

# Editorial overview: Inequality and social class: The psychological and behavioral consequences of inequality and social class: a theoretical integration

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Current Opinion in Psychology 2017, 18:iv–xii

For a complete overview see the [Issue](#)

Available online 5th November 2017

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.11.001>

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Why some people have less and others more is a perennial theme for individuals and groups. Shweder [1] nominates the question of why people share unequally in the burdens and benefits of life as a universal existential concern. As inequality reaches its highest level in decades (<http://www.oecd.org>), and the internet streams images revealing just how much more some people have and just how much less others have, lay observers and researchers from across the social sciences are asking what happens to people and to societies when the inequality among them is so vast and so visible? What are the physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences of having less? And of having more? What explanations do people have for why they and their families have less? Are the consequences and explanations similar across regions, ethnicities, races and social classes? As these questions become the focus of study, many larger and even more troubling questions continue to arise. How are the systems of inequality created and maintained? What has to change so that some will have fewer of the burdens that accompany having less? Whose responsibility is this?

This special issue brings together the most recent evidence relevant to these questions from within psychology and in particular addresses the question: what are the psychological and behavioral consequences of inequality and social class? [Figure 1](#) integrates many of the answers to this question from the twenty-seven papers in the issue. At the most general level, the researchers here share an underlying conceptual model. This model proposes that inequality in access to resources (i.e. inequality in material, social, and conceptual resources including money, power, education, status, and rank) leads to social stratification by economic status and categorization by social class. These researchers use many different categorizations to reflect levels of inequality of social class. In summarizing and integrating themes in this introduction, we use the term *lower class* to refer broadly to contexts at the bottom half of the social class divide including those where most people have attained less than a four year degree, and/or have relatively low incomes or lower status occupations; we use the term *higher class* to refer broadly to contexts at the top half on the social divide including those where most people have attained a four year degree or more and/or have relatively high incomes or higher status occupations.

The knowledge that a given person or group has scarce or abundant material resources or has high or low power is an important starting point but only a starting point in understanding the psychological and behavioral consequences of social class. Indeed, the hundreds of studies reviewed in this issue demonstrate that to understand, explain or predict the consequences of a particular social class categorization requires a consideration of the factors organized and presented in the socio-cultural matrix within [Figure 1](#). As we explain in detail below, these factors are important because they lend meaning, form and coherence to the designation of higher or lower class, and are therefore crucial to understanding the psychological and behavioral consequences of inequality.

This socio-cultural matrix includes four mutually constituting factors. These are a blend of material, social, and conceptual factors. As shown at the top of

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the *socio-cultural matrix* and from the focal persons point of view, these include:

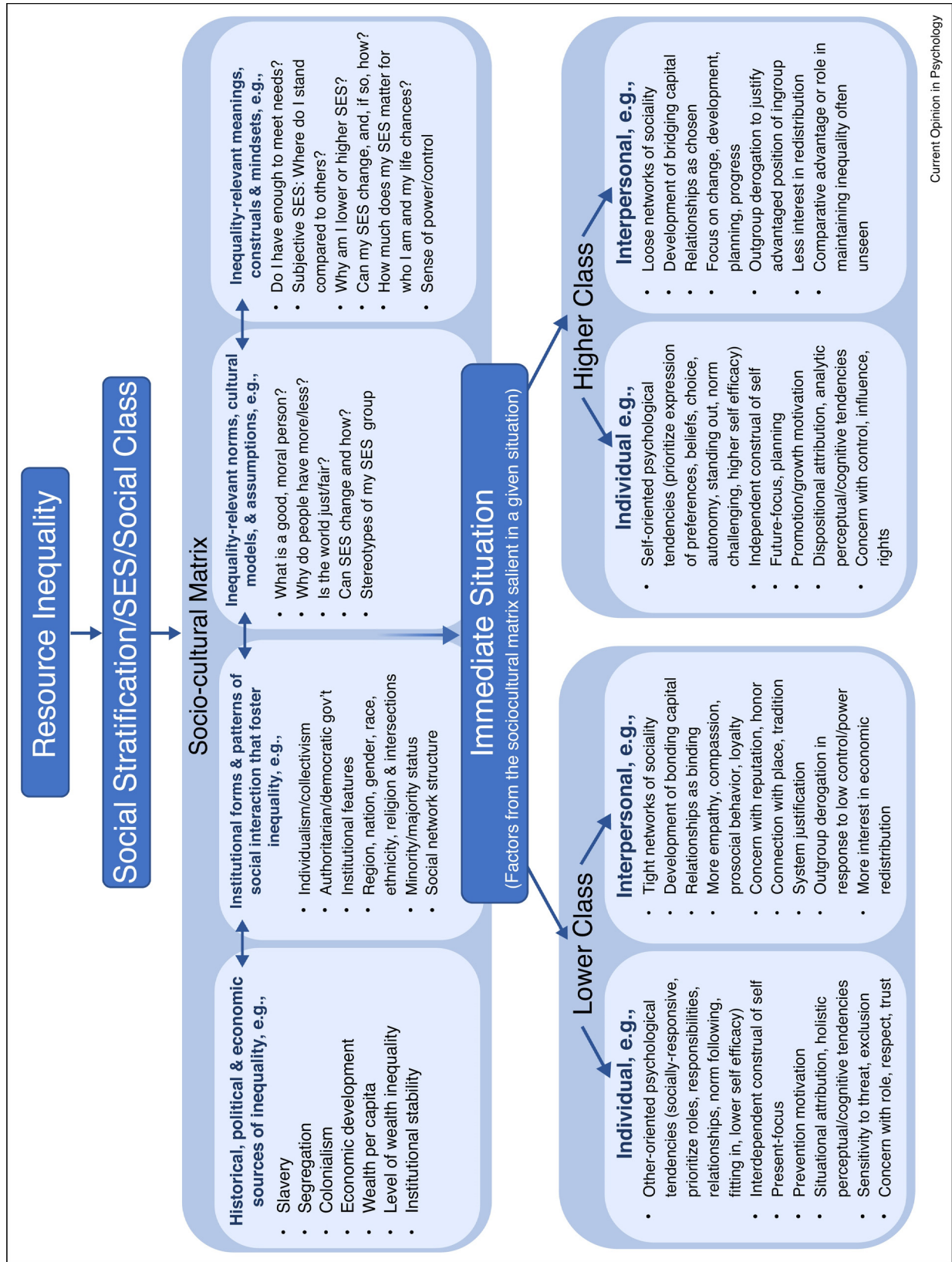
- (1) **the historical, political and economic sources and nature of inequality** and their associated ideas in the persons relevant communities (e.g. slavery, colonialism).
- (2) **the institutional forms and patterns of social interaction** that formalize and foster inequality in the persons relevant communities (e.g. role and legitimacy of government and legal policies and programs, the composition of schools and neighborhoods).
- (3) **the inequality-relevant norms, cultural models and assumptions** pervasive in the persons relevant communities (e.g. the world is just, stereotypes of the persons social class group).
- (4) **the inequality-relevant meanings and mindsets** that the person may hold (e.g. I don't have enough money to meet the needs of my family, I can get ahead with hard work).
- (5) And finally, a fifth factor shown in [Figure 1](#) as embedded and emerging from the socio-cultural matrix: **the composition of the persons immediate situation**, including which features of the socio-cultural matrix (e.g. scarcity, sense of power) are salient at a given moment to frame and provide an interpretation for a given action.

Many of the individual and interpersonal consequences of having more or less, of being perceived as higher or lower, and/or of perceiving one's self as higher or lower class are summarized in the lower panel of [Figure 1](#). Summarizing across the many factors and findings in these reviews, some clear and consistent patterns are now emerging. These patterns reveal the ways in which social class shapes psychological functioning and reflects peoples' adaptations to very different social circumstances. At the individual level, people who are designated or perceive themselves as lower social class compared to higher social class, tend to show more *other-oriented* psychological tendencies, meaning that their cognitive, emotional, motivational tendencies have ingroup others as a referent. For example, they will more often rely on interdependent construals of self, display holistic cognitive patterns and situational attributions, and experience status anxiety, threat, exclusion sensitivity, prevention orientation, and a present or past focus. At the interpersonal level, they more often participate in tight networks of sociality, show more empathy and compassion, engage in prosocial behavior, and display a concern for place, tradition, and upholding the moral order.

In contrast, people who are designated or perceive themselves as higher social class, compared to lower social class, tend to show more *self-oriented* psychological tendencies, meaning that their cognitive, emotional and motivational tendencies have their own preferences and goals as a referent. For example, they will more often rely on independent construals of self, display analytic cognitive patterns and dispositional attributions, emphasize control, choice, and influence, and engage in a promotion orientation and future focus. At the interpersonal level they more often participate in loose, dispersed social networks, and place an emphasis on change, progress, and equality with little awareness of their role in maintaining the current system.

The point of careful consideration of the socio-cultural matrix is to underscore that the observed psychological differences associated with social class are not inherent or essential to people who vary in their social class designation, but instead reflect peoples' participation in very different social class cultures. Even within the same national culture, and even beyond the

Figure 1



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Mapping the psychological and behavioral consequences of inequality and social class.

level of resources, the inequality relevant associations, ideas, institutions, interactions, mindsets and perceptions associated with various social class designations can vary dramatically. For example, people designated as lower social class contend with scarce resources, but also with an air thick with stereotypes and symbolic violence about their competence and motivation, as well as daily experiences that subtly but powerfully reflect and foster others' negative views of their inferiority and life chances. In contrast, people designated as higher social class navigate contexts with relatively abundant resources, a concert of positive expectations, and daily experiences that reflect and foster others' view of their superiority and optimism for their life chances.

As social class intersects with other cultural categorizations and sets of experiences (gender, race, nation of origin), researchers find important and systematic deviations from some of the commonly observed psychological consequences outlined in [Figure 1](#). Such variation further underscores the importance of attention to the types of factors outlined the socio-cultural matrix for understanding and predicting how inequality and social class affects psychology and behavior. The papers in this issue describe a variety of such examples. When social class intersects with gender, women designated as lower class who are the breadwinners in their families do not always manifest the other-oriented behaviors that are commonly observed among lower class individuals. When social class intersects with race, the sense of control that has beneficial health consequences for higher class Whites can have negative health consequences for higher class African Americans. When social class intersects with nation of origin, people designated as higher class in more collectivist Japan show more self-oriented psychological tendencies, but not at the expense of other-oriented tendencies, as is typically the case in the U.S.

Beyond the individual and interpersonal psychological consequences of increasing inequality shown in [Figure 1](#), the papers in this issue also highlight the societal consequences of inequality. Together, the papers forecast a grim future. People will live in even more segregated enclaves, in which the difference between 'us' and 'them' will be further magnified. People designated as higher class will increasingly justify their positions and work toward maintaining the status quo. They are likely to do so by essentializing social class differences, seeing their own resource-supported accomplishments as evidence of personal merits, and the resource-deprived accomplishments of those with less as a sign of personal deficits. As a result, people designated as higher class will fail to support policies that are proven to benefit people designated as lower class. In return, people with lower class standing will derogate those with higher standing, but will also likely accept and justify their own lower standing. The result: at all levels of social class, people

will be anxious, their well-being will suffer, and societal dysfunction will ensue.

Taking seriously the societal dysfunction that escalating inequality will likely produce, the papers here suggest evidence-based optimism for countering some of its negative consequences. These papers provide hope for a future of research-based interventions and nudges that may help to reduce inequality or blunt some of its most pernicious effects. Given the array of factors that foster inequality and social class differences sketched in the socio-cultural matrix, there are myriad levers that can be used to catalyze change (with eyes wide open for unintended negative consequences of these attempts). Indeed, the observed social class differences documented here are by no means fixed. Laboratory studies demonstrate that even temporary situational or circumstantial changes in resource level or in how people are perceived or perceive themselves can change behavior. The interventions described or suggested throughout these papers focus on the resource environment and/or on the people themselves and how they make sense of their experiences.

Interventions that focus on the resource environment include improving access to more and better resources of many types. They range from direct income supports, tax credits, and access to better schools with high quality teachers to simplifying forms or procedures to insure program participation. Other interventions focus on the people participating in lower class contexts. They include improving skills and abilities and self-affirmations of pride and capability. Still others suggest educating people of all social classes about how social class background (both lower and higher) shapes experience and life outcomes (i.e. pointing out how the upward mobility game is rigged from the start), and effectively conveying both accurate and non-stereotypical explanations for the consequences of inequality. Some of the papers point to the necessity of carefully tuning and culturally grounding these interventions so that they reflect what is currently known about the psychological consequences of social class. They suggest, for example, that successful interventions may depend on cultivating trust for those delivering the intervention and care in reducing the possible stigma or stereotypes associated with participation in a program. Further, they advise that the uptake of programs and initiatives in lower class contexts may depend on framings that highlight the benefits for family and community in place of framings that focus individual achievement and competence.

We have divided the contributions to this issue into eight sections and we provide a brief summary of some of the contributions of the papers in each section. We conclude with still more questions and with enthusiasm for the potential of psychologists to continue to lend their



insights and methods to some of the most pressing individual and societal challenges that are a product of social class and inequality.

### Section I. Social class and psychological tendencies

The papers in this section zoom in on how social class can shape psychological functioning, patterns of brain activity, decision-making, risk taking, prosocial behavior and the form and function of relationships. In the first paper on motivated social cognition and action, [Immo Fritzsche and Philipp Jugert](#) review research and present a general framework outlining how economic threat — either lower social class or a precarious socio-economic status — can undermine a person's sense of control and self-esteem and motivate a range of responses to restore them. People can respond with a personal reaction such as stronger goal pursuit, or with a collective reaction such as demonstrating for social changes. A third possibility is to try to increase control and self-esteem by justifying the economic system or by derogating immigrants. Next, [Eldar Shafir](#) looks specifically at decisions in poverty contexts and proposes that low income people experience chronic stress from managing scarce resources and always having money and financial issues at top of mind. This stress affects attention, cognitive resources, and decisions. To make matters worse, people in poverty are exposed to a concert of institutional policies such as hard to understand legal forms, abusive rental housing practices, and predatory and unreliable banking practices. Shafir concludes that the poor should receive support but not disdain, and shows that friendlier forms, direct income supports, and the affirmation of capability can improve take-up of benefit programs and have positive educational and employment outcomes. In a review of the social class and risk-taking literature, [Jennifer Kish-Gephart](#) also focuses on decision-making and shows that lower social class standing has been associated with both risk-seeking behavior and risk-averse behavior. Lower social class standing often fosters an aversion to loss and a prevention mode, but can sometimes promote risk-seeking behavior in situations when people believe they have nothing to lose. Kish-Gephart proposes that it would be productive to give more attention to the type of risk people encounter (e.g. people with lower class standing may be more worried about social risk than risk in general), and that researchers should attend to whether a given risky decision is perceived as low risk or instead perceived as high risk but a necessary evil (e.g. rent-to-own contracts).

The next three papers in this section examine some of the interpersonal, relational, and neural consequences of the different interactional patterns that accompany social class. [Paul Piff and Angela Robinson](#) review the literature on social class and prosocial behavior. They find that even though people designated as lower social class have fewer resources — material as well as attentional — they pay

more attention to others, show more emotional accuracy and prosocial emotion (e.g. compassion), and demonstrate more personally costly actions like helping and sharing that put others' needs over one's own. They suggest that people designated as higher class may experience less vulnerability to threat and therefore manifest more control over the environment. In contrast, people designated as lower class may need to rely on others to cope with their more stressful, uncertain or threatening environments. They note that some very affluent people are also generous and propose that social class differences in helping others may depend on one's motivation, identity, and place in the social hierarchy. [Rebecca Carey and Hazel Rose Markus](#) consider how social class shapes the form and function of relationships and selves. They find that lower social class networks tend to be small, dense, homogenous and strongly connected, and that the ties in these networks provide the bonding capital — the support and protection — that promote an understanding of the self as interdependent. In contrast, higher social class networks tend to be large, far-reaching, diverse and loosely connected, and the ties in these networks provide the bridging capital that help achieve personal goals and promote an understanding of the self as independent. They conclude that the form and function of relationships is a critical link in the connection between social class and psychological tendencies. [Michael Varnum and Shinobu Kitayama](#) consider the neuroscience of social class. Their review finds that lower social class standing is linked to neural responses that indicate greater attunement to others, more holistic cognition and greater vigilance to threat. These findings are linked to social class differences in the understanding of self as independent and interdependent. They emphasize that the responses of those designated as lower social class are not processing deficits as they are sometimes construed but instead adaptations to environments that require people to rely and depend on each other for protection and for material and emotional support.

### Section II. Social class inequality in education

The first two papers in this section focus on the powerful role of identity in the link between social class and performance in the classroom. The third examines how the structure of the classroom and the educational system contribute to these social class differences and inequality. First, in a paper on social class and identity-based motivation, [Oliver Fisher, S. Casey O'Donnell, and Daphna Oyserman](#) show that social class influences which identities come to mind and has a strong impact on meaning-making and behavior. Yet this impact is typically unseen by people themselves or by observers of their behavior. Instead, people make culturally tuned inferences about themselves and others, what they could become, and what they can do about it. Since individualist American culture highlights the individual causes and hides the structural causes of ease and difficulty and of success and

failure, people readily infer that class-based outcomes reflect character. [Mesmin Destin](#) and [Regine Debrosse](#) also focus on the role of identity and present a theory of status-based identity to expand the study of inequalities. They focus on the significance of the narratives people use to make sense of their social class standing, and how these narratives shape current and future identities. Using examples of students who experience a disconnect between who they were at home and who they are becoming in college, they show that upward mobility may not be a uniformly positive experience and how it can foster a destabilizing sense of status uncertainty that can have negative psychological and health outcomes. Finally, in a paper on social class and symbolic violence, [Jean-Claude Croizet](#) points out that the classroom is nowhere near a level playing field. Instead the implicit norms about who is smart and deserving — as conveyed by linguistic structure, independent agency, and the right type of knowledge — disadvantage lower class students by portraying them as ‘lesser’ or deficient. For these students with lower class standing, this process constitutes symbolic violence, as it undermines the self and performance and further fuels inequality.

### **Section III. Social class, inequality, health and well-being**

[Nicholas Buttrick](#), [Samantha Heintzelman](#), and [Shigehiro Oishi](#) address inequality and well-being. This team first reports the findings which tie income inequality with lower levels of happiness. Next, they review a variety of mechanisms that explain this link, including anxiety from status competition, mistrust, and hopes and fears about the future. They emphasize that policy-makers should consider the importance of these effects of perceived inequality along with the effects of objective outcomes such as level of economic success. The second paper in this section considers the effects of social class on physical health. Focusing on psychological buffers against poor health, [Cynthia Levine](#) begins with evidence that the experiences associated with lower class standing put people at risk for a wide range of poor health outcomes, and then considers what beliefs are protective for health in lower and higher class contexts. She finds that the most health-protective beliefs are those that are promoted and valued in a given socio-cultural context. Specifically, in higher class contexts, independence and a focus on the individual predicts health; in lower class contexts, valuing social connection and adjustment predicts health. Levine concludes that these class-based beliefs about health have important implications for addressing health disparities.

### **Section IV. Social class and inequality in the workplace**

The two papers in this section pose new and provocative questions about the role of one's social class background in the workplace. In the first paper, [Sarah S.M. Townsend](#) and [Mindy Truong](#) examine cultural models of self and

social class disparities at organizational gateways and pathways. They review research that reveals that even with a college degree, people from lower class backgrounds achieve less career success in professional, white-collar workplaces compared to those from middle-class backgrounds. To explain this disparity, they report research which demonstrates that the independent cultural beliefs and practices espoused by professional organizations often disadvantage people from working-class backgrounds, who have more familiarity with interdependent beliefs and practices. They suggest that these disparities are especially evident in gateways to interview and hiring decisions, despite relative equality in objective qualifications, and also in performance evaluations and assignments to the high-profile tasks that are the pathways to promotion and advancement. They conclude with a variety of suggestions for reducing these social class disparities. In the second paper, [Sean Martin](#) reviews research on social class, leaders, and leadership. He begins with the important observation that although people from higher social class backgrounds are more likely to occupy formal leader roles in organizations, there is little evidence that they possess the types of traits and social orientations that would make them more effective in these roles than those from lower social class backgrounds. He further proposes that social class shapes different expectations for what the roles of ‘leader’ and ‘follower’ should entail, which can result in workplace clashes between people with different class backgrounds. For example, people from lower and higher social class backgrounds are likely to have different expectations about the amount of communication that should be provided by leaders and followers, as well as different understandings of how to motivate followers.

### **Section V. Social class, politics, and policy**

The papers in this section examine how social class shapes economic policy preferences, as well as the motivation to justify and maintain versus change the system. In the first paper on social class and political attitudes and engagement, [Jazmin Brown-Iannuzzi](#), [Kristjen Lundberg](#), and [Stephanie McKee](#) review research suggesting that the relationship between social class and policy preferences is not as straightforward as previously theorized by the rational voter model. Instead, they propose that while social class may inform attitudes toward economic policies, the psychological factors that inform this relationship are not limited to self-interest alone. Further, they argue that these attitudes toward economic policies are often not related to the expected behavioral outcomes (e.g. voting behavior). Next, [Heather Bullock](#) examines how policy preferences (i.e. attitudes toward redistribution) associated with social class shape economic inequality and interclass relations. Specifically, she argues that cross-national variability in interclass attitudes and relations illustrate the importance of studying social class and inequality in context. Taking the context into account

means considering the role of factors such as self-interest, system justification, stereotypes, and narratives about social class and mobility.

In the final article in this section, [John Jost](#) examines how social class relates to system justification. He proposes that the perennial question of working-class conservatism should not be considered in terms of whether or not the working-class are more or less likely to support the status quo than the advantaged. Rather, he argues that it is far more critical to understand why so many working-class individuals support policies that are against their own economic self-interest. He reviews qualitative and quantitative evidence suggesting that system justification — the desire to believe the society is fair and legitimate — is an important psychological factor that helps to explain why the disadvantaged often endorse conservative, system-maintaining attitudes.

### Section VI. Social class and inequality across cultures

The papers in this section show how the meanings and consequences of social class hinge on its intersection with other cultural contexts and social categorizations (e.g. gender, race, nation of origin). Together, these articles point to the necessity of grounding the study of social class in the socio-cultural matrix. In the first article in this section, [Kathleen McGinn and Eunsil Oh](#) review research that examines the intersection of social class and gender. They propose that women's experiences at work and home are necessarily shaped by social class, and further, describe how this gender-class intersection heightens identification with gender among upper class women, but increases identification with social class among lower class women. They conclude that class-based differences are likely to be weaker among women versus men, and that this gender-class intersection can mitigate or even reverse class-based differences observed in prior research. In the next paper, [Tiffany Brannon, Gerald Higginbotham, and Kyshia Henderson](#) review research examining the intersection of social class and race. They propose that understanding the advantages and disadvantages of social class requires attention to how its intersection with race or ethnicity shapes one's societal rank and understanding of the self. They conclude that although racial or ethnic minorities often do not gain the social, psychological, or economic benefits of higher social class, in some key life domains, they are buffered from some burdens of lower social class standing. In the next paper examining the intersection of social class with national culture [Yuri Miyamoto](#) compares the psychological and health outcomes associated with social class across Western and East Asian cultures. This comparison demonstrates that, unlike Western contexts, higher social class in East Asian contexts is associated with an increased tendency to focus on others. In these different socio-cultural contexts with different meaning systems, social class

differs in its degree of impact, as well as the processes through which it impacts individual health outcomes. In the final paper in this section, [Glenn Adams](#) proposes the value of a decolonized approach to understanding global inequality. He shows that the dominant perspectives on global inequality view the modern institutions and the independent selves common in the Global North as the source of prosperity and development, and the interdependent selves common in the Global South as inferior and as the source of poverty and the lack of development. He first notes that some aspects of interdependence are the legacy of colonial violence. Further, he offers the theory that a more equitable world requires a recognition of some of the downsides of the independent ways of being common in Global North, and an appreciation and attunement to some of the interdependent ways of being common in the Global South.

### Section VII. Maintaining systems of inequality

The papers in this section show how important situational, psychological, and structural factors contribute to people's understanding of and responses to inequality and social class. In the first paper, [Oliver Hauser and Michael Norton](#) review research on (mis)perceptions of inequality. Their review shows how (mis)perceptions of inequality are systematic, suggesting that their source is often due to people's overreliance on cues from their local environments or due to acceptance of systems of hierarchy. They conclude that when these misperceptions are corrected, people show a greater appreciation that inequality is a problem, as well as greater support for the redistribution of economic resources. In the next article, [Federica Durante and Susan Fiske](#) review research on social class and stereotypes, documenting the nature and consequences of social class stereotypes. They show how social class stereotype content is ambivalent — that is, people designated as lower class are viewed both more positively (e.g. warmer) and more negatively (e.g. less competent) than people designated as higher class. They also review how these social class stereotypes support and maintain inequality through ambivalent content, early appearance in children, achievement consequences, institutionalization in education, appearance in cross-class social encounters, and prevalence in the most unequal societies. In the third paper, [Jolanda Jetten, Zhechen Wang, Niklas Steffens, Frank Mols, Kim Peters, and Maykel Verkuyten](#) provide a social identity analysis of responses to economic inequality. As inequality increases, they propose that wealth will become a more central and salient factor in categorizing the self and others, prompting more frequent intergroup comparisons. These increases in categorization and intergroup comparisons should increase 'us' versus 'them' dynamics and also serve to solidify and elaborate social class stereotypes. They conclude that inequality destroys the social fabric of society and negatively affects citizen's social and political behavior. In the

final paper in this section, [Derek Rucker and Adam Galinsky](#) provide an overview of the overlapping yet also distinct constructs of social power and social class and how they relate to each other. To distinguish between these constructs, they define *social power* as control over valuable resources, the *sense of power* as the psychological experience or mindset of feeling powerful, and *social class* as a combination of rank and resources. Despite the differences between social power and social class, they propose that one commonality between them is that both can impact psychological functioning and behavior through increased sense of power they often produce. They argue that a view of power that takes into account different styles of agency can be useful for informing research on social class.

### Section VIII. Understanding and disrupting systems of inequality

The papers in this section provide an overview of the sources of the social class disparities and how to reduce them through intervention. In the first paper on the structural dynamics of social class, [Michael Kraus and Jun Won Park](#) review research suggesting that social class disparities (e.g. academic underperformance) cannot be fully understood through the individual-focused lens that psychology typically employs. Instead, they theorize that it is crucial to attend to the structural dynamics of social class — that is, the interplay between individual factors (e.g. motivation) and social structural factors (e.g. institutions) — to fully understand the sources of social class disparities, as well as to be equipped to intervene to reduce them. In the next article focused on different types of interventions to reduce the social class achievement gap, [Andrea Dittmann and Nicole M. Stephens](#) organize this intervention literature based on how interventions view the sources and solutions to social class disparities. The review shows that existing interventions can be organized according to whether they focus on changing individuals (e.g. increasing motivation), structures (e.g. providing material resources), or peoples patterns of meaning-making or construal (e.g. providing a narrative that ‘I belong here’). They conclude that interventions will be most effective when tailored to fit the specific needs of students and the context in which they are delivered. In the third and final article in this section, [Laura Brady, Adriana Germano, and Stephanie Fryberg](#) argue for the importance of culturally grounded interventions to reduce the social class achievement gap. They define *culturally grounded interventions* as those that acknowledge students’ cultural differences, recognize that educational contexts tend to normalize the mainstream cultures of historically advantaged students rather than attending to their influence, and catalyze change by building on students’ different cultural ways of being. Their article documents that most existing social psychological interventions are not culturally grounded and

suggests that taking the role of culture into account will enable such interventions to be even more effective.

### Conclusion

For the most part, the study of social class and inequality has been seen as a topic relevant primarily to sociology or economics, outside the province of psychology. Indeed, psychologists have only given serious attention to the topic of how social class shapes psychology, culture, and behavior for a little more than a decade (for some of the first studies see [2–9]). In this time, as this issue so powerfully reveals, we have made impressive progress. Yet many challenging and important questions remain untouched. How does inequality and social class influence emotional experience, morality, group and intergroup behavior? Why does the same level of resources have a different set of consequences for individuals in relatively equal communities and societies compared to more unequal ones? How do the many different indicators of social class diverge or converge in their ways of shaping psychology and behavior? How do the consequences of poverty circumstances differ from those of the lower class and how do the consequences of extreme wealth from those of the higher class? What does inequality refer to? Inequality in resources? In opportunities? In outcomes? What are the most effective ways to promote greater equality and spur long-term change in a society increasingly grounded in the ideas and practices of choice, personal responsibility, and pulling oneself up by one’s own bootstraps? Challenging questions like these highlight the value of studying inequality and social class from interdisciplinary perspectives, bringing together the insights of psychologists and economists with the foundational work of sociologists. At a minimum, the papers in this issue suggest that the research path ahead is well-lit and promising; at a maximum, they suggest that a comprehensive framework is emerging for understanding how sharing unequally in the burdens and benefits of life affects psychology and behavior.

### Conflict of interest statement

Nothing declared.

### Acknowledgements

We thank Amrita Maitreyi for her assistance in creating the cover art and figure and with the preparation of the manuscript.

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