of the middle class, specifically examining the similarities and differences between the middle class and the upper class. Hypothesis 5A (H5A) states that, for employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety. Results demonstrated that, compared to interactions with the middle class, same-class interactions elicited greater anxiety for employers from the upper class (β = .62, p = .02) (see Table 13). This finding, again, underscores the threat experienced in same-class interactions for those from the upper social class. Hypothesis 5B (H5B) posited that, for employers from the middle class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety. However, there was not support for H5B, as there was no meaningful difference in anxiety when interacting with someone from the upper class compared to someone from the same class for participants from the middle class (β = .04, p = .79) (see Table 14).

Next, whether enthusiasm was generated for employers from the upper (middle) class when interacting with a job candidate from the middle (upper) class was examined in Hypothesis 6A (H6A) and Hypothesis 6B (H6B), respectively. There was no support for H6A, as interacting with those in the middle class did not elicit a significantly different amount of enthusiasm when compared to interactions with a job candidate from the lower class (β = .29, p = .48) or the upper class (β = -.46, p = .21) (see Table 15). H6B was supported (see Table 16). The results indicated that for those in the middle class, interacting with candidates from the lower class elicited significantly less enthusiasm than when interacting with candidates from the upper class (β = -

.64, p = .03) and that interacting with those from upper class generated less enthusiasm than same-class interactions (β = .77, p < .01). Together, these findings offer initial insight into the distinctive relationship between the lower, middle, and upper social classes, suggesting that it is prudent to differentiate between the three.

Hypothesis 7A (H7A) and 7B (H7B) considered whether interactions at social class extremes elicit increased anxiety. H7A, which suggested that for employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class, received marginal support (β = .36, p = .06) (see Table 17). In contrast, there was no support for H7B (β = -.09, p = .75) (see Table 18), which posited that, for employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class. While not formally hypothesized, results indicated that for those in the lower social class, candidates from the upper class elicited less enthusiasm than those in the middle class (β = -1.32, p < .01) (see Table 19). This finding supports the notion that, for those in the lower social class, there is a distinction between interacting with those in the middle class and those in the upper class.

Hypothesis 8 (H8) suggested that those in the lower class would feel more compassion in same-class interactions compared to when they interact with those in the middle class or those in the upper class. Specific to the lower social class, H8 received partial support, as those in the lower social class felt increased compassion in same-class interactions when compared to interacting with a job candidate from the upper class (β = -1.29, p < .01) (see Table 20). There was no difference in compassion when compared to engaging with a job candidate from the middle class (β = .08, p = .81). While not significant, the direction of effects indicated that those from the lower class experienced increased compassion compared to when the middle class (β =

-.16, p = .64) and upper class (β = -.82, p = .14) interact with similar others (see Table 21). Further examination showed that compared to upward cross-class interactions, both same-class interactions (β = .87, p < .001) and downward cross-class interactions (β = 1.09, p < .001) elicited increased compassion (see Table 22). Furthermore, in downward interactions, participants felt significantly less compassion when interacting with a job candidate from the middle class than a candidate from the lower class (β = -.58, p = .04) (see Table 23). Again, these results indicate a distinction when interacting with those in the lower versus middle social class, and support theorizing that suggests that compassion is elicited when interacting with those who are perceived as being in need.

B path. Hypotheses 9, 10, and 11 consider the impact of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion on selection outcomes. Hypothesis 9 suggests that anxiety relates negatively to assessments or hireability (H9A), salary recommendations (H9B), and social rewards (H9C). Results supported H9A, H9B, and H9C (see Tables 24, 25, and 26), with anxiety relating negatively to hireability (β = -.65, p < .001), salary recommendations (β = -.59, p < .001), and social rewards (β = -.43, p < .001). Hypothesis 10 suggests that enthusiasm relates positively to assessments or hireability (H10A), salary recommendations (H10B), and social rewards (H10C). Results supported H10A, H10B, and H10C (see Table 27, 28, and 29), with enthusiasm, positively relating to hireability (β = .53, p < .001), salary recommendations (β = .52, p < .001), and social rewards (β = .38, p < .001). Finally, Hypothesis 11 posits that compassion relates positively to assessments or hireability (H11A), salary recommendations (H11B), and social rewards (H11C). Results supported H11A, H11B, and H11C (see Table 30, 31, and 32), with compassion relating positively to hireability (β = .52, p < .001), salary recommendations (β =

.54, $p < .001$), and social rewards ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$). Together these results suggest that feeling discrete emotions are associated with selection outcomes and, as such, necessitate consideration.

Mediation. Hypothesis 12A suggests that employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between cross-class interactions and selection outcomes, and, likewise, Hypothesis 12B suggests that employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes. Neither hypothesis was supported as the bootstrap results for the indirect effect included zero in all cases (see Tables 33, 34, and 35, respectively). In contrast, Hypothesis 12C (H12C), which posited that employers' enthusiasm helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes, was supported. The confidence intervals for the bootstrap results for the indirect effect did not include zero for hireability (*M* = .25, *SE* = .09, *CI*: .079, .447), salary recommendations (*M* = .25, *SE* = .10, *CI*: .078, .461), and social rewards (*M* = .18, *SE* = .07, *CI*: .074, .426) (see Tables 36, 37, and 38, respectively). This provides some evidence that the enthusiasm felt in response to same-class interactions (compared to cross-class interactions) generates more positive selection outcomes for job candidates who share a social class background with the employer. Hypothesis 12D (H12D) considered the explanatory role of compassion, specifically suggesting that compassion helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes. H12D was also supported, with the confidence intervals for the bootstrap results for the indirect effect did not include zero for hireability (*M* = .24, *SE* = .09, *CI*: .074, .426), salary recommendations (*M* = .26, *SE* = .10, *CI*: .079, .459), and social rewards (*M* = .18, *SE* = .07, *CI*: .055, .313) (see Tables 39, 40, and 41, respectively). This finding demonstrates that compassion helps explain the positive selection outcomes for job candidates interacting with employers from a similar social class background.

Moderated Mediation. The next set of hypotheses considers the role of three employer-specific moderators: upward social mobility, social dominance orientation, and psychological flexibility. First, upward mobility was hypothesized to weaken the positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety (Hypothesis 13A; see Table 42), to weaken the positive relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm (Hypothesis 13B; see Table 43), and to strengthen the positive relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class (Hypothesis 13C; see Table 44). However, none of these hypotheses were supported as the respective interaction terms were not significant.

Likewise, social dominance orientation did not strengthen the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from higher social classes (Hypothesis 14A; see Tables 45 and 46), strengthen the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes (Hypotheses 14B; see Tables 47 and 48), weaken the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from the lower social class (Hypothesis 14C; see Table 49), weaken the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class (Hypothesis 14D; see Table 50), weaken the relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class (Hypothesis 14E; see Table 51), or weaken the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and compassion for employers from the higher social classes (Hypothesis 14F; see Tables 52 and 53). Seen together, these results may indicate that upward mobility and social dominance orientation do not act as boundary conditions. However, other explanations may include a lack of statistical power or the necessity to consider the boundary conditions in more specific instances (e.g., distinguishing the specific social class of the

participant and target in class salient interactions, examining downward cross-class interactions with certain groups), a topic considered further in the *Discussion* section.

While none of the specific hypotheses related to social dominance were supported, several interactions were significant, although in an unexpected way. First, for those in the upper social class, the positive tie between same-class interactions and enthusiasm was weaker under higher levels of SDO ($\beta = -.74$, $p < .01$), wherein same-class interactions elicited less enthusiasm at lower levels of SDO (-1SD = 4.14) than at higher levels of SDO (+1SD= 3.39), and cross-class interactions generated greater enthusiasm at higher levels of SDO (+1SD = 4.46) than at lower levels of SDO (-1SDO = 3.03). In a similar pattern, the middle social class demonstrated greater enthusiasm in downward cross-class interactions (compared to same-class interactions) at higher levels of SDO (SD+1= 4.38) than at lower levels of SDO (-1SD= 3.69) ($\beta = .53$, $p = .02$). However, in contrast, those in the middle class demonstrated less enthusiasm in same-class interactions compared to upward cross-class interactions, wherein same-class interactions generated less excitement at higher levels of SDO (+1SD= 3.87) than at lower levels of SDO (-SD= 4.52) and more excitement in cross-class interactions at higher levels of SDO (+1SD = 3.77) than at lower levels of SDO (-1SD = 3.13) ($\beta = -.51$, $p = .01$). SDO also moderated the indirect effect of same-class interactions (compared to downward cross class interactions) and hireability via enthusiasm, as is indicted by the confidence intervals in the index of moderated mediation not containing zero (*M* = .23, *SE* = .12, *CI:* .02, .483).

On the one hand, theorizing suggests that hiring a job candidate from a higher social class maintains social hierarchies, as they are filling a valued position. On the other hand, however, it may be that SDO has a more immediate impact in class salient interactions, where employers feel less threat to their personal position on the social hierarchy when interacting with those from

a relatively lower social class and more threat to their personal position on the social hierarchy when interacting with someone at an equal or higher social class. Downward cross-class interactions reinforce the person's current social position, generating more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions, whereas same- or upward cross-class interactions present more of a challenge to the evaluator's social position, eliciting more negative emotions and fewer positive emotions. This reasoning may be a potential explanation for the unexpected findings.

The next set of hypotheses considers whether psychological flexibility moderates the tie between the discrete emotions and selection outcomes. Hypothesis 15A (H15A) posits that psychological flexibility weakens the negative relationship between anxiety and selection outcomes. Likewise, Hypothesis 15B (H15B) suggests that psychological flexibility weakens the positive relationship between enthusiasm and selection outcomes. It was suggested that an increase in psychological flexibility would slow down more self-focused emotions; however, these hypotheses were not supported in the analysis (see Tables 54, 55, and 56 for anxiety and Tables 57, 58, and 59 for compassion). In contrast, Hypothesis 15C suggests that psychological flexibility strengthens the positive relationship between compassion and selection outcomes, as it allows employers to be more focused on their central values. However, this idea was also unsupported in the results (see Tables 60, 61, and 62).

Robustness Check: Qualitative Responses

In addition to assessing participants' emotional response to job candidates using scale measures, their responses were also captured through qualitative responses to two questions: "What 4-5 words (adjectives) would you use to describe how you feel about hiring the job candidate? Why did you choose these words?" and "After watching the interview, how do you feel about the job candidate? What is your 'gut reaction' about hiring him?" Qualitative

responses can provide rich insight into how participants feel and think in social interactions, and this insight can be captured in part through systematic analysis (Boyd et al., 2022; Pennebaker et al., 2015). The LIWC software facilitates such an analysis by reading and analyzing the text using pre-established and validated dictionaries. Specifically, the software reads each response word by word, wherein the dictionary file is searched for a match between the target word (i.e., the word in the written response) and the dictionary word (i.e., the word contained in the pre-established dictionary). When there is a match, the corresponding scale is noted and incremented in the results. LIWC output values represent the percentage of the total words within a text that constitutes the category. For example, if the *negative emotions* score reads 3.93, then 3.93% of the words in the text were *negative emotions* words.

For the purposes of the study, five categories were analyzed for each question. First, *positive* and *negative emotion* variables include words that are emotion labels or words that strongly imply emotions, a dictionary constructed using scales such as the PANAS (Watson et al., 1988). For example, the word "laughter" would be classified in the positive emotion variable because it suggests behavior associated with a positive affective state (Boyd et al., 2022). Emotion variable examples include good, love, happy, and hope for positive emotions (337 dictionary words), and bad, wrong, too much, and hate for negative emotions (618 dictionary words). Second, three psychological drive variables are included: *affiliation* (e.g., we, help, us; 284 dictionary words), *achievement* (e.g., better, best, working; 277 dictionary words), and *power* (e.g., order, allow, power; 856 dictionary words). Each of these represents a potential underlying motivation for the participant.

Several themes emerge when examining the output (see Tables 63 and 64). Consistently, participants from the upper class engaged more positive emotion words and fewer negative

emotion words when speaking about the lower or middle social class compared to the upper social class. When describing how they felt using adjectives, all participants used the most positive emotion words when interacting with the lower class. In contrast, when describing their gut feelings, participants all used the most positive emotion words when interacting with the job candidate from the middle class. Across both questions, participants largely used the fewest negative emotion words when interacting with the middle class. Whether interacting with a job candidate from the lower or upper social class was associated with using more negative words appeared idiosyncratic. Together, these findings are consistent with the notion that the middle class is distinct from the lower and upper classes when it comes to their emotions toward job candidates in same vs. cross-class situations.

A second set of themes relates to the psychological drives that emerged in the responses. Most prominently in the adjective response questions, and across all participants, interactions with the upper class were associated with using words relating to the psychological drive of power. A second theme was, when asked to use adjectives to describe how they felt, participants from the lower and upper classes scored highest in the affiliation drive category when interacting with similar others. Participants from the middle class used slightly more affiliation drive words when interacting with the job candidate from the lower class than the middle class. When examining responses to the question that asked for their gut feeling, participants from the lower, middle, and upper social classes used the most words associated with achievement drive when interacting with the job candidate from the lower class. Insight into the psychological processes lends support to several of the theoretical arguments around same and cross-class interactions with the lower, middle, and upper social classes. Together, the qualitative analysis supports the quantitative findings, particularly in regard to the distinction amidst classes, the existence of

positive and negative emotions when interacting with certain classes, and insofar that certain motivations emerge in certain class salient interactions.

Supplementary Analysis: Alternative Measures of Social Class

Social class is a multidimensional construct and can be operationalized in several ways (Côté, 2022). Because this study is framed within social interactions, where perceptions of others' social class inform judgments about the person and, accordingly, individuals "rely on their own perceptions of social class in deciding how to respond" (Côté, 2022, p. 16), participants perceptions of their own and the job candidate's subjective childhood social class was used to operationalize same and cross-class interactions. As was noted in the *Literature Review*, this study focused on childhood origins because of the argument that social class is "sticky" and has a lasting effect on social interactions. Notably, subjective impressions of one's social class are more strongly associated with objective indicators of one's childhood social class than one's current social class (Côté et al., 2021).

As a part of the supplementary analysis and to further examine the multidimensional nature of social class and class origins, two additional operationalizations of class salient interactions were constructed. First, to compare class origins to current social class, a new predictor variable was constructed from participants' reporting of their current subjective social class and their perception of the job candidate's current subjective social class, following the same steps as the main variable used for analysis but with current versus childhood social class. Second, to examine an objective indicator of social class, a measure of parent's education was created, wherein the lower two categories ("less than high school" and "high school or some university") were bucketed as lower social class, the middle category ("Bachelor's degree") was bucketed as middle social class, and the higher two categories ("Master's degree" or "Ph.D. or

professional degree") were bucketed as the upper social class. Consistent with past research (Martin & Harrison, 2022), only the highest level of education between the two parents or guardians was used in the analysis. Parental educational achievement is often used in psychology literature to tap social class background (e.g., Dittman et al., 2020; Stephens et al., 2014). Downward cross-class interactions, upward cross-class interactions, and same-class interactions were somewhat correlated based on which measure of social class was used to construct the predictors, as follows: subjective childhood social class and subjective current social class (.45), subjective childhood social class and parent education (.58), and subjective current social class and parent education (.37).

A summary of results across all three constructions of predictor variables can be found in Table 65. Results were similar across each of the predictors, with some small variations. For example, the positive tie between same-class interactions and enthusiasm received only marginal support, compared to full support, when parents' education was used to construct the predictor variables. As another example, compassion and enthusiasm acted as mediators when childhood subjective social class was used to construct the predictor, whereas simple mediation for compassion was not supported when current subjective social class or parent's education was employed, and simple mediation for enthusiasm was not supported when using the parent's education was used to construct the independent variable. None of the moderation hypotheses were supported when the independent variables were constructed using subjective childhood social class; however, some meaningful relationships emerged using the other two predictor constructions. For example, upward mobility weakened the positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions (vs. downward cross-class interactions) and anxiety when current subjective social class was employed.

Study 1 Discussion and Transition to Study 2

Seen together Study 1 tested the theoretical model, including the main effects and individual-level moderators. The results indicated some support that class salient interactions impact employers' emotions during job interviews. The extent of impact that class salient interactions have on emotions seems to vary depending on the direction of class interaction (i.e., upward, downward, or same) and the social class of the interaction target. Next, there was support that discrete emotions do meaningfully impact selection outcomes. Regarding the explanatory role of emotions, it seems that enthusiasm and compassion serve as mediators, wherein class salient interactions indirectly impact selection outcomes through these two discrete emotions. Overall, the proposed individual-level moderators had little impact on the main relationships, a topic discussed in more detail in the main *Discussion* section.

Study 2 replicated Study 1 using a sample of full-time employees who primarily work in hiring roles or as human resource specialists, testing the theoretical model in a population with increased selection experience and ostensibly a greater understanding of hiring decisions. Further, as a part of this study, participants were unaware of the research component of the study and, instead, were initially told they were assisting in validating a selection measure for a small organization. When the study was completed, the participants were told about the nature of the research in compliance with IRB standards. This step helps to increase study realism. Further, Study 2 extends Study 1 in two main ways. First, Study 2 considers the organizational role of the position the job candidate is applying to (managerial or non-managerial) as a boundary condition, examining how role expectations may impact how employers feel in class salient interactions. Second, Study 2 introduces a non-obtrusive measure of employers' emotions constructed by analyzing changes in the microexpressions of participants associated with

different emotions as an exploratory step. Study 2 is described below, and following, both studies' findings are discussed in detail in the main *Discussion* section.

Study 2: Method

Sample

The sample for Study 2 consists of 147 full-time employees in human resource or hiring roles with interview experience. Likewise, the participants were based in the U.S. and spoke English as their first language. Thus, this study tested the hypotheses directly in a sample of employees who regularly make personnel, specially selection, decisions. Participants were recruited in partnership with a market research company, as is detailed below.

Procedure

I recruited participants through ROI Rocket, a market research organization based out of the U.S. (Derfler-Rozin & Pitesa, 2020; Liu et al., 2020). ROI Rocket verifies its panelists' employment status and helped recruit full-time employees in human resource roles to participate in online research. No screener survey was required in this case, as the market research organization has individual data that can be used for criteria (i.e., full-time employees in a hiring role, U.S.-based, and English speakers). Overall, participants followed a similar procedure to Study 1 wherein they completed an initial survey that collected measures of social class, additional demographic variables, and trait characteristics. 520 individuals completed the first study. One week later, participants were invited to complete a second study, and 149 individuals completed the second study as of March 17, 2023. During the second survey, each participant was randomly assigned to one of three social class conditions (i.e., a job candidate from the lower, middle, or upper social class) and one of two organizational role conditions (i.e., managerial vs. non-managerial role). Two individuals were removed for missing attention

checks, bringing the total number to 147 (50 from a lower social class background, 80 from a middle social class background, and 17 from an upper social class background). Upward, downward, and cross-class interactions were coded following Study 1 procedures (75 in upward cross-class interactions, 45 in same-class interactions, and 27 in downward cross-class interactions). As in Study 1, during the analysis, specific class-based comparisons were made (see Table 66 for the number of participants in each condition).

As a part of the initial instructions, participants were told that the firm they were being hired to help was seeking input from hiring professionals to improve their selection process, thus allowing for a data collection strategy wherein the participants were not aware of the research component. As a plausible explanation for why interviewees were asked to record their faces during the time (the purpose of which detailed in the *Measures* section below), the participants were told that the firm they were being hired to help was interested in them giving verbal, video-based feedback throughout the process. Thus, participants were instructed to turn on their webcams, and using the video-based software, participated in several steps to ensure that lighting, face visibility, and appropriate camera angles were in place.

Following past research (Podsakoff et al., 2011), participants were then told that the interviewee was applying for a position as a project assistant (non-managerial or entry-level role condition) or as a project manager (managerial or supervisor role condition). They were provided with job-related information for the applicant's position gathered from O*NET including job tasks and work activities (see Figure 2 and Figure 3 for job descriptions). Next, participants were told that they were going to view part of one job candidate's recorded interview and, following, evaluate the candidate. Participants were instructed to watch the interview as if they were in the room with the job candidate, doing their best to picture themselves sitting across from the

interviewee and to listen intently to the responses. Likewise, participants were instructed to read the questions aloud as they appeared on screen. After reading the instructions, participants viewed the video corresponding to their randomly assigned condition.

Following the video, the participants completed measures related to the following (in order): emotional reactions (i.e., scale measures and verbal feedback), selection outcomes (i.e., assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards), and assessments and attributions related to the job candidate including fit, stereotypes, and abilities. Following completion of these measures, participants completed survey questions that included manipulation checks and quality control questions. At the end of the survey, participants were given debriefing materials, contact information, and were told they can receive the general results of the study if they are interested.

Measures

Measures collected in the second survey were the same as those from Study 1, with the following additions and exceptions.

Person job fit. *Person-job fit* was assessed using a five-item scale based on previous research (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Example items include "The interviewees abilities fit the demands of this job" and "The interviewee is the right type of person for this type of work." These items will be rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). Past research has pointed to how employers use assessments of person-job fit when making hiring decisions (Kristof-Brown, 2000), thus collected as a potential control variable.

Salary Recommendations. *Salary recommendation* ranges differed based on job level and in accordance with information collected from O*NET. Specifically, the project assistant salary ranged from $40,000 - $50,000 in $1,000 increments. The project manager salary ranged

from $85,000 - $105,000 in $2,000 increments. In both, the salary range varied by about 10% above and below the median salary reported via O*NET (Podsakoff et al., 2011).

Emotions. In addition to the scale measures collected in Study 1, emotions were captured by identifying participants' facial expressions associated with *anxiety*, *enthusiasm*, and *compassion* as an exploratory step. This method is based on Ekman & Friesen's (1978) pioneering work on facial movements and emotional expressions. In this work, certain combinations of action units (i.e., AUs)—or positions of facial muscles—are associated with distinct emotions (see Figure 2 for a diagram of action units). Initially, analysis of facial expressions relied on human coders, a process subject to fatigue and the coder's affective state. Considering the potentially biasing nature of using human coders, computer-aided facial expression analysis has increased recently (Loijens & Krips, 2018; McKenny et al., 2018) and has been used as a methodological technique in management studies (Warnick et al., 2021). Accordingly, this study uses a computer-aided facial expression analysis to determine and record the emotional expressions of participants.

To collect emotions via facial expressions, several steps were taken. First, employers' facial reactions were recorded throughout the interview using a webcam and then analyzed using the iMotions software, Affdex (iMotions, 2021). Affdex is an algorithm that has been trained on over 12 million faces across ninety countries and a range of demographic groups including gender, ethnicity, and age. Specifically, the software identifies twenty-four key feature points located within three key regions of interest (i.e., mouth region, nose region, and the upper half of the face including the eyes) to capture the color, texture, edges, and gradients of the participant's face. Using these points and regions, the software extracts facial features (e.g., brow raises, the corner of the eyes) and classifies changes into emotion states using both frame by frame analysis

and dynamic analysis, with a capability of capturing up to fourteen frames per second. Following, the classification of emotion states is determined using the FACS coding system (Ekman & Friesen, 1978). For example, joy is determined by assessing the cheek raiser (AU 6) and lip corner puller (AU 12). Or as another example, sadness is determined from the inner brow raiser (AU 1), brow lowerer (4), and lip corner depressor (AU 15).

Previous research has reported the accuracy of Affdex at recognizing basic emotions via a matching score (MS). MS is the percentage of photos that Affdex classified accurately, meaning the highest value emotion generated through the algorithm "matched" the emotion being displayed in a picture. Across three databases, Affdex correctly recognized 73% of emotions, a number on par with human coders (Stöckli et al., 2018). That is, human coders accurately classify human emotion between 60%-80% of the time when using FACS coding, a number that improves for certain emotions (i.e., happiness) but worsens when discriminating between non-happy expressions (Nelson & Russel, 2013). The datasets tested for comparing the accuracy of software of accurately identifying human emotion included the Amsterdam Dynamic Facial Expression Set (153 pictures), the Warsaw Set of Emotional Facial Expression Pictures (210 pictures), and the Radbound Faces Database (536 pictures).

For the software to accurately capture classifiers, head poses and rotations should be between five to ten degrees up and down and twenty degrees left and right. Likewise, for accurate classifiers, light must be at 30 RGB, where 0 is pitch black and 255 is very bright. Instructions for both face positioning and lighting were included in the participant instructions. For example, if a participant had no lights on in the room they were taking the survey, they would be instructed to increase the room's lighting (e.g., to turn on a lamp) so that there is

sufficient lighting. More information, including visual depictions, is available at the iMotions website (https://imotions.com/blog/facial-action-coding-system/).

After identifying the participant's facial features, the software can report the frequency, intensity, and duration of emotions of the viewer during the video clip. Following past research (Warnick et al., 2021), the percentage of time each participant displayed anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion during the interview was used as the emotion indicator. Again, data collected using Affdex is as accurate as data produced by human coders using the facial actions coding system (Stöckli et al., 2018), and the major advantage of collecting emotions data using facial action units is that they are unobtrusive and tap into hiring mangers' subconscious reactions (Stöckli et al., 2018). To measure enthusiasm, anxiety, and compassion, emotions that are closely related[6] (i.e., joy, fear, sentimentality, respectively). In addition, measures of engagement and overall valence captured through facial expression were considered. Capturing emotional reactions using facial expressions also allows for a comparison between reported measures of emotions and automatic reactions collected in a nonobtrusive manner.

Manipulation check and psychological realism

At the end of the survey, participants were directed to reflect on the job candidate video they viewed and were asked questions regarding the social class of the job candidate that mirrored the questions asked in Study 1. Likewise, participants were asked questions regarding the organizational role of the position the applicant was applying to, specifically whether it was

[6] In addition to the pre-established emotions coded by the software, additional measures that are specific to anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion were included in the analysis. To measure anxiety, the following AUs were assessed: AU 1 + 2 + 4 + 5 + 20 + 26 (Carpenter & Niedenthal, 2019; Harrigan & O'Connell, 1996). To measure enthusiasm, the following AUs were assessed: AU 1+2, 5, 6+12, 23, 24, 25-27 (Coan & Gottman, 2007). Finally, compassion was measured using AU 1, 4, and 58 (Condliffe & Maratos, 2020; Haidt & Keltner, 1999; Melwani et al., 2012).

an entry-level position or supervisor position. Finally, participants responded to the same questions as Study 1 that were related to psychological realism and engagement in the study.

Study 2: Results

Manipulation Check, Participant Engagement, and Realism

Responses to the manipulation check about the job candidate's social class demonstrated an effective manipulation. Participants were asked to indicate, "which of the following do you think best describes the job candidate's family's social class while they were growing up?" (lower class - 1, lower middle class - 2, middle middle class - 3, upper middle class - 4, and upper class - 5). The results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), $F(2, 144) = 40.3$, $p < .001$, on the ratings of videos depicting manipulations for the lower, middle, and upper social class conditions (lower social class mean: 2.80 and SD: 0.64; middle social class mean: 3.22 and SD: 0.74; upper social class mean: 4.00 and SD: 0.62) indicated that the participants perceived a significantly different level of job candidate social class. Responses to the manipulation check about the organizational role that a job candidate was applying to also demonstrated an effective manipulation. Participants were asked to indicate, "what level of position was the job candidate applying to?" (0 - assistant/entry level and 1 - supervisor level). The results of a one-way ANOVA, $F(1, 145) = 245.2$, $p < .001$, on the ratings of organizational role for the project assistant and project manager (project assistant mean: 0.02 and SD: 0.16; project manager mean: 0.81 and SD: 0.40) indicated that participants perceived a significantly different level of organizational role between the two conditions.

Participants also reported being highly engaged in their role while evaluating the job candidate video and believed that the interview questions reflected true organizational processes. The means on a 7-point agreement scale were well above the midpoint for the following items: "I

put great effort into putting myself in the role of someone making hiring decisions" (M = 6.30, SD = 0.95) and "The interview questions used seemed like questions an actual organization may use" (M = 6.11, SD = 1.15). Both responses reflect positively on the realism of the study design.

Hypothesis Tests

Replication of Hypotheses Tested in Study 1. Hypotheses 1-15 were tested in the new sample and an overall summary of results is included in Table 67. Table 68 displays means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities of Study 2 variables. Before testing the model, I assessed the measures (anxiety, enthusiasm, compassion, hireability, and social rewards) using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in the R environment using the lavaan package. The 5-factor model fit the data well ($\chi^2_{(80)}$ = 121.15, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .083, SRMR = .044). Thus, I proceeded with testing our hypothesized model to run the analysis. One of the stated goals of Study 2 was to test Hypothesis 1-15 in a sample of employees who work in full-time human resources positions. Broadly, there was a lack of support in the hypotheses testing, with one main exception. The tie between anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion consistently related to hiring outcomes (i.e., hireability assessments, salary recommendations, and social rewards) in the expected direction. The findings from the replication of Study 1 in the new sample are further considered in the *Discussion* section.

Organizational Role. Hypothesis 16 considered organizational role as a moderator on the relationship between class salient interactions and anxiety and enthusiasm. Specifically, Hypothesis 16A (H16A) suggests that organizational role moderates the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety. Likewise, Hypothesis 16B (H16B) posits that organizational role

moderates the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety. Counter to what was expected, organizational role acted a moderator at a marginal level in upward cross-class interactions and same-class interactions are compared to downward cross-class interactions (β = -.91, p = .07 and β = -.09, p = .08, respectively) (see Table 69). That is, when job candidates were applying to a lower-level role, participants were less anxious in upward cross-class interactions and same-class interactions compared to downward cross-class interactions; when candidates were applying to a higher-level role, participants were more anxious in same-class interactions and upward cross-class interactions compared to cross-class interactions.

The next two hypotheses considered organizational role as a boundary condition on the tie between class salient interactions and enthusiasm. Specifically, Hypothesis 16C (H16C) suggests that organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes. H16C did not receive support (β = -.81, p = .29) (see Table 70). Hypothesis 16D (H16D) suggests that organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class. As seen in Table 71, this hypothesis was not supported. However, the direction of the relationship was in the predicted direction (β = -3.19, p = .16), wherein the mean level of enthusiasm fell during same-class interactions when the candidate was applying for a project manager role (project assistant Mean: 4.87; project manager Mean: 4.09).

Together these results point to organizational role as a potentially important boundary condition when it comes to how hiring managers may feel in class salient interactions.

To further understand the role of job level, the means and standard deviations of anxiety, enthusiasm, compassion, hireability, and person-job fit were broken out across perceptions of job candidate social class (see Table 72). Several potentially interesting patterns emerge from this data, while caution is necessary because of a low sample size and broad standard deviations. For example, anxiety increases when a job candidate from the lower social class and middle social class applied for the project manager role, compared to the project assistant role; however, anxiety did not increase when those from an upper social class applied for the project manager role. Similarly, hireability dropped when the job candidate from the lower and middle social class applied for the project manager role (vs. the project assistant role), but it remained nearly the same for the job candidate in the upper social class. Finally, assessments of person-job fit dropped for the job candidate in the lower and middle social class when he applied to the project manager role, compared to the project assistant role. In contrast, assessments of person-job fit increased when the job candidate from the upper social class applied to the project manager role versus the project assistant role. Together, these findings point to a potentially interesting topic for future research.

Facial Analysis of Emotions.

Table 73 displays means, standard deviations, and correlations of the different emotion variables. In addition to the scale measures used in Study 1 and Study 2, several measures of emotions based on changes in facial expressions (i.e., action units or AUs) were included. First, specific measures of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion were calculated based on psychology research (Carpenter & Niedenthal, 2019; Coan & Gottman, 2007; Condliffe & Maratos, 2020;

Haidt & Keltner, 1999; Harrigan & O'Connell, 1996; Melwani et al., 2012). These measures are constructed by looking at the combination of AUs at a rate of 24 frames/second, wherein if all AUs are presented simultaneously within a single frame, the emotion is marked as present and, following, the percentage of frames with the emotion marked out of the total time frame is calculated. In calculating anxiety and enthusiasm, there was a near zero occurrence of either emotion. This may be, in part, because of the increased number of AUs required to construct each. For example, six AUs (1, 2, 4, 5, 20, and 26) and eight AUs (1, 2, 5, 6, 12, 24, and 25-27) must be present to mark anxiety and enthusiasm, respectively. In contrast, compassion appeared more often—a measure based on three AUs (1, 4, and 58). There were no significant correlations between the measures of emotions based on facial expressions and scale measures, a finding that has interesting implications and which is considered in the *Discussion* section.

As outlined in the methods section, several other emotion variables were constructed using AUs including fear, joy, sentimentality, positive valence, negative valence, engagement, and smiles. First, fear is included as an alternative operationalization of anxiety, as low levels of fear are closely related to state anxiety (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). A second basic emotion, joy, was included as an alternative operationalization of enthusiasm. Joy is denoted by positive valence and an activated state; enthusiasm is a close neighbor and distinguishable by slightly greater activation. Third, a metric of sentimentality was included as an alternative means of tapping into compassion. Sentimentality can be understood as a "happy sadness," an expression often observed when seeing emotionally resonant material (iMotions, 2021). In addition to these three measures, measures of positive valence and negative valence, engagement, and smiles were included. The final set of measures were included to better understand participant reactions and explore whether more general measures would yield alternative results.

The main hypotheses were first tested using the measures of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion constructed using the more specific set of AUs. A summary of results is included in Table 74, specifically the second column. There was no support for the proposed hypotheses. Regarding the hypotheses related to anxiety and enthusiasm, a lack of findings is likely attributable to lack of variance in the measures. In this set of data there was one notable finding. Hypothesis 8 proposed that same-class interactions elicit compassion for those from a lower social class—a relationship unsupported in the current set of data. However, further analysis revealed a meaningful relationship between downward cross-class interactions (vs. upward cross-class interactions) and compassion ($\beta = 2.21$, $p = .03$). Likewise, and while not statistically significant, there was also a positive tie between downward cross-class interactions (vs. same-class interactions) and compassion ($\beta = 1.64$, $p = 1.22$). These results mirror what was observed in Study 1 and Study 2 when using the scale measure of compassion.

As is seen in the third column of Table 74, the hypotheses were largely unsupported when fear, joy, and sentimentality were used as an operationalization of participants' discrete emotional reactions. Contrary to what was proposed in Hypothesis 3, however, there was a negative relationship between same-class interactions and joy ($\beta = -2.35$, $p = .04$). When further explored, same-class interactions yielded less joy than upward cross-class interactions ($\beta = -2.64$, $p = .04$) but not downward cross-class interactions ($\beta = -2.21$, $p = .21$). A similar pattern appeared when assessing the relationship between same-class interactions and markers of positive valence, wherein upward-cross class interactions yielded more positive valence markers than same-class interactions ($\beta = -4.39$, $p = .02$) and downward cross-class interactions ($\beta = -3.96$, $p = .14$). The similarity in these findings is unsurprising as joy and positive valence are highly correlated at .96 ($p < .01$). While not hypothesized (and further explicated in the

Discussion section), it may be that participants felt it was more necessary to manage their emotions in upward cross-class interactions, thus offering more markers of positive emotions.

There was largely no tie between fear, joy, and sentimentality and selection outcomes. However, there was marginal support for the negative tie between fear and social rewards (β = -.10, p = .07). One exception to the formal hypotheses being unsupported in this set of data relates to the moderating role of psychological flexibility. Specifically, the results indicated that the positive relationship between joy and hireability was moderated by psychological flexibility wherein an increase in psychological flexibility attenuated the tie (β = -.18, p = .03). That is, at lower levels of psychological flexibility, joy had a greater impact on assessments of hireability than at higher levels. Psychological flexibility also buffered the positive tie between joy and social rewards (β = -.20, p < .01). While psychological flexibility had a meaningful impact using sentimentality as a measure of compassion, it did not when using the scale measure of compassion in Study 1 or Study 2.

Study 2 Discussion

Broadly speaking, Study 2 failed to support the notion that class salient interactions impact employers' emotions. However, this study demonstrated a consistent tie between the discrete emotions of anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion and selection outcomes. Employing a non-obtrusive measure of emotions using facial reactions yielded few meaningful findings, while the construction of these measures and their (lack of) correlation with scale measures raises thought-provoking questions. Like Study 1, individual-level moderators had little effect when these tests were replicated. Study 2 also introduced the organizational role of the position being applied to as a potential moderator on the tie between class salient interactions and discrete emotions. Again, there was little support for the amplifying or attenuating role of organizational

role. However, the descriptive statistics point to a need for further investigation, a topic discussed below in the main *Discussion*.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This dissertation investigates the role of class salient interactions in selection decisions, exploring the mediating role of employers' emotions. Using a validation study and two experimental video vignette studies, this research demonstrates the saliency of social class in interpersonal interactions and, specifically in this study's context—employment interviews. Building on sociology (Rivera, 2015a) and management literature (Amis et al., 2020; DeOrtentiis et al., 2021; Fang & Saks, 2021; Sharps & Anderson, 2021) that has demonstrated that job candidates' social class impacts hiring, this study examines employers' responses to class salient interactions during job interviews. More specifically, this study theorizes and tests how same- and cross-class interactions engender employers' anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion and, in turn, how these emotions shape selection outcomes (i.e., assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and willingness to work with the job candidate). Additionally, individual-level and role-specific moderators were considered. There was mixed support for the broad set of hypotheses tested. For a summary of the results from Study 1 and 2, see Tables 65 and 67, respectively. Following, I discuss the study's main findings,[7] explicate their theoretical and practical implications, and then address the study's limitations and directions for future research.

Summary of Effects

Class Salient Interactions and Emotions

This study integrates social class-specific theorizing (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013; Rivera, 2012) with theory stating that social group membership is fodder for discrete emotions (Smith & Mackie, 2015) to suggest that same- and cross-class interactions generate three distinct employer emotions: anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion. The notion that cross-class

[7] I mainly discuss the results of Study 1 for Hypothesis 1-15 because of the lack of significant findings in the Study 2 replication. The lack of findings in Study 2 is considered in detail in the *Limitations and Future Directions* section.

interactions yield employer anxiety was not supported; however, when the target of the cross-class interactions is considered, anxiety was elicited. Specifically, when participants were in an upward cross-class interaction, interacting with the job candidate from the upper class elicited more anxiety than when interacting with the job candidate from the middle class. While not hypothesized, this finding underscores two ideas, one of theoretical importance and one of practical importance. First, this finding demonstrates the distinctive nature of the lower, middle, and upper social class and, second, it emphasizes the need to consider the target of class salient interactions. Both ideas are discussed in the *Limitations and Future Research Directions* section.

When it comes to enthusiasm, results indicated that same-class interactions, compared to cross-class interactions, generate employer' enthusiasm. This finding is consistent with theorizing related to cultural matching (Rivera, 2012) and points to the importance of considering positively valanced emotions not only in an interview setting but also more broadly when studying what sustains social stratification (Collins, 1990). Similar to enthusiasm, the results indicated that same-class interactions for participants from the lower social class yielded compassion when compared to interacting with a job candidate from the upper social class. While not hypothesized, the findings also indicated that compared to cross-class interactions, both same-class and downward cross-class interactions elicited increased compassion. Together, these results show that interactions where similarities and differences in social class are salient may spark discrete emotional reactions.

The Distinction Between the Lower, Middle, and Upper Social Classes

Several hypotheses focused on differentiating the lower, middle, and upper social classes. While early social class theorizing posits an upper, middle, and lower social class (Bourdieu, 1984), management literature tends to overlook the role of the middle class (for an exception, see

Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2015) or collapses the middle class in with the upper class. The results of this study point to the distinctiveness of each social class and the unique role of the middle class. First, the findings indicated that the lower, middle, and upper class had distinct reactions to class salient interactions. For example, when the target of cross-class interactions for the lower class was considered, there was a marginal relationship to anxiety when interacting with the job candidate from the upper class but not the middle class. Likewise, and while not formally hypothesized, the lower class experienced significantly less enthusiasm when interacting with the job candidate from the upper class compared to the middle class. Still, the middle class remains distinct from the lower class, as the results showed that in downward cross-class interactions, interacting with a job candidate from the lower class elicited more compassion then when interacting with a job candidate from the middle class.

Second, the study's results pointed to the unique role the middle class plays. At times, participants from the middle class drew less of a distinction between themselves and the lower class, as the results indicated no meaningful difference in anxiety when interacting in same class interactions versus when interacting with a candidate from the lower class. In contrast, however, there were times when the middle class favored the upper class. For example, the middle class demonstrated more enthusiasm when interacting with a candidate from the upper class than the lower class and, further, when interacting with similar others than those in the upper class. Participants from the lower and upper class also viewed the middle class as distinct. For example, in downward cross-class interactions the job candidate from the middle class elicited significantly less compassion than the job candidate from the lower class. Seen together, this set of hypotheses joins early social class theorizing to support the idea that there are three distinct classes.

Emotions and Selection Outcomes

Drawing on the idea that emotions motivate specific patterns of behavior (Frijda et al., 1986), the next set of hypotheses suggested that anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion impact employers' assessments of several selection outcomes: assessments of hireability, salary recommendations, and their willingness to work with a job candidate (i.e., social rewards). While the idea that emotions impact workplace behavior (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and decision-making (Lerner et al., 2015) has been established in management literature, increased understanding of how discrete emotions operate in hiring processes provides new insight to an area that has mainly relied on cognitive explanations. This set of hypotheses received the most robust support: first, anxiety was negatively tied to hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards; in contrast, enthusiasm and compassion demonstrated a positive relationship to hireability, salary recommendation, and social rewards. Together, this set of hypotheses points to the need to consider positively and negatively valanced discrete emotions in the context of employment interviews.

The Mediating Role of Employers' Emotions

The results of mediation analysis suggested that enthusiasm and compassion help explain the tie between same-class interactions and selection outcomes. That is, for both enthusiasm and compassion, the positive relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes was explained, in part, by an increase in these two discrete emotions. In contrast, there was no empirical support that anxiety operated as an explanatory variable in the tie between cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.

Individual-Level and Role-Specific Moderators

Individual-Level Moderators. There was a lack of support for hypotheses that tested the

role of the following individual-level moderators: upward social mobility, social dominance orientation, and psychological flexibility. It may be that the theoretical arguments related to these boundary conditions were insufficient and there truly are no effects. Alternative explanations for the lack of findings include a lack of statistical power or, as the results related to the tie between class salient interactions and emotions point toward, the need for more nuanced hypotheses. For example, it may be prudent to consider the target of class salient interactions or class-specific propositions. That is, in order to understand how individual differences impact the main relationships, it may be beneficial to theorize more directly about the employers' social class background and the target's social class in upward cross-class, downward cross-class, and same class interactions. The one exception to a lack of support for the individual-level moderators is that, in Study 2, psychological flexibility did buffer the positive tie between enthusiasm and selection outcomes, when enthusiasm was operationalized using the facial expressions associated with joy. At lower levels of psychological flexibility, joy had a greater impact on selection outcomes, and at higher levels of psychological flexibility, joy had a lesser impact.

There were several findings related to SDO that were contrary to the proposed hypotheses. Overall, it appeared that at higher levels of SDO, participants preferred cross-class interactions. Initial theorizing suggested that job candidates from a higher social class would be met more positively because, in hiring them, employers would be reinforcing the social class hierarchy. However, it may be that employers are more concerned with reinforcing their own position on the hierarchy than the overall class hierarchy—interacting with those in lower social classes reinforces their higher status, thus they are more enthusiastic in these interactions. For the middle class, the story was a bit more nuanced, as they demonstrated more enthusiasm in upward cross-class interactions (vs. same-class interactions) at higher levels of SDO—perhaps when

interacting with these job candidates, participants felt a sense of power and control over higher-status individuals, thus eliciting more positively valanced emotional reactions. That is, it could be that when the participant was concerned with maintaining hierarchies, they felt a boost when someone from a higher social class was reliant on their decision-making. Again, this set of findings points to the need for a more detailed investigation into employer and participant social class.

Organizational Role. One feature of the position the job candidate applied to—organizational role—was considered as a potential boundary condition. Drawing on status characteristics theory (Berger et al., 1972) and role congruity theory (Eagly, 1987), it was suggested that because being from the lower social class is associated with lower status (and vis-a-vera for those in higher social classes), participants would be more keen to those from a lower social filling an entry-level position (i.e., non-managerial role) and those from the upper class filling a supervisor-level position (i.e., managerial role). Contrary to the hypotheses, when job candidates were applying to an entry-level role, participants were less anxious in upward cross-class interactions and same-class interactions compared to downward cross-class interactions. Likewise, when candidates were applying to a supervisor-level role, participants were more anxious in same-class interactions and upward cross-class interactions compared to downward cross-class interactions. Similar to the above observation related to SDO, participants may be more concerned with their personal position on the class hierarchy than they are with how the job candidate adheres to status expectations. Contrary to these findings, however, the overall means of hireability and person-job fit were higher when the job candidate was from the upper social class (vs. the lower and middle class) applied to a supervisor-level position. Likewise, hireability and person-job fit means were lowest when the job candidate from the upper class applied to the

entry-level position. It may be that the initial theorizing holds when the direct tie between class salient interactions and selection outcomes is considered, but organizational role has no bearing on how class salient interactions make employers feel.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Class Salient Interactions

As organizational scholars increasingly consider the role of social class in and around organizations (Kish-Gephart et al., 2022), this study zeroes in on the implications class-based interactions that occur during employment interviews. To do so, this study draws on Bourdieu's early theorizing around the reification of social class distinctions via interpersonal interactions to demonstrate how class salient interactions may contribute to labor market outcomes. As such, this study provides three main insights for management research.

First, this study incorporates the role of the employer to demonstrate how similarities and differences across social class with a job candidate impacts employers' decision making. Because class salient interactions engender distinct emotions which, in turn, impact selection outcomes, it is prudent to not only consider the job candidate's social class (e.g., Belmi et al., 2020; DeOrtentiis et al., 2021; Fang & Saks, 2021; Sharps & Anderson, 2021) but also the employer as they control access to jobs and the benefits employment affords. Accordingly, this study challenges burgeoning social class literature to incorporate class-based interactions as a predictive variable alongside social class as an individual difference when considering what motivates organizational behavior. In demonstrating that perceptions of similarities and differences across childhood social class have consequences in employment interviews, this study also joins literature that posits social class is durable overtime (Bourdieu, 1986; Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2014), having lasting impact on behavior into adulthood. Additionally, and

while the results did not have bearing, it also considered the potential moderating role of upward social mobility. This probe is important because of Bourdieu's (1986) theorizing that upward mobility may occur to a limited extent and, accordingly, that individuals may acquire a unique set of experiences (e.g., interactions across class lines) and resources (e.g., attainment of a college education, financial capital) that impact how they understand themselves and others.

Second, this study draws on past research to consider the discrete emotions generated via upward cross-class interactions, downward-cross class interactions, and same-class interactions during employment interviews. Drawing on past theorizing, this study suggests and shows that cross-class interactions yield anxiety (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Specifically, the results indicated that upward-cross class interactions with job candidates from an upper class generate more anxiety than interactions with job candidates from the middle class. Drawing on research from sociology and psychology (Collins, 1990; Goetz et al, 2010; Rivera, 2012), this study extends consideration to same-class interactions to suggest that enthusiasm and compassion are sparked in these exchanges. The results supported this theorizing and, further, indicate that employers also feel compassion during downward cross-class interactions, most prominently toward those in the lower social class. This outcome, along with findings that differentiate upward cross-class interactions with job candidates in the middle and upper social class, underscores that class salient interactions can be differentiated by both their direction (i.e., upward cross-class, downward cross-class, or same-class) and interaction target (i.e., whether the job candidate is from a lower, middle, or upper social class).

Finally, this study builds on early class theorizing (Bourdieu, 1984) and key management theorizing (Gray & Kish-Gephart) to differentiate the lower, middle, and upper social classes. In contrast to literature that excludes the middle class or collapses them in with the one of the other

social classes, the results of this study suggest that members of the middle class are distinct from and behave in a unique way compared to their counterparts from the middle and upper classes. While at times participants reacted similarly to job candidates from the lower and middle class, they, at other times, responded differently to the two groups. In a similar pattern, the job candidate from the middle class generated distinct reactions from the job candidate from the upper class. When relevant, the findings of study call social class scholars to theorize how the unique capital holdings of those from the middle class may have differential impact. Because a majority of those in the U.S. are considered a part of the middle social class (Pew Research Center, 2022), consideration of the role of this group is especially necessary.

Emotional Outcomes of Class Salient Interactions

As a second main contribution, this study highlights the potential role of emotions in the reification of class distinctions. To do so, I incorporate intergroup emotion theory with class-specific theorizing to extend what is known about the outcomes of class-based interactions. It is necessary to address the emotional experience of social class—specifically social class group membership—as interactions based on group similarities and differences are marked not only by distinct thoughts but also feelings (Mackie et al., 2008).

This study provides evidence that anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion occur in some instances of class salient interactions and, further, that enthusiasm and compassion explain the tie between class salient interactions and selectin outcomes. Increased enthusiasm in same-class interactions may disadvantage those in the lower social class when hiring positions are filled by employers from the middle or upper class. The role of compassion is more complex, as the results demonstrated that same-class interactions are tied to more positive selection outcomes, while downward cross-class interactions elicited greater compassion than upward cross-class

interactions. Together, these results suggest that stratification occurs based not only on resources (i.e., economic, social, and cultural capital) but also because of the discrete emotions generated when interacting within or across social class lines. At the same time, the findings related to compassion introduce the question of what emotions may generate more equitable or inclusive selection decisions.

Emotions in Selection

As a final contribution, this study builds on research focused on affect in decision making to emphasize the role of discrete emotions in selection processes. In doing so, it extends research that emphasizes various cognitive mechanisms to encourage the incorporation of discrete emotions as a mechanism. First, by demonstrating the role of three discrete emotions in selection decisions—anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion—this work provides a basis for consideration of other emotions, such as envy, pride, or disgust. Next, this study provides a basis for considering not only negatively valanced emotions but also positively valanced emotions like enthusiasm. Indeed, in the first study, enthusiasm demonstrated a more consistent effect on selection outcomes than anxiety. Likewise, the role of compassion as a negatively valanced yet deactivated emotion encourages consideration of alternative appraisal dimensions (e.g., certainty, importance, or activation) and their impact. Finally, the lack of correlation between the measures of emotion based on self-reported scale items and computer-aided analysis of facial expression provides initial insight into the distinction between emotions that are reflective and those felt "in the moment," respectively. Especially in the context of employment interviews, employers may, perhaps implicitly, manage their facial expressions, offering an indication of emotions that do not match what they later report when assessing how they feel about a job candidate. While the results are tentative due to sample size, this finding raises an important question about the

simultaneity of affective and cognitive processes, how employers' displayed emotions are interpreted by job candidates and if these carry consequences, and, more broadly, the measurement of emotions in management research.

Practical Implications

This study's findings may provide helpful insight for organizational leaders and job seekers. First, this study underscores that social class is a salient characteristic during hiring and that it is not only the job seekers' social class that has bearing on selection decisions. Thus, it is prudent for organizations to consider who is sitting across from candidates. One strategy to improve class diversity in organizations is to increase social class diversity represented in hiring roles and selection committees. Because social class is not a protected status, it may be even more important to ensure representation of those from the lower social class throughout the selection process. As previously pointed out, "if firms had more managers from lower social-class origins, employees and customers with similar origins could expect more-equitable treatment. Managers have an outsize influence on their companies, so inherited privilege… can be a source of durable inequality" (Ingram, 2021, p. 1). Ensuring that there is representation of diverse social class backgrounds on hiring committees and in hiring roles may improve the experience of job seekers from lower social class origins.

A second strategy to improve class diversity in organizations is to implement training programs for employees with hiring responsibilities to raise awareness of the potential for social class discrimination in selection processes. What may appear class neutral on the surface may instead be reinforcing social stratification: "Even sophisticated hiring processes, which increase information about candidates' and employees' human capital, are not as neutral as they appear… They are instead shaped by existing patterns of disadvantage, and they combine to penalize and

discriminate against employees from lower classes, even when they appear bias-free to medium to high class employees" (Guerci et al., 2022, p. 4). Similar to trainings done in regarding other employee characteristics, such as gender, race, or disability, the goal of class-specific training is to raise awareness of how social class may be impacting decision-making—a first step in reducing social class bias in selection. For example, employers could be introduced to a basic vocabulary of social class, asked to reflect on their own social class experience, delivered statistics regarding social class inequality in the labor market, and taught strategies to offset implicit bias and to ask more class-inclusive questions throughout selection. Notably, adopting an intersectional approach to training is essential.

As a second practical implication, this study underscores a long-standing principle advanced by organizational scholars—the necessity of structured interviews. Whereas unstructured interviews lack definition, structured interviews standardize interview questions and, if questions are thoughtfully designed with the job description in mind, focus the conversation on what factors may most impact job seekers' performance. This step is particularly important as unstructured interviews are more amenable to informal conversations that allow for chatting about forms of capital that are unrelated to the position and its responsibilities. Standardizing interviews, while not enough on their own, may keep in check the positive emotions generated through same-class interactions by focusing attention on the job's responsibilities and away from discussions related to shared cultural capital associated with certain class backgrounds. There are several additional steps that organizations may consider as they address the potential biasing effect of social class in selection processes more broadly: countering degree inflation when designating job requirements, implementing blind resume

reviews that hide institution's names, administering work sample tests, and re-working job descriptions to focus on experiences accessible across social class groups (Knight, 2017).

Finally, this study provides potentially useful insight for job seekers from a lower class background. The knowledge that employers implicitly perceive job seekers' class backgrounds and react differently based on similarities and differences is disheartening, and inequitable, especially if the interactions undermine the ability of those from the lower class to secure employment. It is also critical to emphasize that the impetus for change falls squarely on organizations, their leaders, and those who fill hiring roles. At the same time, equipped with this study's knowledge, job seekers from a lower class may want to process how to deliberately emphasize the strengths that come with being raised in a lower social class context, as they are many. For example, the lower social classes' ability to work in groups (Dittman et al., 2020), their empathic accuracy and prosocial tendencies (Dietze & Knowles, 2021; Kraus, Côté, & Keltner, 2010), or their ability to bridge cultural divides in organizations (Martin & Côté, 2019). While unfair that job seekers from lower social class backgrounds must consider the implications of their class background and its consequences in selection processes, understanding their unique set of strengths and how to articulate these in employment interviews may improve selection outcomes.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite its theoretical and practical implications, this study has several limitations, which open the door for future research. That is, as studies are designed, there are upsides and downsides with each possible design, and this dissertation is the same. Several limitations require caution as the results are interpreted and, potentially, may help explain unsupported hypotheses. The limitations noted below (i.e., generalizability, an intersectional approach,

common method variance, and the role of cognitive mechanisms) point toward opportunities for future research. As such, in addition to discussing the study's limitations, the potential for future studies are addressed below.

Generalizability

An experimental design increases internal validity, but it limits the realism of employment interviews that occur as a part of an actual job selection processes (Highhouse, 2009). This limitation has several implications. First, participant decision-making was limited to the context of a single job interview and thus disconnected from the broader selection process including reviewing materials like a resume or recommendation letters, recruitment meetings, collecting work samples, and additional interview rounds. Because the study was limited to one employment interview, the question may be raised about what components of the selection process are most important and if interacting across these different steps would change the function of class salient interactions. On one hand, it could be that having other pieces of data might offset any bias related to classed interactions. On the other hand, it could be that similar effects would be found or exaggerated in these other contexts. For example, because recruitment meetings often involve informal networking conversations, the importance of matching on forms of cultural capital may be elevated. Another difference related to the broader selection process is that, at times, decisions to move candidates forward in the hiring process are made by groups or teams. It may be that group conversations either amplify or attenuate the emotional reactions those conducting interviews feel towards job candidates, and this study does not speak to that. Seen together, the use of an experimental vignette model is not able to fully capture the complexity of selection processes or organizational decision making.

Second, participants' decisions did not carry real-world implications for the job

candidate. Again, this point pertains to the ecological and external validity of the study. Individuals in the first study were aware of the research motivation of the study, whereas individuals in the second study were under the impression they were assisting in validating new selection measures. While the second study attempted to generate a more realistic and weighty decision-making process, both studies vary from what occurs in real-world hiring. The second study was also implemented to ensure a sample that is less susceptible to habitual survey-taking, a concern that is raised when collecting data using online research platforms like Prolific. While steps, including using screeners and attention checks were implemented, this concern remains. Regarding the second study sample, one limitation was a limited number of participants. The small sample size in the second study may partially explain the lack of empirical findings and, as such, points to the need for continued data collection. Because of the number of conditions included in the experimental design, especially with the addition of organizational role as a boundary condition, increased statistical power in the second study would have been beneficial and allowed for analysis that tapped into the distinctions between the lower, middle, and upper social classes, in contrast to just same-class and cross-class interactions. Likewise, an increased sample size would have ensured access to an increased sample with high-quality video data, which would be needed to better understand the measurement of emotions using facial expressions and their empirical and theoretical implications. Data will continue to be collected until an adequate sample size is achieved, allowing for the Study 2 analysis to be run again.

Third, and also related to participants, the selection decisions were not being made on behalf of participants' actual organization, which allows for more psychological distance from the decision. While there were efforts to offset these concerns (e.g., using real-world interview questions, including survey language to help increase attention and realism, asking participants

to read the interview questions aloud, testing the hypotheses in a second set of employees who fill hiring roles or who are human resource specialists), a tradeoff between external and internal validity was necessary. Relatedly, it may be that certain organizational factors shift decision-making. For example, if there are strong perceptions of a positive diversity climate, it may be that employers are less threatened and more excited by those in cross-class interactions. As another example, it may be that certain industries value prestige and, thus, have a bias for those job seekers who have greater prestige associated with more capital. For example, past research has been conducted in law and banking firms, which are marked by a value for prestigious forms of cultural capital (Rivera, 2012). As another example of the potential role of organizational characteristics, when organizations are described as more interdependent, job seekers from lower social class backgrounds receive higher ratings (Sharps & Anderson, 2021). While this study incorporated the position being filled (i.e., whether it was an entry-level or supervisor-level position), it may be that broader organizational or industry characteristics are critical in determining how class salient interactions are experienced.

Seen together, these concerns point to the value in conducting a field study where actual selection processes are observed. Conducing a field study allows for increased external validity and would lend insight into several important questions: whether there are other critical moments in the selection process that classed interactions occur, what information related to social class is disclosed and how it is disclosed during interviews, the role of individual or team decision-making, if there are other factors that eclipse the emotional reactions based on job seekers' social class background, and what organizational features influence the overall process. If access to an actual organization in which to conduct a field study is limited, it would be beneficial to partner with a university career center, especially if recruiters come onto campus to conduct first-round

screening interviews with job seekers. Again, this option would lend insight into real-world practices and outcomes.

Data collection in an organization or through an established career center would also allow researchers to collect information related to the job seeker's process: if emotional contagion occurs based on the interviewer's facial expression, the job candidate's perception of an employer's social class and the expectation for certain forms of capital, whether job candidates choose to openly disclose their social class background and, if so, what strategies they implemented. Likewise, access to an organization is necessary to test whether any of the aforementioned interventions (e.g., increasing social class diversity on hiring teams or training regarding social class bias) may offset or amplify the relationships uncovered in this study.

An Intersectional Approach

Another limitation is that this study focused solely on social class and did not address other potentially impactful identities, such as gender or race, that might impact interactions. While on the one hand, focusing on social class is beneficial because it moves research forward by taking a first step to isolate the role of social class in employment interviews. On the other hand, because the job candidate was played by a white male, this study cannot lend insight into how a job candidate holding other historically marginalized identities may shape this process. For example, it would be beneficial to better understand how social class intersects with race and gender, as there may be an implicit association between these and holding a higher/lower social class status. For example, past research has pointed to the intersection of social class and gender regarding job search efforts (Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016). Future research is necessary to understand these intersectional effects and to counter broader systems of inequality—a step that requires thoughtful theorizing and study design. As a potential first step, researchers could record

interviews with additional individuals that have alternative gender identities and racial or ethnic memberships and, following, run a study similar to the two in this dissertation. Until this step is taken, the complexity of class salient interactions is potentially underrealized.

Common Method Variance

Because the first study's data relied on self-report measures, there may be a potential concern about common method variance. Several steps were taken to address this potential issue, including temporal separation of surveys, using different response formats and questions, and the antecedent variable being based on a demographic attribute. To somewhat address this concern, qualitative responses that tapped into participants emotional reactions were also included. In doing so, scale measures of emotions could be compared to the emotional sentiment captured through coding the written responses in Study 1. Likewise, the second study included a measure of emotions that is based on changes in facial expressions. In particular, the second effort was a hopeful means of gathering data that did not rely on self-report measures but tapped into emotions using a non-obtrusive approach. However, Study 2's small sample size may have inhibited this set of results and account for the lack of correlation between the scale measures of emotion and the measure based on changes in facial expressions. Future steps to collect high-quality video data from a larger sample may produce clearer findings and lend additional insight into employers' emotional reactions to class salient interactions.

It may also be, however, that the emotional expressions displayed during the interview do not relate to the scale measures of emotions. First, it may be that employers filter their emotional expressions during interviews, perhaps monitoring oneself and displaying more positive cues such as smiling or engagement markers like nodding in certain instances. Future research may consider under what circumstances employers are more likely to monitor their facial expressions.

For instance, it may be that employers tend to offer job candidates from higher social classes more positive facial feedback because of their elevated status, even if they are less excited about the job candidate. Receiving more positive facial feedback can potentially boost the job candidate's confidence or ease any nerves—or improve their affect through contagion—ultimately improving their performance in the job interview. It may also be, however, that employers are not monitoring their facial expressions and, in fact, the emotions that are automatic in response to class salient interactions vary from more reflective emotions. That is, what employers feel in the moment (as captured by changes in one's expressions) varies from how they feel when prompted to evaluate how they feel about a job candidate. In this case, a question is raised about under which circumstances do more automatic versus more reflexive emotions impact selection decisions? The lack of findings in Study 2, along with the potential alternative explanations outside of sample size, raise important questions about the measurement of emotions in experimental studies and points to the complexity of how emotions impact decision making. These questions offer ample opportunity for future research, both in collecting additional data to re-run an analysis but also to design additional studies to explicate the potential difference between more automatic versus reflective emotions.

Cognitive vs. Emotional Mechanisms

From the onset, it was clarified that this study's aim was not to assert that affect, specifically discrete emotional reactions, are the only important mechanism in selection decisions. Instead, this study set out to highlight that discrete emotions may also impact selection decisions and suggest they must be considered alongside cognitive mechanisms. Although there is evidence that anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion are at play during class salient interactions, there are two consequences of focusing solely on these exact emotions. First, this study does not

address other discrete emotions that may be generated in class salient interactions. Although this study relied on class-specific theorizing to identify the most likely emotional reactions in employment interviews, there may be other discrete emotions at play. Future research, for instance, may want to consider envy or jealousy in upward cross-class interactions as this set of job candidates have been afforded opportunities that the employer has not been. As another example, it may be that the upwardly mobile may feel a distinct sense of pride when interacting with job candidates from the lower class, as the candidate reminds the employer of the distance they have traveled. Likewise, employers may also feel pride or inspiration when interacting with job candidates from the lower social class as the beloved narrative of the American Dream is salient, a narrative these candidates may appear to fulfill. As a final example, employers may feel disgust when interacting with a job candidate from an upper social class if they come off as bragging or ungrateful for their class privilege. Each of these examples points to the importance of considering additional discrete emotions that may occur in class salient interactions not only in employment interviews but, more generally, in the workplace.

A second limitation is that this study does not directly address how affective mechanisms and cognitive mechanisms work together. Future research should address this by theorizing the sequence of the two, their interaction, which is stronger, and under what circumstances affective versus cognitive mechanisms exert their impact. For example, do discrete emotions drive perceptions of person-job fit, or is it the opposite? As another example, do stereotypes about a job candidate's warmth or competence that are based on social class generate certain emotions? To understand class salient interactions more fully in the context of employment interviews it is necessary to consider these mechanisms in tandem, explicating how they are sequenced or interact to shape selection decisions. Greater understanding around these questions is particularly

important to design organizational interventions that offset social class bias.

Conclusion

Securing employment is critical to access labor market rewards such as a steady income, benefits, and job security. Central to this process are employment interviews and, notably, the employer responsible for selection decisions. Understanding how class salient interactions impact selection decisions is necessary because social class similarities and differences are salient during these exchanges and spark employer anxiety, enthusiasm, and compassion. These discrete emotions carry downstream consequences for assessments of job candidate hireability, salary recommendations, and social rewards—ultimately maintaining or disrupting social class stratification in the labor market. Seen together, this study helps explicate the stratifying power of employers' emotions and, more broadly, offers actionable insight into social class inequality in organizations.

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Tables

Table 1
Overview of Discrete Emotions

Emotion	Appraisal - Valence	Appraisal – Certainty	Appraisal – Importance	Activation Dimension	Action Readiness
Anxiety	Negative	Uncertain	Important	Activated	Avoid
Excitement	Positive	Certain	Important	Activated	Approach
Compassion	Negative	Certain	Important	Deactivated	Approach

Table 2

Overview of Hypotheses

	Hypotheses
A Path: Anxiety and Enthusiasm	Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between downward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.
	Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.
	Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between same-class interactions and employer enthusiasm.
Specifying the Lower, Middle, and Upper Social Class	Hypothesis 4A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.
	Hypothesis 4B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.
	Hypothesis 4C: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.
	Hypothesis 4D: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.
Specifying the Role of the Middle Social Class	Hypothesis 5A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.
	Hypothesis 5B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.
	Hypothesis 6A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit enthusiasm.
	Hypothesis 6B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit enthusiasm.
Social Class Extremes	Hypothesis 7A: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.
	Hypothesis 7B: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.
A Path: Compassion	Hypothesis 8: For employers from the lower social class, same-class interactions elicit compassion.
B Path	Hypothesis 9A: Anxiety negatively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.
	Hypothesis 9B: Anxiety negatively relates to salary recommendations.

Table 2 (Cont.)

	Hypotheses
	Hypothesis 9C: Anxiety negatively relates to social rewards.
B Path	Hypothesis 10A: Enthusiasm positively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.
	Hypothesis 10B: Enthusiasm positively relates to salary recommendations.
	Hypothesis 10C: Enthusiasm positively relates to social rewards.
	Hypothesis 11A: Compassion positively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.
	Hypothesis 11B: Compassion positively relates to salary recommendations.
	Hypothesis 11C: Compassion positively relates to social rewards.
Simple Mediation	Hypothesis 12A: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' downward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.
	Hypothesis 12B: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' upward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.
	Hypothesis 12C: Employers' enthusiasm helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.
	Hypothesis 12D: Employers' compassion helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.
Study 1 Moderators	Hypothesis 13A: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety.
	Hypothesis 13B: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm.
	Hypothesis 13C: Upward mobility strengthens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class.
	Hypothesis 14A: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from higher social classes.

Table 2 (Cont.)

	Hypotheses
	Hypothesis 14B: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes.
	Hypothesis 14C: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from the lower social class.
	Hypothesis 14D: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class.
	Hypothesis 14E: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class.
	Hypothesis 14F: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and compassion for employers from the higher social classes.
	Hypothesis 15A: Psychological flexibility weakens the negative relationship between anxiety and selection outcomes.
	Hypothesis 15B: Psychological flexibility weakens the positive relationship between enthusiasm and selection outcomes.
	Hypothesis 15C: Psychological flexibility strengthens the positive relationship between compassion and selection outcomes.
Study 2 Moderator	*Hypothesis 16A*: Organizational role moderates the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and anxiety.
	Hypothesis 16B: Organizational role moderates the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) the relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety.
	Hypothesis 16C: Organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) strengthens (vs. weakens) the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes.
	Hypothesis 16D: Organizational role moderates the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm, such that filling a managerial role (vs. non-managerial role) weakens (vs. strengthens) relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class.

Table 3

Interview Questions

Interview Type	Question
Behavioral	1. Tell me about your interest in this position.
	2. Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation and how you addressed it.
	3. Tell me about a class in college that you really enjoyed and why.
	4. Share more about how you decided to attend your undergraduate institution.
	5. Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to achieve it.
	6. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
Situational	7. Suppose you were assigned to take minutes at a weekly sales meeting led by the district manager that would have about 10 people in attendance and a few more attending via conference call. How would you approach this task?
	8. Imagine you're working on a project with a tight deadline and a team member is behind schedule with a critical deliverable you need to move forward. What would you do?

Table 4

Outline of Social Class Signals in Video Manipulation

Category	Lower Social Class	Middle Social Class	Upper Social Class
Cultural and social markers	Undergraduate extracurricular activity of basketball (leisure activities)	Undergraduate activity of baseball (leisure activities)	Undergraduate activity of golf team (leisure activities)
	Received college support from guidance counselor (social capital)	Received college support from parent (social capital)	Received college support from parents and tutor (social capital)
	Pastimes of attending local fairs (preferences)	Pastimes of hiking and listening to indie music (preferences)	Pastimes of sailing and listening to classical music (preferences)
Economic markers	Worked as a server and on-campus position for financial aid (occupation/income)	Worked a paid summer internship (occupation/income)	Worked an unpaid summer internship and position in campus organization (occupation/income)
	Peer mentor for first-generation college students (parent's education)	Peer mentor for first-year college students (parent's education)	Peer mentor for first-year college students (parent's education)
	Father and mother both work in blue-collar occupations (factory workers) (parent's occupation)	Father works in a white-collar/professional occupation (high school teacher) that does not require a graduate degree and mother is a homemaker (parent's education/parent's occupation)	Father and mother both work in white-collar/professional occupations (investment banking) that requires graduate degrees (parent's education/parent's occupation)
	University award for outstanding first-generation student athlete (parent's education)	University athletic award (income)	University athletic award (income)
	Spring break spent working at restaurant (income)	Spring break spent visiting friends in Wisconsin (income/cultural experience)	Spring break spent in condo in Mexico (income/cultural experience)

Note. Signals are based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.; Kraus et al., 2017; Kraus & Keltner, 2009; Kraus & Mendes, 2014; and Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016.

Table 5

Study 1 Specific Social Class Interactions: Subjective Childhood Social Class

Interaction	Sample Size
Lower Participant and Lower Candidate	44
Lower Participant and Middle Candidate	33
Lower Participant and Upper Candidate	44
Middle Participant and Lower Candidate	50
Middle Participant and Middle Candidate	84
Middle Participant and Upper Candidate	71
Upper Participant and Lower Candidate	16
Upper Participant and Middle Candidate	37
Upper Participant and Upper Candidate	29

Table 6

Study 1 Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Alphas

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Class Salient Interactions	0.73	0.45	-						
2. Gender	0.50	0.50	-0.05	-					
3. Race	0.19	0.39	0.07	-0.07	-				
4. Age	42.38	11.46	0.01	0.06	-0.12*	-			
5. Total Mobility	0.16	1.09	0.06	-0.08	0.09	0.14**	-		
6. Upward Mobility	0.35	0.48	.13**	-0.06	0.06	0.10*	0.80**	-	
7. Trait Positive Affect	3.41	0.81	-0.03	-0.06	0.02	0.14**	0.11*	0.06	(.93)
8. Trait Negative Affect	1.57	0.64	-0.02	0.10*	0.10	-0.22**	-0.16**	-0.10*	-0.42**
9. Social Dominance Orientation	2.26	1.29	-0.08	-0.17**	-0.03	0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.08
10. Psychological Flexibility	3.29	0.60	0.02	-0.15**	-0.08	0.25**	0.13**	0.09	0.51**
11. Anxiety	1.59	1.00	-0.04	-0.05	0.02	-0.12*	-0.04	-0.01	-0.08
12. Enthusiasm	3.75	1.72	-.13**	-0.08	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.42**
13. Compassion	3.5	1.70	-.13**	-0.02	0.08	-0.05	0.06	0.06	0.33**
14. Hireability	5.36	1.65	-.14**	0.02	0.02	0.02	-0.03	-0.01	0.19**
15. Salary Recommendations	4.81	2.46	-0.05	0.03	0.03	-0.06	0.05	0.08	0.11*
16. Social Rewards	3.70	1.15	-.15**	0.02	0.03	0.03	-0.02	-0.01	0.24**

Table 6 (Cont.)

Variable	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
8. Trait Negative Affect	(.92)								
9. Social Dominance Orientation	-0.05	(.96)							
10. Psychological Flexibility	-0.67**	-0.04	(.86)						
11. Anxiety	0.32**	0.12*	-0.25**	(.97)					
12. Enthusiasm	-0.16**	0.15**	0.09	-0.15**	(.87)				
13. Compassion	-0.03	0.07	0.00	-0.05	0.72**	(.93)			
14. Hireability	-0.08	0.05	0.09	-0.36**	0.54**	0.53**	(.97)		
15. Salary Recommendations	-0.04	0.06	0.07	-0.22**	0.34**	0.37**	0.61**	-	
16. Social Rewards	-0.11*	0.05	0.10*	-0.36**	0.57**	0.57**	0.92**	0.59**	(.95)

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Cronbach alpha scores are included in the parentheses, when applicable. Class salient interactions are categorized as same class interactions (0) and cross class interactions (1). Gender is categorized as male (0) and female/other (1). Race is categorized as white (0) and non-white (1).

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 7

Hypothesis 1 & 2: Cross-class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.72	0.36	2.02	0.04*	0.020	1.420
Upward vs. Same-class Interactions	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.83	-0.203	0.254
Upward vs. Downward Class Interactions	-0.12	0.13	-0.92	0.36	-0.377	0.136
Same vs. Downward Class Interactions	-0.15	0.13	-1.08	0.28	-0.411	0.119
Gender	-0.17	0.10	-1.74	0.08	-0.354	0.022
Race	-0.06	0.12	-0.50	0.61	-0.305	0.180
Age	0.00	0.00	-1.03	0.30	-0.013	0.004
Social Class Mobility	-0.01	0.05	-0.21	0.83	-0.107	0.086
Trait Positive Affect	0.09	0.07	1.41	0.16	-0.036	0.221
Trait Negative Affect	0.55	0.08	6.61	0.00**	0.388	0.716

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .12

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 8

Regression Results: Upward Cross-class Interactions with the Middle vs. Upper Social Class and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.21	0.52	0.39	0.70	-0.826	1.236
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.31	0.15	2.10	0.04*	0.019	0.599
Gender	-0.01	0.13	-0.07	0.94	-0.275	0.255
Race	-0.10	0.16	-0.62	0.53	-0.423	0.220
Age	0.00	0.01	0.36	0.72	-0.010	0.015
Social Class Mobility	-0.04	0.07	-0.58	0.57	-0.175	0.096
Trait Positive Affect	0.08	0.09	0.94	0.35	-0.093	0.262
Trait Negative Affect	0.55	0.12	4.56	0.00**	0.313	0.790

Note. N = 197. R^2 = .15

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 9

Hypothesis 3 Regression Results: Same-class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.63	0.59	1.07	0.28	-0.523	1.778
Cross-class vs. Same-class Interactions	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
Gender	-0.23	0.16	-1.47	0.14	-0.538	0.078
Race	0.06	0.20	0.27	0.78	-0.343	0.454
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.28	0.78	-0.016	0.012
Social Class Mobility	-0.01	0.07	-0.13	0.9	-0.153	0.134
Trait Positive Affect	0.90	0.11	8.51	0.00**	0.696	1.114
Trait Negative Affect	0.06	0.14	0.43	0.67	-0.210	0.329

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .20

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 10

Hypothesis 4A Regression Results: Upper Class to Lower Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.09	0.91	0.10	0.92	-1.725	1.911
Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interviewee	-0.09	0.29	-0.32	0.75	-0.680	0.491
Lower Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.53	0.30	1.76	0.08	-0.069	1.125
Gender	0.06	0.23	0.25	0.8	-0.401	0.516
Race	0.37	0.32	1.13	0.26	-0.278	1.011
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.98	-0.022	0.021
Social Class Mobility	0.09	0.13	0.65	0.52	-0.178	0.351
Trait Positive Affect	0.07	0.16	0.42	0.68	-0.259	0.395
Trait Negative Affect	0.75	0.19	3.90	0.00**	0.369	1.138

Note. N = 86. R^2 = .29

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 11

Hypothesis 4B Regression Results: Middle Class to Lower Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.66	0.54	1.21	0.23	-0.415	1.728
Lower Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.20	0.18	1.12	0.27	-0.156	0.562
Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interviewee	0.16	0.18	0.90	0.37	-0.191	0.512
Gender	-0.37	0.14	-2.62	0.01**	-0.658	-0.092
Race	-0.09	0.19	-0.47	0.64	-0.474	0.293
Age	-0.01	0.01	-1.11	0.27	-0.018	0.005
Social Class Mobility	-0.05	0.10	-0.49	0.63	-0.255	0.154
Trait Positive Affect	0.14	0.10	1.36	0.17	-0.061	0.335
Trait Negative Affect	0.49	0.13	3.89	0.00**	0.242	0.741

Note. N = 164. R^2 = .15

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 12

Hypothesis 4C & 4D Regression Results: Lower Class to Middle Class and Upper Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.94	0.60	1.58	0.12	-0.238	2.126
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.36	0.19	1.90	0.06	-0.014	0.737
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	0.09	0.20	0.44	0.66	-0.308	0.483
Upper Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	-0.27	0.19	-1.45	0.15	-0.646	0.099
Gender	-0.11	0.16	-0.70	0.49	-0.432	0.207
Race	-0.20	0.19	-1.08	0.28	-0.570	0.166
Age	-0.01	0.01	-0.89	0.37	-0.021	0.008
Social Class Mobility	0.02	0.09	0.27	0.79	-0.152	0.199
Trait Positive Affect	0.06	0.10	0.62	0.54	-0.137	0.262
Trait Negative Affect	0.40	0.14	2.88	0.00**	0.125	0.673

Note. N = 158. R^2 = .09

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 13

Hypothesis 5A Regression Results: Upper Class to Middle Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.00	0.92	0.00	1.00	-1.824	1.820
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	0.09	0.29	0.32	0.75	-0.491	0.680
Middle Class vs. Upper Class interviewee	0.62	0.26	2.41	0.02*	0.108	1.138
Gender	0.06	0.23	0.25	0.8	-0.401	0.516
Race	0.37	0.32	1.13	0.26	-0.278	1.011
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.98	-0.022	0.021
Social Class Mobility	0.09	0.13	0.65	0.52	-0.178	0.351
Trait Positive Affect	0.07	0.16	0.42	0.68	-0.259	0.395
Trait Negative Affect	0.75	0.19	3.90	0.00**	0.369	1.138

Note. N = 86. R^2 = .29

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 14

Hypothesis 5B Regression Results: Middle Class to Upper Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.82	0.53	1.55	0.12	-0.226	1.860
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	-0.16	0.18	-0.90	0.37	-0.512	0.191
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.04	0.16	0.27	0.79	-0.265	0.351
Gender	-0.37	0.14	-2.62	0.01**	-0.658	-0.092
Race	-0.09	0.19	-0.47	0.64	-0.474	0.293
Age	-0.01	0.01	-1.11	0.27	-0.018	0.005
Social Class Mobility	-0.05	0.10	-0.49	0.63	-0.255	0.154
Trait Positive Affect	0.14	0.10	1.36	0.17	-0.061	0.335
Trait Negative Affect	0.49	0.13	3.89	0.00**	0.242	0.741

Note. N = 164. R^2 = .15

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 15

Hypothesis 6A Regression Results: Upper Class to Middle Class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	1.63	1.28	1.28	0.21	-0.917	4.184
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	0.29	0.41	0.72	0.48	-0.525	1.114
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	-0.46	0.36	-1.27	0.21	-1.178	0.262
Gender	-0.42	0.32	-1.30	0.20	-1.062	0.221
Race	-0.29	0.45	-0.65	0.52	-1.195	0.610
Age	-0.03	0.02	-1.85	0.07	-0.058	0.002
Social Class Mobility	-0.01	0.19	-0.08	0.94	-0.384	0.357
Trait Positive Affect	1.08	0.23	4.68	0.00**	0.618	1.533
Trait Negative Affect	-0.17	0.27	-0.61	0.54	-0.703	0.373

Note. N = 86. R^2 = .37

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 16

Hypothesis 6B Regression Results: Middle Class to Upper Class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.37	0.86	0.43	0.67	-1.323	2.060
Upper Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	-0.64	0.30	2.14	0.03*	0.049	1.235
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	-0.77	0.29	-2.98	0.00**	-1.277	-0.259
Gender	-0.34	0.24	-1.45	0.15	-0.811	0.123
Race	-0.33	0.32	-1.04	0.30	-0.967	0.300
Age	0.01	0.01	1.20	0.23	-0.008	0.031
Social Class Mobility	0.27	0.17	1.59	0.11	-0.065	0.611
Trait Positive Affect	0.76	0.17	4.60	0.00**	0.435	1.089
Trait Negative Affect	0.13	0.21	0.64	0.52	-0.278	0.546

Note. N = 164. R^2 = .26

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 17

Hypothesis 7A Regression Results: Lower Class to Upper Class vs. Middle Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.94	0.60	1.58	0.12	-0.238	2.126
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.36	0.19	1.90	0.06	-0.014	0.737
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	0.09	0.20	0.44	0.66	-0.308	0.483
Gender	-0.11	0.16	-0.70	0.49	-0.432	0.207
Race	-0.20	0.19	-1.08	0.28	-0.570	0.166
Age	-0.01	0.01	-0.89	0.37	-0.021	0.008
Social Class Mobility	0.02	0.09	0.27	0.79	-0.152	0.199
Trait Positive Affect	0.06	0.10	0.62	0.54	-0.137	0.262
Trait Negative Affect	0.40	0.14	2.88	0.00**	0.125	0.673

Note. N = 158. R^2 = .09

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 18

Hypothesis 7B Regression Results: Upper Class to Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interactions and Anxiety

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.09	0.91	0.10	0.92	-1.725	1.911
Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interviewee	-0.09	0.29	-0.32	0.75	-0.680	0.491
Lower Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	0.53	0.30	1.76	0.08	-0.069	1.125
Gender	0.06	0.23	0.25	0.80	-0.401	0.516
Race	0.37	0.32	1.13	0.26	-0.278	1.011
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.98	-0.022	0.021
Social Class Mobility	0.09	0.13	0.65	0.52	-0.178	0.351
Trait Positive Affect	0.07	0.16	0.42	0.68	-0.259	0.395
Trait Negative Affect	0.75	0.19	3.90	0.00**	0.369	1.138

Note. N = 86. R^2 = .09

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 19

Regression Results: Lower Class to Upper Class vs. Middle Class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.92	0.97	0.94	0.35	-1.001	2.831
Middle Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	-1.32	0.31	-4.29	0.00**	-1.930	-0.713
Middle Class vs. Lower Class Interviewee	-0.15	0.32	-0.46	0.65	-0.789	0.493
Gender	0.31	0.26	1.17	0.24	-0.210	0.826
Race	0.59	0.30	1.95	0.05	-0.007	1.186
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.21	0.83	-0.026	0.021
Social Class Mobility	-0.22	0.14	-1.52	0.13	-0.502	0.066
Trait Positive Affect	0.89	0.16	5.45	0.00**	0.569	1.216
Trait Negative Affect	0.16	0.22	0.70	0.49	-0.288	0.600

Note. N = 158. R^2 = .23

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 20

Hypothesis 8 Regression Results: Lower Class to Upper Class vs. Middle Class Interactions and Enthusiasm

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	1.91	1.01	1.89	0.06	-0.087	3.902
Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interviewee	0.08	0.33	0.24	0.81	-0.583	0.741
Lower Class vs. Upper Class Interviewee	-1.29	0.32	-4.08	0.00**	-1.911	-0.664
Gender	0.52	0.27	1.93	0.06	-0.013	1.057
Race	0.36	0.31	1.17	0.25	-0.253	0.979
Age	-0.03	0.01	-2.46	0.01*	-0.055	-0.006
Social Class Mobility	0.09	0.15	0.58	0.56	-0.207	0.380
Trait Positive Affect	0.76	0.17	4.49	0.00**	0.425	1.093
Trait Negative Affect	0.17	0.23	0.74	0.46	-0.287	0.630

Note. N = 158. R^2 = .28

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 21

Regression Results: Same-class Interactions for the Lower Class vs. Middle Class and Upper Class and Compassion

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.80	1.04	0.77	0.44	-1.267	2.870
Same for Lower vs. Same for Middle	-0.16	0.35	-0.46	0.64	-0.861	0.535
Same for Lower vs. Same for Upper	-0.82	0.55	-1.48	0.14	-1.919	0.277
Gender	0.25	0.28	0.89	0.37	-0.304	0.803
Race	0.03	0.40	0.08	0.94	-0.772	0.834
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.13	0.89	-0.026	0.023
Social Class Mobility	0.03	0.21	0.14	0.89	-0.380	0.437
Trait Positive Affect	0.73	0.20	3.68	0.00**	0.335	1.116
Trait Negative Affect	0.44	0.25	1.75	0.08	-0.060	0.948

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .14

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 22

Regression Results: Upward vs. Downward Interactions and Compassion

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.44	0.57	0.77	0.44	-0.689	1.570
Upward vs. Same-class Interactions	0.87	0.19	4.65	0.00**	0.504	1.241
Upward vs. Downward Interactions	1.09	0.21	5.18	0.00**	0.677	1.504
Same-class vs. Downward Interactions	0.22	0.22	1.00	0.32	-0.209	0.645
Gender	0.02	0.15	0.14	0.89	-0.281	0.324
Race	0.28	0.20	1.43	0.15	-0.108	0.675
Age	-0.01	0.01	-1.56	0.12	-0.024	0.003
Social Class Mobility	0.25	0.08	3.14	0.00**	0.093	0.406
Trait Positive Affect	0.73	0.11	6.88	0.00**	0.518	0.933
Trait Negative Affect	0.28	0.13	2.07	0.04*	0.013	0.543

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .21

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 23

Regression Results: Downward Interactions with Lower Class vs. Middle Class and Compassion

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	0.56	1.03	0.55	0.58	-1.473	2.599
Lower Class vs. Middle Class Interviewee	-0.58	0.28	-2.05	0.04*	-1.142	-0.017
Gender	-0.19	0.27	-0.72	0.47	-0.722	0.339
Race	0.39	0.36	1.09	0.28	-0.323	1.111
Age	-0.01	0.01	-1.05	0.29	-0.034	0.011
Social Class Mobility	0.15	0.14	1.04	0.30	-0.135	0.428
Trait Positive Affect	0.97	0.19	5.04	0.00**	0.585	1.348
Trait Negative Affect	0.53	0.22	2.39	0.02*	0.089	0.962

Note. N = 100. R^2 = .27

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 24

Hypothesis 9A Regression Results: Anxiety and Assessments of Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	4.47	0.57	7.85	0.00**	3.354	5.596
Anxiety	-0.65	0.08	-8.13	0.00**	-0.805	-0.492
Gender	0.00	0.15	-0.01	0.99	-0.302	0.298
Race	0.07	0.20	0.33	0.74	-0.321	0.452
Age	0.00	0.01	-0.54	0.59	-0.017	0.010
Social Class Mobility	-0.08	0.07	-1.10	0.27	-0.217	0.062
Trait Positive Affect	0.46	0.10	4.45	0.00**	0.257	0.663
Trait Negative Affect	0.32	0.14	2.30	0.02*	0.047	0.598

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .18

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 25

Hypothesis 9B Regression Results: Anxiety and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	4.73	0.90	5.25	0.00**	2.959	6.502
Anxiety	-0.59	0.13	-4.70	0.00**	-0.840	-0.344
Gender	0.15	0.24	0.62	0.54	-0.324	0.623
Race	0.06	0.31	0.18	0.85	-0.553	0.668
Age	-0.02	0.01	-1.88	0.06	-0.042	0.001
Social Class Mobility	0.11	0.11	0.97	0.33	-0.112	0.329
Trait Positive Affect	0.39	0.16	2.38	0.02*	0.068	0.709
Trait Negative Affect	0.29	0.22	1.31	0.19	-0.144	0.727

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .19

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 26

Hypothesis 9C Regression Results: Anxiety and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	2.91	0.40	7.36	0.00**	2.131	3.684
Anxiety	-0.43	0.06	-7.83	0.00**	-0.541	-0.324
Gender	0.01	0.11	0.10	0.92	-0.197	0.218
Race	0.08	0.14	0.59	0.56	-0.188	0.348
Age	0.00	0.00	-0.50	0.62	-0.012	0.007
Social Class Mobility	-0.05	0.05	-0.99	0.32	-0.145	0.048
Trait Positive Affect	0.37	0.07	5.19	0.00**	0.231	0.512
Trait Negative Affect	0.19	0.10	1.97	0.05*	0.000	0.382

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .19

*p < .05, **p < .01

Table 27

Hypothesis 10A Regression Results: Enthusiasm and Assessments of Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	3.64	0.53	6.91	0.00**	2.601	4.669
Enthusiasm	0.53	0.04	12.01	0.00**	0.447	0.622
Social Class Mobility	-0.07	0.07	-1.11	0.27	-0.202	0.056
Gender	0.21	0.14	1.51	0.13	-0.064	0.490
Race	0.10	0.18	0.53	0.60	-0.261	0.454
Age	0.00	0.01	0.05	0.96	-0.012	0.013
Trait Positive Affect	-0.09	0.10	-0.83	0.41	-0.290	0.118
Trait Negative Affect	-0.07	0.12	-0.58	0.56	-0.314	0.171

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .30

*p < .05, **p < .01

Table 28

Hypothesis 10B Regression Results: Enthusiasm and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	3.94	0.87	4.53	0.00**	2.231	5.647
Enthusiasm	0.52	0.07	7.12	0.00**	0.379	0.668
Gender	0.35	0.23	1.52	0.13	-0.104	0.811
Race	0.08	0.30	0.28	0.78	-0.506	0.675
Age	-0.02	0.01	-1.59	0.11	-0.037	0.004
Social Class Mobility	0.11	0.11	1.05	0.29	-0.099	0.327
Trait Positive Affect	-0.14	0.17	-0.83	0.40	-0.480	0.194
Trait Negative Affect	-0.07	0.20	-0.35	0.73	-0.471	0.330

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .13

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 29

Hypothesis 10C Regression Results: Enthusiasm and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	2.33	0.36	6.51	0.00**	1.626	3.033
Enthusiasm	0.38	0.03	12.60	0.00**	0.322	0.441
Gender	0.16	0.10	1.67	0.10	-0.029	0.348
Race	0.10	0.12	0.81	0.42	-0.143	0.343
Age	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.94	-0.008	0.009
Social Class Mobility	-0.05	0.04	-1.01	0.31	-0.133	0.043
Trait Positive Affect	-0.02	0.07	-0.22	0.82	-0.154	0.123
Trait Negative Affect	-0.07	0.08	-0.88	0.38	-0.238	0.091

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .33

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 30

Hypothesis 11A Regression Results: Compassion and Assessments of Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	3.69	0.53	6.99	0.00**	2.653	4.729
Compassion	0.52	0.04	11.81	0.00**	0.435	0.608
Gender	0.10	0.14	0.71	0.48	-0.178	0.377
Race	-0.01	0.18	-0.05	0.96	-0.368	0.351
Age	0.01	0.01	0.79	0.43	-0.007	0.018
Social Class Mobility	-0.12	0.07	-1.75	0.08	-0.246	0.014
Trait Positive Affect	-0.02	0.10	-0.24	0.81	-0.226	0.177
Trait Negative Affect	-0.20	0.12	-1.63	0.10	-0.448	0.042

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .29

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 31

Hypothesis 11B Regression Results: Compassion and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	3.97	0.86	4.61	0.00**	2.277	5.669
Compassion	0.54	0.07	7.55	0.00**	0.402	0.686
Gender	0.24	0.23	1.05	0.30	-0.212	0.696
Race	-0.03	0.30	-0.09	0.93	-0.613	0.562
Age	-0.01	0.01	-1.12	0.26	-0.032	0.009
Social Class Mobility	0.07	0.11	0.65	0.52	-0.142	0.282
Trait Positive Affect	-0.11	0.17	-0.66	0.51	-0.439	0.219
Trait Negative Affect	-0.21	0.20	-1.03	0.30	-0.611	0.189

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .14

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 32

Hypothesis 11C Regression Results: Compassion and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	2.36	0.35	6.66	0.00**	1.665	3.058
Compassion	0.39	0.03	13.00	0.00**	0.327	0.444
Gender	0.08	0.09	0.83	0.41	-0.108	0.265
Race	0.02	0.12	0.18	0.86	-0.219	0.264
Age	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.37	-0.005	0.012
Social Class Mobility	-0.08	0.04	-1.73	0.08	-0.164	0.011
Trait Positive Affect	0.02	0.07	0.26	0.80	-0.118	0.153
Trait Negative Affect	-0.17	0.08	-2.06	0.04*	-0.336	-0.007

Note. N = 408. R^2 = .34

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 33

Hypothesis 12A & 12B Simple Mediation Results for Anxiety: Class Salient Interactions and Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. SC (X1)	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.83	-0.203	0.254
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. DCC (X2)	-0.12	0.13	-0.92	0.36	-0.377	0.136
Anxiety regressed on SC vs. DCC (X3)	-0.15	0.13	-1.08	0.28	-0.411	0.119
Hireability regressed on Anxiety, controlling for interactions	-0.65	0.08	-8.26	0.00**	-0.801	-0.493
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for anxiety	0.75	0.18	4.14	0.00**	0.394	1.109
Hireability regressed on X2, controlling for anxiety	0.56	0.2	2.75	0.01*	0.16	0.963
Hireability regressed on X3, controlling for anxiety	-0.19	0.21	-0.9	0.37	-0.605	0.225
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	-0.02	0.08	-0.194	0.147		
X2	0.08	0.09	-0.094	0.255		
X3	0.09	0.09	-0.081	0.282		

Note. Table 33 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 34

Hypothesis 12A & 12B Simple Mediation Results for Anxiety: Class Salient Interactions and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. SC (X1)	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.83	-0.203	0.254
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. DCC (X2)	-0.12	0.13	-0.92	0.36	-0.377	0.136
Anxiety regressed on SC vs. DCC (X3)	-0.15	0.13	-1.08	0.28	-0.411	0.119
Hireability regressed on Anxiety, controlling for X1, X2, X3	-0.59	0.13	-4.66	0.00**	-0.834	-0.339
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for anxiety	0.47	0.29	1.61	0.11	-0.105	1.045
Hireability regressed on X2, controlling for anxiety	0.53	0.33	1.60	0.11	-0.12	1.172
Hireability regressed on X3, controlling for anxiety	0.06	0.34	0.17	0.87	-0.611	0.723
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	-0.01	0.08	-0.183	0.132		
X2	0.07	0.08	-0.089	0.232		
X3	0.09	0.08	-0.070	0.263		

Note. Table 34 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 35

Hypothesis 12A & 12B Simple Mediation Results for Anxiety: Class Salient Interactions and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. SC (X1)	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.83	-0.203	0.254
Anxiety regressed on UCC vs. DCC (X2)	-0.12	0.13	-0.92	0.36	-0.377	0.136
Anxiety regressed on SC vs. DCC (X3)	-0.15	0.13	-1.08	0.28	-0.411	0.119
Hireability regressed on Anxiety, controlling for X1, X2, X3	-0.43	0.05	-7.97	0.00**	-0.538	-0.325
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for anxiety	0.53	0.13	4.25	0.00**	0.287	0.781
Hireability regressed on X2, controlling for anxiety	0.4	0.14	2.83	0.00**	0.122	0.677
Hireability regressed on X3, controlling for anxiety	-0.13	0.15	-0.92	0.36	-0.421	0.153
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	-0.01	0.06	-0.132	0.096		
X2	0.05	0.06	-0.063	0.171		
X3	0.06	0.06	-0.052	0.190		

Note. Table 35 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 36

Hypothesis 12C Simple Mediation Results for Enthusiasm: Same-class Interactions and Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Enthusiasm regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
Hireability regressed on Enthusiasm, controlling for X1	0.52	0.04	11.70	0.00**	0.436	0.613
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for enthusiasm	0.25	0.16	1.58	0.11	-0.06	0.56
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.25	0.09	0.079	0.447		

Note. Table 36 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 37

Hypothesis 12C Simple Mediation Results for Enthusiasm: Same-class Interactions and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Enthusiasm regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
Hireability regressed on Enthusiasm, controlling for X1	0.52	0.07	7.05	0.00**	0.378	0.67
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for enthusiasm	-0.01	0.26	-0.05	0.96	-0.529	0.5
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.25	0.10	0.078	0.461		

Note. Table 37 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 38

Hypothesis 12C Simple Mediation Results for Enthusiasm: Same-class Interactions and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Enthusiasm regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
Hireability regressed on Enthusiasm, controlling for X1	0.37	0.03	12.28	0.00**	0.314	0.434
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for enthusiasm	0.18	0.11	1.66	0.10	-0.033	0.389
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.18	0.07	0.058	0.319		

Note. Table 38 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 39

Hypothesis 12D Simple Mediation Results for Compassion: Same-class Interactions and Hireability

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Compassion regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.18	2.70	0.01**	0.129	0.823
Hireability regressed on Compassion, controlling for X1	0.51	0.04	11.51	0.00**	0.424	0.599
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for compassion	0.26	0.16	1.64	0.10	-0.052	0.571
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.24	0.09	0.074	0.426		

Note. Table 39 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 40

Hypothesis 12D Simple Mediation Results for Compassion: Same-class Interactions and Salary Recommendations

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Compassion regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.18	2.70	0.01**	0.129	0.823
Hireability regressed on Compassion, controlling for X1	0.55	0.07	7.48	0.00**	0.402	0.688
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for compassion	-0.02	0.26	-0.08	0.93	-0.532	0.489
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.26	0.10	0.079	0.459		

Note. Table 40 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 41

Hypothesis 12D Simple Mediation Results for Compassion: Same-class Interactions and Social Rewards

Variable	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
Compassion regressed on CC vs. SC (X1)	0.48	0.18	2.70	0.01**	0.129	0.823
Hireability regressed on Compassion, controlling for X1	0.38	0.03	12.69	0.00**	0.32	0.437
Hireability regressed on X1, controlling for compassion	0.18	0.11	1.68	0.09	-0.031	0.388
Bootstrap results for indirect effects	Effect	Std. Error	LLCI	ULCI		
X1	0.18	0.07	0.055	0.313		

Note. Table 41 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 42

Hypothesis 13A Conditional Indirect Effects of Upward Mobility: Upward Cross-class Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	0.72	0.36	2.01	0.04*	0.018	1.426
UCC vs. SC (X1)	-0.03	0.15	-0.24	0.81	-0.320	0.251
UCC vs. DCC (X1)	-0.09	0.14	-0.60	0.55	-0.367	0.195
Social Class Mobility	-0.01	0.14	-0.07	0.95	-0.282	0.264
Social Class Mobility x X1	0.25	0.25	0.99	0.32	-0.246	0.740
Social Class Mobility x X2	-0.28	0.35	-0.81	0.42	-0.966	0.400
	Hireability					
Constant	4.34	0.56	7.76	0.00**	3.242	5.44
Anxiety	-0.65	0.08	-8.27	0.00**	-0.801	-0.493
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
DCC	Stable	1.62				
SC	Stable	1.58				
UCC	Stable	1.53				
DCC	Upwardly Mobile	1.61				
SC	Upwardly Mobile	1.82				
UCC	Upwardly Mobile	1.24				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
X1	-0.16	0.20	-0.583	0.201		
X2	0.18	0.22	-0.237	0.608		

Note. Table 42 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 43

Hypothesis 13B Conditional Indirect Effects of Upward Mobility: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	0.61	0.59	1.04	0.30	-0.546	1.763
CC vs. SC (X1)	0.58	0.21	2.79	0.01**	0.171	0.986
Social Class Mobility	0.11	0.19	0.57	0.57	-0.264	0.478
Social Class Mobility x X1	-0.33	0.39	-0.83	0.41	-1.094	0.444
	Hireability					
Constant	3.62	0.53	6.89	0.00**	2.584	4.649
Enthusiasm	0.52	0.04	11.7	0.00**	0.437	0.613
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	Stable	3.57				
Same-class	Stable	4.15				
Cross-class	Upwardly Mobile	3.68				
Same-class	Upwardly Mobile	3.93				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	-0.17	0.21	-0.584	0.244		

Note. Table 43 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 44

Hypothesis 13C Conditional Indirect Effects of Upward Mobility for the Lower Social Class: Same-class Interactions, Compassion, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	1.05	1.06	0.99	0.32	-1.045	3.142
CC vs. SC (X1)	0.94	0.57	1.65	0.10	-0.184	2.065
Social Class Mobility	0.37	0.36	1.03	0.31	-0.342	1.079
Social Class Mobility x X1	-0.24	0.77	-0.31	0.76	-1.77	1.292
	Hireability					
Constant	3.82	0.86	4.46	0.00**	2.126	5.506
Compassion	0.52	0.07	7.77	0.00**	0.385	0.649
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	Stable	3.03				
Same-class	Stable	3.97				
Cross-class	Upwardly Mobile	3.40				
Same-class	Upwardly Mobile	4.10				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	-0.12	0.38	-0.846	0.651		

Note. Table 44 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 158 participants. Results include controls for *gender*, *race*, *age*, *social class mobility*, *trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 45

Hypothesis 14A Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Upper Social Class: Cross-class Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	-0.02	1.06	-0.02	0.98	-2.125	2.079
CC vs. SC (X1)	0.33	0.62	0.53	0.60	-0.908	1.569
Social Dominance Orientation	0.30	0.16	1.81	0.07	-0.029	0.621
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	-0.22	0.19	-1.16	0.25	-0.590	0.156
	Hireability					
Constant	3.05	1.44	2.13	0.04*	0.196	5.914
Anxiety	-0.74	0.17	-4.44	0.00**	-1.075	-0.409
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	-1 SD	1.05				
Same-class	-1 SD	1.05				
Cross-class	Mean	2.51				
Same-class	Mean	2.51				
Cross-class	+1 SD	3.97				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.97				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**				
CC vs. SC	0.16	0.26	-0.129	0.934		

Note. Table 45 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 86 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 46

Hypothesis 14A Conditional Indirect Effects of SDO for the Middle Social Class: Cross-class Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	0.52	0.55	0.94	0.35	-0.566	1.599
UCC vs. SC (X1)	-0.14	0.32	-0.44	0.66	-0.771	0.49
UCC vs. DCC (X2)	0.05	0.37	0.14	0.89	-0.683	0.791
SC vs. DCC (X3)	0.19	0.37	0.53	0.60	-0.532	0.921
Social Dominance Orientation	0.17	0.09	1.86	0.07	-0.011	0.352
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.82	-0.214	0.269
Social Dominance Orientation x X2	-0.12	0.14	-0.84	0.40	-0.397	0.161
Social Dominance Orientation x X3	-0.15	0.14	-1.08	0.28	-0.412	0.122
	Hireability					
Constant	3.93	0.85	4.63	0.00**	2.256	5.609
Anxiety	-0.60	0.13	-4.60	0.00**	-0.857	-0.342
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Upward Cross-class	-1 SD	1.41				
Same-class	-1 SD	1.29				
Downward Cross-class	-1 SD	1.33				
Upward Cross-class	Mean	1.62				
Same-class	Mean	1.54				
Downward Cross-class	Mean	1.40				
Upward Cross-class	+1 SD	1.83				
Same-class	+1 SD	1.79				
Downward Cross-class	+1 SD	1.46				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
X1	-0.02	0.10	-0.209	0.201		
X2	0.07	0.11	-0.115	0.325		
X3	0.09	0.10	-0.079	0.303		

Note. Table 46 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 164 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000. $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 47

Hypothesis 14B Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Upper Social Class: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	1.01	1.18	0.86	0.39	-1.339	3.356
CC vs. SC (X1)	1.89	0.80	2.37	0.02*	0.299	3.483
Social Dominance Orientation	0.49	0.12	3.93	0.00**	0.241	0.737
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	-0.74	0.24	-3.09	0.00**	-1.224	-0.265
	Hireability					
Constant	2.06	1.31	1.57	0.12	-0.557	4.671
Enthusiasm	0.62	0.12	5.35	0.00**	0.386	0.845
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	-1 SD	3.03				
Same-class	-1 SD	4.14				
Cross-class	Mean	3.74				
Same-class	Mean	3.77				
Cross-class	+1 SD	4.46				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.39				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**				
CC vs. SC	-0.46	0.23	-1.106	-0.178		

Note. Table 47 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 86 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 48

Hypothesis 14B Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Middle Social Class: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	-0.38	0.91	-0.42	0.68	-2.166	1.411
UCC vs. SC (X1)	1.94	0.53	3.68	0.00**	0.900	2.985
UCC vs. DCC (X2)	0.54	0.62	0.87	0.38	-0.681	1.755
SC vs. DCC (X3)	-1.41	0.61	-2.31	0.02*	-2.605	-0.206
Social Dominance Orientation	0.26	0.15	1.69	0.09	-0.043	0.556
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	-0.51	0.20	-2.54	0.01*	-0.913	-0.115
Social Dominance Orientation x X2	0.02	0.23	0.08	0.93	-0.441	0.480
Social Dominance Orientation x X3	0.53	0.22	2.39	0.02*	0.093	0.974
	Hireability					
Constant	3.30	0.82	4.03	0.00**	1.685	4.923
Enthusiasm	0.46	0.08	6.11	0.00**	0.313	0.613
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Upward Cross-class	-1 SD	3.13				
Same-class	-1 SD	4.52				
Downward Cross-class	-1 SD	3.69				
Upward Cross-class	Mean	3.45				
Same-class	Mean	4.19				
Downward Cross-class	Mean	4.03				
Upward Cross-class	+1 SD	3.77				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.87				
Downward Cross-class	+1 SD	4.38				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
X1	-0.23	0.01	-0.424	-0.038		
X2	0.01	0.10	-0.196	0.219		
X3	0.23	0.12	0.020	0.483		

Note. Table 48 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 164 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000. $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 49

Hypothesis 14C Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Lower Social Class: Cross-class Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	1.43	0.72	1.99	0.05*	0.013	2.843
SC vs. CC (X1)	-0.32	0.46	-0.68	0.50	-1.229	0.598
Social Dominance Orientation	-0.11	0.17	-0.63	0.53	-0.451	0.233
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	0.10	0.19	0.55	0.58	-0.271	0.479
	Hireability					
Constant	5.76	0.99	5.81	0.00**	3.801	7.717
Anxiety	-0.63	0.13	-4.88	0.00**	-0.880	-0.373
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Same-class	-1 SD	1.76				
Cross-class	-1 SD	1.55				
Same-class	Mean	1.65				
Cross-class	Mean	1.55				
Same-class	+1 SD	1.52				
Cross-class	+1 SD	1.54				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	-0.07	0.15	-0.393	0.217		

Note. Table 49 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 158 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 50

Hypothesis 14D Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Lower Social Class: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	-0.17	1.07	-0.16	0.87	-2.29	1.944
CC vs. SC (X1)	0.13	0.79	0.16	0.87	-1.434	1.686
Social Dominance Orientation	0.17	0.13	1.33	0.19	-0.082	0.420
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	0.03	0.32	0.08	0.93	-0.613	0.667
	Hireability					
Constant	4.36	0.85	5.16	0.00**	2.689	6.030
Enthusiasm	0.53	0.07	7.84	0.00**	0.397	0.665
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	-1 SD	3.42				
Same-class	-1 SD	3.57				
Cross-class	Mean	3.60				
Same-class	Mean	3.78				
Cross-class	+1 SD	3.80				
Same-class	+1 SD	4.01				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	0.01	0.17	-0.287	0.417		

Note. Table 50 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 158 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 51

Hypothesis 14E Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Lower Social Class: Same-class Interactions, Compassion, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	0.88	1.10	0.80	0.42	-1.294	3.054
CC vs. SC (X1)	1.26	0.81	1.55	0.12	-0.345	2.858
Social Dominance Orientation	0.12	0.13	0.93	0.35	-0.136	0.379
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	-0.22	0.33	-0.67	0.50	-0.880	0.434
	Hireability					
Constant	3.84	0.84	4.55	0.00**	2.171	5.506
Compassion	0.53	0.07	8.01	0.00**	0.397	0.657
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-class	-1 SD	3.17				
Same-class	-1 SD	4.20				
Cross-class	Mean	3.30				
Same-class	Mean	4.10				
Cross-class	+1 SD	3.44				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.98				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	-0.12	0.17	-0.501	0.180		

Note. Table 51 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 158 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 52

Hypothesis 14F Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Upper Social Class: Downward Cross-class Interactions, Compassion, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	1.96	1.42	1.38	0.17	-0.862	4.787
SC vs. DCC (X1)	-0.41	0.84	-0.48	0.63	-2.07	1.259
Social Dominance Orientation	-0.18	0.22	-0.82	0.41	-0.616	0.257
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	0.24	0.25	0.95	0.35	-0.263	0.739
	Hireability					
Constant	1.58	1.33	1.19	0.24	-1.059	4.228
Compassion	0.71	0.12	6.11	0.00**	0.480	0.944
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Downward Cross-class	-1 SD	3.03				
Same-class	-1 SD	4.14				
Downward Cross-class	Mean	3.74				
Same-class	Mean	3.77				
Downward Cross-class	+1 SD	4.46				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.39				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	-0.46	0.23	-1.106	-0.178		

Note. Table 52 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 86 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 53

Hypothesis 14F Conditional Indirect Effects of Social Dominance Orientation for the Middle Social Class: Downward Cross-class Interactions, Compassion, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	-0.28	0.89	-0.31	0.75	-2.032	1.477
SC vs. DCC (X1)	-0.35	0.61	-0.57	0.57	-1.55	0.858
Social Dominance Orientation	0.08	0.09	0.88	0.38	-0.102	0.265
Social Dominance Orientation x X1	0.28	0.22	1.26	0.21	-0.16	0.725
	Hireability					
Constant	4.02	0.84	4.78	0.00**	2.357	5.677
Compassion	0.38	0.08	4.78	0.00**	0.221	0.533
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Same-class	-1 SD	4.04				
Downward Cross-class	-1 SD	4.00				
Same-class	Mean	3.83				
Downward Cross-class	Mean	4.14				
Same-class	+1 SD	3.61				
Downward Cross-class	+1 SD	4.28				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	0.11	0.09	-0.058	0.286		

Note. Table 53 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 164 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 54

Hypothesis 15A Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	0.78	0.37	2.12	0.03*	0.057	1.499
SC vs. CC	-0.07	0.11	-0.65	0.51	-0.278	0.139
	Hireability					
Constant	4.72	1.49	3.17	0.00**	1.798	7.649
Anxiety	-0.4	0.58	-0.69	0.49	-1.542	0.738
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.06	0.34	0.19	0.85	-0.600	0.730
Anxiety x PF	-0.05	0.15	-0.35	0.73	-0.356	0.250
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	5.16				
Mean Anxiety	-1 SD	4.82				
+1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	4.24				
-1 SD Anxiety	Mean	5.16				
Mean Anxiety	Mean	4.8				
+1 SD Anxiety	Mean	4.19				
-1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	5.17				
Mean Anxiety	+1 SD	4.79				
+1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	4.14				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	0.00	0.02	-0.042	0.052		

Note. Table 54 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 55

Hypothesis 15A Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Anxiety, and Salary Recommendations

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	0.78	0.37	2.12	0.03*	0.057	1.499
SC vs. CC	-0.07	0.11	-0.65	0.51	-0.278	0.139
	Salary Recommendations					
Constant	5.45	0.93	5.87	0.00**	3.628	7.282
Anxiety	-0.67	0.36	-1.86	0.06	-1.384	0.039
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	-0.16	0.21	-0.77	0.44	-0.577	0.253
Anxiety x PF	0.00	0.10	0.02	0.98	-0.187	0.191
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	5.86				
Mean Anxiety	-1 SD	5.46				
+1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	4.80				
-1 SD Anxiety	Mean	5.75				
Mean Anxiety	Mean	5.36				
+1 SD Anxiety	Mean	4.69				
-1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	5.65				
Mean Anxiety	+1 SD	5.25				
+1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	4.59				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	0.00	0.02	-0.037	0.032		

Note. Table 55 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 56

Hypothesis 15A Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Anxiety, and Social Rewards

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	0.78	0.37	2.12	0.03*	0.057	1.499
SC vs. CC	-0.07	0.11	-0.65	0.51	-0.278	0.139
	Social Rewards					
Constant	3.56	0.64	5.53	0.00**	2.298	4.831
Anxiety	-0.54	0.25	-2.15	0.03*	-1.034	-0.047
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	-0.1	0.15	-0.65	0.51	-0.383	0.192
Anxiety x PF	0.03	0.07	0.41	0.68	-0.104	0.158
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	4.00				
Mean Anxiety	-1 SD	3.73				
+1 SD Anxiety	-1 SD	3.28				
-1 SD Anxiety	Mean	3.96				
Mean Anxiety	Mean	3.70				
+1 SD Anxiety	Mean	3.26				
-1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	3.91				
Mean Anxiety	+1 SD	3.66				
+1 SD Anxiety	+1 SD	3.25				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
SC vs. CC	0.00	0.01	-0.032	0.017		

Note. Table 56 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 57

Hypothesis 15B Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	0.63	0.59	1.07	0.28	-0.523	1.778
CC vs. SC	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
	Hireability					
Constant	2.91	1.12	2.61	0.01**	0.718	5.104
Anxiety	0.55	0.25	2.21	0.03*	0.062	1.047
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.21	0.27	0.79	0.43	-0.317	0.745
Enthusiasm x PF	0.00	0.06	-0.07	0.94	-0.124	0.115
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	4.30				
Mean Enthusiasm	-1 SD	5.23				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	6.16				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	4.43				
Mean Enthusiasm	Mean	5.36				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	6.28				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	4.57				
Mean Enthusiasm	+1 SD	5.49				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	6.41				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	0.00	0.04	-0.071	0.074		

Note. Table 57 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 58

Hypothesis 15B Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Salary Recommendations

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	0.63	0.59	1.07	0.28	-0.523	1.778
CC vs. SC	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
	Salary Recommendations					
Constant	2.57	1.85	1.39	0.16	-1.060	6.209
Anxiety	0.63	0.42	1.53	0.13	-0.182	1.451
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.41	0.45	0.92	0.36	-0.468	1.293
Enthusiasm x PF	-0.02	0.1	-0.22	0.82	-0.221	0.176
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	3.63				
Mean Enthusiasm	-1 SD	4.59				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	5.56				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	3.87				
Mean Enthusiasm	Mean	4.81				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	5.75				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	4.11				
Mean Enthusiasm	+1 SD	5.03				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	5.94				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	-0.01	0.05	-0.121	0.103		

Note. Table 58 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 59

Hypothesis 15B Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Social Rewards

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	0.63	0.59	1.07	0.28	-0.523	1.778
CC vs. SC	0.48	0.17	2.76	0.01**	0.139	0.825
	Social Rewards					
Constant	1.42	0.76	1.87	0.06	-0.07	2.901
Anxiety	0.46	0.17	2.69	0.01**	0.122	0.79
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.27	0.18	1.46	0.14	-0.092	0.628
Enthusiasm x PF	-0.02	0.04	-0.41	0.68	-0.098	0.064
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	2.87				
Mean Enthusiasm	-1 SD	3.56				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	-1 SD	4.25				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	3.03				
Mean Enthusiasm	Mean	3.70				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	Mean	4.37				
-1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	3.18				
Mean Enthusiasm	+1 SD	3.83				
+1 SD Enthusiasm	+1 SD	4.48				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	-0.01	0.02	-0.052	0.039		

Note. Table 59 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 60

Hypothesis 15C Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Compassion, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	0.78	0.37	2.12	0.03*	0.057	1.499
CC vs. SC	-0.07	0.11	-0.65	0.51	-0.278	0.139
	Hireability					
Constant	4.72	1.49	3.17	0.00**	1.798	7.649
Anxiety	-0.40	0.58	-0.69	0.49	-1.542	0.738
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.06	0.34	0.19	0.85	-0.600	0.730
Compassion x PF	-0.05	0.15	-0.35	0.73	-0.356	0.250
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	5.16				
Mean Compassion	-1 SD	4.82				
+1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	4.24				
-1 SD Compassion	Mean	5.16				
Mean Compassion	Mean	4.80				
+1 SD Compassion	Mean	4.19				
-1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	5.17				
Mean Compassion	+1 SD	4.79				
+1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	4.14				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	0.00	0.02	-0.042	0.052		

Note. Table 60 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 61

Hypothesis 15C Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Compassion, and Salary Recommendations

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	0.54	0.59	0.91	0.36	-0.626	1.703
CC vs. SC	0.48	0.18	2.70	0.01**	0.129	0.823
	Salary Recommendations					
Constant	4.62	1.77	2.61	0.01**	1.137	8.11
Anxiety	0.12	0.41	0.29	0.77	-0.694	0.936
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	-0.13	0.42	-0.3	0.76	-0.961	0.706
Compassion x PF	0.11	0.10	1.07	0.29	-0.092	0.312
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	3.82				
Mean Compassion	-1 SD	4.64				
+1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	5.45				
-1 SD Compassion	Mean	3.87				
Mean Compassion	Mean	4.81				
+1 SD Compassion	Mean	5.75				
-1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	3.92				
Mean Compassion	+1 SD	4.98				
+1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	6.04				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	0.05	0.06	-0.048	0.183		

Note. Table 61 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 62

Hypothesis 15C Conditional Indirect Effects of Psychological Flexibility: Class Salient Interactions, Compassion, and Social Rewards

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Compassion					
Constant	0.54	0.59	0.91	0.36	-0.626	1.703
CC vs. SC	0.48	0.18	2.70	0.01**	0.129	0.823
	Social Rewards					
Constant	1.89	0.73	2.60	0.01**	0.461	3.314
Anxiety	0.37	0.17	2.20	0.03*	0.039	0.706
Psychological Flexibility (PF)	0.14	0.17	0.83	0.41	-0.197	0.485
Compassion x PF	0.00	0.04	0.08	0.94	-0.079	0.086
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
-1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	2.94				
Mean Compassion	-1 SD	3.59				
+1 SD Compassion	-1 SD	4.24				
-1 SD Compassion	Mean	3.04				
Mean Compassion	Mean	3.70				
+1 SD Compassion	Mean	4.35				
-1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	3.14				
Mean Compassion	+1 SD	3.80				
+1 SD Compassion	+1 SD	4.46				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
CC vs. SC	0	0.02	-0.042	0.048		

Note. Table 62 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 63

Qualitative Data – Adjectives Response Overview

Participant Social Class	Job Candidate Social Class	Positive Emotions	Negative Emotions	Affiliation Drive	Achievement Drive	Power Drive
Lower Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	3.88	1.32	1.66	4.57	1.16
	Middle Social Class	3.26	0.71	1.09	3.05	0.61
	Upper Social Class	3.26	1.91	1.06	3.35	1.21
Middle Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	5.42	0.93	1.49	4.47	0.72
	Middle Social class	4.93	0.65	1.37	3.21	0.81
	Upper Social Class	3.17	1.09	1.13	3.38	1.14
Upper Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	4.80	0.95	1.13	3.01	0.46
	Middle Social Class	4.14	0.46	1.21	4.28	0.30
	Upper Social Class	4.13	1.80	1.88	3.95	1.15

Table 64

Qualitative Data – Gut Feeling Response Overview

Participant Social Class	Job Candidate Social Class	Positive Emotions	Negative Emotions	Affiliation Drive	Achievement Drive	Power Drive
Lower Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	1.52	0.96	1.26	3.93	0.69
	Middle Social Class	2.34	0.47	1.13	2.26	0.81
	Upper Social Class	1.81	1.10	1.50	2.86	1.03
Middle Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	1.91	0.71	1.23	3.95	0.84
	Middle Social Class	2.88	0.51	1.47	2.89	0.51
	Upper Social Class	2.11	0.47	1.36	2.96	0.50
Upper Social Class						
	Lower Social Class	1.91	0.23	1.19	3.97	0.82
	Middle Social Class	1.97	0.42	2.45	3.45	0.78
	Upper Social Class	1.55	1.52	1.34	2.48	0.67

Table 65

Study 1 Summary of Results

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class	Perceptions of Subjective Current Social Class	Parent Education
Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between downward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and employer anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between same-class interactions and employer enthusiasm.	Supported	Supported	Marginal Support
Hypothesis 4A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4C: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4D: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.	Marginal Support	Marginal Support	Marginal Support
Hypothesis 5A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 5B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit anxiety.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported

Table 65 (Cont.)

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class	Perceptions of Subjective Current Social Class	Parent Education
Hypothesis 6A: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the middle social class elicit enthusiasm.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 6B: For employers from the middle social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit enthusiasm.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 7A: For employers from the lower social class, interviewees from the upper social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.	Marginal Support	Marginal Support	Marginal Support
Hypothesis 7B: For employers from the upper social class, interviewees from the lower social class elicit greater anxiety than those from the middle social class.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 8: For employers from the lower social class, same-class interactions elicit compassion.	Partial Support	Marginal Support	Partial Support
Hypothesis 9A: Anxiety negatively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 9B: Anxiety negatively relates to salary recommendations.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 9C: Anxiety negatively relates to social rewards.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 10A: Enthusiasm positively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 10B: Enthusiasm positively relates to salary recommendations.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 10C: Enthusiasm positively relates to social rewards.	Supported	Supported	Supported

Table 65 (Cont.)

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class	Perceptions of Subjective Current Social Class	Parent Education
Hypothesis 11A: Compassion positively relates to assessments of interviewee's hireability.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 11B: Compassion positively relates to salary recommendations.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 11C: Compassion positively relates to social rewards.	Supported	Supported	Supported
Hypothesis 12A: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' downward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 12B: Employers' anxiety helps mediate the relationship between interviewees' upward cross-class interactions and selection outcomes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 12C: Employers' enthusiasm helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.	Supported	Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 12D: Employers' compassion helps mediate the relationship between same-class interactions and selection outcomes.	Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 13A: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between upward cross-class interactions and anxiety.	Not Supported	Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 13B: Upward mobility weakens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm.	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported

Table 65 (Cont.)

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class	Perceptions of Subjective Current Social Class	Parent Education
Hypothesis 13C: Upward mobility strengthens the positive relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class.	Not supported	NA	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14A: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from higher social classes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14B: Social dominance orientation strengthens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the higher social classes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14C: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between cross-class interactions and anxiety for employers from the lower social class.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14D: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and enthusiasm for employers from the lower social class.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14E: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between same-class interactions and compassion for employers from the lower social class.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14F: Social dominance orientation weakens the relationship between downward cross-class interactions and compassion for employers from the higher social classes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported

Table 65 (Cont.)

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class	Perceptions of Subjective Current Social Class	Parent Education
Hypothesis 15A: Psychological flexibility weakens the negative relationship between anxiety and selection outcomes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 15B: Psychological flexibility weakens the positive relationship between enthusiasm and selection outcomes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 15C: Psychological flexibility strengthens the positive relationship between compassion and selection outcomes.	Not Supported	Not Supported	Not Supported

Table 66

Study 2 Specific Social Class Interactions: Subjective Childhood Social Class

Interaction	Sample Size
Lower Participant and Lower Candidate	11
Lower Participant and Middle Candidate	20
Lower Participant and Upper Candidate	19
Middle Participant and Lower Candidate	31
Middle Participant and Middle Candidate	22
Middle Participant and Upper Candidate	27
Upper Participant and Lower Candidate	7
Upper Participant and Middle Candidate	8
Upper Participant and Upper Candidate	2

Table 67

Study 2 Summary of Results

Hypotheses	Perceptions of Subjective Childhood Social Class
Hypothesis 1	Not Supported
Hypothesis 2	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4A-D	Not Supported
Hypothesis 5AB	Not Supported
Hypothesis 6AB	Not Supported
Hypothesis 7AB	Not Supported
Hypothesis 8	Not Supported
Hypothesis 9A	Supported
Hypothesis 9B	Not Supported
Hypothesis 9C	Supported
Hypothesis 10ABC	Supported
Hypothesis 11ABC	Supported
Hypothesis 12ABCD	Not Supported
Hypothesis 13ABC	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14A-F	Not Supported
Hypothesis 15ABC	Not Supported
Hypothesis 16A-D	Not Supported

Table 68

Study 2 Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Alphas

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Class Salient Interactions	0.69	0.46	-							
2. Organizational Role	0.50	0.50	-0.05	-						
3. Gender	0.50	0.50	-0.02	-0.03	-					
4. Race	0.32	0.47	-0.05	-0.10	0.05	-				
5. Age	46.63	11.8	-0.02	-0.03	-.17*	-0.1	-			
6. Total Mobility	0.32	0.96	0.13	-0.08	-0.12	-0.08	0.1	-		
7. Upward Mobility	0.35	0.48	.18*	-0.05	-0.14	-0.05	0.00	0.81**	-	
8. Trait Positive Affect	3.92	0.73	0.00	0.04	-0.11	0.00	0.05	-0.04	-0.11	(.92)
9. Trait Negative Affect	1.89	0.78	-0.05	0.05	0.14	0.05	-0.22**	0.01	0.02	-0.19*
10. Social Dominance Orientation	2.62	1.13	-0.1	0.09	0.11	0.02	-0.22**	0.00	-0.05	-0.02
11. Psychological Flexibility	4.15	0.58	0.06	0.07	-0.07	-0.17*	0.14	-0.17*	-0.19*	0.48**
12. Anxiety	1.71	1.19	-0.08	0.15	0.07	0.02	-0.29**	0.09	0.04	-0.05
13. Enthusiasm	4.48	1.76	0.04	-0.06	0.00	0.21*	-0.08	-0.05	-0.06	0.31**
14. Compassion	3.92	1.8	-0.06	-0.12	0.08	0.23**	-0.13	-0.01	-0.04	0.33**
15. Hireability	5.04	1.73	0.04	-0.19*	0.05	0.09	-0.07	-0.02	-0.03	0.16
16. Salary Recommendations	3.84	2.69	0.17*	-0.35**	0.00	0.08	-0.20*	0.09	0.01	0.00
17. Social Reward	5.34	1.43	0.02	-0.07	0.00	0.06	-0.06	0.01	0.01	0.12

Table 68 (Cont.)

Variable	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
9. Trait Negative Affect	(.92)								
10. Social Dominance Orientation	0.32**	(.89)							
11. Psychological Flexibility	-0.22**	-0.13	(.77)						
12. Anxiety	0.37**	0.16*	-0.17*	(.71)					
13. Enthusiasm	-0.04	0.21*	0.08	-0.17*	(.93)				
14. Compassion	-0.02	0.18*	0.07	-0.09	0.81**	(.82)			
15. Hireability	-0.06	0.14	0.03	-0.31**	0.74**	0.63**	(.96)		
16. Salary Recommendations	-0.05	0.07	-0.13	-0.08	0.36**	0.35**	0.53**	-	
17. Social Reward	-0.12	0.07	0.05	-0.35**	0.72**	0.64**	0.88**	0.50**	(.94)

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Cronbach alpha scores are included in the parentheses, when applicable. Class salient interactions are categorized as same class interactions (0) and cross class interactions (1). Gender is categorized as male (0) and female/other (1). Race is categorized as white (0) and non-white (1).

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 69

Hypothesis 16A & 16B Conditional Indirect Effects of Organizational Role: Cross-class Interactions, Anxiety, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Anxiety					
Constant	1.27	0.55	0.94	0.35	-0.566	1.599
UCC vs. SC (X1)	0.21	0.31	0.68	0.50	-0.397	0.814
UCC vs. DCC (X2)	0.60	0.37	0.15	0.14	-0.185	1.297
SC vs. DCC (X3)	0.35	0.39	0.90	0.37	-0.418	1.114
Organizational Role	0.49	0.26	1.92	0.06	-0.015	1.000
Organizational Role x X1	0.04	0.41	0.10	0.92	-0.778	0.900
Organizational Role x X2	-0.91	0.50	-1.83	0.07	-1.900	0.076
Organizational Role x X3	-0.95	0.54	-1.76	0.08	-2.020	0.116
	Hireability					
Constant	3.93	0.85	4.63	0.00**	2.256	5.609
Anxiety	-0.655	0.13	-4.31	0.00**	-0.800	-0.300
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Upward Cross-class	Project Assistant	1.38				
Same-class	Project Assistant	1.59				
Downward Cross-class	Project Assistant	1.93				
Upward Cross-class	Project Manager	1.87				
Same-class	Project Manager	2.12				
Downward Cross-class	Project Manager	1.51				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
X1	-0.02	0.25	-0.592	0.416		
X2	0.50	0.27	0.024	1.089		
X3	0.52	0.32	0.012	1.234		

Note. Table 69 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 70

Hypothesis 16C Conditional Indirect Effects of Organizational Role for Middle Class: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	3.34	1.61	2.07	0.04*	0.127	6.546
Cross-Class vs. Same Class (X1)	0.18	0.55	0.34	0.74	-0.910	1.276
Organizational Role	0.03	0.55	0.06	0.96	-1.07	1.128
Organizational Role x X1	-0.81	0.77	-1.06	0.29	-2.338	0.718
	Hireability					
Constant	3.22	1.13	2.85	0.01**	0.968	5.486
Enthusiasm	0.68	0.08	8.42	0.00**	0.518	0.840
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-Class	Project Assistant	4.68				
Same-class	Project Assistant	4.87				
Cross-Class	Project Manager	4.71				
Same-class	Project Manager	4.09				
Index of Moderated Mediation	**Index**	**Std. Error**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**		
X1	-0.55	0.53	-1.654	0.480		

Note. Table 70 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 71

Hypothesis 16D Conditional Effects of Organizational Role for Lower Class: Same-class Interactions, Enthusiasm, and Hireability

Predictor	Effect	Std. Error	t value	p value	LLCI	ULCI
	Enthusiasm					
Constant	0.97	2.34	0.41	0.68	-3.763	5.703
Cross-Class vs. Same Class (X1)	1.60	1.81	0.89	0.38	-2.047	5.25
Organizational Role	0.18	0.53	0.34	0.74	-0.892	1.247
Organizational Role x X1	-3.19	2.21	-1.44	0.16	-7.656	1.281
	Hireability					
Constant	1.09	1.43	0.77	0.49	-1.786	4.000
Enthusiasm	0.29	0.09	8.31	0.00**	0.595	0.977
Conditional Indirect Effect	**Moderator**	**Level**				
Cross-Class	Project Assistant	4.38				
Same-class	Project Assistant	5.94				
Cross-Class	Project Manager	4.51				
Same-class	Project Manager	2.93				

Note. Table 71 presents coefficient estimates, standard errors, and bootstrap results for mediation analyses for 408 participants. Results include controls for *gender, race, age, social class mobility, trait positive affect,* and *trait negative affect.* Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 72

Means and Standard Deviations Across Job Levels and Job Candidate Social Class

Job Candidate Social Class	Job Role	Anxiety	Enthusiasm	Compassion	Hireability	Person-Job Fit
Lower Social Class						
	Project Assistant	1.58 (0.90)	4.53 (1.85)	3.75 (1.89)	5.45 (1.61)	5.66 (1.28)
	Project Manager	1.86 (1.35)	4.84 (1.68)	3.55 (1.62)	4.68 (1.96)	5.13 (1.66)
Middle Social Class						
	Project Assistant	1.33 (0.44)	4.76 (1.68)	4.59 (1.60)	5.64 (1.38)	5.75 (1.12)
	Project Manager	1.92 (1.44)	4.32 (1.70)	3.70 (1.66)	4.51 (1.80)	4.73 (1.55)
Upper Social Class						
	Project Assistant	1.92 (1.44)	4.41 (1.66)	3.71 (1.83)	5.00 (1.61)	5.37 (1.58)
	Project Manager	1.92 (1.48)	4.63 (2.06)	3.79 (2.11)	4.99 (2.02)	5.46 (1.69)

Table 73

Emotion Measures Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Class Salient Interactions	0.74	0.44								
2. Organizational Role	0.54	0.5	-0.10							
3. Anxiety (AUs)	0.00	0.02	-0.10	-0.20						
4. Enthusiasm (AUs)	0.00	0.01	0.08	0.12	-0.00					
5. Compassion (AUs)	0.74	2.77	0.00	-0.00	0.00	0.24*				
6. Fear (AUs)	1.41	3.04	0.03	-0.00	0.07	-0.00	0.28*			
7. Joy (AUs)	2.18	4.69	0.18	0.04	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.14		
8. Sentimentality (AUs)	2.34	4.34	0.16	0.04	0.03	0.25*	0.35**	0.22*	0.49**	
9. Positive Valence (AUs)	3.59	7.09	0.2	0.07	-0.00	0.04	-0.04	0.07	0.96**	0.50**
10. Negative Valence (AUs)	19.7	27.2	0.01	0.15	-0.1	.27*	0.24*	-0.10	-0.10	0.10
11. Engagement (AUs)	33	25.9	0.02	0.15	--0.00	.26*	0.23*	0.10	0.14	0.25*
12. Smiles (AUs)	4.46	8.39	0.21	0.09	0.00	0.08	-0.02	0.06	0.90**	0.62**
13. Anxiety (scale)	1.77	1.28	-0.2	0.14	0.15	0.12	-0.08	0.07	-0.02	0.03
14. Enthusiasm (scale)	4.47	1.73	0.13	-0.00	0.03	0.09	0.02	-0.00	0.03	-0.08
15. Compassion (scale)	3.85	1.75	0.04	-0.1	0.04	0.02	-0.04	-0.10	0.09	-0.06
16. Hireability (scale)	4.94	1.81	0.10	-0.22*	0.04	0.03	0.09	-0.10	-0.12	-0.05

Table 73 (Cont.)

Variable	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
10. Negative Valence (AUs)	-0.14						
11. Engagement (AUs)	0.10	0.91**					
12. Smiles (AUs)	0.97**	-0.12	0.11				
13. Anxiety (scale)	-0.03	-0.16	-0.20	-0.00			
14. Enthusiasm (scale)	0.01	-0.11	-0.20	-0.00	-0.1		
15. Compassion (scale)	0.08	-0.14	-0.20	0.05	-0.00	0.83**	
16. Hireability (scale)	-0.16	-0.05	-0.20	-0.20	-0.25*	0.69**	0.65**

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Class salient interactions are categorized as same class interactions (0) and cross class interactions (1).

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

Table 74

Study 2 Summary of Results with Facial Action Units

Hypotheses	Anxiety, Enthusiasm, & Compassion AUs	Fear, Joy, & Sentimentality AUs
Hypothesis 1	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 2	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 8	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 9ABC	Not Supported	Marginal Support
Hypothesis 10ABC	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 11ABC	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 12ABCD	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 13ABC	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 14A-F	Not Supported	Not Supported
Hypothesis 15ABC	Not Supported	Partial Support
Hypothesis 16A-D	Not Supported	Not Supported

Figures

Figure 1

Theoretical Model

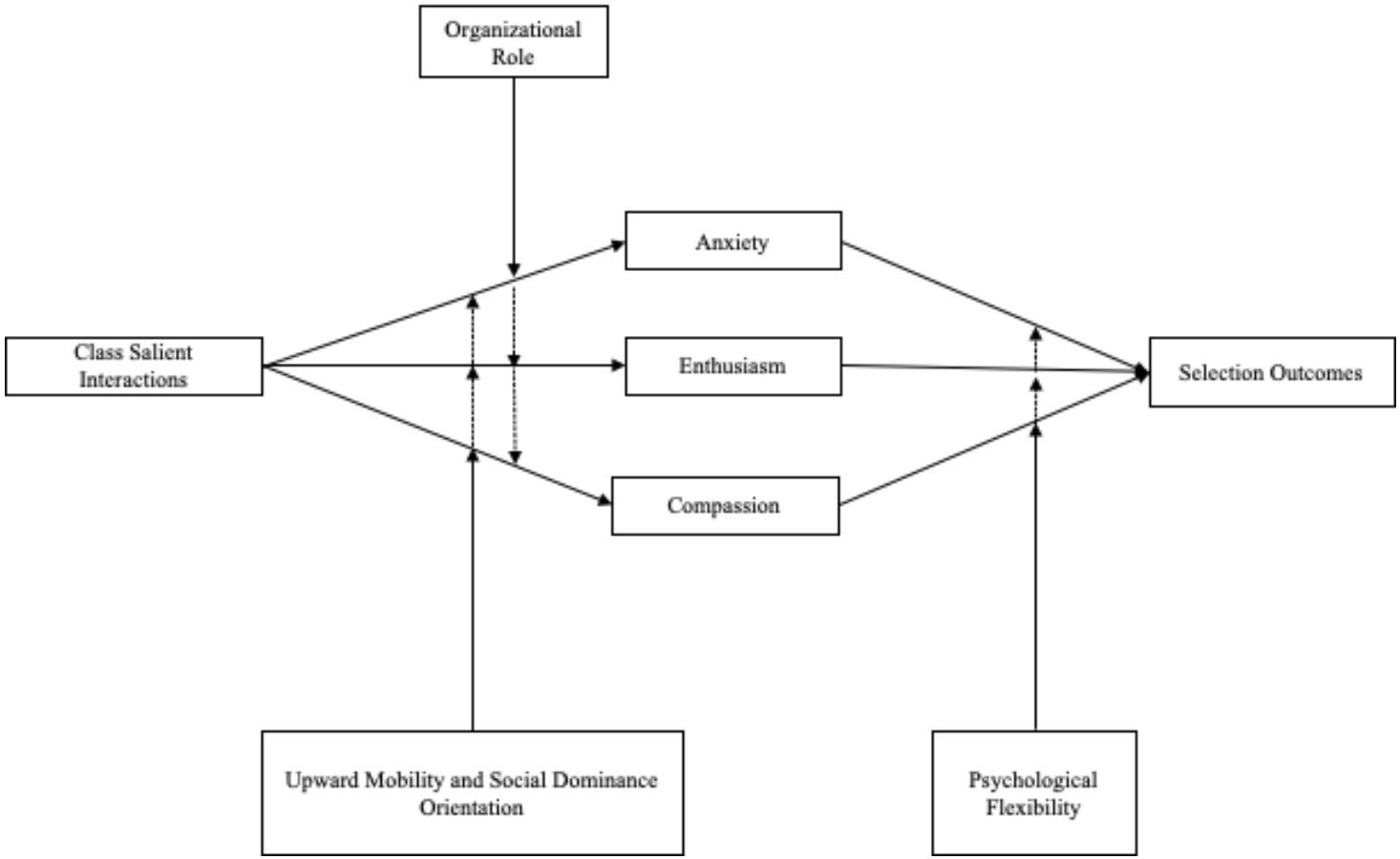

Figure 2

Project Assistant Job Description

Applicant Position: Project Assistant

Job Overview: Analyze and coordinate the schedule and timeline of a product or service on a per project basis, including the scheduling of personnel necessary to complete the projects. May serve as a point of contact for the client or customer.

Job Level: Entry-level position

Tasks:

- Communicate with key stakeholders to determine project requirements and objectives.
- Create project status presentations for delivery to customers or project personnel.
- Develop or update project plans including information such as objectives, technologies, schedules, funding, and staffing.
- Identify, review, or select vendors or consultants to meet project needs.
- Liaison with key departments, including accounting and human resources.
- Process, verify, and maintain personnel related documentation.
- Produce and distribute project documents.
- Propose, review, or approve modifications to project plans.
- Provide assistance in administering and answering questions related to employee benefits.

Work Activities:

- Collaborate with others to resolve information technology issues.
- Coordinate resource procurement activities.
- Develop detailed project plans.
- Develop operating strategies, plans, or procedures.
- Discuss business strategies, practices, or policies with managers.
- Manage information technology projects or system activities.
- Prepare financial documents, reports, or budgets.
- Prepare scientific or technical reports or presentations.
- Present work to clients for approval.
- Process information pertaining to employee benefits and compensation
- Report information to managers or other personnel.
- Select resources needed to accomplish tasks.

Educational Requirement: Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in business, management, or human resources preferred

Figure 3

Project Manager Job Description

Applicant Position: Project Manager

Job Overview: Analyze and coordinate the schedule, timeline, procurement, staffing, and budget of a product or service on a per project basis, including the scheduling and managing of personnel necessary to complete the projects. Lead and guide the work of project staff.

Job Level: Supervisor position

Tasks:

- Assign duties or responsibilities to project personnel.
- Communicate with key stakeholders to determine project requirements and objectives.
- Confer with project personnel to identify and resolve problems.
- Create project status presentations for delivery to customers or project personnel.
- Develop or update project plans including information such as objectives, technologies, schedules, funding, and staffing.
- Identify, review, or select vendors or consultants to meet project needs.
- Plan, direct, supervise, and coordinate work activities of subordinates and staff relating to employment, compensation, and employee relations.
- Propose, review, or approve modifications to project plans.
- Recruit or hire project personnel.

Work Activities:

- Assign duties or work schedules to employees.
- Develop detailed project plans.
- Coordinate resource procurement activities.
- Communicate with supervisors, peers, or subordinates.
- Develop operating strategies, plans, or procedures.
- Discuss business strategies, practices, or policies with managers.
- Gather organizational performance information.
- Participate in staffing decisions.
- Prepare financial documents, reports, or budgets.
- Prepare scientific or technical reports or presentations.
- Present work to clients for approval.
- Select resources needed to accomplish tasks.

Educational Requirement: Bachelor's Degree in business, management, or human resources required

Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

To:	Kristie J Moergen
From:	Douglas J Adams, Chair IRB Expedited Review
Date:	09/01/2022
Action:	**Exemption Granted**
Action Date:	08/31/2022
Protocol #:	2207409890
Study Title:	Dissertation Validation and Study 1

The above-referenced protocol has been determined to be exempt.

If you wish to make any modifications in the approved protocol that may affect the level of risk to your participants, you must seek approval prior to implementing those changes. All modifications must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have any questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact the IRB Coordinator at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

cc: Jason Ridge, Investigator

Page 1 of 1

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

To:	Kristie J Moergen
From:	Douglas J Adams, Chair IRB Expedited Review
Date:	09/01/2022
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cc: Jason Ridge, Investigator