Abstract

Attributions for poverty lead to fundamentally distinct reactions to the economically disadvantaged. While attributional beliefs have been shown to differ between individuals (e.g., on the basis of political orientation), the current research suggests that reactions to the poor are polarized within the individual perceiver. In the first three studies, participants evaluated a poor or wealthy target exhibiting either high or low work ethic. As expected, work-ethic main effects, favoring the hardworking and denigrating the lazy, significantly interacted with social class, such that differentiation for the poor was always bigger. In Study 1, perceived work ethic polarized evaluative, affective, and behavioral reactions to the poor, but not the non-poor. Study 2 replicated a similar pattern of results with a mostly lower-middle and working class non-student sample, demonstrating that this effect relates to societal status, not merely ingroup/outgroup processes. Study 3 examines some consequential implications of these biases in an evaluation of polarized social class attitudes on job candidate assessments. Studies 4-6 shift the paradigm and identify some apparent instances of polarization toward the rich and muted reaction to the poor. Theoretical implications of the results across the six studies are discussed.

KEY WORDS: polarized attitudes, social class, work ethic, stereotypes, attributions
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Acknowledgements

On a cool wintry night in the not-so-distant past, a little girl clung to the covers inside the car in which her family lived, peered pensively through the frosty window at the outside world, and dreamed. Thus began a journey of hope that today culminates in her attainment of a doctoral degree in Psychology and Social Policy from Princeton University.

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A Tale of Two Paupers:

Polarized Perceptions of the Poor

The present thesis contends that perceptions of the poor are not altogether negative, as suggested in previous research, but multidimensional, consisting of both negative and positive components. The introduction first discusses attitudes toward the poor within the U.S. context. The second section reviews evidence suggesting singularly negative views of the poor and then builds a case for bi-dimensional ambivalence, based on more recent findings. The third section develops the argument that people harbor mixed attitudes toward the poor and makes predictions about the expression of polarized reactions to them.

Perceptions of the Poor in the United States

From its Depression-era inception to its Reagan-championed rollbacks, welfare policy has long been steeped in controversy within sociopolitical discourse (Applebaum, 2001; Cook & Barrett, 1992; Feldman & Zaller, 1992; Shapiro et al., 1987; Williamson, 1974). In our troubling economic times, the issue has only gained in contentiousness, remaining gripped in an ideological tug of war between those who demand an expansion of governmental safety nets and those who seek to end “socialist” redistributions of wealth (Epstein, 2004; Henry, Reyna, & Weiner, 2004). Foundational to this protracted cultural chasm, we argue, are conflicting attitudes toward welfare’s beneficiaries: the American poor (e.g., Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003; Feagin, 1975; Feldman & Zaller, 1992; Zucker & Weiner, 1993).

Americans are divided in their views of the poor. Individualistic (internal) explanations hold poor people at fault for their plights, citing deficiencies in individual effort, ability, or culturally compatible values (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Jost & Hunyady, Reyna, Henry, Korfmancher, & Tucker, 2006; see also Belle, 2006 and Bullock, 1999). By contrast,
structural (external) explanations assert that systematic inequalities bind the impoverished to a
d life of social disadvantages that are difficult to overcome. In this view, structural inequities such
as low wages, underfunded public schools, and reduced social capital deny poor citizens a fair
chance at economic mobility.

The current research argues that while certainly some people take stances at either
attributional extreme, most have internalized both individualistic and societal attributions (Hunt,
1996; Kluegel & Smith, 1986), leaning toward one type of causal explanation for poverty, but
perceiving validity in the other. As a result, we argue, divergent perspectives on the
impoverished coexist and compete, not only between groups and individuals, but within the
individual. We suggest that people simultaneously conceive of poverty as both a societal menace
and a natural outcome; as socially debilitating yet somehow individually surmountable; and as an
unfair burden, yet justly distributed.

Conflicting perceptions of poverty is necessarily tied to dual conceptions of the poor. The
present research argues that, contrary to previous assumptions of univalent antipathy, attitudes
toward the poor may be markedly mixed, consisting simultaneously of positive and negative
components. Further, attributions of blame amplify valenced responses to economically
disadvantaged individuals, prompting a wide variety of interpersonal reactions, ranging from
active assistance to passive discrimination. These studies add to previous work by going beyond
the default negative view of poor people and explaining when others denigrate or sympathize
with the poor. We posit that reactions to the poor are based on morally-tinged judgments of their
social attributes and locate these processes within the individual perceiver.

The current research investigates the evaluative, affective, and behavioral consequences
of polarized perceptions of the poor. We test our predictions of divergent and amplified reactions
across six studies manipulating the variables of social class and work ethic in the context of resource threat. Study 1 observes polarized and exaggerated responses to the poor, relative to the non-poor, at both positive and negative poles. Study 2 replicates much of this pattern while demonstrating the robustness of this effect across contexts and demographics. Study 3 illustrates the potential for exaggerated reaction to result in consequential disadvantages to poor targets. A second set of studies shift the experimental paradigm and potentially demonstrates at least one condition that favors the poor and disadvantages the affluent.

**Social Class Attitudes in the Psychological Literature**

Social psychologists have long been interested in attitudes toward socially disadvantaged groups, but have often overlooked socioeconomic class as a stigmatized social category (Lott, 2002). This conspicuous blind spot in psychological literature seems to parallel a cultural tendency to perceive the United States as a virtually classless society (Fiske, 2011; Hartz, 1955) in which socioeconomic boundaries are fluid and the opportunity for financial success is accessible to all. However, research across social science disciplines has established that social class is, in fact, a virtually fixed characteristic and determinant of life outcomes (i.e., occupational status, educational attainment, health, lifespan) in the United States as much as in other post-industrial countries (Jäntti, et al., 2006; Kenworthy & Pontusson, 2005). Moreover, psychological studies of social-class prejudice have found that socioeconomic status intersects with and sometimes trumps primary grouping categories (Dasgupta, 2005; Landrine, 1999; Lott & Saxon, 2002; Weeks & Lupfer, 2004), such as race and gender, which have garnered significantly more empirical attention. Given its increasingly evident significance, social psychologists are beginning to actively investigate class as a meaningful social divide (Bullock & Lott, 2004; Fiske & Markus, in press). In attempting to understand class-based intergroup
attitudes, the current research addresses a social category that is unarticulated and under-served in both empirical and cultural discourse.

Though psychological literature on social class attitudes is limited, the prevailing consensus seems to hold that American attitudes toward the poor are universally unfavorable. For example, Fiske and colleagues’ (2002) investigations of cultural stereotypes reveal that perceptions of the poor radically deviate from those of other social class groups in their level of negativity. Whereas the content of middle-class stereotypes is roundly positive and evaluations of the rich reflect ambivalent positivity, poor people are the only social class category to receive univalently negative appraisal, denigrating them in the fundamental domains of both warmth/trustworthiness and competence. Similarly, a general survey of social class beliefs found that participants rated unfavorable descriptors such as “immoral” and “stupid” as attributes significantly more reflective of the poor than the affluent (Cozarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001). Reviews of sociological literature (Bullock, 1995) and national studies on social class (Chafel, 1997) further reveal the pervasiveness of these antagonistic perceptions, showing that adults generally characterize the poor as intellectually limited, morally remiss, and at fault for their economic misfortune; moreover, non-poor children increasingly adopt this view as they get older. Further supporting the theme of anti-poor sentiment, cross-cultural studies suggest that poor people are held in universal disrepute across the globe (Cuddy et al., 2008). Yet, even here, the U.S. merits special attention: social policy research shows that Americans oppose government assistance to the poor more than do citizens of all other Western democracies (Benabou & Tiroule, 2006).

Universal antipathy toward the poor is thematic in the literature, but perhaps attitudes toward the poor are more complex than previously documented. Private donations to charities
(annually numbering in the billions), volunteerism in local community service centers, and long-term enrollment in anti-poverty national service programs (i.e., Teach for America, AmeriCorps) indicate a large measure of benevolence toward this supposedly wholly maligned group. In the empirical realm, some recent findings also seem to hint that poor people can elicit positive reactions in certain circumstances. For instance, studies examining the relationship between system-justifying beliefs and social class attitudes have found that people confer on to the poor such positive traits as “happy” or “honest,” in order to downplay the disadvantages of poverty and retain the conception of a just world (Kay & Jost, 2003). Cozzarelli and colleagues (2001) also found that despite reporting unfavorable cognitions about the poor, survey respondents simultaneously expressed moderately positive affect, endorsing such statements as “my feelings toward the poor are generally positive.” In another line of research, investigators examining the attributional content of social class stereotypes further discovered that while participants opposed negatively stereotyped welfare programming, they supported other forms of generous systematic aid to the poor (Henry, Reyna, & Weiner, 2004). Taken together, lay and empirical observations cast reasonable doubt on the notion of a singular societal perspective on poor persons and invite further investigation into more complex attitudes.

Mixed attitudes toward social groups appear to be the rule rather than the exception, for they emerge in the prejudice literature as a prevalent feature of intergroup perception (Bell & Esses, 1997; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Katz & Hass, 1988). The Stereotype Content Model (SCM: Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) demonstrates that ambivalence, or simultaneously favorable and unfavorable sentiment on different dimensions, characterizes most stereotypes of societal outgroups. Although ambivalence is generally defined by concurrent positive and negative evaluations of an attitude object (McGregor, Newby-Clark, & Zanna, 1999; Olson & Zanna,
1993; Priester & Petty, 1996), important variations appear in how it is been conceptualized and defined (Jonas, Broemer, & Diehl, 2000; for review, see Thompson, Zanna, & Griffin, 1995).

Traditional attitudinal ambivalence research focuses on conflicting evaluations of an attitude object along a single evaluative dimension such as favorability or harmfulness (Kaplan, 1972; Thompson, et al., 1995). This kind of unidimensional ambivalence is usually studied in regard to attitudes toward specific objects, topics or issues, such as the death penalty or euthanasia, about which people may harbor simultaneously positive and negative views on the single dimension of harmfulness, for example (see Thompson, et al., 1995). Single-dimensional ambivalence does not typically apply to the study of intergroup judgments. A more fitting variant for intergroup literature might be called bi-dimensional or multidimensional ambivalence. Compared to its unidimensional counterpart, bi-dimensional ambivalence tends to encompass a broader evaluative sphere and considers judgments of an attitude object on more than one valued dimension. For example, ambivalent stereotypes of older people appraise them negatively on the competence dimension, but positively on the warmth dimension (Fiske, et al., 2002), while stereotypes of Asians give them credit for competence, but mark them as lacking in warmth (Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). While this form of ambivalence is more expansive than the traditional interpretation in the number of considered evaluative dimensions, it shares the oppositely valenced reactions to an attitude object.

Social class ambivalence, as defined here, most closely aligns with the multidimensional conceptualization of mixed intergroup reactions. It refers to the distinct positive and negative beliefs that people simultaneously hold toward poor people and the contradictory emotions (sympathy and contempt) and evaluations (favorable and unfavorable) that result. Although ambivalence is increasingly understood to be a common intergroup phenomenon, social class has
unique psychological properties not shared by previously studied outgroups. Thus, mixed attitudes toward this group warrant a more focused examination.

In the past, the attitudinal ambivalence literature has been enriched by case studies of uniquely situated societal groups. Besides the already-mentioned cases of older and Asian groups, most notably documented are ambivalent racism toward Black Americans (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Katz & Hass, 1986) and ambivalent sexism toward women (Fiske & Glick, 1996). Both forms of ambivalent prejudice share common themes of paternalism and historic subjugation. However, the sources of ambivalence differ for each group. Where ambivalent racism finds its basis in internal psychological conflict between incompatible sets of moral beliefs and cognitions (i.e., egalitarian values and anti-Black affect; Protestant work ethic and pro-Black affect), ambivalent sexism emphasizes the preservation of male dominance in the context of intimate interdependence.

Just as with these groups, a case emerges for a focused examination of ambivalent reactions to the poor. Social class differs from other social outgroups in several ways. One unique property of lower social class group membership is that, unlike most other social categories, it is imbued with moral meaning. Fundamental to the American economic belief system is the notion that every person can and should attain financial prosperity (Biernat, Vescio & Theno, 1996; Hsu, 1972; Katz & Hass, 1988), and economic status signals one’s success at fulfilling this edict. As a result, moral judgments are likely to see expression in responses to the economically unsuccessful who, by definition, fall short.

Moreover, unlike virtually all other stigmatized groups, membership in the lower social class is socially, not biologically, determined and can thus be more easily construed as a deserved subordinate status. Previous research indicates that the perceived causal locus and
controllability of negative outcomes play a mediating role in the severity of prejudice expressed toward stigmatized groups (Henry, Reyna, Weiner, 2004; Reyna, 2000; Weiner, Graham, & Reyna, 1997). Perceivers are more likely to react with explicit scorn and condemnation toward the allegedly blameworthy (Weiner et al., 1997), and, conversely with extreme praise and charity to the blameless, as described below.

**Predictions of Polarized Reactions to the Poor**

The present research hypothesizes that individuals hold conflicting attitudes toward the poor, and endorses an attributional model to predict the expression of extreme positivity versus negativity. The framework begins with the proposition that the valence of attitudes toward the poor is determined by blame attributions. Perceivers will view the poor unfavorably to the degree that they deem them complicit in their plight. On the other hand, perceivers will see the poor positively to the degree that they view them as blameless and upward bound in their struggle. Previous research corroborates the idea that blame differentiates perceptions of the poor on an intergroup level. For example, conservatives, who generally see the poor as blameworthy in their predicament, tend to view them more negatively, with less sympathy and more anger than liberals, who tend not to hold the poor responsible for their disadvantage (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). As a novel contribution, the current framework posits that blame differentiates perceptions of the poor *within the individual perceiver.*

This model further contends that blameworthiness is determined primarily by appraisals of the poor individual’s adherence to work ethic, the core value system that most directly relates to people’s causal perceptions of economic outcomes in the United States. The work ethic ideology asserts that: a) it is the moral responsibility of each person to work hard to achieve financial independence and success; b) economic prosperity is attainable to all who strive for it;
and 3) failure to achieve prosperity reflects failures of effort and motivation. In summary, as U.S. Republican presidential primary candidate Herman Cain so aptly articulated, if you are not rich, you can only “blame yourself” (2011). Consistent with this view, previous research has implicated endorsement of the work ethic in class-based prejudice, including negative attitudes toward the poor (MacDonald, 1972), and support for punitive sanctions against the unemployed such as a withdrawal of unemployment benefits (Furnham, 1982; 1990).

Building on these observations, the current social class ambivalence framework predicts the following social cognitive processes in the evaluation of a low-income target:

1. *Causal Attribution*: Because perceivers are motivated to explain negative outcomes (Weiner, 1986), exposure to an economically disadvantaged target prompts causal explanations for the person’s low economic status. In other words, upon learning about a target’s low economic standing perceivers will respond to information that signals the target's blameworthiness or blamelessness for their troubling condition.

2. *Blame-Driven Appraisals*: Perceivers will assign blame based on the extent to which a poor target allegedly violates or adheres to work ethic. The direction of blame attributions will determine the valence of responses. Specifically, poor targets who adhere to work ethic, and are thus viewed as blameless in their struggle, will elicit positive responses. Poor individuals who violate work-ethic will be perceived as blameworthy in their economic failure and will elicit negative responses.

3. *Polarizing Subtypes*: From the prescriptive work ethic context emerge two polarizing narratives of the poor: the hardworking underdogs who strive to overcome disadvantage and the lazy miscreants who perpetuate their sins of
economic failure. It is predicted that the hardworking poor prototype will be rewarded with admiration and exaggerated positivity for working to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, thus fulfilling the ultimate work ethic mandate. On the other hand, the lazy poor prototypes will be penalized with exaggerated negativity for failing at even trying to better themselves.

In keeping with previous attribution theory (Weiner, 1986), reactions should be triggered in the following causal sequence: Attribution-relevant information will prompt exaggerated affective reactions which will then energize behavioral responses.

4. *Differential Social Class Reactions:* The rich have less moral burden placed upon them because they are not facing troubling circumstance to overcome (such as poverty). Therefore, whether one is working hard or not is more a moral issue for those struggling with disadvantage than it is for those who already enjoy success. In other words, it is predicted that work ethic ascription will differentiate perceptions of targets who are poor markedly more than it will targets who are more affluent.

This research contributes to the prejudice literature by extending the dialogue on mixed intergroup reactions to a previously overlooked low-status social groups using a relatively unique approach. Rather than exploiting existing differences in people’s lay theories of causal attributions for poverty, this work manipulates evaluative targets’ actual work ethic and examines a more complex pattern of reaction.

**STUDY 1: POLARIZED REACTIONS TO LOW-INCOME COLLEGE PEERS**

Work-ethic adherence or violation could polarize responses because of the proposed attributional processes or because it simply adds a positive or negative (value) threat to the
disadvantaged group. To test this possibility, Study 1 manipulates resource threat as an alternative negative frame. Thus we presented a vignette manipulating an evaluative target’s social class, work ethic, and advantaged access to resources (resource threat). We predicted that poor targets’ perceived work ethic would amplify reactions toward them in evaluative, affective, and behavioral domains, but that this would not be the case for comparable non-poor targets. Although resource threat was manipulated in this study, as predicted, it was less central in attitudes toward the poor than was work ethic; therefore, Studies 2 and 3 simply hold it constant.

Participants read a vignette manipulating the target’s social class, work ethic, and advantage (resource threat). We hypothesized that symbolic and economic threats would differentiate and amplify reactions toward the poor, relative to comparably threatening rich targets and non-threatening poor controls. While resource threat is a manipulated variable in this study, it was found to be less impactful than symbolic values threat and thus is not central to the focus of this article and is simply held constant in proposed future studies.

Method

Participants and Design

Participants were 109 Princeton undergraduates and 10 Princeton alumni, recruited by email invitation to participate in a short web survey in exchange for a ticket to cash lottery (from which two winners would receive $25). Six participants were dropped for failing one of two manipulation checks (described in the materials below). The remaining 113 self-identified as 66% white, 68% female, 60% upper to upper middle class, 28% middle class, and 12% lower middle to working class. Participants followed an emailed link to the web survey where, after indicating consent, they were randomly assigned to one of eight conditions in this 2 (social class:
rich vs. poor) X 2 (work ethic: lazy vs. hardworking) X 2 (special admissions advantage: mentioned vs. not mentioned) between-subjects design.

**Procedure and Materials**

The web survey introduction informed participants that they were participating in a study on responses to social scenarios, that they would read a brief scenario, and that they would report their reactions on a questionnaire. Next participants were shown a vignette and asked to imagine it vividly. The vignettes told the story of a fellow student from the perspective of a friend. The manipulations follow:

**Social Class Manipulation:**
You and a friend are chatting about your respective roommates. In this conversation you learn, among other things, that your friend’s roommate comes from a very affluent [low-income] family.

**Work Ethic Manipulation:**
You also learn that the roommate seems like a lazy [hardworking] person.

**Resource Threat Manipulation** (omitted in no-threat condition):
[Your friend suspects and you agree that your friend’s roommate is a beneficiary of an aggressive new university initiative that recruits legacy [low-income] applicants by offering them priority in admissions and other aspects of undergraduate life (e.g., class space, room draws, food points, discounts at U-Store).]

Two follow-up sentences instructed,

"Please take about a minute to think about your impressions of your friend’s roommate. Once you have imagined this scenario vividly, please click "Continue."

After completing this page, participants completed a series of survey questions probing their **evaluative**, **affective**, and likely **behavioral** responses to the target. The questionnaire items were derived primarily from Stereotype Content Model (SCM) findings on the primary domains of intergroup reactions. Specifically, because warmth and competence appear to be the primary
dimensions of interpersonal and intergroup evaluations (Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2007; Russell & Fiske, 2008), an 18-item personality trait list utilized traits synonymous with those dimensions (kind, likeable, warm, competitive, trustworthy, cold, unfriendly, unethical, exploitative, immoral arrogant, undeserving, intelligent, capable, conscientious, incompetent). Trait judgments were rated on a 9-point scale (1= Not at all to 9= Very much).

Based on previous SCM research linking social perceptions to specific emotions and behavioral tendencies (Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2007), participants indicated the emotions they experienced and the behaviors they would likely enact toward the target. Using a 9-point scale (1= Not at all, 9= Very much), participants reported the extent to which they would feel toward the target any of eight theoretically derived (Cuddy et al., 2007) social emotions (admiration, pride, contempt, disgust, pity, sympathy, anger, resentment). They further rated the extent to which they would engage in active and passive helping or harming social behaviors, adapted from the findings of the SCM BIAS Map (active help: assist, praise, defend; passive help: befriend, socialize with, associate with; active harm: attack, criticize, confront; passive harm: neglect, ignore, avoid), again using a 9-point scales (1= Not at all, 9= Very much).

After completing these ratings, participants responded to a demographic survey asking their gender, graduation year, race, social class and political orientation. Participants identified their political orientation by responding to the question, “How would you describe your political leanings?” with a selection of one of seven points on a gradient scale ranging from conservative to liberal extremes (very conservative, conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, liberal, very liberal). They additionally indicated their social class membership by responding to the following question, “With which social class group are you most identified, in terms of income and education?” with the selection of one of five categories
on a gradient scale of increasing socioeconomic status (working class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class).

Finally two multiple choice manipulation check items placed at the very end of the survey asked participants to recall the target’s social class (options: Rich, Middle Class, Poor, or Don’t, Remember) and work ethic (Hardworking, Lazy, A little of both, Don’t Remember). Only participants who correctly answered at least one of the two items were retained.

**Results**

**Polarized Trait Judgments**

A confirmatory factor analysis on the 18 trait-judgment items revealed a four-factor solution organizing trait variables by dimension and valence. The best-fitting model reflected target evaluations that were most sensitive to valence (negative/positive), minimum Δχ²(1, N = 109) = 162.88, and less so, though still distinctly, to dimension, understood as warmth and competence, minimum Δχ²(1, N = 109) = 362.34, p < .001. Specifically, on the warmth dimension, a five-item positive factor (kind, likeable, trustworthy, deserving, warm, α = .91) and a six-item negative factor (exploitative, immoral, cold, unethical, undeserving, arrogant, α = .92) emerged. Similarly, on the competence dimension, five positively valenced items loaded reliably (intelligent, clever, conscientious, capable, competent, α = .92), and two negative trait items comprised the incompetence factor (lazy, incompetent, r = .65, p < .01). The items on each factor were combined into the following four composite variables, respectively: positive personal warmth, negative personal warmth (i.e., coldness), positive competence, and negative competence (i.e., incompetence). Participants’ combined ratings of the target’s warmth, coldness, competence, and incompetence were entered into a 2 (social class condition: rich vs. poor) X 2 (work ethic condition: lazy vs. hardworking) between-subjects analysis of covariance.
(ANCOVA), with participants’ political orientation (coded from 1-7 with very conservative at the lowest value and very liberal at the highest; \(M = 4.43\)) and social class, coded from 1-5 (with working class at the lowest value; \(M = 3.55\)) entered as covariates (in order to reduce the extraneous contribution of these variables on reactions to social class scenarios). The assumptions for ANCOVA were met. In particular, the homogeneity of the regression effect was evident for the covariates, and the covariates were linearly related to the dependent measures.

The ANCOVAs revealed no main effects of either covariate (all \(ps > .1\)) on any of the four trait ratings. However, the analyses did reveal a series of main effects as well as interaction effects of the two independent variables (work ethic and social class), as described below.

Three main effects of work ethic indicated a strong distaste toward the less hardworking and a more positive orientation toward targets espousing high work ethic. Lazy targets received higher ratings than hardworking targets on unlikeable (cold) personality traits, \(F(1,107) = 7.20, p = .008, \eta_p^2 = .06\) (\(M = 3.64\) vs. 2.81) and were viewed as more incompetent \(F(1,107) = 30.07, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .22\), (\(M = 4.55\) vs. 2.69). On the other hand, hardworking targets, were rated higher on competence traits, \(F(1,107) = 7.95, p = .006, \eta_p^2 = .07\) (\(M = 5.28\) vs. 4.34) than were lazy targets. No significant effect of work ethic emerged on the warmth variable, however, \(F(1,107) = 1.57, p = .21, \eta_p^2 = .01\), (\(M = 4.73\) vs. 4.35).

Two main effects of social class favoring the poor were also revealed. Specifically, participants gave the poor higher ratings on perceived personal warmth, \(F(1,107) = 3.77, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .03\) (\(M = 4.83\) vs. 4.25) and competence, \(F(1,107) = 6.51, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .06\), (\(M = 5.23\) vs. 4.40) than they gave the rich.

Supporting our predictions of polarized reactions, significant social-class X work-ethic interaction effects emerged on the two negative trait variables, the coldness variable, \(F(1,107) = \).
5.71, \( p = .019 \), \( \eta_p^2 = .05 \) and the incompetence measure, \( F(1,107) = 5.57, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .05 \). An analysis of simple effects showed that while perceived work ethic did not affect coldness ratings for rich targets, \( F(1,54) = 0.14, p = 0.71, \eta_p^2 = .003 \), it significantly polarized perceptions of the poor targets’ coldness, \( F(1,56) = 12.22, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .18 \) (see Figure 1). Follow-up tests additionally revealed that although work ethic did affect the perceived incompetence of affluent targets, \( F(1,49) = 5.73, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .11 \), it polarized perceptions of the poor to a much greater extent, \( F(1,56) = 31.12, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .36 \) (see Figure 1).

On positive traits, interactions did not reach significance, but the means were in the predicted direction. Specifically, as is demonstrated in Figure 2, the non-significant warmth interaction, \( F(1,107) = 1.04, p = .31, \eta_p^2 = .01 \) shows greater differentiation between poor targets, \( F(1,56) < 1, \eta^2 = .008 \), than rich, \( F(1,49) < 1, \eta_p^2 = .006 \). Additionally, although the competence variable did not yield a viable interaction effect, \( F(1,107) = 1.01, p = .32, \eta_p^2 = .01 \), simple effects tests suggested that work ethic did significantly polarize evaluations of the poor, \( F(1,56) = 7.19, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .11 \) (\( M = 5.84 \) vs. 2.63), but not the rich, \( F(1,49) = 2.26, p = 0.14, \eta_p^2 = .04 \) (\( M = 4.74 \) vs. 4.05).

**Polarized Interpersonal Emotions**

To examine emotional reactions, we combined the 8 affect items on the basis of valence into two composite variables: *positive affect* (admiration, pride, pity, sympathy; \( \alpha = .73 \)) and *negative affect* (contempt, disgust, anger, resentment; \( \alpha = .91 \)). These scaled affect variables were submitted to a series of 2 (social class) X 2 (work ethic) ANCOVAs, again controlling for participants’ political orientation and social class. These analyses yielded a number of significant results.
A main effect of participants’ political orientation was revealed on the negative affect variable, $F(1,107) = 5.18, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .05$. No main effects emerged on participants’ own social class.

Main effects of work ethic favoring the hardworking emerged on both affective variables. Hardworking targets elicited significantly higher ratings of positive affect, $F(1,107) = 22.72, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .18 (M = 3.61 \text{ vs. } 2.45)$, and less negative affect, $F(1,107) = 30.90, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .22 (M = 1.92 \text{ vs. } 3.77)$ than did lazy targets. Additionally, a main effect of social class revealed more positive social emotions toward the poor, $F(1,107) = 42.46, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .28$, than rich targets ($M = 3.80 \text{ vs. } 2.75$).

Finally, interaction effects emerged on both negative, $F(1,107) = 5.43, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .05$ and positive, $F(1,107) = 7.06, p < .009, \eta^2_p = .06$ emotional reactions, supporting the prediction of exaggerated responses toward poor targets. Follow-up simple effects tests found that while work ethic did influence negative affect toward the rich, $F(1,49) = 6.21, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .11$, it carried significantly more weight in differentiating negative affect toward the poor, $F(1,56) = 27.66, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .33$ (See Figure 1). Simple effects analyses on the positive affect interaction revealed that while work ethic had little influence on positive affect toward the rich, $F(1,49) = 2.97, p = .09, \eta^2_p = .06$, work ethic significantly differentiated positive affect toward poor targets, $F(1,56) = 22.71, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .29$ (See Figure 1).

**Polarized Social Behaviors**

Finally, two six-item behavior scales averaged similarly valenced groups of behavioral responses: negative interpersonal behaviors (attack, criticize, confront, neglect, ignore, avoid; $\alpha = .85$) and positive interpersonal behaviors (assist, praise, defend, befriend, socialize with, and associate with; $\alpha = .88$). Consistent with the previous analyses, these two behavioral variables
were subjected to a series of 2 (social class: rich vs. poor) X 2 (work ethic: lazy vs. hardworking) between-subjects ANCOVAs, holding participants’ political orientation and social class constant. The ANCOVAs revealed no main effects of either covariate (all $p$s > .1) on the behavioral variables.

Behavioral main effects revealed that hardworking targets relative to lazy targets elicited significantly less negative social behaviors, $F(1,107) = 12.32, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .10$ ($M = 2.15$ vs. 3.05), and more positive social behaviors, $F(1,107) = 12.56, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .10$ ($M = 4.91$ vs. 3.89). A main effect for social class additionally revealed more positive behavioral intent toward the poor than the rich $F(1,107) = 5.17, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .05$ ($M = 4.72$ vs. 4.08).

The ANCOVAs further revealed interaction effects for negative, $F(1,107) = 5.58, p < .02, \eta^2_p = .05$, and positive social behaviors, $F(1,107) = 5.83, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .05$, once again indicating ambivalence toward the poor. Simple effect analyses showed that while work ethic did not influence negative behavioral intentions toward the rich, $F(1,49) = 1.35, p = .25, \eta^2_p = .03$, it significantly polarized harmful intentions toward the poor, $F(1,56) = 13.48, p = .001, \eta^2_p = .19$.

On the other hand, participants were significantly more likely to engage in helpful behavior to hardworking poor targets than lazy poor targets, $F(1,56) = 17.95, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .24$ but work ethic had no differentiating impact on helping intentions toward the rich, $F(1,49) < 1, \eta^2_p = .02$ (see Figure 1).
Figure 1. Negative trait assessment, social emotions, and behavioral intent toward targets as a function of targets’ social class and work ethic, Study 1. Work ethic strikingly differentiates reactions to the low-income college peers, but has little impact on reactions to affluent targets.

Figure 2. Positive trait assessment, affective, and behavioral reactions elicited by targets as a function of the social class and work ethic interactions, Study 1. Reactions toward the poor are polarized relative to rich targets.
Finally, a meditational analysis revealed a partial mediation effect, showing that negative trait attributions predicted negative affect ($\beta = .48$), and negative affect in turn predicted harmful behavioral responses ($\beta = .56$), and finally that negative affect significantly accounted for the relationship between negative affect and negative behavior ($\beta = .27$; Sobel test: $z = 3.50, p < .001$) (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Mediational Analysis, Study 1.](image)

**Discussion**

The findings of the first study supported the primary theoretical claims. The interaction of social class and work ethic consistently polarized responses on trait assessments, affective reactions, and behavioral inclinations in both positive and negative directions (with the sole exception of positive traits). Specifically, adherence to work ethic polarized perceptions of poor, but not affluent targets. Further, more extreme positive and negative evaluations, affect, and behavioral intent were directed toward poor targets relative to rich targets of comparable work ethic orientations. Finally, meditational analyses supported the theorized causal sequence of class and work ethic combining to exaggerate evaluative-affective-behavioral responses.

The finding of significant interaction effects on negative (but not positive) trait judgments, and then on both positive and negative affective reactions, as well as positive and
negative behavior, was unexpected, but note that the nonsignificant effects on positive trait evaluations did trend in the hypothesized directions.¹

**STUDY 2: POLARIZED REACTIONS TO LOW-INCOME COLLEAGUES**

Study 1 supported our hypotheses of polarized reactions to the poor on the basis of work ethic on evaluative, affective, and behavioral domains. However, it has two potential limitations. First, the elite college student sample raises the question of generalizability to the broader population. One may speculate, for example, that high-achieving students in a competitive academic setting may be more sensitive to work ethic values than is the general public, thus rendering the demonstrated effects context-dependent and demographically constrained. Another concern is that perhaps this mostly upper to upper-middle-class sample holds more extreme perceptions of the poor, and these results simply reflect the well-documented phenomenon of amplified reactions to marginalized outgroups (Bell, Esses, & Maio, 1996; Linville & Jones, 1980). Study 2 sought to address both of these concerns by replicating these results with a socioeconomically diverse non-student adult sample and presenting a vignette in an everyday workplace context.

¹ While the resource-threat variable did not influence reactions to the poor, a supplemental set of analyses showed that polarization effects were strongest when both variables (resource threat and work ethic) were simultaneously high. In other words, the effect of work ethic on reactions to the poor was most apparent in the context of heightened resource threat. Because of this, subsequent studies hold constant the perceived threat to valued resources.
Method

Participants and Design

Participants were 93 non-student adults recruited via an advertisement on the Amazon Mechanical Turk website seeking volunteers for a short web survey, “Social Scenarios in the Work Place,” in exchange for financial compensation and a $25 lottery. Four participants were dropped for self-reported inattentiveness during the study (indicated by self-ratings of focus below the 7-point scale’s midpoint). Of the remaining 89 respondents, 24% identified as upper-middle class, 48% as middle class and 26% as lower-middle to working class, aged 19-60 (M = 34.47, SD = 10.81), 67% female, and 84% White. In a design essentially identical to the first, but adapted to a workplace context, participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in this 2 (social class: rich vs. poor) x 2 (work ethic: lazy vs. hardworking) between-subjects design.

Procedure and Materials

The procedures for this study resembled Study 1: Participants read a vignette manipulating the social class (high-income vs. low-income) and work ethic (hardworking vs. lazy vs. control) of a peer. However, based on pilot tests showing that adults rejected second-hand information about the poor target (i.e., learning from a friend), we shifted the vignette to imply participants’ first-hand knowledge of the target’s traits and background. Specifically we used the following language:

Social Class Manipulation:
You and a friend are chatting about your respective co-workers. In this conversation you mention, among other things, that your co-worker, "M", comes from a very low-income [affluent] family background.
Work Ethic Manipulation:
You also discuss your observation that M is [is not] a very hard-working person and has a notably high [low] work ethic.

Resource Threat Information (held constant):
Your friend suspects and you agree that M is a beneficiary of an aggressive new initiative that recruits low-income [affluent] applicants by offering them priority in hiring and other aspects of workplace life (e.g., promotions, professional development training, vacation time, retirement benefits).

Following the vignette, participants responded to two manipulation-check items. The first asked them to characterize the target’s work ethic (high, low, none of the above). The item asked them to classify the target’s socioeconomic standing (affluent, middle-income, poor, none of the above).

Finally, participants responded to survey questions about their trait evaluations, emotional reactions, and likely behavioral responses to the target, the same items used in Study 1. Participants last completed a brief demographics survey.

Results

Manipulation Checks
The work ethic manipulation was successful, with 98% of participants in the hardworking condition correctly characterizing the target, and 95% of participants in the lazy condition accurately classifying the target. The social class manipulation was equally effective, with 94% of participants in the rich condition correctly identifying the target, and 95% of participants in the poor condition correctly categorizing the target.

Polarized Trait Judgments
Trait ratings were subjected to Study 1’s statistical processes. Eighteen personality trait items were calculated into four composite indices on the bases of content (warmth, competence) and valence (positive, negative), resulting in the following four variables: positive warmth (kind,
likeable, warm, trustworthy, and deserving; \( \alpha = .89 \), coldness (arrogant, cold, undeserving, exploitative, immoral, unethical; \( \alpha = .89 \)), positive competence (competent, conscientious, intelligent, capable, and clever; \( \alpha = .93 \)), and incompetence (incompetent, lazy; \( \alpha = .86 \)). These four indices were subjected to a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) ANCOVA, controlling for participants’ political orientation and social class.

Main effects again revealed approval of high work ethic and reproach toward laziness. Hardworking targets received higher ratings on positive warmth, \( F(1,83) = 39.58, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .32 \) (\( M = 5.20 \) vs. 3.31) and positive competence, \( F(1,83) = 68.22, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .45 \) (\( M = 6.04 \) vs. 3.33), while lazy targets were viewed as more cold, \( F(1,83) = 45.78, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .36 \) (\( M = 4.45 \) vs. 2.39) and incompetent, \( F(1,83) = 119.70, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .59 \) (\( M = 5.59 \) vs. 1.98). Only one social class main effect emerged: poor targets were viewed as overall more incompetent than rich targets, \( F(1,83) = 4.37, p = .04, \eta_p^2 = .05 \) (\( M = 4.14 \) vs. 3.43). This result diverges from the more politically-correct social-class main effects in the college sample (Study 1), but fits SCM findings in adult samples (Fiske et al., 2002). No other main effects for trait judgments occurred on the social class variable.

A series of interactions emerged on both negative (Figure 4) and positive trait judgments (Figure 5). An interaction effect on incompetence (negative competence), \( F(1,83) = 14.07, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .15 \), was subjected to simple effects tests which revealed that while work ethic did differentiate the perceived incompetence of the rich targets, \( F(1,48) = 31.02, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .39 \), it polarized evaluations of the poor to a much greater extent, \( F(1,33) = 94.78, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .74 \). Additionally, an interaction on the perceived coldness (negative warmth) variable approached significance, \( F(1,83) = 3.17, p = .08, \eta_p^2 = .04 \), with simple effects analyses similarly showing
that although work ethic divided perceptions of the rich, $F(1,48) = 14.74, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .24$, it had more extreme effects on judgments of the poor, $F(1,33) = 28.00, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .46$.

Also as predicted, a corresponding pattern of significant interaction effects emerged on positive competence, $F(1,83) = 5.51, p < .02, \eta^2_p = .06$, and warmth, $F(1,83) = 4.66, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .05$. Follow-up simple effects analyses revealed that although work ethic again affected perceived competence of rich targets, $F(1,48) = 20.14, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .30$, it determined perceptions of the poor to much more, $F(1,33) = 42.04, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .56$. This pattern was also evident in the simple effects findings for the perceived warmth of the rich, $F(1,48) = 9.81, p = .003, \eta^2_p = .17$, and poor, $F(1,33) = 31.40, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .49$.

### Polarized Interpersonal Emotions

To measure affective reactions, once again, eight affect items were reduced through averaging into two distinctly valenced four-item scales: *negative affect* (contempt, disgust, anger, resentment; $\alpha = .86$) and *positive affect* (admiration, pride, pity, sympathy; $\alpha = .50$). Scaled affective item scores were then subjected to two-way ANCOVAs, with political orientation and social class entered as covariates. The covariates yielded no main effects or interactions.

Main effects for work ethic revealed that targets with low work ethic elicited more negative affect, $F(1,83) = 26.31, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .24 (M = 3.94 vs. 2.20)$, while hardworking targets receive more positive affect, $F(1,83) = 37.85, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .30 (M = 4.56 vs. 2.21)$. No social class main effects emerged.

The main effect of work ethic on negative affect was qualified by a significant interaction, $F(1,83) = 5.26, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .06$. As with trait judgments, work ethic differentiated negative affective reactions to the rich, $F(1,48) = 4.37, p = .04, \eta^2_p = .08$, but polarization was
significantly more evident in negative affect toward the poor, $F(1,33) = 22.58, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .41$ (Figure 4).

A significant interaction also emerged on the positive affect variable, $F(1,83) = 4.05, p = .05, \eta^2_p = .05$. Once again, positive affect toward the poor diverged significantly as a function of perceived work ethic, $F(1,33) = 33.37, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .50$, but less so for the rich, $F(1,48) = 9.35, p = .004, \eta^2_p = .16$.

Figure 4. Trait judgment and affective negativity toward colleague, Study 2
Figure 5. Trait judgment and affective positivity toward colleague, Study 2

*Polarized Social Behaviors*

Study 1’s data reduction of behavioral items was once again implemented on Study 2 variables. That is, twelve behavioral items were reduced to two oppositely valenced six-item composite scales: *negative interpersonal behavior* (attack, criticize, confront; neglect, ignore, avoid; $\alpha = .93$), and *positive interpersonal behavior* (assist, praise, defend, befriend, socialize with, and associate with, $\alpha = .91$). These variables were subjected to 2 (social class) x 2(work ethic) ANCOVAs (covarying out political orientation and social class), which revealed work ethic main effects on both items. Specifically, participants were more likely to take negative action against lazy targets, $F(1,83) = 26.87, p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .25$ ($M = 3.88$ vs. 2.26) and more likely to behave positively toward the hardworking, $F(1,83) = 41.45, p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .33$ ($M = 5.77$ vs. 3.63).
The ANCOVA yielded nonsignificant interaction trends (all $ps > .10$), although showing the hypothesized pattern of negative, $F(1,83) = 1.12, \eta^2_p = .01$, and positive behavioral responses, $F(1,83) = 1.83, \eta^2_p = .02$, to the poor as a function of work ethic. Because behavioral results did not reach significance, meditational analyses were not conducted.

**Discussion**

Surveying a socioeconomically diverse sample, Study 2 replicated the finding that perceived work ethic is a defining factor in evaluations of the poor, while imparting less impact in perceptions of the rich. A series of significant social class by work ethic interactions showed polarized reactions to the poor in critical trait judgment (warmth, competence) and affective (negative social emotions) domains. Non-significant trends showed similar patterns in negative and positive interpersonal behavioral responses. Additionally, graphed interactions (Figures 4 and 5) show that responses to the poor target were consistently amplified relative to the rich. That is, lazy targets were subjected to considerably more negativity and hardworking targets elicited more positivity when they were characterized as poor versus affluent.

While the overall pattern of polarized responses replicated, Study 1 and Study 2 results showed minor divergences worth discussion. First, unlike the previous study in which work ethic adherence differentiated reactions to the poor almost exclusively, assessments of the rich were more affected by the work ethic manipulation in this study than before. Greater overall sensitivity to work ethic in the workplace scenario compared to roommate scenarios may suggest that while work ethic can matter in appropriate contexts for the rich, it always matters across (social, occupational) contexts in evaluations of the poor, and it always matters more: note that the effect sizes were consistently larger for the poor.
Another noteworthy difference is that no significant interaction effects emerged on behavioral items in Study 2. This may likely stem from the differing nature of co-worker and college-peer relationships. Perhaps because interpersonal campus relationships are more social and interaction-oriented than many co-worker relationships, Study 1 participants could more vividly and realistically imagine enacting social behaviors toward their peers. However, the means still trended in the predicted pattern.

**STUDY 3: POLARIZED REACTIONS TO LOW-INCOME JOB CANDIDATES**

Having observed amplified responses to socioeconomically disadvantaged people across different samples and contexts, our next aim was to explore the potential impact of these polarized reactions on functional outcomes for the poor. Study 3 invokes a job applicant-evaluation scenario to simulate a real-world judgment context in which polarized appraisals lead to costly consequences.

**Method**

**Participants and Design**

Participants were 122 non-student adults, recruited through the Amazon Mechanical Turk website, of whom four were dropped for self-reported inattentiveness (rating themselves lower than the mid-point on a focus assessment item). Of this sample, 14% self-identified as upper-middle class, 50% as middle class, and 34% as working to lower-middle class; 2% did not indicate their socioeconomic status. Most participants identified as White (79%) and female (62%). The web survey advertisement invited participants to complete a short study on evaluations of job candidates in exchange for a small financial compensation. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2 (social class: rich vs. poor) x 2 (work ethic: hardworking vs. rich) between-subjects design.
Procedure and Materials

Participants were instructed to imagine serving on a marketing firm’s hiring committee for an Advertising Coordinator position and that as a major decision-maker on the team, their task was to assess the candidate’s qualifications and make a hiring recommendation. They further learned that they would read an abbreviated version of randomly selected candidate’s completed application. In addition, they would evaluate slogan samples submitted by the candidate. Finally, after reviewing the application they would report their impressions in a candidate review questionnaire.

After these instructions, participants viewed a job description, which created a more vivid role-playing experience and also delivered resource threat information. As mentioned, resource threat, or privileged access to valued resources, is present for all conditions because this seems to be the context in which polarized reactions to the socially disadvantaged are most strongly elicited (see footnote 1). In this study, resource threat was represented by the position’s specialized access to promotions, professional development training, as well as vacation and retirement benefits.

Participants next viewed a page of excerpts from the candidate’s application, displaying the candidate’s professional credentials (held constant across conditions), as well as the experimental manipulations, conveyed through the target’s answers to application questions. Specifically, social class was implied through parental occupation, which targets mentioned in answer to the application prompt: “Tell us a little about yourself.” Both targets indicated that their parents worked in industries that relied on marketing, but in the upper-social-class condition, the parents worked as plastic surgeons and in the lower-social-class condition, the parents were fast-food service workers.
The target’s work ethic was conveyed in response to the question “How many hours a week are you willing to work (can range from 20-50).” The hardworking applicant stated a willingness to work the maximum amount of hours (50) and an eagerness to “commit as much time as necessary” to carry out the job responsibilities effectively. The lazy applicant indicated an interest in working the minimum amount of hours (20) and a desire to have a “laid back and flexible” schedule.

After reviewing the application, participants next viewed a writing sample. Here participants judged the target’s attempts to write slogans for four fictitious products (Pizzazz Hair Spray, Rise & Shine Coffee House, Sustain-a-Bulb (energy-efficient light bulbs), and Fizzy-Pop Soda).

Participants first rated each slogan on eight descriptors (ineffective, dull, unoriginal, and boring, creative, persuasive, charming, and clever), on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely). Next, participants reported their overall evaluative impressions of the candidate on 9 SCM-related personality traits (warm, likeable, cold, arrogant capable, clever, motivated, incompetent) on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (extremely). Finally, participants rated the target’s overall desirability as a candidate on a scale of 1 (completely unfavorable) to 10 (completely favorable).

Results

Polarized Performance Assessments

To test the hypothesis that poor targets would evoke both exaggerated negativity and positivity, the slogans were grouped by valence into two reliable composite variables: negative slogan ratings (ineffective, unoriginal, dull, and boring; α = .88) and positive slogan ratings (persuasive, creative, clever, and charming; α = .88). Negative and positive composite ratings were analyzed for each of the four slogans using a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) ANCOVA,
with participants’ own social class and political orientation as covariates. In these analyses, only the first slogan rating (Pizzazz Hair Spray) yielded significant effects, perhaps because of evaluation fatigue. Thus, only analyses for the first slogan are reported further. Means and standard deviations for all other slogans are reported in Table 1 (see appendix).

A two-way ANCOVA yielded a significant interaction for negative slogan evaluations (Figure 6), \( F(1,105) = 4.83, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .04 \) (see Figure 6). Simple effects analyses showed that while work ethic differentiated perceptions of poor targets’ work, \( F(1,45) = 6.85, p = .01, \eta^2_p = .13 \), it did not differentiate the rich targets’ work, \( F(1,59) < 1, \eta^2_p = .01 \).

A significant interaction also emerged for positive slogan evaluations (Figure 7), showing a similar pattern, \( F(1,105) = 6.31, p = .01, \eta^2_p = .06 \) (see Figure 7). Simple effects also revealed that while work ethic significantly polarized ratings of the poor \( F(1,45) = 7.90, p = .007, \eta^2_p = .15 \), positive slogan ratings did not differ between the rich lazy and hardworking conditions, \( F(1,59) < 1, \eta^2_p = .006 \).

**Polarized Trait Judgments**

Trait assessments were once again averaged into positive competence (competent, clever, capable, motivated; \( \alpha = .92 \)) and incompetence (one item: incompetent), as well as positive (likeable, warm; \( \alpha = .85 \)) and negative (cold, arrogant, \( r = .68 \)) warmth. A two-way ANCOVA (controlling for social class and political orientation) revealed the standard work-ethic main effects, rewarding the hardworking with positive warmth, \( F(1,104) = 8.45, p = .004, \eta^2_p = .08 (M = 5.68 \text{ vs. } 4.85) \) and competence, \( F(1,104) = 19.99, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .16 (M = 5.88 \text{ vs. } 4.38) \) evaluations, and rebuking the lazy on incompetence, \( F(1,104) = 16.71, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .14 (M = 4.08 \text{ vs. } 2.86) \) and coldness judgments, \( F(1,104) = 14.25, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .12 (M = 3.70 \text{ vs. } 2.73) \). Additionally, a stereotype –aligning marginal main effect for social class emerged on the
incompetence variable, \( F(1,104) = 3.49, p = .07, \eta^2_p = .03 \), attributing more trait incompetence to the poor than to the rich \((M = 3.78 \text{ vs. } 3.16)\).

The ANCOVAs further revealed a series of interactions. On the negative side were a significant interaction for incompetence, \( F(1,104) = 8.04, p = .005, \eta^2_p = .08 \) and a marginal effect for coldness, \( F(1,104) = 4.00, p = .05, \eta^2_p = .04 \) (Figure 6). On the positive items, effects emerging as significant were positive competence, \( F(1,104) = 5.99, p = .02, \eta^2_p = .05 \), and positive warmth, \( F(1,104) = 5.13, p = .03, \eta^2_p = .05 \) (Figure 7).

Follow-up simple effects tests once again showed that while work ethic determined competence \( F(1,44) = 24.43, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .36 \), and incompetence, \( F(1,44) = 20.90, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .32 \), assessments of the poor, it made no difference on the perceived competence of rich, \( F(1,59) = 2.11, p = .15, \eta^2_p = .04 \), and had no bearing whatever on their incompetence, \( F(1,59) = 0.80, p = .38, \eta^2_p = .01 \). This pattern of differentiation emerges again on simple effects tests of warmth variables, showing, specifically, that while work ethic played a definitive role in judgments of poor targets’ warmth, \( F(1,44) = 17.72, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .29 \) or lack thereof (personal coldness), \( F(1,44) = 21.03, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .32 \), it was an insignificant factor in assessments of personal warmth, \( F(1,59) < 1, \eta^2_p = .003 \) or coldness in the rich, \( F(1,59) = 1.42, p = .24, \eta^2_p = .02 \).
Figure 6. Trait and evaluative negativity to job applicant, Study 3

Figure 7. Trait and evaluative positivity to job applicant, Study 3
**Hiring Decision**

A two-way ANCOVA on the target’s overall desirability as a hire revealed a significant social class by work ethic interaction, $F(1,104) = 6.62, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .06$. An analysis of simple effects showed that the low-income lazy target was rated far more unfavorably for hiring than the hardworking target $F(1,45) = 18.94, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .30$. However, in the rich candidate condition the hardworking and lazy target were viewed equally favorably for hiring, $F(1,58) = 0.65, p = .44, \eta_p^2 = .01$ (see Figure 8).

![Figure 8. Likelihood to hire job applicant, Study 3](image)

**Discussion**

The results of the job candidate study showed that not only does perceived work ethic polarize reactions to poor targets, it also leads to polarized biases in appraisals of their performance. Even though all participants viewed the same writing sample (product slogans), their evaluations differed markedly based on their perceptions of the target’s social-class background and work ethic. Specifically, when the target was perceived as poor, work-ethic
information exaggerated negative ratings of the slogans in the lazy condition as well as favorable ratings in the hardworking condition. By contrast, perceived work ethic did not influence slogan ratings when the target was perceived as affluent. Study 3 also replicated the trait judgment patterns found in Studies 1 and 2, showing once again a polarizing effect of work ethic on assessments of poor targets’.

Finally, the hiring decision results showed the potential for exaggerated reactions to the poor to have discriminatory consequences. While the affluent targets were received with equal favor regardless of their perceived work ethic, perceived laziness led participants to find the poor target an undesirable hire. Given that stereotypes presume the laziness and incompetence of low-income people, the implications for the evaluations of poor people in occupational contexts are dire.

POLARIZED SOCIAL CLASS PERCEPTIONS

PART 2: THE INTERNSHIP STUDIES

A second set of studies aimed to explore the effects of polarized reactions to the poor in a more behavioral paradigm, that is, scenarios with more consequential outcomes for the targets. The previously presented vignette studies asked participants to vividly engage a hypothetical scenario involving poor or rich targets and predict how they would likely respond to that individual. However, it is well known within the discipline that participants are limited in the accuracy with which they can anticipate their own behavioral reactions, particularly in sensitive intergroup scenarios. Previous studies have shown that a variety of psychological factors such as social desirability biases, underestimation of situational influences, and failures of self-insight—can result in a considerable incongruency between how people say they will behave and how they actually behave in a given circumstance (e.g., Kawakami, Dunn, Karmali & Dovidio, 2009;
Wilson & Nisbett, 1978). Thus behavioral experiments, or studies in which participants believe they are enacting meaningful behaviors toward real individuals, have the potential to inform a well-rounded analysis of intergroup phenomena. As part of the increased realism for certain kinds of judgments, the first two studies in this part change from the between-designs of Studies 1-3 to a within-subjects design, because judgments of job candidates are usually comparative, within an applicant pool. Given the disappearance of Study 1-3’s between-subjects effects in Studies 3-4’s within-subjects designs, Study 6 returns to a between-subjects design.

**STUDY 4: SOCIAL CLASS REACTIONS IN A COMPARATIVE CONTEXT**

The current behavioral study take its cues from the job candidate web-survey (Study 3), except that this in-person, within-subjects laboratory version of the study led participants to believe that their evaluations would have actual implications for the target applicants’ access to a valuable professional opportunity. In a paradigm based on Goodwin et al.’s application-evaluation study (2000), participants evaluated four high school students’ applications to determine their suitability for a selective internship program.

**Method**

**Participants and Design**

Fifty-four Princeton undergraduates from the psychology subject pool were recruited to participate in the “Internship Application Study” for one hour of course credit. The study description noted that participants would review a handful of applications for a competitive high school internship program and subsequently report their feedback and selection preferences. Of the initial 54, six participants were dropped after failing an attention measure. The remaining 48 participants self-identified as 65% male, 54% White, 25% East Asian, and 17% Black. More than half of the sample categorized their socioeconomic status as upper to upper-middle class
(62%), 21% as middle class, and 15% as lower-middle or working class. The recruitment
description noted that participants would review a handful of applications for a competitive high
school internship program and report their feedback and hiring preferences. When they arrived at
the lab, they received four individual folders of completed internship applications in this 2
(social class) x 2 (work ethic) within-subject study design.

Procedure

A female experimenter greeted participants, arriving in groups of four, and invited them
to sit at computer carrels in a four-cubicle office space where she gave instructions. Participants
learned that a local internship company, Career Voyage, was seeking the perspectives of
Princeton undergraduates on candidates for their intensive summer program. Applications were
presented to participants in four manila folders that were systematically organized according to a
Latin Square sequence to counterbalance any order effects. To ensure that the sequence was
preserved, participants were explicitly instructed to evaluate each applicant one at a time in the
order that they were placed in the pile.

Although applications were reviewed in hardcopy, participants were asked to record their
judgments electronically, using the candidate assessment survey set-up on their respective
computers. Participants were encouraged to ask questions and then directed to begin the study by
following the prompts of the web-survey. Participants received directions through a series of
survey prompts for the remainder of the experiment. At the end of the hour, the experimenter
debriefed the participants, addressed their questions and thanked them for their participation in
the research.
Materials

After logging onto the online survey and indicating consent, participants read that Princeton’s social cognition research lab was currently collaborating with Career Voyage, a local intensive high school internship organization that was piloting a peer application-review program. They read that the social cognition lab was interested in learning about how people integrate information from different sources to form impressions about others in consequential circumstances. The Career Voyage program, on the other hand, was purportedly interested in incorporating Princeton students’ evaluations of applicants for the company’s fall internship program as part of a pilot peer-review screening process to which all of the included applicants and their parents had given full consent to participate.

The introductory text further explained:

For the next hour, we ask you to review four randomly selected candidates' completed application packages. After each review of an application, we will ask you to report your impressions of the candidate as well as your recommendation to the Career Voyage internship hiring committee. Your evaluations will be taken very seriously and remain completely anonymous.

The subsequent page described the program’s mission in the paragraph below:

Career Voyage is a co-educational internship program for high school students between the ages of 16 and 18. Admission is selective and based on high school records and recommendations. Career Voyage gives high school students a “jump start” on their career planning by providing them with real-world work experiences in a supervised environment created by professional mentors and a dedicated staff. We provide opportunities for
our interns to explore both career and creative interests in professional environments in a variety of fields.

After learning these aims, participants were prompted to begin the applicant review process.

Applications. Similar to the job candidate study, the critical manipulations were conveyed through the application content, which implicitly indicated the targets’ social class background and indirectly described their work ethic. Each application folder consisted of the following materials: (a) a completed application form consisting of biographical information, namely: home address, parent’s names, titles, and occupations, name of high school, name of guidance counselor, internship interests, and desired work hours; (b) applicants’ resumes reporting the target’s work history, extracurricular activities, and GPA; (c) a referral form completed by a recommender and (d) a Candidate Review Questionnaire (Goodwin et al., 2000) asking participants to rate their reactions to the applicant on a variety of relevant dimensions.

The social class and work ethic manipulations were embedded at strategic points in the application. The target’s social class was indicated through the application form sections referencing the target’s high school and parental background. Affluent targets’ parents held high status titles (e.g., Dr.) and occupational positions (e.g., orthodontic surgeon) while socioeconomically disadvantaged targets’ parents worked low-income and low-status occupations (e.g., public bus driver).

Work ethic was conveyed in a number of ways. First, the candidate’s job application form indicated the target’s preference to work either the minimum (low work ethic condition) or maximum (high work ethic condition) amount of hours possible for the internship program.
Further, the referral forms directly described targets’ work ethic through the recommender’s moderately positive or moderately negative descriptions of the target’s work style and habits.

All other demographic, academic and work background information was carefully designed to be constant as well as neutrally valenced across conditions.

Dependent Measures

Candidate Rating Questionnaire. An impression rating form assessed the participants’ perceptions of the applicants on the same positive and negative SCM-related personality traits used in Studies 1 and 2, indicating the extent to which the listed traits characterize the target on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 9 (extremely). Participants were further asked to report their “gut feeling” affective reactions to each candidate. Finally, the last page presented the primary behavioral indicator—the option to provide or deny the candidate further consideration for this opportunity. Participants indicated their vote of whether the candidates should get accepted, rejected, or tabled, by rating their hiring preference on a decision scale of 1 (definitely reject) to 9 (definitely accept).

Demographic Survey. Participants were asked to provide standard information about their social background, such as age, race, political affiliation, social class, and family income. These factors constituted possible sources of individual differences.

Results

The studies of Part 2 place participants in a position to evaluate and allocate a charitable resource (career internship opportunity) to targets of varying social-class backgrounds and work-ethic orientations. The results of a series of ANOVAs on Study 4 by themselves seemed to indicate a reversal of the prior effects, showing greater polarization in response to rich candidates compared to poor candidates. However, using analyses parallel to Part I, ANCOVA tests
revealed that when participants’ own social class and political orientations were covaried out of the analyses, the results of the initial ANOVAs almost entirely disappeared, suggesting that polarized reactions to the rich were primarily accounted for by these two demographic factors. The ANOVAs thus should not be interpreted as showing a reliable effect of the manipulations.

Nevertheless, this section will report the results of the Study 4 ANOVAs, for the record, but because they are shown to be unreliable, there will be limited discussion of their implications for the bigger picture.

Trait Assessment Variables: ANOVA Results

Consistent with the preceding studies, personality trait items were divided into four composite variables based on content (warmth, competence) and valence (positive, negative), resulting in four indices: positive warmth (kind, likeable, warm, trustworthy, deserving), coldness (cold, undeserving, unethical), positive competence (competent, conscientious, intelligent, capable, clever), and incompetence (incompetent, lazy). These four indices were subjected to a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) repeated measures ANOVA.

Participants rewarded hardworking targets with high ratings on perceived warmth, $F(1,47) = 18.74, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .29 (M = 5.80\ vs.\ 4.99)$ and competence, $F(1,47) = 72.24, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .61 (M = 6.00\ vs.\ 4.58)$, and castigated the lazy with low ratings on coldness, $F(1,47) = 9.74, \ p < .001, \ \eta^p = .24 (M = 2.96\ vs.\ 2.33)$ and incompetence, $F(1,47) = 131.86, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .74 (M = 4.73\ vs.\ 2.37)$.

Additionally, a series of social class main effects emerged showing favor to the poor. This pattern is fairly atypical and is likely explained as a politically correct byproduct of the explicitly comparative within-subjects design of this particular study. Poor targets were rated as more competent, $F(1,47) = 12.07, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .20 (M = 5.50\ vs.\ 5.07)$ and warm $F(1,47) =$
than rich targets, who rated slightly higher on perceived incompetence, $F(1,47) = 4.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .09 (M = 3.71 \text{ vs. } 3.39)$ and coldness, $F(1,47) = 9.74, p < .01, \eta^2 = .17 (M = 2.83 \text{ vs. } 2.46)$.

Finally, interaction effects emerged on all negative and positive trait judgments; however, simple effects analyses revealed a pattern that diverged from previous observations. Specifically, t-tests showed that social class, rather than work ethic primarily drove simple effects differences and these effects seemed to penalize wealthy candidates while looking generously on poor applicants. T-tests on the incompetence interaction, $F(1,47) = 7.37, p < .01, \eta^2 = .14$, revealed that social class significantly differentiated evaluations of lazy targets such that scores were more punitive to affluent than poor internship candidates, $t(47) = -3.42, p = .001 (M = 5.07 \text{ vs. } 4.39)$, but ratings of hardworking targets were not statistically distinguishable on the basis of social class, $t(47) = -3.42, p = .001 (M = 2.34 \text{ vs. } 2.40)$. T-tests on the coldness interaction, $F(1,47) = 9.74, p < .01, \eta^2 = .17$, showed the same pattern: lazy targets trait received significantly higher coldness scores $t(47) = -4.95, p < .001$ when they came from an affluent versus poor background $(M = 3.38 \text{ vs. } 2.53)$, while hardworking rich and poor targets came out statistically even, $t(47) = .70, p = \text{NS} (M = 2.39 \text{ vs. } 2.27)$.

Likewise, t-test analyses on positive competence, $F(1,47) = 17.23, p < .001, \eta^2 = .27$ and warmth, $F(1,47) = 9.74, p < .01, \eta^2 = .17$ interaction effects also showed a distinct distaste for the lazy rich. Targets demonstrating weak work ethic were judged significantly less positively on competence $t(47) = 4.77, p < 0.001$ when rich $(M = 4.12)$ than when poor $(M = 5.03)$, while strongly work-inclined targets fared well, regardless of social class, $t(47) = 6.64, p < .001 (M = 6.00 \text{ vs. } 6.01)$. Social class similarly differentiated the perceived warmth of the lazy, $t(47) = -
2.59, \( p = NS \) (\( M = 4.40 \) vs. 5.58), but not the hardworking, \( t(47) = 1.32, p = NS \) (\( M = 5.93 \) vs. 5.66).

**Trait Assessment Variables: ANCOVA Results**

When trait ratings were submitted to a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) ANCOVA covarying out the contribution of participants’ own social class and political orientation, however, the above reported results reduce dramatically. For example, differences in reaction to the high and low social class target were accounted for by the participants’ own social class and political orientation.

First, all but one of the four main effects of work ethic were reduced to nonsignificance. Specifically, the lazy targets were still rated as significantly more incompetent than the hardworking targets, \( F(1,42) = 7.96, \ p = .007, \eta^2 = .16 \) (\( M = 4.74 \) vs. 2.42). However, no significant differences were found on ratings of coldness, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 < .001 \) (\( M = 2.96 \) vs. 2.39), warmth, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 = .01 \) (\( M = 4.97 \) vs. 5.71), or competence, \( F(1,42) = 1.78, \ p = .19, \eta^2 = .04 \) (\( M = 5.45 \) vs. 5.89), for lazy and hardworking candidates.

Similarly, significant differences in trait ratings of the poor and the rich targets no longer appeared on competence, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 = .001 \) (\( M = 5.45 \) vs. 4.98), warmth, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 = .002 \) (\( M = 5.70 \) vs. 4.98), incompetence, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 = .002 \) (\( M = 3.42 \) vs. 3.74), or coldness, \( F(1,42) < 1, \eta^2 = .006 \) (\( M = 2.48 \) vs. 2.96) items.

Finally, one singular interaction effect emerged on the coldness variable, \( F(1,42) = 5.14, \ p = .03, \eta^2 = .11 \). T-test analyses revealed a pattern of findings similar to the results of the ANOVA section above. Specifically, lazy targets were rated as more cold when they were rich \( t(47) = -4.95, \ p < .001 \) than when they were poor (\( M = 3.41 \) vs. 2.50), but ratings of hardworking
targets did not differ as a function of social class condition \( t(47) = -0.22, p = .49 \) \( (M = 2.31 \text{ vs. } 2.46) \).

The covariate items (participants’ own social class and political orientation) did not produce any main effects and did not interact with repeated measures \( (all \ p > .2) \).

**Affective Variables: ANOVA Results**

To measure affective reactions, the standard eight SCM affect items were reduced through averaging to two similarly valenced four-item scales: negative affect \( \text{(contempt, disgust, anger, resentment)} \) and positive affect \( \text{(admiration, pride, pity, sympathy)} \). Scaled affective item scores were then subjected to a repeated-measures ANOVA.

Participants reacted to hardworking targets with more positive affect, \( F(1,47) = 18.58, \quad p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .28 \) \( (M = 2.94 \text{ vs. } 2.26) \) than they did lazy targets and favored the poor over the rich candidate, \( F(1,47) = 12.95, \quad p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .22 \) \( (M = 2.79 \text{ vs. } 2.40) \). However, no main effects occurred on the negative affect variable and neither positive nor negative affect yielded significant interactions.

**Affective Variables: ANCOVA Results**

When the two affective items were subjected to a repeated-measures ANCOVA, controlling for participants’ social class and political orientation, all of the above reported main effects and interaction effects were reduced to non-significance \( (all \ p > .12) \).

**Hiring Recommendation: ANOVA Results**

Participants’ decisions to hire or reject candidates were subjected to two-way repeated measures analyses which revealed several work ethic and social class main effects. As would be expected, participants rated the hardworking candidates more favorably for hiring, \( F(1,46) = 100.24, \quad p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .69 \) \( (M = 5.73 \text{ vs. } 3.14) \) and subjected lazy candidates to higher rates of
rejection, $F(1,47) = 61.46, \ p <.001, \ \eta_p^2 = .57 \ (M = 5.96 \ vs. 3.31)$. They also showed a preference for hiring the poor, $F(1,46) = 9.71, \ p <.01, \ \eta_p^2 = .17 \ (M = 4.78 \ vs. 4.10)$ and rejecting the rich, $F(1,47) = 8.48, \ p <.01, \ \eta_p^2 = .15 \ (M = 5.00 \ vs. 4.27)$.

Repeated measures analyses on participants’ recommendations to hire or reject the applicant revealed significant interactions on each item respectively, $F(1,46) = 6.89, \ p = .01, \ \eta_p^2 = .13$ and $F(1,47) = 11.34, \ p <.01, \ \eta_p^2 = .19$. Lazy targets received lower hiring ratings when wealthy compared than did targets with low-income, ($t(46) = 4.78, \ p < .001 \ (M = 2.51 \ vs. 3.77)$), where as the rating of hardworking targets was unaffected by target’s social class, $t(46) = .06, \ p = NS, \ (M = 5.67 \ vs. 5.69)$.

T-tests for simple effects of the rejection interaction reflected the same pattern: exaggeratedly negative recommendations for the lazy target when rich as opposed to when poor, $t(47) = -4.43, \ p < .001 \ (M = 6.65 \ vs. 5.27)$, and no class based differentiation in the rejection recommendations for the hardworking $t(47) = -.26, \ p = NS, \ (M = 3.35 \ vs. 3.27)$.

**Hiring Recommendation: ANCOVA Results**

Once again, once the variance contributed by participants own social class and political orientation were covaried out, all of the above main effects and interactions for the hiring and rejection variables were non-significant (all $p$s > .13).

**Discussion**

ANOVA tests yielded results that, had they been supported by the ANCOVA, would have diverged from the classic effect in several notable ways. Specifically, the results of these tests showed that, whereas work ethic was the primary differentiating variable in the studies of Part I (polarizing perceptions of the poor, but not the rich), social class played the distinguishing role in this paradigm (dividing perceptions of the lazy, but not the hardworking). Additionally, to
the extent that the ANOVAs showed exaggerated social class reactions, they seemed to be elicited by antagonistic attitudes toward the rich, rather than driven by negative stereotypes of the poor.

The ANOVA results further revealed social class main effects that were partial to the poor, conferring on them more favorable evaluative appraisals, positive affective reactions, and preference in hiring. On the other hand, participants gave the rich more negative appraisals and were more likely to reject them. Interaction effects derived from ANOVAs and follow-up simple effects tests on evaluative and behavioral (hiring) variables further bore out a pattern of an anti-rich penalty for the lazy applicants, though hardworking targets were viewed with equal favor, regardless of social class.

When the participants’ social class and political orientations were factored into the analyses through ANCOVA, however, all of these effects diminished to non-significance, with the exception of a work ethic main effect on incompetence and an interaction effect on coldness. While the coldness interaction did uphold the ANOVA pattern of findings, it is difficult to know what meaning if, any, is to be made of this single result. Given that the seven other variables showed null effects once demographic factors were accounted for, it seems most likely that the incompetence interaction is more indicative of noise than signal.

There are several possible ways to interpret the differing results of the ANOVAs and the ANCOVAs in this study. It is possible that the ANCOVA results represent the “true” effect of this paradigm, specifically that participants differed in their reactions to social class and work ethic manipulations solely on the basis of individual differences. Previous research has shown that political attitudes are a significant determinant of reactions to the poor, and it is also conceivable that participants’ social class memberships could influence reactions to the rich and
poor as well. At the same time, the studies of Part I found reliable effects for the independent variables of interest even after taking these participant factors into account, so it is unclear why different results would happen here.

Another possible interpretation of the differing results is that the ANOVA results reflect a real phenomenon that gets obscured by the covariate analyses because the variability explained by the covariate happens to be greater than the variability explained by the manipulation in this instance.

In order to follow-up on either possible interpretation, it is important to identify the factors that set this study apart from the others and may thus have given rise to the present outcomes: 1) Target Status- Perhaps high school targets were not perceived to threaten resources of a peer population, as had been the case of same status targets in the preceding studies, and thus did not arouse the usual ambivalence toward the poor; 2) Within-subjects design- Unlike the previous between-subjects studies, participants in this study were exposed to all four conditions, making the social class manipulations more salient and perhaps inducing socially desirable responding (e.g. careful guarding against acting or appearing biased toward the poor); 3) Finally, perhaps internships are perceived as a kind of charitable good that does not call for the same resource-protective responses as the more coveted, costly and scarce goods that were previously tested (valued Princeton resources (Study 1), job benefits (Study 2) and high level employment position (Study 3)).

Studies 5 and 6 examine retest the paradigm under conditions that allow for an investigation of the contribution of the first two factors, respectively, to the current results.
STUDY 5: WITHIN-SUBJECTS STUDY WITH STATUS MANIPULATION

Purpose

Despite the Study 4 ANCOVA results investigated the role of an evaluative target’s status as a non-threatening subordinate versus a resource threatening peer in activating the polarized reactions. Study 5 moved the laboratory version of the internship study to an entirely online platform, reduced complete applications to excerpts, and manipulated the target’s status as either a high school or a college student applicant. All conditions, materials, and dependent measures were otherwise identical to Study 4.

Method

Participants and Design

Eighty-four Princeton undergraduates signed up through the psychology subject pool to participate in an online study entitled “Internship Applicant Review Study,” in exchange for partial course credit. Four subjects were dropped for taking longer than one hour to complete this half-hour study. The remaining 80 students described themselves as 60% female, 62% White, and mostly middle (31%) to upper middle class (45%). Participants once again learned via the recruitment posting that they would evaluate applicants for an internship program. Students who partook in previous similar studies were excluded from recruitment and participation. All participants were randomly assigned to evaluate either four college or four high school applicants this 2 (social class: poor vs. rich) x 2 (work ethic: hardworking vs. lazy) x (status: high school versus college student) mixed-factorial study design.

Procedure

Participants followed an emailed link to the web-survey page, where they gave participatory consent and received instruction and information regarding the study’s aims. An introductory page conveyed the back-story used in Study 4 about our social cognition lab’s
partnership with a local internship organization and motivated the interest in a peer reviewed selection process.

The internship applications used in Study 4 were reduced to three excerpted sections: a) a biographical section which conveyed social class through parental occupation (either high status or low status positions) b) a job history, which was held constant, and c) a teacher’s recommendation which delivered the work ethic manipulation (describing the applicant as either demonstrating strong or little motivation). The four applications were presented in a randomized order and were each followed by Study 4’s candidate assessment survey questions. After evaluating all four applications, participants completed a demographic questionnaire and received a written debrief of the study’s purpose. They were also given the experimenter’s contact information and invited to offer comments or questions.

**Results**

The various evaluative, affective, and behavioral indices from the preceding studies were subjected to a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) x 2 (target status) mixed-factorial ANCOVA. Of general interest was the extent to which the target status (peer vs. subordinate) manipulation differentiated reactions to the social class x work ethic manipulations. Of specific interest was whether introducing the peer status condition would arouse the previously observed polarization effect within the internship paradigm.

Analyses of the target status condition on all of the dependent variables of interest suggested that this was not the case. Status condition yielded no significant main effects (all \( ps > .10 \)) or meaningful interactions with the other independent variables (all \( ps = NS \)).

Because these results showed no meaningful differences on the basis of target status as peer versus subordinate, all of the data reported below were collapsed across the two conditions
and processed using a 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) repeated-measures ANCOVA, holding constant participants social class membership and political orientation.

**Trait Judgment Variables**

With respect to work ethic, participants gave the hardworking targets high ratings on perceived warmth, \( F(1,76) = 12.62, \ p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .14 \ (M = 6.25 \text{ vs. } 4.88) \) and competence, \( F(1,77) = 12.46, \ p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .14 \ (M = 6.56 \text{ vs. } 4.80) \), and censured the lazy on ratings of coldness, \( F(1,76) = 7.15, \ p = .009, \eta_p^2 = .09 \ (M = 2.27 \text{ vs. } 3.67) \) and incompetence, \( (1,76) = 11.67, \ p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .13 \ (M = 2.27 \text{ vs. } 3.67) \).

As was the case in Study 4, the ANCOVA yielded no social class main effects. However, some interaction effects did emerge on negative and positive trait judgments. Specifically, \( t \)-tests on the coldness interaction, \( F(1,76) = 4.82, \ p < .03, \eta_p^2 = .06 \), similarly showed that lazy targets received higher trait coldness scores \( t(78) = -6.12, \ p < 0.001 \) when perceived as affluent as opposed to poor \( (M = 4.28 \text{ vs. } 3.06) \), while hardworking rich and poor targets were differentiated to a slightly lesser degree, \( t(79) = 2.79, \ p = .007 (M = 2.43 \text{ vs. } 2.08) \). No interaction effect emerged on incompetence ratings.

Analyses of competence, \( F(1,77) = 6.63, \ p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .08 \), and warmth, \( F(1,78) = 4.95, \ p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .06 \), interaction effects also showed a distinct distaste for the lazy rich. Low work ethic targets were appraised less positively on competence, \( t(79) = 5.21, \ p < 0.001 \), when rich \( (M = 4.49) \) than when poor \( (M = 5.12) \), while high work ethic targets rated well, without regard to social class \( t(79) = 1.31, NS (M = 6.63 \text{ vs. } 6.49) \). Finally, social class differentiated the perceived warmth of the lazy, \( t(78) = 4.38, \ p < .001 (M = 4.48 \text{ vs. } 5.27) \), but not the hardworking, \( t(79) = -2.74, \ p = .008 (M = 6.05 \text{ vs. } 6.38) \).
**Affective Variables**

The ANCOVA results revealed that participants expressed marginally more negative emotions toward the lazy than the hardworking, $F(1,78) = 3.52$, $p = .06$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$ (M = 2.34 vs. 1.42). No other work ethic or social class main effects emerged on participants ratings of their affective reactions to the targets.

Finally, a significant interaction emerged on positive affect, $F(1,78) = 5.14$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, revealing that social class differentiated perceptions of the lazy, $t(79) = -4.00$, $p < .001$ (M = 2.96 vs. 3.55) and also the hardworking but to a slightly lesser extent, $t(78) = -3.51$, $p = .001$ (M = 1.96 vs. 2.57).

**Hiring Recommendation**

Participants rated targets with a high work ethic more favorably for hiring than they did targets with a low work ethic, $F(1,78) = 24.61$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .25$ (M = 6.92 vs. 4.25) and gave targets displaying a high work ethic lower ratings for rejection than they did targets displaying a low work ethic, $F(1,77) = 17.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .19$ (M = 2.70 vs. 5.44).

No social class main effects emerged.

No interactions effects emerged on the repeated measures.

**Discussion**

The findings of Study 5 did not bear out the hypothesis that target status might differentially activate polarization effects. Very few significant interaction effects appeared and to the extent that they occurred, the current results appear to provide some support for the ANOVA findings of polarized reactions to the rich from Study 4, though not reliably. Specifically, interaction effects appear on three trait variables and one affective variable, revealing exaggeratedly negative ratings for the lazy wealthy target. However, null effects appear
on the four other critical variables in this study, including the behavioral measures (hiring and rejection decision). Study 6 moves forward with looking at the extent to which the within design explains the seeming (though unreliable) reversal effect and the essentially null effects of reactions to the poor by switching back to a between subjects paradigm. Specifically, in Study 5, the target status (peer vs. subordinate) manipulation did not exhibit statistically meaningful effects on dependent variables and did not interact with the other independent variables (social class and work ethic). The data, both separated (unreported here) and collapsed by target status, instead, appeared to support the single effect revealed in Study 4, appearing to penalize the lazy rich. The next study examines the extent to which the study design (within vs. between) contributed to the difference in results between Part I and Part II studies.

**STUDY 6: BETWEEN-SUBJECTS INTERNSHIP STUDY**

Study 6 used the same procedures, materials, and measures as Study 5, but transformed the design from a within- to a between-subjects study. Instead of evaluating candidates in all four conditions, participants were randomly assigned to review one candidate in this 2 (social class) x 2 (work ethic) between-subjects design.

**Method**

**Participants**

Participant recruitment through the psychology subject pool yielded 58 student volunteers, of whom 6 were dropped for reporting failure to pay sufficient attention (scoring less than the midpoint on 7-point attention scale). The remaining sample was 59% male, mostly middle (28%) to upper middle class (50%) and ranged in age from 17-22 years old ($M = 19.52, SD = 1.20$); race data were not collected due to a technical error. Participants once again connected to this online study through an emailed link and followed the procedural instructions
for reviewing and rating the candidate’s application. All methods and measurements were identical to those used in Study 5.

Results

A series of two-way between subjects ANCOVAs, controlling for political orientation and social class membership, returned results that were mixed and perhaps more evocative of questions than answers.

Trait Judgment Variables

As expected, participants rated hardworking targets higher on competence, \( F(1,46) = 14.48, \ p < .001, \ \eta_p^2 = .24 \ (M = 6.53 \text{ vs. } 5.40) \) and warmth, \( F(1,46) = 7.23, \ p = .01, \ \eta_p^2 = .14 \ (M = 6.39 \text{ vs. } 5.66) \) than did lazy targets. Lazy targets, on the other hand, received higher ratings of incompetence, \( F(1,46) = 24.63, \ p < .001, \ \eta_p^2 = .35 \ (M = 4.64 \text{ vs. } 2.65) \). Participants did not attribute coldness differentially to hardworking vs. lazy targets.

Participants also ascribed greater warmth, \( F(1,46) = 6.22, \ p = .02, \ \eta_p^2 = .12 \ (M = 6.36 \text{ vs. } 5.70) \) and less coldness, \( F(1,46) = 6.27, \ p = .02, \ \eta_p^2 = .12 \ (M = 2.54 \text{ vs. } 3.42) \) to the poor than they did to the rich.

No interaction effects emerged on trait assessment variables. No main effects or interaction effects of the covariates were found.

Affective Variables

One work ethic main effect emerged on the positive affect variable, \( F(1,46) = 12.40, \ p = .001, \ \eta_p^2 = .21 \ (M = 4.23 \text{ vs. } 2.84) \), but no effect was found for negative affect.

Participants expressed feeling higher positive affect, \( F(1,46) = 8.51, \ p = .005, \ \eta_p^2 = .16 \ (M = 4.11 \text{ vs. } 3.00) \) and lower negative affect, \( F(1,46) = 5.42, \ p = .02, \ \eta_p^2 = .11 \ (M = 1.35 \text{ vs. } 2.15) \) toward the poor than to the wealthy.
There were no significant interaction effects on affective items. The covariates did not yield any main effects and did not interact with the independent variables.

**Hiring Recommendation**

Finally, participants favored hiring the hardworking, $F(1,46) = 8.70$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2_p = .16$ ($M = 6.34$ vs. 4.80) and rejecting the lazy, $F(1,46) = 7.39$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2_p = .14$ ($M = 4.70$ vs. 3.16).

No social class main effects emerged, and no interaction effects were found. The covariates also did not result in significant main effects and did not interact with the independent variables.

**Discussion**

The between-subjects version of the internship study returned essentially null results on the question of explicitly comparative contexts as a boundary condition of the polarization effect. While the current results did not replicate the interaction patterns of Studies 4 and 5, it also failed to turn up the polarized reactions observed in the earlier between-subjects studies. To the extent that the current study produced significant effects at all, evaluative and affective items continued to show a trend of favoring the poor, though the trend did not extend to hiring preferences.

**Overall Discussion of Part II**

The results of the internship application paradigm deviated in notable ways from the findings in the first section, which had consistently demonstrated polarized reactions to poor targets in response to work ethic information. In Study 4, college students evaluated high school internship candidates whose social class backgrounds and work ethic orientations were manipulated. Analyses of their reactions produced only a single interaction effect (on incompetence ratings), which, if taken as meaningful, seemed to showed an exaggeratedly negative reaction to the lazy rich candidate (instead of the poor). Study 5 probed the possibility
that design change away from previously tested peer targets to subordinate targets contributed to the changed reaction to the social class and work ethic interaction. Results did not support this proposition, but instead continued to produce mostly null effects and a faint pattern of exaggerated reactions to the rich, particularly on evaluative ratings. Study 6 shifted the within-subjects internship paradigm back to the between-subjects design that had elicited the initial effects. This design for the internship paradigm yielded null effects, washing out the fragile pattern of exaggerated reactions to the rich, but also failing to observe polarized responses to the poor.

Clearly there was something different about the internship studies, and in the absence of definitive answers, one is only left to speculate as to why the interaction of social class and work ethic variables have acted differently—or in most cases, failed to act in this new paradigm.

Had these results more strongly supported the finding of polarized reactions to the rich, we might consider the possibility that the two paradigms (in Part I and Part II) captured the circumstances that shift attention and responsibility from one social class group to another. Specifically, we might pursue the idea that high-demand competitive goods (local resources and jobs) may prompt different fairness criteria than criteria developed for charitable goods (internships) aimed at bettering the condition of the disadvantaged. Perhaps, as suggested earlier, internships are viewed less as a scarce good and more of a charitable opportunity that ought to target people of low social and economic rank. This suggests that charitable goods are different from the previously tested exclusive competitive goods in that they are distributed on need-based versus merit-based criteria.

The Part II (weak) finding of polarized and mostly negative reactions to the rich appears only in the two within-subjects versions of this research; this seems to signal that the explicitly
comparative evaluation context contributed to those particular results. Perhaps, participants’ awareness of the social implications of their judgments led them react more harshly to socially privileged targets and more generously to the disadvantaged targets. In fact, it is quite conceivable that in a real world context a similar course of decision-making would play out—namely, that a charitable opportunity such as an internship would be more distributed more restrictively to advantaged than disadvantaged individuals.

A final untestable, but considerable factor that differentiated the second set of studies from the first was the economic climate at the time the data were collected. Notably, the data collection for the studies of Part I concluded in January 2008, just barely preceding the cataclysmic crisis that would subvert the U.S. economy later that year. The studies of Part II were conducted in the years of economic instability that followed (Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010 respectively). It is not currently understood how prevailing economic contexts influence or change social class attitudes or reactions to the poor, but it is certainly conceivable that times of economic hardship would soften attitudes to individuals facing economic difficulty.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The evidence for ambivalent reactions to the poor is reliable and well-supported by the studies of Part I. Across the first three studies, perceived work ethic consistently polarized reactions to poor targets, while bearing little to no effect on judgments of the affluent. In Study 1, a mostly upper middle-class student sample directed exaggeratedly negative evaluations, social emotions, and interpersonal behaviors to lazy low-income peers, while rewarding hardworking poor targets with exaggerated positivity. Assessments of wealthy peers, on the other hand, were relatively unaffected by work ethic ascriptions. In Study 2, a mostly lower middle-class to working-class sample showed an overall preference for hardworking over lazy peers, but this
was exaggeratedly so for targets described as poor. Finally, using an applicant-evaluation and performance-assessment paradigm, Study 3 demonstrated meaningful consequences of this pattern of ambivalence-induced amplified responses to the poor.

The initial part of current work adds to the growing understanding of attitudes toward marginalized groups as complex and multidimensional, instead of simplistically univalent. These effects occur depending on context, so across participants, ambivalent polarization reflects processes within individuals, not based on individual differences in ideology. It further demonstrates the potential consequences of these internal tensions for the targeted group.

To be sure, there are some limitations of note even in the first three studies. First, some of the predicted interaction effects did not always appear across all dependent variables the first three studies (e.g., behavioral effects did not appear in Study 2). Given the fact that each study examines effects on at least eight dependent variables, this occasional unevenness is not entirely unusual. Earlier in the text we suggested reasons that some items may have worked better than others in each study, but only future research will bear out whether the observed unevenness is meaningful or not. One may also argue that to the extent that the results were successful, they could probably be accommodated by previous works in attitudinal ambivalence which have documented extreme reactions to racial minorities (Bell & Esses, 2002; Katz & Hass, 1988) and other marginalized groups (Soder, 1990). While our findings are consistent with these themes, the current work is distinct in demonstrating this effect outside of the ingroup-outgroup paradigm in which the extremity phenomenon is traditionally situated. The polarization effect is specific to one outgroup, the poor, not the rich, and depending on work-ethic information.

Finally, the internship studies of Part II, which were really slight variations on a single design, failed to continue capturing the critical effect. The repeatedly null effects and weak
effects in the opposite direction seems to suggest that either something about the internship paradigm is problematic, such the particular resource at hand as being charitable or a flaw in the execution of the design—perhaps there was something about the study that participants did not buy into. A broader and harder to examine speculation is that the dramatic shift in economic tides had some influence on the results.

If one were to pursue the notion that internships or similarly charitable opportunities elicit different reactions than competitive goods, one course of action might be to re-run the job candidate study (Study 2), add an internship candidate condition and compare the reactions across resource type. Re-testing this study, in which the polarization effect was previously demonstrated, offers the additional possibility of lending insight as to whether and how the economic context affects attitudes and reactions to social class groups.

Returning to the first three studies’ original results, the current findings strike an optimistic note in showing that, despite the discrimination they face, people of low economic status may actually receive a boost over the more affluent in some domains of consequence. Questions remain, however, as to whether this positivity is driven by paternalistic pity or respectful admiration. The delicate results of Part II may suggest that the diminishing middle-class who worked hard to pull themselves up only to fall victim to economic failure may now begin to question the goodness of the rich, the badness of the poor, and their faith in the promise of work ethic---that hard work is always duly rewarded.
References


Table 1. Mean Slogan Ratings by Target, Study 3

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive Slogan Ratings</th>
<th>Negative Slogan Ratings</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich Target</td>
<td>Poor Target</td>
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<td></td>
<td>HW</td>
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<td><strong>Slogan 1</strong>*</td>
<td>3.67 (2.32)</td>
<td>3.93 (1.49)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slogan 2</td>
<td>4.51 (2.13)</td>
<td>4.28 (2.46)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slogan 3</td>
<td>6.16 (1.75)</td>
<td>5.74 (2.48)</td>
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<td>5.00 (2.08)</td>
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<td>5.86 (2.99)</td>
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<td>5.02 (2.41)</td>
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<td>Slogan 4</td>
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Note: Values enclosed in parentheses represent standard deviations. * $p < 0.05$. For all other values, $p > .11$. 
# 2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

## Student/Family Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James</th>
<th>Ryan</th>
<th>Peters</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name (first)</td>
<td>(middle)</td>
<td>(last)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/18/53</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jpete@gmail.com">jpete@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>853-863-7627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Date</td>
<td>Westerly</td>
<td>Student email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Food Service Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zip</td>
<td>853-581-0600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Karen Peters</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Daytime phone</td>
</tr>
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<td>Occupation</td>
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</tr>
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## High School Information

- Heibert Lehman Public High School
- High school currently attending
  - 3000 Tremont Avenue

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<th>Westerly</th>
<th>New Jersey</th>
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<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Mr. Richards</td>
<td>Zip</td>
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<td>853-904-4200</td>
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## Academic Information

- Sophomore
- Junior
- Expected Graduation Date: June 2011

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Career Voyage, 23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960. CV Boston Phone: 617.288.6390. CE New York Phone: 973.455.1655
Web: www.cvinternships.com E-mail: info@cvinternships.com Fax: 973.685.1402
Internship Preferences

Please check the three internship categories that best correspond with your areas of interest. Along with the rest of your application, we will use these as a guide to help find your ideal internship. However, once you apply, we will be in contact with you to learn more about your internship interests and goals. Please contact Career Explorations with any questions about the internship placement process. Please indicate if you have a strong preference for a particular field among your three choices.

- Architecture/Engineering
- Business
- Computers
- Culinary Arts
- Restaurant Management
- Education
- Event Planning
- Fashion Design
- Film
- Hotel Management/Hospitality
- Interior Design
- Journalism/Publishing
- Law
- Marketing/Advertising
- Medicine/Healthcare
- Music Production
- Non-Profit
- Photography
- Politics/Government
- Psychology
- Public Relations
- Real Estate
- Social Service
- Sports Management
- Television/Media
- Theater Production
- Veterinary Medicine

Internship Schedule

1) Which semester of the internship program are you applying for?
   - [ ] Fall
   - [ ] Winter
   - [ ] Spring
   - [x] Summer

2) How many hours per week are you willing to commit to your internship position? Please select a time block between 5 hours (min) to 40 hours (max) per week.
   - Approximately 40 hours per week.

Statement of Work Experiences and Extracurricular Activities

List and describe your extracurricular interests and activities, such as school clubs, athletic teams, community and volunteer activities, jobs, in the approximate order of their interest to you. Include the following:

1) Any work, travel, volunteer or other programs in which you have participated
2) Positions held, major accomplishments, awards

Please attach a separate list, typed with dates.
James Peters

Objective

To get an office job.

Education

2006-Present
Herbert H. Lehman Public High School
Overall GPA: 3.3
Westerly, NJ

Experience

2008-Present
HILPH Office of Community Liaison Services
Staff Assistant
- Provided administrative assistance for coordination of PTA meetings and school socials
- Carried out other administrative functions as requested
Westerly, NJ

2007-2008
Whitestone Multiplex Cinemas
Ticket Taker
- Manage customer admission to movie theater
- Provide customer service by giving directions in large theater complex and answering questions
Westerly, NJ

Computer Skills

- Highly knowledgeable of Microsoft Office Applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Well-versed in Google, Yahoo, Bing, and other web search engines

Involvement/Activities

- Mock Trial
- Track Team
2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Recommendation Form
Please type or print your name and address in the space provided below and then give this form, along with a stamped business size envelope addressed to Career Voyage Admissions, 23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 to the teacher, guidance counselor, coach, or reference of your choice.

Name of applicant: James Peters
Phone: 856-355-1371

Name of recommender: Ms. Casey Andrews
Phone: 853-904-4200
High School Affiliation: Herbert Lehman High School

TO THE RECOMMENDER
The above named student is applying for admissions to Career Voyage (CV), an internship program that arranges internships for high school students. Participants work alongside practicing professionals for four weeks, live in a college dorm with a diverse group of teens from the US, and it is essential that participants be able to balance a work schedule and social life. The summer experience will provide challenges beyond the usual high school level. It is important that participants chosen for CV be mature, responsible and motivated. We would appreciate your candid and thoughtful appraisal of the applicant's readiness for this pre-college experience.

We are interested in any information that will help us evaluate this student's personal qualities and potential to perform in an internship. Specific examples in support of your judgment would be most helpful. Your comments will help us make an appropriate and informed admissions decision regarding this student. Recommendations may be written on this form or on school or business letterhead. Recommendations may be e-mailed (info@cvinternships.com), faxed (973-695-1492), or mailed directly to Career Voyage (23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960). Thank you in advance for your time.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this applicant?
   I have known the applicant for one school year as his history teacher.

2. In the space below, please describe the applicant’s qualities in a few sentences. Note any attribute that strongly suggests s/he would benefit from our program (honesty and integrity, self-discipline, self-esteem, maturity, reaction to criticism or setbacks, capacity for growth, disciplined work habits). 
   The applicant is a very congenial and remarkably level-headed student. He has demonstrated particular strengths as a self-motivated hardworking individual who works well independently as well as in groups.
# Lazy Poor Applicant

## 2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

### Student/Family Information

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<th>Richard</th>
<th>Bryson</th>
<th>Madison</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:rmadison@gmail.com">rmadison@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Mr. George Madison</td>
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### High School Information

Linville High School

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<td>Linville 550 Parker Street</td>
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### Academic Information

- [ ] sophomore
- [ ] junior
- [ ] senior

Expected Graduation Date: June 2011
**Internship Preferences**

Please check the three internship categories that best correspond with your areas of interest. Along with the rest of your application, we will use these as a guide to help find your ideal internship. However, once you apply, we will be in contact with you to learn more about your internship interests and goals. Please contact Career Explorations with any questions about the internship placement process. Please indicate if you have a strong preference for a particular field among your three choices.

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**Internship Schedule**

1) Which semester of the internship program are you applying for?

- [] Fall  - [] Winter  - [] Spring  - [] Summer

2) How many hours per week are you willing to commit to your internship position? Please select a time block between 5 hours (min) to 40 hours (max) per week.

   Probably around 5-10 hours a week.

**Statement of Work Experiences and Extracurricular Activities**

List and describe your extracurricular interests and activities, such as school clubs, athletic teams, community and volunteer activities, jobs, in the approximate order of their interest to you. Include the following:

1) Any work, travel, volunteer or other programs in which you have participated
2) Positions held, major accomplishments, awards

Please attach a separate list, typed with dates.
Richard Madison

Objective
To obtain career knowledge and professional growth in a demanding internship position.

Education
2006-Present Linville High School Linville, NJ
Overall GPA: 3.3

Experience
2008-Present Rickel’s Books and Stationery Store
Linville, NJ

Retail Sales Assistant
- Maintain and restock inventory.
- Provide customer service.

2007-2008 Linville High School Guidance Office
Linville, NJ

Peer Office Assistant
Greeted students, triaged inquiries, and scheduled appointments
Organized and maintained the office filing system.

Computer Skills
Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint
Skilled in Internet Research

Involvement/Activities
Yearbook Committee, 2008-2009
Goodwill Thrift Store Volunteer, 2008
2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Recommendation Form

Please type or print your name and address in the space provided below and then give this form, along with a stamped business size envelope addressed to Career Voyage Admissions, 23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 to the teacher, guidance counselor, coach, or reference of your choice.

Name of applicant: Richard Madison
Phone: 856-355-1371

Name of recommender: Ms. Charlotte Dahl
Phone: 856-991-2020
High School Affiliation: Linville High School

TO THE RECOMMENDER

The above named student is applying for admissions to Career Voyage (CV), an internship program that arranges internships for high school students. Participants work alongside practicing professionals for four weeks, live in a college dorm with a diverse group of teens from the US, and it is essential that participants be able to balance a work schedule and social life. The summer experience will provide challenges beyond the usual high school level. It is important that participants chosen for CE be mature, responsible and motivated. We would appreciate your candid and thoughtful appraisal of the applicant’s readiness for this pre-college experience.

We are interested in any information that will help us evaluate this student’s personal qualities and potential to perform in an internship. Specific examples in support of your judgment would be most helpful. Your comments will help us make an appropriate and informed admissions decision regarding this student. Recommendations may be written on this form or on school or business letterhead. Recommendations may be e-mailed (info@cvinternships.com), faxed (973-695-1492), or mailed directly to Career Voyage (23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960). Thank you in advance for your time!

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this applicant?

   I have known the applicant for a full academic year in my capacity as teacher of his political science course.

2. In the space below, please describe the applicant’s qualities in a few sentences. Note any attribute that strongly suggests s/he would benefit from our program (honesty and integrity, self-discipline, self-esteem, maturity, reaction to criticism or setbacks, capacity for growth, disciplined work habits).

   This student’s best attributes are his easy-going and sociable nature. He also has intellectual potential, but his weak area is that he does not regularly apply himself and often needs to be pushed.
Hardworking Rich Applicant

2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Student/Family Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (first)</th>
<th>Josh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth Date</td>
<td>02/26/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>Arlington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Erica Bailey</td>
<td>Orthodontic Surgeon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's name (Mrs./Mrs./Dr.)</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's name (Mr./Dr.)</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (middle)</th>
<th>Evan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jegray@gmail.com">jegray@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student email</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>732-227-9756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bmdsn@yahoo.com">bmdsn@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime phone</td>
<td>732-899-3348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td><a href="mailto:grayson@tt.net">grayson@tt.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High School Information

Arlington Regional High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School address</th>
<th>New Jersey</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>08106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School phone</td>
<td>Name of guidance counselor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Information

☐ sophomore  ☑ junior  ☐ senior  Expected Graduation Date: June 2011
Internship Preferences
Please check the three internship categories that best correspond with your areas of interest. Along with the rest of your application, we will use these as a guide to help find your ideal internship. However, once you apply, we will be in contact with you to learn more about your internship interests and goals. Please contact Career Explorations with any questions about the internship placement process. Please indicate if you have a strong preference for a particular field among your three choices.

- Architecture/Engineering
- Business
- Computers
- Culinary Arts
- Restaurant Management
- Education
- Event Planning
- Fashion Design
- Fashion Merchandising
- Film
- Hotel Management/Hospitality
- Interior Design
- Journalism/Publishing
- Law
- Marketing/Advertising
- Medicine/Healthcare
- Music Production
- Non-Profit
- Photography
- Politics/Government
- Psychology
- Public Relations
- Real Estate
- Social Service
- Sports Management
- Television/Media
- Theater Production
- Veterinary Medicine

Internship Schedule
1) Which semester of the internship program are you applying for?

- [ ] Fall
- [ ] Winter
- [ ] Spring
- [x] Summer

2) How many hours per week are you willing to commit to your internship position? Please select a time block between 35 hour (min) to 40 hours (max) per week.

35-40 hours weekly

Statement of Work Experiences and Extracurricular Activities
List and describe your extracurricular interests and activities, such as school clubs, athletic teams, community and volunteer activities, jobs, in the approximate order of their interest to you. Include the following:

1) Any work, travel, volunteer or other programs in which you have participated
2) Positions held, major accomplishments, awards

Please attach a separate list, typed with dates.
Josh Grayson

Objective
To obtain a job in a firm.

Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-Present</td>
<td>Arlington Regional High School</td>
<td>Arlington, NJ</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall GPA: 3.34</td>
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Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Job Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-Present</td>
<td>Peer Assistant</td>
<td>Arlington, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage front office functions to provide administrative support to professional staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage student records, both in hardcopy and on computerized student database</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>Receiving Clerk/Stockperson</td>
<td>Arlington, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unload food shipments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare retail stock for displays</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Computer Skills

- Adept in all Microsoft Office Suite Programs
- Proficient in Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, other web browsers

Involvement/Activities

- Community Theater
- Basketball
2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Recommendation Form
Please type or print your name and address in the space provided below and then give this form, along with a stamped business size envelope addressed to Career Voyage Admissions, 23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 to the teacher, guidance counselor, coach, or reference of your choice.

Name of applicant __________________________ Phone 732-741-5839
Josh Grayson

Name of recommender __________________________ Phone 732-382-0750
Ms. Angela Gould

High School Affiliation __________________________
Arlington Regional High School

TO THE RECOMMENDER
The above named student is applying for admissions to Career Voyage (CV), an internship program that arranges internships for high school students. Participants work alongside practicing professionals for four weeks, live in a college dorm with a diverse group of teens from the US, and it is essential that participants be able to balance a work schedule and social life. The summer experience will provide challenges beyond the usual high school level. It is important that participants chosen for CV be mature, responsible and motivated. We would appreciate your candid and thoughtful appraisal of the applicant’s readiness for this pre-college experience.

We are interested in any information that will help us evaluate this student’s personal qualities and potential to perform in an internship. Specific examples in support of your judgment would be most helpful. Your comments will help us make an appropriate and informed admissions decision regarding this student. Recommendations may be written on this form or on school or business letterhead. Recommendations may be e-mailed (info@cvinternships.com), faxed (973-695-1492), or mailed directly to Career Voyage (23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960). Thank you in advance for your time!

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this applicant?

I have known this student for four academic quarters as his social studies teacher.

2. In the space below, please describe the applicant’s qualities in a few sentences. Note any attribute that strongly suggests s/he would benefit from our program (honesty and integrity, self-discipline, self-esteem, maturity, reaction to criticism or setbacks, capacity for growth, disciplined work habits).

This student is very personable and highly diligent. He has a strong internal drive that keeps him working his hardest to produce high quality work in a timely fashion.
Lazy Rich Applicant

2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Student/Family Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name (first)</th>
<th>Name (middle)</th>
<th>Name (last)</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
<th>Birth City</th>
<th>Student email</th>
<th>Student phone</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Corporate Attorney</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Daytime phone</th>
<th>e-mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/29/93</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td><a href="mailto:daleadams@gmail.com">daleadams@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>Medway</td>
<td>Student email</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>973-859-9775</td>
<td>08055</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Nancy Adams</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Zip</td>
<td>Mr. Robert Adams</td>
<td>Quantitative Analyst</td>
<td>973-869-1666</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rad@chase.com">rad@chase.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's name (Mr./Dr.)</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Daytime phone</td>
<td>e-mail</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High School Information

Medway High School

- School address
  - Medway
  - New Jersey
  - 08055
- City or town: Medway
  - State: New Jersey
  - Zip: 08055
- School phone: 973-359-8300
- Name of guidance counselor: Mr. Parker

Academic Information

- Sophomore
- Senior
- Expected Graduation Date: June 2011
Internship Preferences

Please check the three internship categories that best correspond with your areas of interest. Along with the rest of your application, we will use these as a guide to help find your ideal internship. However, once you apply, we will be in contact with you to learn more about your internship interests and goals. Please contact Career Explorations with any questions about the internship placement process. Please indicate if you have a strong preference for a particular field among your three choices.

- Architecture/Engineering
- Business
- Computers
- Culinary Arts
- Restaurant Management
- Education
- Event Planning
- Fashion Design
- Fashion Merchandising
- Film
- Hotel Management/Hospitality
- Interior Design
- Journalism/Publishing
- Law
- Marketing/Advertising
- Medicine/Healthcare
- Music Production
- Non-Profit
- Photography
- Politics/Government
- Psychology
- Public Relations
- Real Estate
- Social Service
- Sports Management
- Television/Media
- Theater Production
- Veterinary Medicine

Internship Schedule

1) Which semester of the internship program are you applying for?
   - Fall
   - Winter
   - Spring
   - Summer

2) How many hours per week are you willing to commit to your internship position? Please select a time block between 0 hour (min) to 40 hours (max) per week.
   - Like 7 to 9 hours a week.

Statement of Work Experiences and Extracurricular Activities

List and describe your extracurricular interests and activities, such as school clubs, athletic teams, community and volunteer activities, jobs, in the approximate order of their interest to you. Include the following:

1) Any work, travel, volunteer or other programs in which you have participated
2) Positions held, major accomplishments, awards

Please attach a separate list, typed with dates.
Dale Adams

Objective
To obtain career knowledge and professional growth in a demanding internship position.

Education
2006-Present
Medway High School
Medway, NJ
Overall GPA: 3.31

Experience
2008-Present
Medway High School Main Office
Medway, NJ
Student Office Attendant
• Handled photo copying, mail distribution, and call logging
• Provided a variety of services to support professional staff

2007-2008
Generations Record Exchange
Medway, NJ
Store Assistant
• Responsible for inventorying of merchandise
• Assisted customers in purchasing and selling of music media

Computer Skills
• Skilled in a variety of word processing, spreadsheet, and professional presentation programs
• Strong web search skills, savvy in all internet browser applications

Involvement/Activities
• School Newspaper, Staff Contributor
• Hiking
2009 Career Voyage Internship Application

Recommendation Form
Please type or print your name and address in the space provided below and then give this form, along with a stamped business size envelope addressed to Career Voyage Admissions, 23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 to the teacher, guidance counselor, coach, or reference of your choice.

Name of applicant: Dale Adams

Phone: 973-355-1371

Name of recommender: Ms. Amanda Morris

Phone: 973-359-8300

High School Affiliation: Medway High School

TO THE RECOMMENDER

The above named student is applying for admissions to Career Voyage (CV), an internship program that arranges internships for high school students. Participants work alongside practicing professionals for four weeks, live in a college dorm with a diverse group of teens from the US, and it is essential that participants be able to balance a work schedule and social life. The summer experience will provide challenges beyond the usual high school level. It is important that participants chosen for CE be mature, responsible and motivated. We would appreciate your candid and thoughtful appraisal of the applicant’s readiness for this pre-college experience.

We are interested in any information that will help us evaluate this student’s personal qualities and potential to perform in an internship. Specific examples in support of your judgment would be most helpful. Your comments will help us make an appropriate and informed decision regarding this student. Recommendations may be written on this form or on school or business letterhead. Recommendations may be e-mailed (info@cvinternships.com), faxed (973-695-1492), or mailed directly to Career Voyage (23 Gleason Street, Morristown, NJ 07960). Thank you in advance for your time!

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this applicant?

The applicant was a student in my class (chemistry) for one year.

2. In the space below, please describe the applicant’s qualities in a few sentences. Note any attribute that strongly suggests s/he would benefit from our program (honesty and integrity, self-discipline, self-esteem, maturity, reaction to criticism or setbacks, capacity for growth, disciplined work habits).

The applicant is a generally good-natured student who is willing to go along to get along with his peers when working on group projects. The only challenge I have encountered with him is that he is not always highly motivated and his inconsistent work ethic sometimes requires that he be closely supervised.