Cultures of Consumption

Working Paper Series

"Social Stratification and Cultural Consumption
Music in England"

Tak Wing Chan* and John H. Goldthorpe**

* Department of Sociology, University of Oxford
** Nuffield College, University of Oxford

Social Stratification and Cultural Consumption: Music in England*

Tak Wing Chan
Department of Sociology
University of Oxford

John H. Goldthorpe
Nuffield College
University of Oxford

June 16, 2005

Abstract

In this paper we use recent survey data to test three arguments on the relationship between social stratification and cultural consumption: i.e. what we label as the homology, individualisation and omnivore–univore arguments. We note various conceptual and methodological problems in the ways these arguments have been advanced and stress in particular the importance of maintaining the Weberian distinction between class and status. We concentrate on musical consumption and apply latent class models to identify types of musical consumer. We then examine the social character of these types through a regression analysis that includes a range of demographic and stratification variables. As would be anticipated from a Weberian standpoint, type of musical consumption proves to be more closely associated with status, and also with education, than with class. In

general, our results provide little support for the homology or individualisation arguments. They are more consonant with the omnivore–univore argument, although a number of qualifications to this are also suggested.

1 Introduction—The three arguments

In the current sociological literature that treats the relationship between social stratification and cultural taste and consumption, it is possible to identify three main—and rival—lines of argument, each, though, with its variant forms. For convenience, we will refer to (i) the homology argument; (ii) the individualisation argument; and (iii) the omnivore–univore argument. In this paper, we begin by briefly outlining these three positions.[1] We then note some conceptual and methodological problems that arise, and indicate how we would ourselves propose to deal with these problems. We go on to report some first results from a research project in which we are engaged on cultural consumption in contemporary British society. While these results are limited to one particular cultural domain, that of music, this focus has, we believe, some strategic advantages in evaluating the current debate.

1.1 The homology argument

In its simplest form this argument claims no more than that social stratification and cultural stratification map on to each other very closely. Individuals in higher social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'high' or 'elite' culture, and individuals in lower social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'popular' or 'mass' culture—with, usually, various intermediate situations also being recognised. However, more elaborate versions of the homology argument exist, notably that developed by Pierre Bourdieu in his book, *Distinction*, which, for reasons that will later become apparent, is of particular interest to us.

As best we can understand the essentials of Bourdieu's position, they are as follows.[2] On Bourdieu's own account (1984, p.xii), *Distinction* starts out from 'an endeavour to rethink Max Weber's opposition between class and *Stand*'. Bourdieu agrees with Weber (1968, p.932) that status position—position within a generally recognised hierarchy of social superiority and

---

[1] We claim no originality in defining the current situation on these lines. See also, for example, Warde *et al.* (2000) and Sintas and Álvarez (2002).

[2] We rely a good deal on the illuminating exposition of Bourdieu on 'social class and symbolic violence' in Weininger (2005).

inferiority—is expressed by 'above all else a specific *style of life*'. But he then rejects Weber's view of the class position of individuals or groups as being analytically and empirically separable from their status position in that class position is determined purely by *economic* relations—i.e. relations in labour markets and production units. For Bourdieu, class and status are not to be understood as different forms of social stratification that can be linked, as Weber puts it, 'in the most varied ways'. Rather, status has to be seen as the symbolic aspect or dimension of the class structure, which is not itself reducible to economic relations alone.

Thus, it is not possible for Bourdieu to accept that the relationship between class and status—and thus lifestyle—is, at least to some degree, a contingent one. A necessary correspondence, or homology, has to be recognised. This homology is crucially mediated, Bourdieu claims, by the *habitus* of different classes. That is, by the socially constituted 'system of dispositions' into which the members of a class are socialised and that arises out of specific 'class conditions'. The class *habitus* produces a 'semantic' unity in practices across all domains of consumption, cultural consumption included; and thus, within and integral to the class structure, there are created the internally coherent but sharply contrasting lifestyles that are expressed by the status order. In turn, then, rivalry and competition within this order are not to be seen as separate from class divisions and conflict, let alone as serving, perhaps, to inhibit class-based action (cf. Weber, 1968, p.930). To the contrary, the status order is the field of symbolic struggle between classes, in which those involved seek to 'classify' themselves and others as same or different, included or excluded, and in which members of the dominant class use 'symbolic violence' in order to confirm the superiority of their own lifestyle by arrogating to it those cultural forms that are generally recognised as 'canonical', 'legitimate', or otherwise 'distinguished'. It is in fact in this last respect, as Weininger (2005) has observed, that 'the full significance of Bourdieu's attempt to yoke together "class" and "status" becomes apparent'.[3]

---

[3]The one way in which, so far as we can see, Bourdieu might allow for the possibility of a discrepancy between status and class—of the kind to which Weber frequently refers—is where, within what he deems to be the same class, Bourdieu acknowledges that differences in the relative importance of cultural as opposed to economic capital lead to some 'class fractions' having lifestyles of greater 'distinction' than others. For example, within the dominant class academics and 'artistic producers' appear in this sense to be recognised as having superior status to industrial and commercial employers, with professionals falling somewhere in-between. If we are correct in this interpretation, it would, we believe, represent a much more substantial concession to the Weberian position than Bourdieu is ready to acknowledge.

1.2 The individualisation argument

The individualisation argument may be regarded, if not as a more or less direct contradiction of the homology argument, then at all events as an attempt to restrict the validity of that argument to the past. What essentially is held is that, in the economically advanced societies of the present day, differences in cultural taste and consumption and indeed in lifestyles generally are losing their grounding in social stratification, however this may be understood, and are becoming more a matter of individual 'self-realisation'.

In weaker versions of the argument the suggestion is that other structural bases, such as age, gender, ethnicity or sexuality, are now at least as important as class or status in conditioning lifestyles, and that individuals are in this way given a much greater range of choice as regards the collectivities, real or imagined, with which they will subjectively align themselves and, in turn, greater possibilities for forming—or recreating—their own identities (e.g. Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). However, in stronger versions, often developed under postmodernist influences, lifestyles are seen as now lacking any kind of structural grounding or indeed unifying logic. Through their lifestyles, and primarily their patterns of consumption and demonstrations of taste, individuals are increasingly able to 'construct' their own selves more or less at will (e.g. Featherstone, 1987; Bauman, 1988). Here, then, the contrast with Bourdieu's position is striking. The emphasis shifts dramatically, as Warde (1997, p.8) has put it, 'from *habitus* to freedom'. Instead of being permanently marked by their initial class socialisation and restricted to a limited set of predefined lifestyles, individuals not only can but *have* to choose—to 'pick-and-mix'—from the vast array of possibilities that the highly commercialised 'consumer societies' of today make available to them: lifestyle becomes a 'life project'.

1.3 The omnivore–univore argument

The first point to note about this argument is that it relates more specifically to cultural consumption than to lifestyles in general. In its substance, it can perhaps be traced back to the findings of empirical research as early as that of Wilensky (1964) who reported that in the US highly educated persons had rarely any strong aversion to 'mass' culture and indeed often enjoyed it at least in some forms. However, in its present-day terms the argument would appear to originate with Peterson and Simkus (1992). The broad hypothesis that is advanced—and that is seen as having received support from empirical research (e.g. Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996)—is that in modern societies the homology argument is outmoded, not because cul-

tural consumption has lost all grounding in social stratification, but because a new relationship is emerging. Rather than cultural stratification mapping onto social stratification, on 'elite-to-mass' lines, the cultural consumption of individuals in higher social strata differs from that of individuals in lower strata chiefly in that it is greater *and much wider in its range*—comprising not only more 'high-brow' culture but in fact more 'middle-brow' and more 'low-brow' culture as well. Thus, the crucial contrast is not that of 'snob versus slob' but that of cultural omnivore versus cultural univore.

The omnivore–univore argument might then be seen as a 'middle way' between the homology and individualisation arguments previously considered (cf. Warde *et al.*, 2000). It is, however, open to at least two interpretations that endow it with clearly differing significance.

On the one hand, omnivores may be seen as essentially tolerant individuals (because, say, of their relatively high levels of education and/or social mobility) who have a general openness to other cultural styles than that into which they were initially socialised and further, perhaps, a desire to experiment with different kinds of cultural consumption. In this case, there is a fairly obvious affinity with the individualisation argument. Omnivore cultural consumption is concerned more with self-realisation then with setting down status markers and creating social distinction (cf. the discussion of 'the new middle class' in Wynne and O'Connor, 1998). On the other hand, though, omnivores may be seen as expressing a new aesthetic which, even if more inclusive and 'cosmopolitan' than that of earlier cultural elites, is no less directed towards the demonstration of cultural *and* social superiority— that is, when set against the very restricted cultural styles of univores (Sintas and Álvarez, 2002). And, in turn, omnivores may still show discrimination, either in the *uses* that they make of mass or popular culture—e.g. often 'ironic' or otherwise condescending uses—or in still rejecting some of its particular forms, such as ones with an especially close association with low status groups (cf. Bryson, 1996). In this case, then, the omnivore–univore argument could be regarded as taking over a good deal from the homology argument. The mapping of cultural onto social stratification is understood in a more sophisticated way but cultural consumption is still seen as playing a central part in creating symbolic boundaries and in status rivalry and competition.

1.4 Conceptual and methodological problems

The three broad positions outlined above have been widely debated and, to an increasing extent, on the basis of empirical research. However, examination of this research reveals certain recurrent problems of conceptualisation and method that call for more attention than they have so far received (though

see Warde *et al.*, 2000). Here we focus for the most part on two problem-areas that relate to the 'dependent' and 'independent' variables that are central to our own empirical analyses: i.e. cultural consumption and social stratification.

In most previous work, a distinction is in principle accepted between cultural consumption and cultural taste or knowledge. However, in actual research practice the distinction seems often to be elided. Thus, respondents to surveys may be asked about their cultural tastes—i.e. their likes and dislikes—or perhaps 'tested' on their cultural knowledge; but then at some point in the analysis based on this information, it becomes interpreted, if only implicitly, as if it were in fact information on actual consumption which, clearly, it is not. For some purposes, a concern with cultural taste or knowledge, regardless of whether or not these are reflected in consumption, may indeed be appropriate; and it is true that cultural consumption may be simply an expression of personal taste. But insofar as one is concerned with the part played by cultural style in processes of social stratification, it is on consumption *as a form of social action* that attention must focus. In this perspective, for an individual to have actually been at the opera or have Monteverdi or modern jazz playing on the stereo when the guests arrive is more important than whether or not he or she likes opera, Monteverdi or modern jazz or is knowledgeable about them. In our own work, therefore, it is on evidence of cultural consumption rather than taste that we concentrate.

Turning now to social stratification, we would observe that in this regard conceptualisation is often very loose and that indicators, such as occupation, education or income, are used with no very clear rationale. There are few examples where a range of well-defined stratification variables is constructed and then used in multivariate analyses;[4] and in turn the possibly differing processes through which social 'gradients' in cultural consumption are actually generated have remained largely unconsidered. For example, when other stratification variables are controlled, an income gradient, if present, could more readily be taken as reflecting simply ability to pay, while a gradient by educational attainment would lend support to the idea that an individual psychological factor—i.e. information processing capacity—is of importance, as suggested by various proponents of 'empirical aesthetics' (cf. Ganzeboom, 1982; Berlyne, 1974; Moles, 1971).[5] Furthermore, if cultural consumption

---

[4]These variables tend of course to be correlated with each other. But the correlation is seldom so high as to preclude their simultaneous inclusion a multivariate model so that their net effects can be assessed.

[5]The argument here is that the higher individuals' information processing capacity, the greater must be the information content of the cultural forms in which they participate if they are to derive satisfaction from them. Thus, the association between 'high' culture and

is to be related to the *structure* of inequality in society, the question arises of how this structure should itself be envisaged. In this regard, we appreciate Bourdieu's readiness to take seriously the distinction between class and status that was proposed by Weber, but we believe that his attempt to transcend this 'opposition' is not well considered. Especially in addressing issues of cultural and social stratification, it is, in our view, analytically preferable to follow Weber and to see class and status as different forms of social stratification, the connection between which is empirically variable, rather than to follow Bourdieu and to treat the status order as being the 'symbolic' dimension of the class structure more or less by *fiat*. From a Weberian point of view, one would in fact expect that cultural consumption, as an aspect of lifestyle, will be more strongly associated with status than with class—whatever the specific form the relationship may take; and, further, that in so far as systematic discrepancies do exist between the positions of individuals and groups in the status order and in the class structure (the latter being defined by economic relations—i.e. relations within labour markets and production units), these discrepancies will then be reflected in differences in patterns of cultural consumption *within* classes.[6]

There is, finally, one other methodological point of a quite different kind that we need also to note. The individualisation and omnivore–univore arguments concern change over time. Both aim to replace the homology argument with an understanding of the relationship between cultural and social stratification that is seen as more appropriate to the present day. But in fact few of the empirical studies that have taken up these arguments have an over-time dimension (the main exception being Peterson and Kern, 1996). We are not, for the time being at least, in a position to improve matters in this regard. We can only keep in mind that our data and analyses do pertain to just one point in time, and hope that they may serve as baseline for further research so that questions of change can be more adequately addressed.

2   Data and analytical strategy

Our data come from the Arts in England Survey carried out in England in 2001 by the Social Survey Division of the UK Office for National Statistics

---

educational attainment is due to the facts (a) that 'high' culture has, on average, a higher level of information content than 'low' culture and (b) that education is crucially involved in, and is thus a good proxy for, the information processing capacity of individuals.

[6]At an empirical level, we would thus wish to question whether Bourdieu's notion of class *habitus* as the source of a close correspondence between 'class conditions', on the one hand, and lifestyle, including cultural consumption, on the other, is in fact capable of being seriously upheld. See further below.

on behalf of Arts Council England. Face-to-face interviews were carried out with a stratified probability sample of individuals aged over 16 and living in private households. Interviews were completed with 6,042 respondents, giving a response rate of 64 per cent (for details, see Skelton *et al.*, 2002).

The inquiry was concerned with assessing attendance at cultural events and participation in cultural activities, very broadly understood. In later analyses we shall aim to exploit this unusually wide coverage. In the present paper, however, we concentrate on just one cultural domain: that of music. This, we believe, represents an appropriate starting point. Music has often been seen as having special significance in regard to the social stratification of cultural style. Bourdieu (1984, p.18), for example, claims that 'nothing more clearly affirms one's "class", nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music'. And analyses of musical taste and consumption have in fact figured prominently in current debates (see e.g. Bryson, 1996, 1997; van Eijck, 2001; Coulangeon, 2003) in part because research in this area (Peterson and Simkus, 1992) was closely associated with the development of the omnivore–univore argument.

In the Arts in England Survey questions were directly asked about frequency of attendance at musical events as well as of listening to music through various media. In many other data-sets that have been used in analyses of musical consumption information is available on listening only, without any distinction being possible as to whether listening was 'live' or not. This is, however, a distinction that from our standpoint is important and that we seek fully to exploit.

As regards musical events, respondents were asked whether in the last twelve months they had attended: a classical music concert, an opera or operetta, a jazz concert, or a pop or rock concert. We take as our dependent variables whether (or not) attendance was reported at each of these kinds of event.[7] As regards listening to music, respondents were asked whether in the last four weeks they had listened, through any medium (radio, TV, CDs, records, tapes etc.), to the same four genres of music. Again, we take as our dependent variables whether (or not) any listening was reported to

---

[7]The survey also contains information on attendance at (i) musicals, (ii) folk or country and western concerts, or (iii) other music events. These items are not used for the following reasons. Attendance at musicals will be considered in a later analysis of theatre-going. We have repeated the analysis of the present paper with this item included, and the results are substantively the same as those reported below. Details are available from the authors on request. Attendance at folk or country and western concerts is not used because this was reported by only 3 per cent of respondents, and preliminary analysis suggested that this item was not discriminatory between the latent classes of musical consumption that we distinguish. Finally, attendance at 'other' music event is discounted as too imprecise in character to be relevant to our concerns.

each of these kinds of music, whatever the medium. On this basis, then, we have in total eight different types of musical consumption that respondents might or might not have engaged in over a specific time-period: live and media consumption of the four genres of classical music, opera or operetta, jazz and pop or rock. These genres are not as refined as we would ideally have wished. However, it should be recognised that in collecting information on actual musical consumption, rather than expressions of taste, the detailed specification of genres is less easily accomplished, at least in a reliable way.

Apart from its emphasis on consumption, the Arts in England Survey is also well suited to our purposes in that it obtained information on a wide range of respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. Respondents were coded to the National Statistics (NS) Socio-Economic Classification, which is in effect a new instantiation of the Goldthorpe class schema (Rose and Pevalin, 2003); and from the detailed occupational codings that are also available, we are able to allocate respondents to the 31 categories of the social status scale developed by Chan and Goldthorpe (2004).[8] In addition, information is available on respondents' income and educational qualifications (coded to the six official National Vocational Qualifications levels), and further on a range of attributes that are of potential interest to us as control variables, including age, marital status, family composition and region of residence (see Table 6 below). We have restricted our analysis to respondents aged 20 to 64 ($N = 4,249$) since preliminary analyses pointed clearly to the desirability of undertaking separate analyses of the cultural participation of both younger and older groups. After deleting cases with missing values on the key covariates of income, education and social status the analytical sample size becomes 3,819.

3   Results

We begin by showing in Table 1 the overall proportions of respondents to the Arts in England Survey who engaged in the eight types of musical consumption that we identified above. It can be seen that, as might be expected, rates of live consumption were lower than rates of media consumption, even over a twelve-month as compared with a four-week period. Further, there is some wide variation across genres. Most obviously, opera and operetta (henceforth 'opera') and jazz attract far fewer live consumers (henceforth 'attenders') and media consumers ('listeners') than does pop or rock ('pop/rock').

---

[8]This scale is based on an analysis of the occupational structure of close friendships (cf. Laumann, 1966). For further details of the construction and properties of this scale, see Appendix A.

Table 1: Percentage of respondents who have attended live music events in the past 12 months, or have listened to music via media in the past 4 weeks.

	live	media[a]
opera/operetta	5.7	16.3
jazz	6.3	24.7
classical	10.2	51.9
pop/rock	23.2	88.5

Note: [a] includes radio, CD, mini disc, tape, record, television, DVD or video.

3.1 Latent class measurement models

In order to move on from data in the form of Table 1 to gain an understanding of patterns of musical consumption among respondents, we turn to latent class analysis. The binary responses to the eight questions on musical consumption represented in Table 1 can be understood as forming an eight-way contingency table with 256 (i.e. 2^8) cells. What we wish to know is whether, underlying these data, there are certain relatively well-defined types of musical consumer. Latent class analysis, which can be regarded as the categorical counterpart of factor analysis for continuous variables, is therefore an appropriate technique to apply. Latent class models seek to capture the association that exists among the observed indicators of some phenomenon—in our case, the eight indicators of musical consumption—through a small number of discrete latent classes. In effect, this association is regarded as resulting from a mixture of 'pure' types within the population studied, so that if these types can be identified and separated as latent classes, then *conditional on membership of these classes*, the indicators will become statistically independent of each other. This principle of 'local independence' is key to all latent variable analyses, including latent class models (McCutcheon, 1987).[9] However, we should note that in the present paper, we do, pragmatically, depart from it

---

[9]Thus, if there are three observed categorical variables A, B, C with I, J and K categories respectively, a latent class model with T classes can be expressed as follows:

$$\pi_{ijk}^{ABC} = \sum_{t=1}^{T} \pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{\bar{A}X} \pi_{jt}^{\bar{B}X} \pi_{kt}^{\bar{C}X},$$

where π_t^X is the probability that a person belongs to latent class t, $\pi_{it}^{\bar{A}X}$ is the probability that this person is found at level i of A given membership in latent class t, and so on.

in one respect. We allow for specific local *dependence* between live and mediated consumption of music of the same genre. Substantively, it is reasonable to expect there to be some residual association even within latent classes between attending live opera, classical music, jazz or pop performances and listening to these same genres through various media. And, empirically, the inclusion of these four local dependencies improves quite dramatically the fit of all latent class models that we apply.

As can be seen from Table 2, the results of our latent class modelling, with the modification indicated above, are in fact fairly straightforward. A model postulating three latent classes fits the data satisfactorily according to the usual criterion of five per cent type I error.[10]

Table 2: Latent class measurement models fitted to musical consumption data.

# classes	G^2	df	p	BIC
1	1583.63	243	0.00	-420.57
2	387.55	234	0.00	-1542.42
3	222.96	225	0.52	-1632.78

Note: Four local dependence terms are included to account for residual association between indicators of live and mediated consumption of music of the same genre.

The solutions of the three-class and also of the simpler two-class model of Table 2, i.e. the estimated relative size of the latent classes and the estimated conditional probability of consuming each of the eight items, given membership in a latent class, are reported in Table 3. A comparison of these two models suggests that the main difference between them is that the smaller latent class under model 2 needs to be further differentiated into two sub-classes. On the basis of these results, we can then already make some relevant commentary on the three arguments that we previously outlined, even before we consider the social covariates of latent class membership.

Most obviously, perhaps, the very fact that we are able to identify three latent classes, each representing a relatively well-defined type of musical consumer, must throw doubt on the individualisation argument, at least in its extreme, postmodernist versions: i.e. those that would claim the break-up of all pattern or coherence in consumption itself as well as in its linkages with

---

[10]Without the four parameters of local dependence, we need to postulate six latent classes before a satisfactory fit can be achieved. Details are available from the authors on request.

Table 3: Estimated relative size of the latent classes and the conditional probabilities of consuming each of the nine music items under the two-class and three-class models.

	2-class model			3-class model		
	1	2		1	2	3
relative size	0.689	0.311		0.657	0.240	0.103
opera (l)	0.010	0.162		0.013	0.039	0.386
jazz (l)	0.024	0.150		0.027	0.075	0.273
classical (l)	0.017	0.291		0.024	0.060	0.701
pop/rock (l)	0.225	0.249		0.225	0.234	0.277
opera (m)	0.016	0.488		0.011	0.418	0.541
jazz (m)	0.125	0.517		0.112	0.509	0.499
classical (m)	0.313	0.973		0.289	0.952	0.977
pop/rock (m)	0.903	0.845		0.899	0.905	0.749

Note: (l): attending live concerts, (m): listening to music through media.

social stratification. We are evidently far removed from any such situation.[11]

Turning next to the homology argument, it might be suggested that members of our latent class 1 under model 3 are very plausible exemplars of popular or 'mass' consumption in the musical domain. They account for about two thirds of all respondents and are very likely to listen to pop music via the media ($p = .90$) but otherwise have relatively low levels of musical consumption. However, if we can thus rather readily identify a potential 'mass', there is little evidence to be found in Table 3 for the existence of a musical 'elite', at least in the sense of a group who, while actively expressing 'high' musical taste, at the same time reject more popular musical forms. Members of our latent class 3, the smallest of the three (10.3%), have overall the highest probability of attending operas, jazz and classical concerts but also of attending pop concerts. And while they again have high probabilities of listening to opera, jazz and classical music through the media, their probability of listening to pop is likewise high in absolute terms ($p = .75$) and not very much lower than that of the members of the two other latent classes.[12]

---

[11]As we have noted in the text, the binary responses to the eight questions on musical consumption with which we work can be regarded as forming an eight-way contingency table. If our respondents were to have been distributed randomly over the cells of this table, then we would have been able to do no more than identify just one latent class—to which everyone belonged. In other words, model 1 of Table 2 would have sufficed.

[12]If musical elites are defined as those who would consume opera, classical music and jazz, either live or through any media, while at the same time not consuming pop at all, then only 36 respondents, or 0.85% of our sample, fall into this category. And even taking

This being so, it might be said that our results so far chiefly favour the omnivore–univore argument, although still in this case some qualifications are also suggested. On the one hand, while musical consumption in latent class 1 is clearly more restricted than in the other two classes, it is not entirely univorous. There is some non-negligible probability ($p = .29$) of listening to classical music in addition to popular forms, which can perhaps be understood as a 'crossover' or a 'Classic FM' effect, and would merit further investigation. And, on the other hand, while members of latent class 3 do have an obvious claim to be regarded as musical omnivores, latent class 2, which is larger than latent class 3, also shows omnivorous tendencies so far as listening to music rather than attending musical events is concerned—suggesting, that is, a need to distinguish various degrees and kinds of omnivore.

None the less, with these qualifications being kept in mind, it would seem reasonable, and not unduly misleading, if we were to provisionally label our latent classes according to the univore–omnivore argument, on the following lines: latent class 1 as univores (Us), latent class 2 as omnivores–listeners (OLs), and latent class 3 as true omnivores (Os).

3.2   Incorporating covariates into the analysis

We now move on to the question of the social characteristics of members of our latent classes and in particular to that of how they may differ in their location within the stratification of contemporary English society. In technical terms, therefore, we introduce covariates into our latent class analysis of types of musical consumer.

We adopt the following strategy. First, we calculate, on the basis of our preferred latent class solution (cf. Table 3), the conditional probability of respondents' membership in each of our three latent classes, given their responses to the eight indicators.[13] Thus, all respondents with a particular response pattern are assigned to the same latent class—that to which they have the highest, or modal, conditional probability of belonging. With our

---

a more inclusive definition of the musical elite by leaving jazz out of account, still only 2.8% of the sample would be covered. A colleague thoughtfully suggested that our failure to identify a musical elite is perhaps because we have used a very broad definition of music-listening. He suggested that musical elites might casually listen to pop music on the radio, but they would never put on a record or a CD of pop music. We have repeated our latent class analysis with a narrower definition of media consumption of music, counting CD, mini disc, tape or record only, and the results obtained are very similar to those reported here, except that two further local dependence terms are needed to account for weaker associations between jazz and pop. Details are available from the authors on request.

[13]Thus, suppose there are three observed categorical variables A, B and C, the conditional probability that someone belongs to latent class t given that this person is at level

respondents then distributed among the three latent classes, we can go on
to investigate the association between latent class membership and other
variables of interest, whether through simple tabulation or through more
powerful regression models, such as the multinomial logit. This procedure has
had several effective sociological applications—in, for example, the analysis
of intergenerational exchanges (Hogan *et al.*, 1993) or, specifically in the field
of cultural consumption, in a study of patterns of 'high-brow' and 'low-brow'
reading (van Rees *et al.*, 1999).

Assigning individuals to modal latent classes inevitably introduces error
into the data, no matter how high the modal probabilities might be, and
the relative sizes of the latent classes after modal assignment can differ quite
significantly from those estimated from the measurement model. However, in
our present case, this is not a serious problem. Modal class assignment mis-
classifies 14 per cent of the respondents which is a quite modest level.[14] Since
measurement errors tend to attenuate the association between variables, the
statistical association reported below can be regarded as *conservative esti-
mates*.[15]

---

i of *A*, level *j* of *B* and level *k* of *C* is given by the following expression:

$$\pi_{ijkt}^{ABC\bar{X}} = \frac{\pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{\bar{A}X} \pi_{jt}^{\bar{B}X} \pi_{kt}^{\bar{C}X}}{\sum_{t=1}^T \pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{\bar{A}X} \pi_{jt}^{\bar{B}X} \pi_{kt}^{\bar{C}X}}.$$

[14]Post-assignment, the relative sizes of the latent classes are 0.704, 0.191, and 0.104
respectively, compared with 0.657, 0.240 and 0.103 in the measurement model (cf. Table 3).
The percentage of cases misclassified is calculated as: $100 \times \sum_j [(1 - \hat{\pi}_j) \cdot \frac{n_j}{N}]$, where n_j
is the number of respondents giving response pattern j, $\hat{\pi}_j$ is the estimated modal latent
class probability given response pattern j, and N is the total sample size. Note that
the percentage of cases misclassified by latent class models is different from the index
of dissimilarity (Δ) that is commonly used in loglinear analysis. While Δ measures the
discrepancy between the fitted and observed frequencies of a contingency table, in latent
class models there is, by definition, no observed value of latent class membership. Thus,
in latent class analysis the percentage of cases misclassified should be understood in terms
of measurement error. In the extreme, to have zero per cent of cases misclassified would
mean that univores will *always* do *X* but *never Y* or *Z* ... and omnivores will *always* do
X, Y, Z, ... This is clearly unrealistic, as various random factors, such as a spell of ill
health, might intervene and prevent even the truest omnivore to go to any music event for
a specific period. Furthermore, although the model which assumes just one latent class
rarely, if ever, fits the data, it also, by definition, *never* misclassifies any case through
the modal latent class assignment procedure. Thus, the percentage of cases misclassified
should not be used as a criterion of model selection.

[15]An alternative and more sophisticated way to incorporate covariates has been pro-
posed. In this case, the latent class measurement model is combined directly with a
regression model (Yamaguchi, 2000; Bandeen-Roche *et al.*, 1997; Dayton and Macready,
1988; Formann, 1992), and in this way the probabilistic nature of the former is preserved.

3.3 The distribution of types of musical consumer by social class and social status

As earlier noted, we start from the position that in investigating the relationship between cultural consumption and social stratification, it is important conceptually to maintain the Weberian distinction between social class and social status; and in turn we have the empirical expectation that cultural consumption, as an aspect of lifestyle, will be the more closely associated with status than with class. It is then of interest to examine, before undertaking more elaborate multivariate analyses, how the types of musical consumer that we have identified are actually distributed by class and status.

In Table 4 we show results by class, following the seven-class version of the new NS schema. It can be seen that within Classes 1 and 2, forming the salariat of primarily professional and managerial employees, there is the smallest representation of univores, our most limited type of musical consumer, and the largest representation of omnivore–listeners and true omnivores. The reverse is then generally the case within Classes 5, 6 and 7, making up the working class of lower supervisory and manual wage-earners, while within Classes 3 and 4, those of routine nonmanual workers and of small employers and self-employed workers respectively, an intermediate situation obtains, though there are more Us and fewer OLs and Os in class 3 than in class 4. However, it should further be noted from Table 4 that univores are the most frequently, and omnivores the least frequently occurring type *within each class alike.*

Table 4: Distribution of latent class membership within social class.

social class	U	OL	O
1. higher managerial & professional occupations	52.3	27.1	20.7
2. lower managerial & professional occupations	62.5	21.9	15.6
3. intermediate occupations	74.9	16.9	8.2
4. small employers and own-account workers	68.0	20.7	11.3
5. lower supervisory & technical occupations	78.3	17.8	3.9
6. semi-routine occupations	82.1	13.2	4.7
7. routine occupations	81.0	15.6	3.3

Table 5 then reports the corresponding distribution by status—i.e. by

This approach accepts in effect that we can never know for certain that an individual belongs to one latent class rather than another, and is in this regard preferable. However, our experience is that the measurement part of the model could become unstable once more than a quite limited number of covariates are added. Details are available from the authors on request.

the 31 categories of the status scale of Chan and Goldthorpe (2004), and Figure 1 presents essentially the same information in graphical form, with membership in each of our three latent classes being plotted against status score (though note the differing scales on the vertical axes). We also add a non-parametric regression line to each plot (Cleveland, 1979). Figure 1 shows that the probability of being a univore is negatively related to status in a fairly linear fashion while the probability of being a true musical omnivore is positively related, with the slope being somewhat steeper at the high end of the status hierarchy. The probability of being a omnivore–listener also seems positively related to status, even though the wider dispersion of points around the regression line indicates that in these cases the association is weaker than with true omnivores. From Table 5 it can further be seen that within four of the seven highest ranking groups, Higher professionals, Specialist managers, Teachers and other professionals in education and Scientists, engineers and technologists, omnivores and omnivore–listeners together achieve approximately equal representation with univores—i.e. are strongly over-represented in relation to their numbers in our total sample.

Thus, status effects on type of musical consumption would, on this basis, appear somewhat clearer than class effects. However, to provide a serious test of our claim that in so far as the extent of the social stratification of musical or other forms of cultural consumption is in question, it is on status rather than class that attention should focus, we need to move on to multivariate analyses.

3.4 The social characteristics of types of musical consumer: Multivariate analysis

Descriptive statistics of the covariates that are included in our multivariate analyses are given in Table 6. These covariates are of two main kinds. First, there are ones of a broadly demographic kind that we introduce primarily as controls. It could be expected that musical consumption will be influenced by demographic factors, operating essentially as constraints. For example, women with young children living in the far North might be thought less likely at least to participate in musical events than single men living in London. For our present purposes, we wish to abstract from effects of this kind on the chances of individuals being found in one or another of our latent classes. Secondly, there are covariates relating to social stratification on which our attention focuses, and it is these that serve as our explanatory variables of interest. Here, in addition to the measures of class and status to which we have already referred, we include measures of individuals' income and

Table 5: Distribution of latent class membership within status categories.

Status categories[a]		status score	U	OL	O	N
HP	Higher professionals	0.5643	52.3	18.8	28.9	128
APB	Associate professionals in business	0.5337	59.6	21.1	19.3	171
SM	Specialist managers	0.5107	53.3	27.5	19.2	182
TPE	Teachers and other professionals in education	0.5017	46.1	24.0	29.9	167
GMA	General managers and administrators	0.4114	57.9	26.3	15.8	76
API	Associate professionals in industry	0.3116	61.8	25.5	12.7	110
SET	Scientists, engineers and technologists	0.3115	51.5	30.9	17.7	136
FRC	Filing and record clerks	0.2559	69.6	19.6	10.7	56
OMO	Managers and officials, nec g	0.2355	77.8	11.1	11.1	9
AOA	Administrative officers and assistants	0.2274	64.3	21.4	14.3	98
NCC	Numerical clerks and cashiers	0.2238	80.5	14.2	5.3	169
APH	Associate professionals in health and welfare	0.2228	67.1	17.1	15.8	152
SEC	Secretaries and receptionists	0.1539	70.1	19.1	10.8	157
OCW	Other clerical workers	0.1443	72.6	23.2	4.2	95
BSR	Buyers and sales representatives	0.1193	69.0	20.7	10.3	58
CCW	Childcare workers	0.1097	76.4	16.9	6.7	89
MPS	Managers and proprietors in services	-0.0453	62.9	23.5	13.5	170
PDM	Plant, depot and site managers	-0.0625	64.0	25.6	10.5	86
SW	Sales workers	-0.1151	82.1	14.1	3.8	262
HW	Health workers	-0.2121	78.7	14.6	6.7	164
PSW	Personal service workers	-0.2261	69.6	17.4	13.0	92
PSP	Protective service personnel	-0.2288	75.9	17.7	6.3	79
RWS	Routine workers in services	-0.2974	87.5	11.1	1.4	208
CW	Catering workers	-0.3261	70.6	22.1	7.4	68
SDC	Store and despatch clerks	-0.3353	76.0	24.0	0.0	25
SMO	Skilled and related manual workers nec	-0.4072	72.5	20.3	7.3	138
TO	Transport operatives	-0.4114	71.6	25.7	2.8	109
SMC	Skilled and related manual workers in construction and maintenance	-0.5014	80.2	16.4	3.5	116
SMM	Skilled and related manual workers in metal trades	-0.5121	76.0	21.5	2.5	121
PMO	Plant and machine operatives	-0.5589	87.9	10.1	1.9	207
GL	General labourers	-0.5979	88.4	8.3	3.3	121
overall			70.4	19.1	10.4	3819

Note: [a] For examples of occupations within each category and other details, see Table 9 in the Appendix.
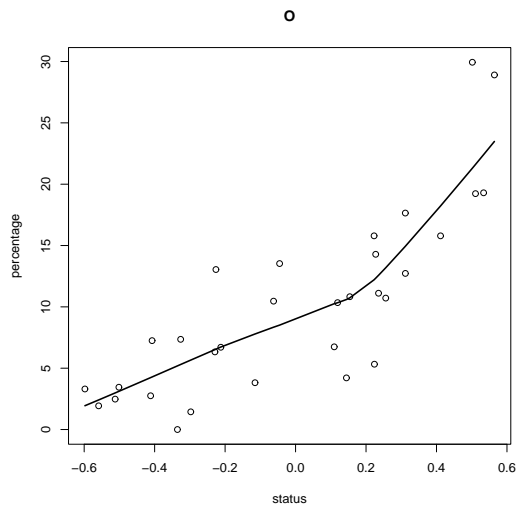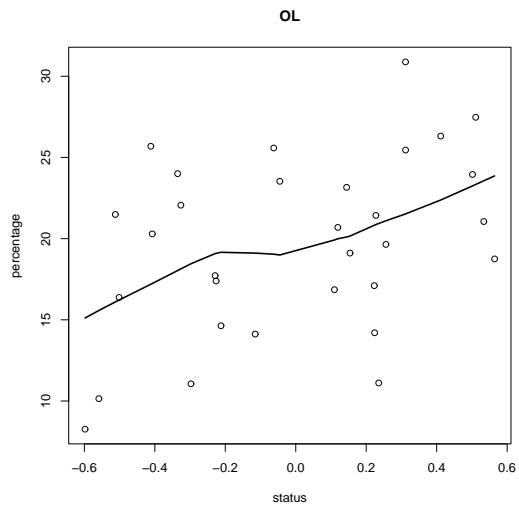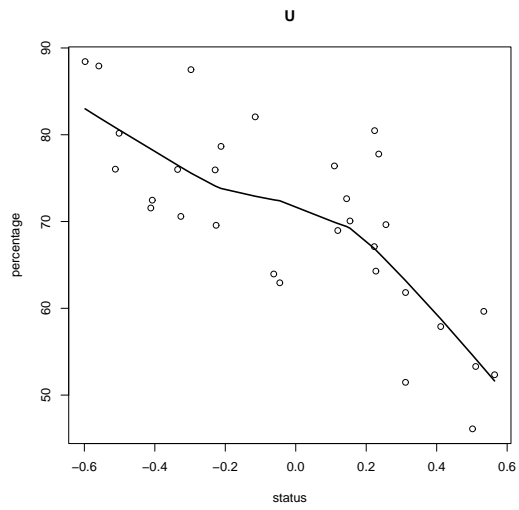
18

Figure 1: Membership in latent classes
by social status.

educational qualifications so that the separate effects of all these variables cab be assessed. We use a multinomial logit model with membership in our three latent classes as the dependent variable, and take univores as our reference category. Results are reported in Table 7.[16]

It can be seen, to begin with, that the demographic variables that we include in the model have significant effects in a rather patchy and sometimes in only a marginal fashion. Women are clearly less likely than men to be OLs rather than Us, but are more likely to be Os rather than OLs: i.e. the OLs have a rather masculine bias. Younger people are clearly more likely than older people to be Us rather than OLs or Os and, among the omnivores, older people are more likely to be Os rather than OLs. Married people appear less likely, as compared with singles, to be OLs rather than Us, and the presence of older children appears to reduce the chances of individuals being Os or OLs rather than Us. Finally, region has an effect in that living in the North or Midlands rather than in London reduces the chances of being an OL or O rather than a U.[17]

Turning next to our main concern with the social stratification of musical consumption, one result is immediately apparent from Table 7. We can confirm our hypothesis that status is in this regard of greater importance than is class. In the context of our multivariate model the effects of class are non-significant, while status has a significant effect in the contrasts between O and U and between O and OL. In other words, the higher an individual's status, the more likely he or she is to be a true omnivore rather than a univore, and a true omnivore rather than a omnivore–listener.[18] It might be argued, especially by those who favour a one-dimensional understanding of social stratification and reject the utility of the class/status distinction, that all that is being shown here is that our measure of status better captures this one dimension than does our measure of class. However, we can report that in other work we are undertaking we obtain results that would undermine this

---

[16]The multinomial logit model, fitted with R (R Development Core Team, 2005), can be represented as follows:

$$log(\frac{P_k}{P_{\mathrm{U}}}) = \mathbf{x}'\boldsymbol{\beta}, \quad k = \mathrm{OL}, \mathrm{O}$$

where P_{U} is the probability of being a univore, P_k is the probability of belonging to the latent class k, $\mathbf{x}$ is a vector of covariates, and $\boldsymbol{\beta}$ is the vector of parameters to be estimated. We also report in Table 7 a column showing results with OL serving as the reference category. This is just a different parameterisation of the same model.

[17]The size of the town in which one lives might have greater sociological relevance than region. Unfortunately, there is no such measure in the data set.

[18]In analyses not reported here, we have included quadratic terms for status and and also age in the model. But these terms turn out to be insignificant. Details are available from the authors on request.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of covariates.

	N	$\%$
female[a]	2110	55.3
Single (reference category)	700	18.3
Married or cohabiting	2473	64.8
Separated, divorced or widowed	646	16.9
children 0–4[b]	651	17.1
children 5–10[b]	779	20.4
children 11–15[b]	623	16.3
London (reference category)	493	12.9
The North	1141	29.9
Midlands and East Anglia	1150	30.1
South East	617	16.2
South West	418	11.0
no qualifications (reference category)	865	22.7
CSE, etc.	508	13.3
O-levels	889	23.3
A-levels	518	13.6
post-secondary qualifications	347	9.1
degree	692	18.1
Class 1—higher managerial & professional occupations (ref.cat.)	488	12.8
Class 2—lower managerial & professional occupations	1023	26.8
Class 3—intermediate occupations	574	15.0
Class 4—small employers and own-account workers	275	7.2
Class 5—lower supervisory & technical occupations	359	9.4
Class 6—semi-routine occupations	620	16.2
Class 7—routine occupations	480	12.6

	mean	s.d.	min.	max.
age	42.1	11.8	20	64
annual income[c]	15573	10863	260	37700
status	-0.001	0.365	-0.598	0.564

Note:

[a] Male is reference category.

[b] Not having children in the respective age ranges are the reference categories.

[c] The income variable in the Arts in England data set is originally coded in terms of 32 income brackets of variable width. In our analysis, we have assigned respondents to the midpoint of the income bracket to which they belong.

Table 7: Multinomial logit model: Regression of latent classes membership on covariates.

	OL vs U		O vs U		O vs OL	
	$\hat{\beta}$	s.e.	$\hat{\beta}$	s.e.	$\hat{\beta}$	s.e.
female	−0.272∗∗	(0.104)	0.156	(0.137)	0.428∗∗	(0.150)
married	−0.265∗	(0.131)	−0.321	(0.176)	−0.056	(0.194)
separated	0.098	(0.157)	−0.065	(0.214)	−0.163	(0.232)
age	0.042∗∗	(0.005)	0.066∗∗	(0.006)	0.024∗∗	(0.007)
child (0–4)	−0.077	(0.139)	−0.391	(0.214)	−0.314	(0.235)
child (5–10)	−0.101	(0.125)	−0.340	(0.188)	−0.239	(0.208)
child (11–15)	−0.259∗	(0.131)	−0.397∗	(0.191)	−0.138	(0.212)
The North	−0.453∗∗	(0.144)	−0.470∗	(0.193)	−0.017	(0.211)
Midlands	−0.314∗	(0.142)	−0.198	(0.184)	0.117	(0.202)
South East	−0.017	(0.154)	0.060	(0.198)	0.077	(0.215)
South West	−0.036	(0.172)	−0.224	(0.238)	−0.188	(0.256)
income	0.005	(0.005)	0.012	(0.007)	0.007	(0.007)
CSE/others	0.578∗∗	(0.162)	1.006∗∗	(0.276)	0.428	(0.299)
O-levels	0.572∗∗	(0.146)	1.109∗∗	(0.242)	0.537∗	(0.263)
A-levels	0.740∗∗	(0.171)	1.523∗∗	(0.265)	0.783∗∗	(0.288)
sub-degree	0.821∗∗	(0.188)	1.851∗∗	(0.266)	1.030∗∗	(0.292)
degree	1.028∗∗	(0.177)	2.367∗∗	(0.256)	1.339∗∗	(0.278)
class 2	−0.181	(0.148)	−0.135	(0.172)	0.047	(0.188)
class 3	−0.325	(0.194)	−0.329	(0.247)	−0.004	(0.273)
class 4	−0.106	(0.236)	0.299	(0.291)	0.404	(0.321)
class 5	−0.160	(0.252)	−0.253	(0.382)	−0.094	(0.413)
class 6	−0.339	(0.234)	−0.107	(0.317)	0.232	(0.350)
class 7	−0.133	(0.257)	−0.109	(0.387)	0.024	(0.420)
status	0.345	(0.211)	1.047∗∗	(0.287)	0.702∗	(0.315)
constant	−2.979∗∗	(0.342)	−5.906∗∗	(0.472)	−2.927∗∗	(0.515)

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

view and are in fact much as would be expected from a Weberian standpoint. For example, in analyses of party choice in the 1997 and 2001 UK General Elections we find, using the same measures as in the present paper, that class has a clearly stronger influence than does status. And a similar finding would also appear to be emerging from analyses of economic life-chances, such as risks of long term unemployment.[19]

As regards the other stratification variables included, the effect of income turns out to be non-significant. In contrast, the effects of educational qualifications are obviously important, and follow a pattern broadly similar to those of status. The higher an individual's educational level, the more likely he or she is to be an an O or OL rather than a U, and more likely to be an O than an OL. However, the important question then arises of whether, once status and other stratification variables are controlled, the effects of education *per se* are in fact best understood in terms of stratification. We would ourselves take the view that they are more plausibly seen as operating through individual psychology according to the information-processing hypothesis to which we have previously referred: i.e. the hypothesis that the higher an individual's information-processing capacity (as indexed in our case by educational attainment), the more complex must be the informational stimuli of any form of cultural participation in which he or she engages if pleasure and fulfilment are to derive from it (see note 5).

Finally in this section we turn to the issue of the substantive strengths of the effects of status and educational attainment, the two variables that show up as clearly most important in regard to musical consumption. To this end, we report in Table 8 some predicted probabilities from our multinomial logit model of the latent class membership of a hypothetical person—we take a 40-year old childless woman living in London—whose education and status we vary at three income levels.[20]

The effects of educational qualifications are described in Panel A of Table 8. The pattern that generally emerges is most clearly brought out in the central lines of the panel (lines 3–5) where we hold income constant at £25,000 and status constant at the level of Managers and proprietors in ser-

---

[19]It might further be argued that because we use six parameters to capture the effect of class but only one parameter to represent status, the latter is much more likely than the former to be found statistically significant. In this way, we might be privileging the Weberian position that we favour. We have repeated our analysis with a fivefold version of the class schema and with a fourfold division of the status hierarchy (see Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004). Essentially the same results are obtained as those reported in the text except that the effect of status does now become significant in the contrast between omnivore-listeners and univores. Details are available from the authors on request.

[20]These probabilities are estimated under a model that is very similar to the one reported in Table 7, but with the insignificant terms of class and marital status being dropped.

Table 8: Examples of predicted probabilities of latent class membership.[a]

	income[b]	education	occupation[c]	U	OL	O
A: Effects of education, controlling for status and income.						
1	15	None	PMO	0.860	0.119	0.021
2	15	O-levels	PMO	0.762	0.184	0.054
3	25	None	MPS	0.824	0.135	0.042
4	25	O-levels	MPS	0.705	0.196	0.099
5	25	Degree	MPS	0.495	0.221	0.284
6	35	O-levels	HP	0.599	0.216	0.185
7	35	Degree	HP	0.353	0.204	0.443
B: Effects of status, controlling for education and income.						
8	15	None	PMO	0.865	0.113	0.022
9	15	None	MPS	0.829	0.138	0.033
10	25	O-levels	PMO	0.747	0.193	0.060
11	25	O-levels	MPS	0.693	0.214	0.093
12	25	O-levels	HP	0.614	0.235	0.150
13	35	Degree	MPS	0.477	0.257	0.266
14	35	Degree	HP	0.372	0.249	0.380

Note:

[a] Other covariates fixed as follows: Forty years old female Londoner with no children.

[b] Annual income (in thousand of pounds).

[c] PMO: Plant and machine operatives, MPS: Managers and proprietors in services, HP: Higher professionals.

vices. It can be seen that the probability of our hypothetical woman being a univore is then very sensitive to the level of her educational qualifications— declining by about 33 percentage points as between 'none' and 'degree'; and, further, that most of the compensating change relates to her chances of being a true omnivore. A range of results on this pattern is shown graphically in the plots of Figure 2 in which the strength of the effects of education is indicated by the vertical distance between the lines. This distance is greatest in the plots for membership in U and O, and in the latter case, especially at the high end of the status order.

The effects of status are illustrated in Panel B of Table 8. To begin with, it is apparent that in all scenarios the chances of our hypothetical woman being a univore decline with the status we attribute to her—in fact by about 13 percentage points across virtually the full status range (lines 10– 12) when we suppose that she has an annual income of £25,000 and O-level qualifications. Again, the larger compensating change is in the probabilities of our hypothetical woman being a true omnivore. This effect is also revealed in Figure 2), especially by the slopes of the lines for those with a university degree.

In sum, one could then say, education appears to have a somewhat stronger effect than status on which type of musical consumer an individual is likely to be, but some, positive, interaction between these two variables seems also to occur.[21]

4   Conclusion

We have already noted some of the immediate implications of our latent class analysis for the three arguments on social stratification and cultural taste and consumption from which we started. We now consider what further can be said in the light of our examination of the social characteristics of our three types of musical consumer.

As regards the homology argument, we previously observed that this appears to be undermined by the fact that although we can identify a potential 'mass' of musical consumers, that is, our univores, our latent class analysis does not reveal a musical 'elite' who clearly reject more popular musical forms. Our subsequent analyses then show that, as the homology argument would require, our univores do indeed predominate at the lower levels of the stratification of contemporary English society, in whatever way this may be conceptualised. Thus, as can be seen from Tables 4 and 5, univores constitute

---

[21]There are no interaction terms in our multinomial logit model but, while the model is linear in the logit, it is *not* linear in probability.
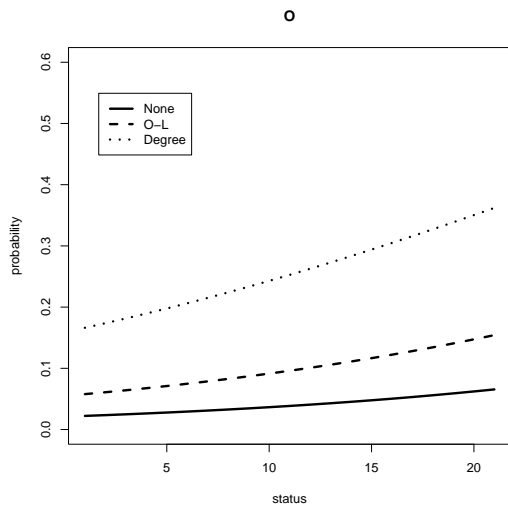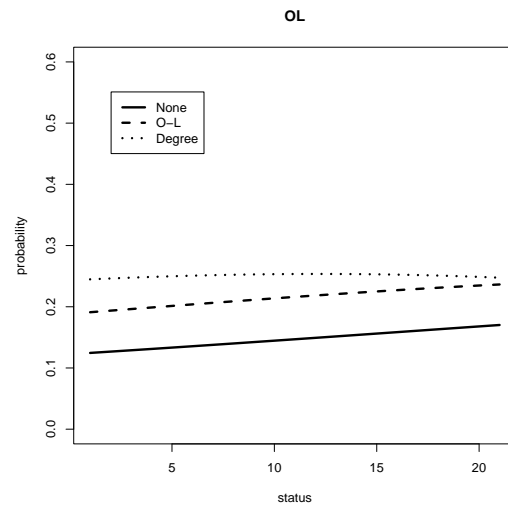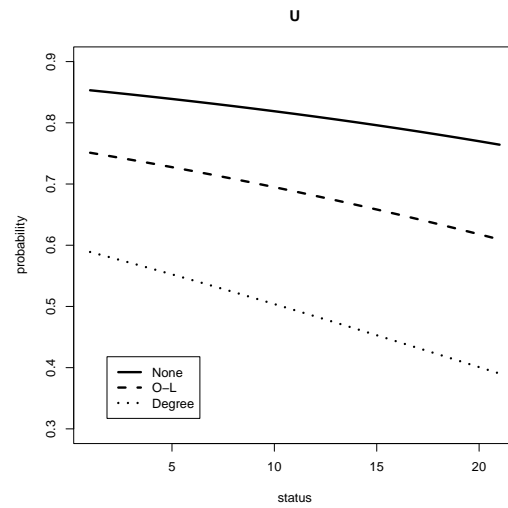
25

Figure 2: Association between latent class membership, education and social status.

Note: Other covariates fixed as follows: Forty years old female Londoner, with annual income of £25,000 and no children.

a substantial majority—around 80 per cent—of the broadly defined working class (NS Classes 5, 6 and 7) and likewise of the categories in the lower half of our status scale. However, what has then further to be recognised is that univores are by no means minoritarian at *higher* levels of stratification. In fact, they make up a majority of the professional and managerial salariat (NS Classes 1 and 2) and of five of the seven highest-ranking categories in the status scale. In other words, the homology argument breaks down not only in that we fail to find a musical elite that confines its consumption to 'higher' musical forms, but further in that these forms appear to have little appeal for many in higher class and status positions, who in fact follow the most frequent pattern in the population at large in restricting their consumption largely to popular music.

These same findings would also appear highly damaging to Bourdieu's elaboration of the homology argument. Since we cannot identify a musical elite, then neither *a fortiori* can we identify anything recognisable as Bourdieu's 'dominant class' that seeks both to define and appropriate high culture—and even when we focus on music, Bourdieu's 'infallible classifier'.[22] Moreover, the results we report sustain the view we previously expressed that there is little to be said for Bourdieu's attempt to go beyond Weber and to 'yoke together' class and status: i.e. by treating status and associated lifestyles as the symbolic aspect of the class structure and as reflecting the distinctive forms of *habitus* created by different 'class conditions'. Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) have shown that in contemporary British society the class structure and the status order, at least as they would wish to conceptualise them, do not map all that closely onto each other. And in this paper, we show that, when class and status are entered into the analysis together, class turns out to have rather little connection with musical consumption while the significance of status persists. Thus, in so far as we can identify musical elites at all, not in the sense of the homology argument but rather as omnivores who consume higher musical forms along with more popular ones, status—and education—do far more to account for membership in these groupings than does class. At the same time, though, it should be apparent from what has

---

[22]A dominant class of the kind Bourdieu describes would surely be large enough, if it existed, to be picked up in our latent class analysis—i.e. would amount to at least a few percent of the total population. An attempt to 'save' the homology argument in some form could perhaps be made by postulating a musical or more general cultural elite that is much smaller than this and in fact too small to figure in any survey-based analysis. But it would need to be explained how the argument then applied to the rest—i.e. virtually the whole—of the population. It is, of course, possible that Bourdieu's views were more apt to France, or at least to Paris, in the 1960s when in fact the empirical research on which he relies was carried out. Unfortunately, the data collected do not appear to be available for reanalysis.

already been said that the effects of status on type of musical consumption, while highly significant, are not overwhelmingly strong. And thus the idea of such consumption being more or less compulsively determined by the *habitus* of the individual's status group—or class—would appear, at all events in the case we have considered, to be quite inappropriate.[23]

As regards the individualisation argument, we have already remarked that the outcome of our latent class analysis—i.e. the very fact that we can identify a limited number of fairly well defined types of musical consumer—at once raises serious doubts, at least if the argument goes so far as to imply that all patterns of consumption, cultural and otherwise, are tending to dissolve into an infinity of individual styles. And, further to this, we can now say on the basis of our regression analysis that the probabilities of individuals approximating one rather than another type of musical consumption are indeed associated in fairly clear, even if not always straightforwardly 'homologous', ways with their position in the status order and with educational attainment. On the one hand, the probability of being a univore declines steadily as level of status and also of education increase. On the other hand, the probability of being a omnivore–listener and especially that of being a true omnivore are positively related to status and education.

Although, then, musical consumption will no doubt in some degree reflect purely individual taste and possibly, too, conscious lifestyle choice, there can be no question that it does still remain in various ways socially stratified.[24] Whether this stratification is less or more marked than at some earlier period, we are unable to say. But, so far as the present is concerned, our findings would indicate that for analysts of cultural consumption simply to change their emphasis 'from *habitus* to freedom' is in fact to move from one empirically untenable extreme to the other.

Finally, as regards the omnivore–univore argument, we earlier suggested that it is this that would appear most consonant with the results of our latent class analysis—sufficiently so, at least, to justify labelling our three types of musical consumer in omnivore–univore terms. To this we can now add that results from our regression analysis are also broadly in line with omnivore–

---

[23]In fact, much the same conclusion has recently been reached in a study of musical tastes in contemporary France of a generally far higher technical quality than that of Bourdieu: 'Si l'analyse sur les données françaises confirme la robustnesse du lien entre les caractéristiques sociales et l'orientation des préférences musicales des individus, celui-ci apparaît sensiblement moins consistent que ne le suggère la théorie de l'*habitus*' (Coulangeon, 2003, pp.28–9).

[24]To link the individualisation argument with that of the decay or 'death' of class, as some authors have done, would then seem rather beside the point: status is the form of stratification that the argument needs chiefly to address to make good the claim that lifestyles have broken free of all structural grounding.

univore expectations. As described above, omnivores tend to be of higher status and also to have higher levels of education than univores. At the same time, though, certain qualifications to the omnivore–univore argument that we previously put forward are also underlined. In particular, the importance of the distinction between omnivore–listeners and true omnivores is borne out in that this distinction, too, is found to have a grounding in differences in status and education.

We further noted that the omnivore–univore argument, while apparently representing a 'middle way' between the homology and individualisation arguments, can in differing versions have more affinity with the one or the other: that is, depending on whether omnivorousness is taken to express a new aesthetic—perhaps less inclusive than it may at first appear—that is itself exploited in status competition or simply an attempt at self-realisation that is little constrained by conventional ideas of cultural levels. We would not at this stage, before having extended our analyses to other cultural domains than that of music, wish to take up any very strong position on which slant has most to commend it.[25] But, so far as our present findings go, they incline us to favour the 'self-realisation' rather than the 'status competition' view. Our data are not sufficiently detailed to allow us to say whether our musical omnivores do in fact 'draw a line' at certain kinds of popular music, but we do find (see Table 3) that omnivorousness can be qualified by an apparent dislike of kinds of music, such as opera or jazz, that do not have low status associations.

More generally, in fact, we would believe that a rather radical rethinking is now be required of the nature of status relations in modern societies, and likewise of the part played by differences in cultural consumption in these relations. We would ally ourselves with proponents of the omnivore–univore argument who claim that, whatever validity the ideas of symbolic 'struggle' and 'violence', as advanced by Bourdieu and his followers, may have had for the earlier history of modern societies, they appear out of place the contemporary world. However, new ideas are then needed. Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) have shown, in the case of present-day Britain, that although a status order can still be discerned, it would appear to be less sharply demarcated than previously; and there is other evidence to indicate that status differences are now less openly asserted from above or deferentially acknowledged from

---

[25]As we earlier remarked, the omnivore–univore argument has in general been developed largely on the basis of studies of musical taste and consumption, and the musical domain may in fact be one that is especially favourable to it because of the wide variety of genres that it comprises and the differing uses to which they may be put. It is far from clear that the argument will fare as well in application to other cultural domains such as, say, that of the visual arts.

below. In turn, therefore, it could also be that the connection between status and cultural consumption is itself tending to weaken, and even on omnivore-univore lines, although, to repeat, data adequate to test this possibility are not yet available. At all events, it may have to be recognised that while both collective attempts at the hierarchical differentiation of lifestyles and individual striving for ranking within the hierarchies thus formed may still be pervasive, status enhancement may now be pursued through less direct and overt means than previously, and may even, perhaps, no longer imply an essentially 'zero-sum' game in which exclusion is always as important as acceptance or in which, in Gore Vidal's memorable phrase, 'it is not enough to succeed; others must fail'.

A The social status scale

Following the approach pioneered by Laumann (1966; 1973), the enquiry of Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) starts from the occupational structure of close friendship. The main idea is as follows: if occupations are among the most salient social positions to which status attaches and if close friendship can be taken to imply relations of social equality, then by analysing the propensity for friendships to be formed as between members of different occupational categories—through, say, the use of multidimensional scaling techniques—a structure of presumed social *in*equality may be inferred.

In the light of their findings, Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) argue that a status order can still be identified in British society, despite an evident decline in displays of deference and in the readiness of individuals openly to assert their social superiority. The status order that they propose is set out in Table 9 in the form of a ranking of 31 occupational categories according to their status scores as derived from the first dimension of a multidimensional scaling exercise.

Table 9: The 31 occupational categories ranked in descending order of status score, and representative occupations within each category.

rank	title	code	representative occupations[a]
1	Higher professionals	HP	chartered accountants, clergy, medical practitioners, solicitors
2	Associate profssionals in business	APB	journalists, investment analysts, insurance brokers, designers
3	Specialist managers	SM	company treasurers, financial managers, computer systems managers, personnel managers
4	Teachers and other professionals in education	TPE	college lecturers, education officers and inspectors, school teachers
5	General managers and administrators	GMA	bank and building society managers, general managers in industry, national and local government officers
6	Associate professionals in industry and business	API	computer analysts and programmers, quantity surveyors, vocational and industrial trainers

7	Scientists, engineers and technologists	SET	civil and structural engineers, clinical biochemists, industrial chemists, planning engineers, software engineers
8	Filing and record clerks	FRC	conveyancing clerks, computer clerks, library assistants
9	Managers and officials, nec	OMO	security managers, cleaning managers
10	Administrative officers and assistants	AOA	clerical officers in national and local government
11	Numerical clerks and cashiers	NCC	accounts assistants, bank clerks
12	Associate professionals in health and welfare	APH	community workers, nurses, occupational therapists, youth workers
13	Secretaries and receptionists	SEC	personal assistants, receptionists, secretaries, word processor operators
14	Other clerical workers	OCW	general assistants, commerical and clerical assistants
15	Buyers and sales representatives	BSR	buyers and purchasing officers, technical sales representatives, wholesale representatives
16	Childcare workers	CCW	educational assistants, nursery nurses
17	Managers and proprietors in services	MPS	catering managers, hoteliers, publicans, shopkeepers and managers
18	Plant, depot and site managers	PDM	clerks of works, farm managers, maintenance managers, transport managers, works managers
19	Sales workers	SW	cash desk and check-out operators, sales and shop assistants, window dressers
20	Health workers	HW	ambulance staff, dental nurses, nursing auxiliaries
21	Personal service workers	PSW	caretakers and housekeepers, hairdressers and beauticians, travel attendants, undertakers

22	Protective service personnel	PSP	fire service and police officers, security guards
23	Routine workers in services	RWS	car park attendants, cleaners, counter-hands, couriers and messengers, hotel porters, postal workers
24	Catering workers	CW	bar staff, chefs, cooks, waiters and waitresses
25	Store and despatch clerks	SDC	despatch and production control clerks, storekeepers
26	Skilled and related manual workers n.e.c.	SMO	gardeners and groundsmen, printers, textile workers, woodworkers
27	Transport operatives	TO	bus and coach drivers, lorry and van drivers, taxi drivers
28	Skilled and related manual workers in construction and maintenance	SMC	bricklayers, electricians, painters and decorators, plasterers, roofers, telephone repairmen
29	Skilled and related manual workers in metal trades	SMM	fitters, setters, setter-operators, sheet metal workers, turners, welders
30	Plant and machine operatives	PMO	assemblers, canners, fillers and packers, food processors, moulders and extruders, routine inspectors and testers
31	General labourers	GL	agricultural workers, factory labourers, goods porters, refuse collectors

[a] That is, occupations that account for relatively large numbers of individuals within each category and at the same time give some idea of its range.

Four features of this status order are noteworthy. First, this order reveals clear continuities with that depicted for the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries in historical and earlier sociological research. Most importantly, status appears to be still rather systematically associated with the degree of 'manuality' of work. Thus, non-manual occupations generally rank higher than manual occupations and, within the non-manual range, professional occupations rank higher than managerial occupations. Indeed, some managerial occupations—those which operate in personal service or manual milieux—such as Managers and proprietors in services (MPS) or Plant,

depot and site managers (PDM), are found at the bottom end of the non-manual range, ranking, in fact, below many routine clerical and secretarial occupations.

This ranking of occupations is consistent with those reported in previous research (e.g. Laumann, 1966; Coxon and Jones, 1978; Stewart *et al.*, 1980). However, in one crucial respect, the result of Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) is different: the second dimension and, to some degree, the third dimension of their multidimensional scaling exercise are also interpretable. Specifically, the second dimension is highly correlated with the degree of occupational sex segregation ($r = -0.92$), while the third dimension refers to various occupational *situses*. To the extent that these two dimensions capture the effects of workplace environments on the opportunities for friendship formation, the first dimension, having thus 'purified' of such influence, should reflect friendship *choice* as influenced by social status (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004, pp.387–389 and note 16).

The second point to note is that although this status order correlates sensibly with both income and education, the correlations are only rather modest. A case in point is that Plant, depot and site managers (PDM), despite their relatively low ranking in the status order, have considerably higher income than many occupations which rank above them (see Table 10). Similarly, further down the status order, Skilled and related manual workers in construction and those in metal trades (SMC and SMM) rank below Sales workers (SW), Health workers (HW), Personal service workers (PSW), Routine workers in services (RWS) and Catering workers (CW). But Table 10 again reveals that these skilled manual workers have, in fact, higher income and educational attainment than the various types of service workers mentioned above. Moreover, when the estimated status score is regressed on both income and education, the coefficient of income is actually negative in sign and marginally non-significant (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004, p.392 and Table 3). The upshot is that status, in an essentially Weberian sense as involving relations of social superiority, equality and inferiority, appears to be distinct, empirically as well as conceptually, from 'socio-economic' status as represented by scales that in some way synthesise information on income and education (e.g. Duncan, 1961; Ganzeboom and Treiman, 1996).

Thirdly, although there is a clear status gradient across social classes, the spread of status *within* class is often quite considerable and there is a good deal of overlap in status *between* classes. Thus, in contemporary British society the mapping of status onto classes is not uniformly close. Status stratification within class is especially extensive for Class 2 (lower managerial and professional occupations), Class 4 (small employers and own-account workers), Class 5 (Lower supervisory and technical occupations) and Class 7

Table 10: Some descriptive statistics of the 31 occupational categories in desending status ranking.

	rank	median income	% with A-levels		rank	median income	% with A-levels
HP	1	21054	93.3	MPS	17	11129	55.7
APB	2	16256	82.7	PDM	18	20240	62.2
SM	3	24018	81.1	SW	19	5977	39.5
TPE	4	20880	99.2	HW	20	7962	39.1
GMA	5	21010	74.9	PSW	21	7541	44.8
API	6	18416	86.6	PSP	22	17805	59.0
SET	7	22603	93.9	RWS	23	5898	25.5
FRC	8	12113	65.8	CW	24	6681	41.1
OMO	9	20073	79.8	SDC	25	11115	38.6
AOA	10	12597	55.9	SMO	26	10600	36.5
NCC	11	11173	50.3	TO	27	12850	37.2
APH	12	13888	86.4	SMC	28	14115	52.6
SEC	13	8821	46.0	SMM	29	15999	57.7
OCW	14	10338	57.3	PMO	30	11651	32.5
BSR	15	16835	70.5	GL	31	10010	31.7
CCW	16	6793	58.1				

(routine occupations) (see Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004, Figures: 6 and 7).

Finally, it should be noted that Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) have repeated their analysis in many different ways. For example, they have tried a classification scheme that is based on 25, rather than 31, occupational categories. They have used Goodman's RC(M) models instead of multidimensional scaling. They have also undertaken their analyses for men and women separately, as well as together. In all these sensitivity tests, the results obtained are remarkably similar (see Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004, Figure 3 and notes 8 and 10 esp.).

References

Bandeen-Roche, K., Miglioretti, D. L., Zeger, S. L., and Rathouz, P. J. (1997). Latent variable regression for multiple discrete outcomes. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, **92**(440), 1375–1386.

Bauman, Z. (1988). *Freedom.* Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

Beck, U. (1992). *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity.* Sage, London.

Berlyne, D., editor (1974). *Studies in the New Experimental Aesthetics: Steps Toward an Objective Psychology of Aesthetic Appreciation.* Hemisphere, Washington.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste.* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Bryson, B. (1996). "Anything but Heavy Metal": Symbolic exclusion and musical dislikes. *American Sociological Review*, **61**(5), 884–899.

Bryson, B. (1997). What about the univores? musical dislikes and group-based identity construction among Americans with low level of education. *Poetics*, **25**, 141–156.

Chan, T. W. and Goldthorpe, J. H. (2004). Is there a status order in contemporary British society? Evidence from the occupational structure of friendship. *European Sociological Review*, **20**(5), 383–401.

Cleveland, W. S. (1979). Robust locally weighted regression and smoothing scatterplots. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, **74**(368), 829–836.

Coulangeon, P. (2003). La stratification sociale des gôuts musicaux. *Revue francaise de sociologie*, **44**, 3–33.

Coxon, A. and Jones, C. (1978). *The Images of Occupational Prestige.* Macmillan, London.

Dayton, C. M. and Macready, G. B. (1988). Concomitant-variable latent class models. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, **83**(401), 173–178.

Duncan, O. D. (1961). A socioeconomic index for all occupations. In A. Reiss, editor, *Occupations and Social Status*. Free Press, New York.

Featherstone, M. (1987). Lifestyle and consumer culture. *Theory, Culture and Society*, **4**(1), 55–70.

Formann, A. K. (1992). Linear logistic latent class analysis for polytomous data. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, **87**(418), 476–486.

Ganzeboom, H. B. (1982). Explaining differential participation in high-cultural activities: A confrontation of information-processing and status-seeking theories. In W. Raub, editor, *Theoretical Models and Empirical Analyses: Contributions to the Explanation of Individual Actions and Collective Phenomena*, pages 186–205. E.S.–Publications, Utrecht.

35

Ganzeboom, H. B. and Treiman, D. J. (1996). Internationally comparable measures of occupational status for the 1988 International Standard Classification of Occupations. *Social Science Research*, **25**, 201–239.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age.* Polity, Cambridge.

Hogan, D. P., Eggebeen, D. J., and Clogg, C. C. (1993). The structure of intergenerational exchanges in American families. *American Journal of Sociology*, **98**(6), 1428–1458.

Laumann, E. O. (1966). *Prestige and Association in an Urban Community.* Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis.

Laumann, E. O. (1973). *Bonds of Pluralism.* Wiley, New York.

McCutcheon, A. L. (1987). *Latent Class Analysis*, volume 64 of *Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences.* Sage, Newbury Park, London.

Moles, A. A. (1971). *Sociodynamique de la culture.* Mouton, Paris.

Peterson, R. A. and Kern, R. M. (1996). Changing highbrow taste: From snob to omnivore. *American Sociological Review*, **61**(5), 900–907.

Peterson, R. A. and Simkus, A. (1992). How musical tastes mark occupational status groups. In M. Lamont and M. Fournier, editors, *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, chapter Seven, pages 152–186. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

R Development Core Team (2005). *R: A language and environment for statistical computing.* R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. ISBN 3-900051-07-0.

Rose, D. and Pevalin, D. J., editors (2003). *A Researcher's Guide to the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification.* Sage, London.

Sintas, J. L. and Álvarez, E. G. (2002). Omnivores show up again: The segmentation of cultural consumers in Spanish social space. *European Sociological Review*, **18**(3), 353–368.

Skelton, A., Bridgwood, A., Duckworth, K., Hutton, L., Fenn, C., Creaser, C., and Babbidge, A. (2002). Arts in England: Attendance, participation and attitudes in 2001. Research report 27, The Arts Council of England, London.

Stewart, A., Prandy, K., and Blackburn, R. M. (1980). *Social Structure and Occupations*. Macmillan, London.

van Eijck, K. (2001). Social differentiation in musical taste patterns. *Social Forces*, **79**(3), 1163–1184.

van Rees, K., Vermunt, J., and Verboord, M. (1999). Cultural classifications under discussion: Latent class analysis of highbrow and lowbrow reading. *Poetics*, **26**, 349–365.

Warde, A. (1997). *Consumption, Food and Taste*. Sage, London.

Warde, A., Tomlinson, M., and McMeekin, A. (2000). Expanding tastes? cultural omnivorousness and cultural change in the uk. The University of Manchaster CRIC Discussion Paper No.37.

Weber, M. (1922/1968). *Economy and Society*. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Weininger, E. B. (2005). Pierre Bourdieu on social class and symbolic violence. In E. O. Wright, editor, *Approaches to Class Analysis*, chapter 4, pages 116–165. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wilensky, H. L. (1964). Mass society and mass culture: Interdependence or independence? *American Sociological Review*, **29**(2), 173–197.

Wynne, D. and O'Connor, J. (1998). Consumption and the postmodern city. *Urban Studies*, **35**, 841–864.

Yamaguchi, K. (2000). Multinomial logit latent-class regression models: An analysis of the predictors of gender-role attitudes among Japanese women. *American Journal of Sociology*, **105**(6), 1702–1740.