
Lipset and “Working-Class” Authoritarianism

DICK HOUTMAN

The concept of “class” has . . . often been seen by critics of sociology as a defining characteristic of the discipline: sociologists, they hold, reduce everything to class.

—John Scott, *Stratification and Power*

Lipset’s article “Democracy and Working-Class Authoritarianism” (1959), published more than four decades ago, still plays a major role in the discussion on the relation between class and political values.¹ It introduces a distinction between two types of political values: economic liberalism/conservatism and authoritarianism/libertarianism. According to Lipset, the working class is at the liberal end of the former ideological dichotomy. Its members advocate economic redistribution by the state and thus reject a distribution based on the free market. Regarding the latter, pertaining to tolerance of nonconformity, acceptance of unconventional lifestyles, and respect for individual liberty, working-class liberalism is out of the question: “Economic liberalism refers to the conventional issues concerning redistribution of income, status, and power among the classes. The poorer everywhere are more liberal or leftist on such issues. . . . On the other hand, when liberalism is defined in non-economic terms—so as to support, for example, civil rights for political dissidents, civil rights for ethnic and racial minorities, internationalist foreign policies, and liberal immigration legislation—the relation is reversed” (1959:485).

So, according to Lipset, if liberalism is conceived as a preference for economic redistribution, the working class is more liberal than the middle class. If liberalism is viewed as tolerance and respect for individual liberty, however, the working class is less liberal than the middle class—hence his thesis of “working-class authoritarianism.” Left-wing intellectuals, or so Lipset concludes, have too facilely presented the working class as a liberating force in history because “the struggle for freedom is not a simple variant of the economic class struggle” (1959:483).

Although it is now more than forty years later, there is still no consensus about the tenability of this theory.² I start with an examination of the most important research findings to explain how researchers have interpreted the very same findings in different ways.

Dick Houtman is an assistant professor of sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and a member of the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR). His principal research interest is cultural change in late modernity and the way it restructures the political and religious domains. This article is drawn from his first book-length work in English, *Class and Politics in Contemporary Social Science: ‘Marxism Lite’ and Its Blind Spot for Culture* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2003).

Some feel they confirm Lipset's theory, while others hold that they refute it. An elaboration of this theoretical controversy justifies doubts about the tenability of Lipset's theory that authoritarianism, like economic liberalism, can be explained by class. It also produces three clusters of hypotheses that are tailored to clarify this issue. After a discussion of the operationalization, I test those hypotheses and summarize my findings.

Research conducted since the 1960s demonstrates that "the conceptualization and measurement of social class has a great deal of influence on whether . . . the theory of working-class authoritarianism [receives] support or not" (Grabb 1980:369; cf. Lipsitz 1965; Grabb 1979). The more the operationalization of class is based upon differences in education, the stronger the observed relation between class and authoritarianism. In fact, it is mainly the poorly educated who are authoritarian. In the new and revised edition of his book *Political Man*, Lipset himself notes, "A consistent and continuing research literature has documented relationships between low levels of education and racial and religious prejudice, opposition to equal rights for women, and with support of, and involvement in, fundamentalist religious groups" (1981:478).

The fact that working-class authoritarianism is mainly an "authoritarianism of the poorly educated" is evident from studies on authoritarianism, racial prejudice, and tolerance of nonconformity, three strongly interrelated variables.³ Well-educated people invariably turn out to be less authoritarian, more tolerant of nonconformists, and less racially prejudiced than people with less education. On the issue of authoritarianism this is exemplified by studies by Dekker and Ester (1987) and Eisinga and Scheepers (1989); on tolerance of nonconformity it is clear from studies by Stouffer (1955), Nunn et al. (1978), Grabb (1979, 1980), and Bobo and Licari (1989); and on racial prejudice, from studies by Eisinga and Scheepers (1989), Case et al. (1989), and Pedersen (1996).

There is thus consensus in the research literature that authoritarianism, intolerance of nonconformity, and racial prejudice are far less frequent among the well educated than the poorly educated.⁴ There is no consensus on whether this effect of education confirms or refutes Lipset's theory, however. Some researchers view education as a valid indicator of class and consequently interpret education's negative effect on authoritarianism as a confirmation of Lipset's theory (e.g., Lipset 1981:480; Kohn 1977 [1969]; Middendorp and Meloen 1990). Other researchers acknowledge that education is often considered a "straightforward proxy variable" for class (Dekker and Ester 1987:397) or an "aspect of social inequality" (Grabb 1980:373) but nonetheless hold that "education is not the same as social class and thus educational differences cannot be used as evidence for class distinctions" (Dekker and Ester 1987:409). Since they feel education is not the same as class, they view the strong effect of education on authoritarianism as being contradictory to Lipset's theory.

It is clear that this difference of opinion hinges on a theoretical question: What is actually a class? Or more specifically: Can the negative education effect on authoritarianism be interpreted as a class effect? If education has an effect here as a class indicator, it is only logical that other class indicators should have comparable effects. Against this background, the absence of any substantial negative effect of income on authoritarianism is quite striking (Kohn 1977 [1969]; Kohn and Schooler 1983; Kohn and Slomczynski 1990; cf. Zipp 1986).⁵ After all, in class analysis, income is viewed as closely linked to class. More than that: the validity and explanatory power of a class schema is usually determined by its ability to explain income differences (e.g., Wright 1979, 1985; Marshall et al. 1988; cf. Middendorp and Meloen 1990). Consistent with this, strong class effects on income are presented as evidence that classes in the Marxist sense of *Klassen an sich* instead of *Klassen für sich* still exist today (Hout et al. 1993, 2001).

According to a central tenet of class analysis, people's class position shapes their political values, which tend to be in keeping with their economic interests: "Those who are weak in labor and consumption markets become more dependent on collective and politically determined redistribution, and those with higher risks of unemployment and poverty are more reliant on a safety net protecting against the uncertainties of paid labor" (Svallfors 1991:619; cf. D'Anjou et al. 1995:357–59). This hypothesis has been confirmed by empirical research. Members of the working class, who are in a relatively poor economic position and consequently have an interest in an egalitarian distribution policy, are indeed more apt to support this kind of policy than are people in more privileged class positions.⁶ Moreover, this working-class economic liberalism can indeed be largely attributed to low income and poor education (e.g., Wright 1985:259–78; Marshall et al. 1988:179–83; De Witte 1990:207–09; Steijn and De Witte 1992). In short, the central tenet of class analysis mentioned above is confirmed by the fact that a poor education and a low income both lead to economic liberalism. The strong negative effect of education on authoritarianism cannot be interpreted on the grounds of this theoretical logic, however. Even apart from the absence of a negative income effect, it is unclear how and why the economic interests of the working class would lead to a preference for capital punishment, strict discipline in bringing up children, or limiting freedom of speech. Though an interpretation like this may still be conceivable in the case of racial prejudice among workers,⁷ this is not the case for authoritarianism in a more general sense.

Education thus seems to indicate something other than class here. But what? Bourdieu's work suggests an obvious possibility. Shouldn't education be viewed as an indicator of cultural capital (i.e., the ability to recognize cultural expressions and comprehend their meaning) rather than class (Bourdieu 1973, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977)? Following Bourdieu, education is frequently used nowadays in empirical studies as a key indicator of cultural capital (e.g., Kalmijn 1994; Bles-Booij 1994; De Graaf and Kalmijn 2001). It is quite plausible that having ample cultural capital entails an acceptance of unconventional lifestyles and nontraditional patterns of behavior. After all, it enables people to recognize and acknowledge those as culture, that is, as equally contingent and arbitrary as the culture one has grown up in oneself (cf. Bauman 1987:81–95). To put it another way, if the amount of cultural capital is limited, unconventional cultural patterns are more likely to be interpreted as not simply different, but as deviant and morally reprehensible. In other words, they are then likely to be interpreted as violations of "metasocial" norms that are made absolute, that is, as incompatible with a moral foundation that is situated beyond the social order (cf. Gabennesch 1972, Touraine 1981).

Like class, in short, education also seems a rather ambiguous variable. Depending on the type of values being studied, it can have an effect as an indicator of either class or cultural capital. If the causes of economic conservatism are being examined, education is likely to have a positive effect as a class indicator. If authoritarianism is being studied, it is likely to have a negative effect as an indicator for cultural capital. Income, which does not have anything to do with cultural capital, is a less ambiguous class indicator. It should therefore have a positive effect on economic conservatism in much the same way as education, while, unlike education, it should not have a negative effect on authoritarianism.

In short, the negative effect of education on authoritarianism cannot simply be interpreted as confirming Lipset's theory on the authoritarianism of the working class. After all, effects on authoritarianism of variables such as education or class make it impossible to arrive at a theoretically meaningful interpretation, because it remains unclear whether we are dealing with effects of class or cultural capital. This is why a systematic testing of Lipset's

theory requires the use of less ambiguous class and cultural capital indicators in statistical analyses. In addition, to further increase the theoretical interpretability of the findings, it is quite important to determine whether the two sorts of indicators really have divergent effects on economic liberalism and authoritarianism.

Which unambiguous indicators for class and cultural capital should be chosen? Following the logic of class analysis, as briefly outlined above, it is not too difficult to add two explicit class indicators to income. First, of course, wage dependence is traditionally viewed as a key class indicator. Individuals who depend on the wages they earn occupy a weaker economic position than independent entrepreneurs who own the means of production (Marx and Engels 1948 [1848]; Marx 1967 [1867]; Weber 1982 [1921]; Wright 1979, 1985; Goldthorpe 1980). Wage earners are after all dependent on the willingness of entrepreneurs to pay them for their labor and continue to do so. Second, for wage earners and independent entrepreneurs alike, job insecurity is important, because it also implies a weak economic position. Income, wage dependence, and job insecurity are thus three unambiguous class indicators.

Education, as is noted above, is ambiguous because it indicates class as well as cultural capital. As *institutionalized* cultural capital, education can be distinguished from *embodied* cultural capital, that is, an interest in art and culture itself (Bourdieu 1986; cf. Böröcz and Southworth 1996; Lamont 1986).⁸ So in addition to education, cultural participation is a second—and less ambiguous—indicator of cultural capital. If indeed the effect of education on authoritarianism is not an effect of class but of cultural capital, then in addition to a low educational level, a low level of cultural participation should also lead to authoritarianism. The three unambiguous indicators of a weak class position—low income, wage dependence, and job insecurity—should then not affect authoritarianism at all. In an explanation of economic liberalism, the opposite pattern should be found. Like education, the three unambiguous class indicators should affect it, whereas cultural participation should not.

This logic gives rise to three clusters of hypotheses. If members of the working class are distinguished from the rest of the working population primarily on the ground of their occupations, as is common practice in sociology, they can be expected to have a weak economic position and limited cultural capital. Such a “working class” can consequently also be expected to be characterized by economic liberalism (Hypothesis A1) and authoritarianism (Hypothesis A2). Even if these hypotheses are confirmed, it still cannot be concluded that class can explain both types of political values. After all, this type of occupation-based class variable is likely to be quite ambiguous, capturing cultural capital as well as class proper, that is, one’s labor market position. So in essence, such an analysis does not provide an *explanation* of authoritarianism; all it provides is a *description* of the political values of various occupational categories. And since sociology should strive for more than that, the problem of explanation must be addressed next. If both hypotheses formulated above are confirmed, the logical next step is to examine whether the economic liberalism of the working class is indeed generated by its weak economic position and whether its authoritarianism is indeed a result of its limited cultural capital.

This gives rise to two other clusters of hypotheses. The first pertains to the explanation of economic liberalism (Cluster B). If economic liberalism really is caused by a weak economic position, the previously recorded effect of occupational class on economic liberalism should be attributable to labor market differences between the classes. Wage dependence (Hypothesis B1), poor education (Hypothesis B2), low income (Hypothesis B3), and job insecurity (Hypothesis B4) should then lead to economic liberalism and limited cultural participation

should not (Hypothesis B5). Moreover, working-class economic liberalism may be expected to disappear once the variables mentioned above are included in the analysis (Hypothesis B6). If these six hypotheses are confirmed, this convincingly demonstrates that the economic liberalism of the working class should indeed be attributed to its weak labor market position.

The third and last cluster of hypotheses pertains to whether the authoritarianism of the working class should indeed be attributed to its limited cultural capital (Cluster C). A low educational level (Hypothesis C1) and a low level of cultural participation (Hypothesis C2) are expected to lead to authoritarianism, whereas wage dependence (Hypothesis C3), low income (Hypothesis C4), and job insecurity (Hypothesis C5) are expected not to affect it. Analogous to the cluster of hypotheses formulated above, working-class authoritarianism can be expected to disappear once these variables are included in the analysis (Hypothesis C6). If these six hypotheses are confirmed, this demonstrates that working-class authoritarianism has nothing to do with its weak economic or class position, but that it is essentially its limited cultural capital that is decisive.

After a discussion of the operationalization, I start with a test of the first cluster of hypotheses about how occupational class is related to both types of political values. Then I first examine whether, as expected, such a class variable captures not only the strength of one's labor market position, but the amount of cultural capital as well. Since the two final clusters of hypotheses are based on the assumption that this is indeed the case, they are tested only after this has been checked.

Class. To test the hypotheses formulated above, the class schema developed by Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero, the so-called EGP class schema, is used in the analysis in addition to the unambiguous class and cultural capital indicators mentioned above. This class schema was developed in the late 1970s (Erikson et al. 1979; Goldthorpe 1980:39–42), and according to observers it is the one most widely used by sociologists today (Bakker et al. 1997:8; De Graaf and Steijn 1997:131; Scheepers et al. 1989:337; cf. Nieuwbeerta 1995:38–39). Since the EGP class schema is largely based upon the classification of occupations, which are themselves strongly related to education, there seems to be no way to keep it from expressing a mixture of labor market position and cultural capital. This is precisely why it is likely that the EGP classes will differ with regard to both economic liberalism and authoritarianism.

The coding system published by Bakker et al. (1997; see also Ganzeboom et al. 1989) is used to assign EGP class positions to the respondents. This is done on the basis of (1) their occupation, (2) whether they are self-employed, and (3) the number of people they have working under them. Regarding occupational titles, the *1992 Standard Occupational Classification* drawn up by the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (1994) is used. The classification of the 711 respondents who work at least twenty hours a week results in a reasonable distribution over the seven EGP classes, although class II is much larger than the six other ones (Table 1).

Two points require clarification. First, it is important to emphasize that the seven EGP classes do not constitute a one-dimensional hierarchy with class I occupying the most privileged and class VII the least privileged economic position (Goldthorpe 1980:42). The nonmanual classes I, II, and III are arranged in this way, however, in the sense that class I occupies the most privileged and class III the least privileged economic position, with class II in the middle. The same holds true for the manual workers in classes V, VI, and VII: class VII is in the least favorable economic position and class V is in the best one, with class VI in

Table 1
EGP Class Schema

EGP class		%
Class I	Higher grade professionals, self-employed or salaried; higher grade administrators and officials in central and local government and in public and private enterprises; managers in large industrial establishments; large proprietors	15.0
Class II	Lower grade professionals and higher grade technicians; lower grade administrators and officials; managers in small business and industrial establishments and in services; supervisors of nonmanual employees	30.2
Class III	Routine non-manual workers: clerical workers, sales personnel, and other rank-and-file employees in services	21.2
Class IV	Petty bourgeoisie: small proprietors, including farmers and smallholders; self-employed artisans and all other "own account" workers apart from professionals	5.3
Class V	Supervisors of manual workers and lower grade technicians (to some extent manual work)	7.5
Class VI	Skilled manual workers in all branches of industry	5.8
Class VII	Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers in industry and agricultural workers	14.2
Unknown		0.7
Total		100.0

N = 711

the middle. However, the relation between these two separate hierarchies and each of their relations to the class of small self-employed businessmen (class IV) is not simply hierarchical in the same sense. Class III is not simply higher than class V or even higher than classes VI or VII, and class IV is not necessarily lower than classes I, II, or even III.

Second, it is important to say a few words about what constitutes the "working class proper." Classes I, II, and IV can be classified as middle class without any problems, whereas classes VI and VII, consisting of skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled manual workers, definitely constitute the working class. Although sociologists often collapse the EGP class schema into a manual-nonmanual dichotomy (e.g., Nieuwbeerta 1995; Andersen and Heath 2002), thus considering *all* manual workers, including class V, as "working class" and *all* nonmanual workers, including class III, as "middle class," this classification of those two classes is contestable. As for class V, "a latter-day aristocracy of labour or a 'blue collar' elite" (Goldthorpe 1980:41) consisting of lower-grade technicians and supervisors of manual workers, it can be argued that it should be distinguished from the "real" working class by classifying it as (lower) middle class. As for class III, consisting of routine nonmanual employees, neo-Marxists such as Erik Wright (Wright 1979; Wright et al. 1982) argue that it is not part of the "middle class" but consists of "white collar proletarians" who should be classified as "working class" accordingly. In short, although it is uncontested in the literature that EGP classes VI and VII are part of the working class and that classes I, II, and IV are part of the middle class, the classification of classes III and V is contestable.

Because the seven EGP classes cannot be classified in a universally acceptable way, they

Table 2
Factor Loadings of Nine (F Scale) Authoritarianism/Libertarianism Indicators

<i>Authoritarianism/libertarianism indicators (F scale items)</i>	<i>% Agree (strongly)</i>	<i>Factor 1</i>
More and more people have recently begun to interfere with matters that ought to be personal and private.	47.3	0.39
Most people are disappointing when you get to know them better.	17.5	0.59
Young people sometimes have rebellious ideas but as they grow older they ought to grow out of them and adjust to reality.	58.2	0.62
Our social problems would be largely solved if we could only somehow remove criminal and anti-social elements from society.	32.2	0.70
What we need are fewer laws and agencies and more courageous, tireless leaders who people can have faith in.	30.1	0.73
People with bad manners, habits, and upbringing can hardly be expected to know how to associate with decent people.	44.2	0.59
There are two kinds of people, strong ones and weak ones.	18.8	0.62
Sexual offences such as raping and sexually assaulting children warrant more severe punishment than just prison sentences; criminals like these should be given corporal punishment in public.	36.0	0.61
If people would talk less and work harder, everything would be better.	35.4	0.67
Eigenvalue		3.45
R^2		0.38
Cronbach's α		0.79

Principal component analysis, $N = 1,388$.

are not forced into a dichotomous distinction between working class and middle class here. This prevents me from comparing two relatively heterogeneous and contestable classes and making the political values of classes III and V invisible by considering them as parts of a larger "working class" or "middle class." Given the contestable classification of those two EGP classes, the most relevant distinction in interpreting the findings is the one between the working class proper (i.e., classes VI and VII) and the uncontested middle class (i.e., classes I, II, and IV).

Authoritarianism/libertarianism is measured with the use of nine Likert items that constitute a short version of the F scale developed by Adorno et al. (1950) that is often used in survey research (e.g., Dekker and Ester 1987; Eisinga and Scheepers 1989; Meloen and Middendorp 1991; Middendorp and Meloen 1990). Principal component analysis shows that 38 percent of the variance is explained by the first factor, which produces a scale with a reliability of 0.79 (see Table 2). Scale scores between 0 and 10 are assigned to all respondents with no more than two missing values. Higher scores signify stronger authoritarianism.

Economic liberalism/conservatism is determined by means of six Likert items. Principal component analysis produces a first factor that explains 41 percent of the variance. The reliability of the scale composed of those six items is 0.71 (see Table 3). On a scale with a

Table 3
Factor Loadings of Six Economic Liberalism/Conservatism Indicators

<i>Economic liberalism/conservatism indicators</i>	<i>% Agree (strongly)</i>	<i>Factor 1</i>
The state should make social benefits higher.	26.8	0.54
There is no longer any real poverty in the Netherlands.	26.5	-0.51
Large income differences are unfair because in essence everyone is equal.	28.3	0.77
Nowadays workers no longer have to fight for an equal position in society.	27.3	-0.51
The state should intervene to reduce income differences.	32.5	0.83
Companies should be obliged to allow their employees to share in the profits.	59.6	0.53
Eigenvalue		2.48
R^2		0.41
Cronbach's α		0.71

Principal component analysis, $N = 1,602$

range from 0 to 10, scale scores are assigned to all respondents with no more than two missing values. Higher scores signify stronger economic liberalism.

Education. Seven levels of education have been distinguished: (1) no more than elementary school: 2.7 percent; (2) lower vocational school: 15.0 percent; (3) advanced special school: 13.6 percent; (4) five—or six-year secondary school: 9.0 percent; (5) intermediate vocational school: 22.6 percent; (6) higher vocational school or college (B.A.): 26.3 percent; (7) university (M.A.): 8.0 percent.⁹

Income. To examine the relation between the EGP class schema and income, the net individual monthly income is used. Erikson (1984) suggests, however, that it is not the net individual income but the net household income that should be used to determine someone's market position. This is why the net household income is used in the analyses that aim to explain economic liberalism and authoritarianism. The average net individual monthly income is Dfl. 3,072, with a standard deviation of Dfl. 1,535. Of course the average net household monthly income is higher, that is, Dfl. 4,468, with a standard deviation of Dfl. 1,119.

Wage dependence. Wage dependence is simply determined by asking respondents who work whether they do (1: 94.0 percent) or do not (0: 6.0 percent) work for wages.

Job insecurity. Job insecurity is operationalized by means of three questions. The first question pertains to whether respondents do (1: 5.3 percent) or do not (0: 94.7 percent) have a temporary contract.¹⁰ The second question pertains to the number of times they have been unemployed for more than three months since they stopped attending school full-time; 86.8 percent have never been unemployed for more than three months (0), 7.2 percent once (1), and 6.0 percent twice or more (2). The third question pertains to the risk, as estimated by the respondent, that someone with the same kind of contract (either temporary or permanent) and the same kind of work will be forced to look for another job within the next three years; 20.4 percent feel there is a very small chance of this happening (1),

Table 4
Factor Loadings of Seven Cultural Participation Indicators

<i>Cultural participation indicators</i>	<i>% Limited¹</i>	<i>Factor 1</i>
Number of books one has	23.7	0.62
Number of novels one has read in the past three months	40.8	0.46
Frequency of going to concerts	50.7	0.61
Frequency of going to plays, shows, or ballet	53.4	0.52
Frequency of going to art exhibitions	47.1	0.78
Frequency of discussing art and culture	31.6	0.81
Extent of self-image as an art and culture lover	29.5	0.80
Eigenvalue		3.15
R^2		0.45
Cronbach's α		0.79

Principal component analysis, $N = 1,854$.

¹This category includes the answers fewer than fifty books; no novels; never or almost never goes to concerts or to plays, shows, or ballet or to art exhibitions; never or almost never discusses art and culture; and definitely has no self-image as an art and culture lover.

31.4 percent feel there is a pretty small chance (2), 3.6 percent think the chance is not that small but not that large either, or don't know (3), 8.3 percent feel there is a pretty large chance (4), and 3.4 percent feel there is an extremely large chance (5). The three indicators have been added up after standardization and have been converted into an index with a range from 0 to 10. Higher scores stand for greater job insecurity.

Cultural participation. Last, cultural participation is operationalized with questions on how many books people have, how many novels they have read in the past three months; how often they go to (1) concerts, (2) plays, shows, or ballet, and (3) art exhibitions; how often they discuss art and culture; and the extent to which they view themselves as art and culture lovers.¹¹ Principal component analysis produces a first factor that explains 45 percent of the variance with factor loadings varying from 0.46 (number of novels read in the past three months) to 0.81 (frequency of discussing art) (see Table 4). Scores for cultural participation are calculated as the sum of standardized scores, which are then converted into a scale ranging from 0 to 10 (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.79$). Higher scores stand for greater cultural participation.

The importance of Lipset's distinction between authoritarianism and economic liberalism is underscored by the extremely weak correlation between the two scales measuring them ($r = 0.05$; $N = 1,755$; $p > 0.01$). Even if it is known how liberal someone is in an economic sense, there is still thus no way of using this information to predict his or her authoritarianism, and vice versa.

The first two hypotheses now predict that the working class, here simply viewed as a descriptive category, is more economically liberal (Hypothesis A1) as well as more authoritarian (Hypothesis A2) than the other EGP classes. In the EGP class schema, as is noted above, classes VI (skilled manual workers) and VII (semi—and unskilled manual workers) constitute the working class proper. They are thus expected to differ from the five other EGP classes regarding economic liberalism and authoritarianism.

Table 5
Economic Liberalism/Conservatism and Authoritarianism/Libertarianism by EGP Class

<i>EGP class</i>	<i>Economic liberalism/conservatism</i>	<i>Authoritarianism/libertarianism</i>
Class I	-0.27	-0.97
Class II	-0.30	-0.42
Class III	0.24	0.22
Class IV	-1.26	0.25
Class V	0.04	0.16
Class VI	0.67	0.99
Class VII	0.75	1.03
Grand mean	4.89	4.47
η	0.26***	0.35***
R^2	0.07***	0.12***
N	697	682

Analyses of variance, deviations from grand mean.

*** $p < 0.001$

With regard to the differences in economic liberalism, four of the seven EGP classes score higher than the grand mean of 4.89 and are thus economically more liberal than the average (see Table 5). Two of them however, class III and, to an even greater extent, class V, score only marginally higher than the grand mean. The two classes that constitute the working class proper, classes VI and VII, score 0.67 and 0.75 higher than the average. They are evidently the two most economically liberal classes. They are in clear contrast to class IV, the small self-employed businessmen, who are economically the most conservative. Although Hypothesis A1 is confirmed by the observed pattern, it is striking how relatively weak the relation between class and economic liberalism is. EGP class can explain only 7 percent of the differences in economic liberalism.

In the case of authoritarianism, the differences between the classes are greater with 12 percent of the variance being explained. With the exception of classes I and II, all of the classes exhibit above-average authoritarianism. This holds most true, however, for the two classes that join to form the working class proper, classes VI and VII. Hypothesis A2 is thus confirmed as well, and the working class is not only the most liberal with regard to matters of economic distribution; it is also characterized more than the other EGP classes by authoritarianism.

Summing up, as long as class is viewed as no more than a descriptive category, Lipset's thesis is simply confirmed. Perfectly consistent with his ideas, we find a working class characterized by economic liberalism and authoritarianism. From a theoretical point of view, however, the more important question is whether this means that authoritarianism, like economic liberalism, can be *explained* by class. To find this out, the theoretical distinction between class proper (i.e., labor market position) and cultural capital must be applied in testing the two remaining clusters of hypotheses.

Of course the fact that the two first hypotheses are confirmed does not necessarily mean the same will happen with the remaining ones. After all, the last two clusters of hypotheses

Table 6
Net Personal Income, Job Insecurity, Educational Level, and Cultural Participation by EGP Class

<i>EGP class</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Income (corrected)¹</i>	<i>Job insecurity</i>	<i>Educational level</i>	<i>Cultural participation</i>
Class I	991	914	-0.11	1.3	0.98
Class II	224	261	-0.36	0.8	0.49
Class III	-621	-340	0.47	-0.5	-0.15
Class IV	556	-168	-0.53	-0.3	0.49
Class V	228	38	-0.11	-0.4	-0.76
Class VI	-512	-665	-0.12	-1.1	-1.48
Class VII	-692	-718	0.47	-1.7	-1.05
Grand mean	3,080	3,080	1.65	4.5	2.97
η	0.53***	0.47***	0.23***	0.59***	0.37***
R^2	0.28***	0.48***	0.05***	0.34***	0.14***
N	678	678	706	689	705

Analyses of variance, deviations from grand mean.

*** $p < 0.001$

¹Corrected (by means of covariates) for age, sex, and number of weekly working hours.

are based upon the assumption that the seven EGP classes differ substantially with respect to both their labor market positions and their amounts of cultural capital. This is why I address the question of whether and, if so, how exactly and to what extent this is indeed the case, before these hypotheses are tested. In comparison with the other EGP classes, does the working class, in addition to occupying the weakest labor market position, also have the least cultural capital?

Obviously there is no need to devote attention here to differences pertaining to wage dependence between the classes, since this is one of the classification criteria underlying the EGP class schema. By definition, for instance, the whole working class (classes VI and VII) works for wages, and all of the small self-employed businessmen (class IV) do not. Only opening up the black box of the EGP class schema can reveal further differences between the seven EGP classes with respect to labor market position and cultural capital. Its contents, in so far as they are relevant to the theme addressed in this article, are summarized in Table 6.

The EGP class schema is strongly related to income. It explains almost 30 percent of the individual income differences. Since income is used in class analysis as the most appropriate variable for assessing the validity and explanatory power of class measures, this is, of course, not surprising. It is exactly what would be expected from a class variable. The lowest incomes are not only observed in class III (routine nonmanual workers), they are also observed in class VI (skilled manual workers) and class VII (semi- and unskilled manual workers).

In the Netherlands, as in most other western countries, income depends not only on the kind of work people do but also on their age, since as a rule older people earn more. In addition, women tend to earn less than men, even if they do the same kind of work (Schippers 1995). Last, income also depends to a considerable extent on how many hours people work. Since it is conceivable that there are higher percentages of youngsters, part-time workers, and women in the low-income classes, one might wonder how much of the income differ-

ences between the seven EGP classes can be attributed to this. In fact this might help explain the low income of class III. To see whether this is indeed the case, the average income for each class has been recalculated while controlling for the three above-mentioned variables.

The number of hours worked per week, age, and sex all indeed turn out to influence income. The strength of their separate effects is not shown in Table 6, but it is evident from the increase in the explained variance from 28 percent to no less than 48 percent how sizable their collective effect is. It is important, however, that there is barely any reduction in the relation between class and income as a result. It was 0.53 before correction and is still 0.47 after correction. The observed income differences between the classes can thus be attributed only to a very limited extent to the fact that the classes with the lowest incomes have above-average percentages of youngsters, part-time workers, and women. The one important exception, the extremely low income of class III (routine nonmanual workers), is caused to a considerable extent by the relative overrepresentation of these three categories.¹² There are ultimately only two classes left that deviate in a negative sense from the rest with respect to income, classes VI and VIII, the working class proper.

Classes III and VII exhibit above-average job insecurity. This bears only an extremely weak relation to EGP class, however, since the latter captures only 5 percent of the job insecurity differences. Since the EGP class schema is meant and assumed to reflect job insecurity differences, this is a surprising finding. Not that it was not observed in earlier studies—Steijn and Houtman (1998) made the same observation—but it raises questions about the validity of the EGP class schema. Although it is intended to capture differences pertaining to labor market position, this aim is barely achieved with respect to job insecurity.¹³

Last, education and cultural participation differences between the classes are considerable, particularly those pertaining to education. The relation between EGP class and education is no less than 0.59, which means that the EGP class schema captures approximately a third of the education differences. This figure is lower for cultural participation, but it is still considerable. The lowest levels of education and cultural participation are observed in EGP classes VI and VII, the working class. Thus the working class not only has the weakest labor market position, it also has the least cultural capital. To get a closer look at what is going on inside the black box of the EGP class schema as it is used in Table 5 to explain the two types of political values, the remaining hypotheses will have to be tested.

The second cluster of hypotheses pertains to how economic liberalism is explained. Since EGP class actually captures differences in labor market position as well as cultural capital, Hypotheses B1 to B5 are all tested by means of a hierarchical regression analysis in two steps. In the first step, the five different indicators for labor market position and cultural capital are entered, that is, income, job insecurity, wage dependence, education, and cultural participation. The second step is carried out with the stepwise option in SPSS and addresses whether EGP class, represented for this purpose as a series of dummy variables, can explain extra variance after the above-mentioned indicators are included in the analysis.¹⁴ If this is not the case, the previously observed effect of EGP class on economic liberalism can be completely attributed to the series of variables included in the first step. The results of this regression analysis are given in Table 7. Without exception, the four hypotheses on the effects of the separate indicators for the strength of one's labor market position are all confirmed. Working for wages (Hypothesis B1), a low educational level (Hypothesis B2), a low household income (Hypothesis B3), and considerable job insecurity (Hypothesis B4) all contribute to approximately the same extent to economic liberalism. The two last hypotheses, both of which predict the absence of any effect, are similarly confirmed. First,

Table 7
Economic Liberalism/Conservatism Explained by
(Indicators for) Class and Cultural Capital

<i>Independent variables</i>	β
<i>Step 1</i>	
Wage dependence	0.15***
Income	-0.12**
Job insecurity	0.18***
Educational level	-0.15***
Cultural participation	0.08
<i>Step 2:</i>	
Class I	-0.00 ¹
Class II	-0.07 ¹
Class III	0.00 ¹
Class IV	0.04 ¹
Class V	-0.00 ¹
Class VI	0.05 ¹
Class VII	0.07 ¹
<i>R</i> ²	0.10***

Hierarchical regression analysis, N = 661.

** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

¹Not included in regression equation (p > 0.05).

differences in cultural participation do not have any effect on economic liberalism, which means that Hypothesis B5 is confirmed. Second, the seven EGP classes cannot explain any more extra variance than the variables already included, so that Hypothesis B6 is also confirmed. The four labor market position indicators do not have much of an effect on economic liberalism; the effects vary from 0.10 to 0.20. They nonetheless collectively explain a bit more variance (10 percent) than EGP class (7 percent). This not only means that those explicit class indicators are responsible for the variance explained by EGP class above; it also means that they jointly better tap one's labor market position than the EGP class schema. This is not surprising, since job insecurity is barely expressed in the EGP class schema, though it is important in explaining economic liberalism.

The confirmation of this second cluster of hypotheses makes it clear how the observed relation between EGP class and economic liberalism should be interpreted theoretically. The economic liberalism of classes VI and VII, the working class proper, is completely due to their poor position in the labor market. Thus the statement that the working class is economically more liberal than the other EGP classes is more than just a descriptive statement. Its economic liberalism can really be explained from the circumstance that its members occupy weak positions in the labor market. State efforts to reduce income differences are therefore in their interest, and this leads to economic liberalism.

What remains now is the third and last cluster of hypotheses, which pertains to explaining authoritarianism. In this case as well, hypotheses are tested by means of a hierarchical regression analysis in two steps (see Table 8).

As predicted, education, effective above as an indicator for the strength of one's labor market position, now has a relatively strong negative effect. People with a low educational

Table 8
 Authoritarianism/Libertarianism Explained by
 (Indicators for) Class and Cultural Capital

<i>Independent variables</i>	β
<i>Step 1:</i>	
Wage dependence	-0.03
Income	-0.06
Job insecurity	-0.07*
Educational level	-0.29***
Cultural participation	-0.24***
<i>Step 2:</i>	
Class I	-0.07 ¹
Class II	-0.01 ¹
Class III	0.01 ¹
Class IV	-0.02 ¹
Class V	-0.01 ¹
Class VI	0.06 ¹
Class VII	0.05 ¹
R^2	0.22***

Hierarchical regression analysis, N = 659.

*p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001

¹Not included in regression equation (p > 0.05).

level are far more authoritarian than people with a high educational level ($\beta = -0.29$). This means that Hypothesis C1 is confirmed. Two findings indicate that educational level does not play a role here as an indicator for the strength of one's labor market position but as an indicator for cultural capital. First, cultural participation has much the same effect as education; the more people partake of art and culture, the less authoritarian they are. Compared with effects on economic liberalism, the strength of this effect is considerable ($\beta = -0.24$). Hypothesis C2 is thus also confirmed. Second, wage dependence, a low income, and great job insecurity do not lead to authoritarianism. It is true that job insecurity does have a weak effect, but it is negative instead of positive and consequently refutes the idea that a weak class position leads to authoritarianism. Hypotheses C3, C4, and C5 are thus also confirmed; a weak labor market position does not lead to authoritarianism. In short, as expected, the findings are the mirror image of those found for economic liberalism.

Education and cultural participation jointly explain almost twice as much variance (22 percent) as EGP class, and this includes the variance explained by the latter (see Table 5). Once education and cultural participation are included in the analysis, none of the seven EGP classes can explain any extra variance. This also holds true if job insecurity with its weak negative effect is removed from the first step of the analysis (not shown in Table 8). Hypothesis C6 is consequently confirmed; the effect of EGP class on authoritarianism observed above should in fact be completely attributed to differences regarding cultural capital between the seven EGP classes.

What are the more general theoretical implications of those findings for the tenability of Lipset's thesis on working-class authoritarianism? First and foremost, it is clearly completely acceptable as a non-theoretical and descriptive statement. It is simply true that the people sociologists categorize as "the working class" are more authoritarian than others. However,

it is just as clear that this working-class authoritarianism is not *explained* by class, that is, by the weak position workers occupy in the labor market. In essence we are dealing here with an effect of their limited cultural capital. And since theories should offer explanations rather than descriptions of social phenomena, Lipset's thesis is untenable at a theoretical level.

This essay started with Lipset's classical idea that though the working class is economically more liberal than the middle class, it is also more authoritarian and intolerant. Research conducted since the 1960s shows that in essence this working-class authoritarianism is mainly an authoritarianism of the poorly educated. There is no consensus in the literature about whether this should be interpreted as confirming or refuting Lipset's theory. The analysis in this article clarifies this issue.

The distinction between economic liberalism and authoritarianism is important. Since they are completely independent of each other, they cannot be viewed as two aspects of the same thing. Knowing how economically liberal people are does not in any way make it possible to predict how authoritarian they are or are not going to be. In addition, each of the two types of political values, as Lipset notes, exhibits quite a different relation with class according to the classification by Goldthorpe et al. In an economic sense the working class (i.e., manual workers) might well be the most liberal, but this is also the class where authoritarianism is most widespread.

Although at first glance these findings support Lipset's theory, it still proves impossible to conclude that class can *explain* both types of values. If class is viewed as a theoretical concept within an explanatory sociological theory rather than as a descriptive category, then economic liberalism can indeed be explained from class. People who occupy the weakest positions in the labor market and thus have the greatest interest in economic redistribution by the state are the most liberal in an economic sense. However, labor market position does not in any way influence authoritarianism. The decisive factor in this case is cultural capital. Authoritarianism and intolerance are not the by-products of a weak labor market position but of limited cultural capital. The more cultural capital people have, the more apt they are to recognize and acknowledge deviant ideas and lifestyles as cultural phenomena and consequently to accept their existence. Lipset's thesis of working-class authoritarianism is thus tenable as a descriptive statement but not as an explanatory sociological theory.

Those findings have an important theoretical consequence. Lipset's vital distinction between two types of political values must be supplemented by an equally significant distinction between two types of social position: the strength of people's labor market position ("class") on the one hand and the amount of cultural capital on the other. Through the economic interests it entails, an insecure class position leads to economic liberalism. Through the recognition and acknowledgment of unconventional lifestyles as cultural expressions rather than deviations from an absolute moral foundation situated beyond culture, cultural capital leads to libertarianism. Ignoring this distinction between class and cultural capital yields a theoretically ambiguous "class" variable that exhibits relations with both types of political values. Applying such a "black box" in empirical research thus wrongly gives the impression that economic liberalism/conservatism and authoritarianism/libertarianism can both be explained by class and conceals the fact that they come about in fundamentally different ways. Class does not affect authoritarianism.

Notes

1. Under the title "Working-Class Authoritarianism" this article has also been included in his book *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Lipset 1960:97–130). A revised edition of the book was published in

1981 with a new chapter called "Second Thoughts and Recent Findings," in which Lipset focuses on the research findings since 1960 and the criticism of his earlier analysis by other authors.

2. One can dispute the notion that Lipset's article contains a (one) theory. First, one can view it as merely an account of an empirical state of affairs without any theoretical pretension, in which case the article contains no theory. Second, one can view it as a combination of various partially implicit theories that still have not been clearly formulated, in which case there are a number of theories. I follow this second interpretation in this article and address what I consider the two most important theories: one on the effect of class on economic liberalism and one on the effect of class on authoritarianism. I am mainly interested in testing the second of these theories, which is also crucial to Lipset's article, as is evident from its title. The only reason I also test the first theory is to provide a clarifying perspective.
3. No clear distinction is drawn in the research literature between authoritarianism and tolerance of nonconformity. They are largely viewed as interchangeable, as is evident from the fact that in testing Lipset's thesis of working-class authoritarianism, Grabb does not measure authoritarianism with Adorno et al.'s F scale (1950), but with a scale for tolerance of nonconformity developed by Stouffer (1955). Whereas authoritarianism and tolerance of nonconformity are thus generally considered highly similar, Eisinga and Scheepers (1989) demonstrate that there is also an extremely strong relation between authoritarianism and racial prejudice.
4. It has been argued that the negative relationship between education and authoritarianism is simply a methodological artifact caused by either response set or a tendency among well-educated people to give socially desirable answers (e.g., Hamilton 1972:455–56; Jackman 1973, 1978; Jackman and Muha 1984). Such attempts to explain away the libertarianism of the well educated fail to convince, however. First, measures not susceptible to the problem of response set, such as Inglehart's index for postmaterialism, yield the same relationship with education. Second, attempts to demonstrate social desirability produce specifications of the relation with education rather than disproving its existence. They boil down to either (1) demonstrating that the well educated "know" the "right" (i.e., liberal) answers and subsequently raising the standards of libertarianism to a level at which education no longer makes a difference, or (2) inserting ideological or psychological variables between education and authoritarianism/libertarianism to conclude that this accounts for part of the initial relationship (Weil 1985:458–59).
5. Of course it is possible to use bivariate analysis to demonstrate that income has a negative effect on authoritarianism (see, e.g., Middendorp and Meloen 1990:262–63, 1991:66; Dekker and Ester 1987:404). However, analyses of this kind are not convincing because education and income are considerably related among themselves. Multivariate analyses that simultaneously include income and education as independent variables consequently reveal that differences in authoritarianism between income categories should be attributed to the fact that the lower income categories have lower levels of education as well.
6. See, for example, Felling and Peters (1986), Wright (1985:259–78), Marshall et al. (1988:179–83), De Witte (1990:207–09), and Steijn and De Witte (1992). As a rule, the effects observed in studies of this kind are relatively weak, however. For a concise discussion of a few of these and several other studies on this topic, the reader is referred to Houtman (1994:51–71).
7. Without any evidence, Reid (1977:232), for example, interprets racism among the working class as aversion to new rivals on the labor market, since competition could harm its already weak economic position.
8. In addition, Bourdieu distinguishes "objectified" cultural capital, that is, the possession of cultural goods such as books or paintings. In this book, "objectified" and "embodied" cultural capital are combined to make one scale for cultural participation. Since it is hard to conceive of the possession of cultural goods as having an effect on authoritarianism/libertarianism independently of embodied cultural capital, only one indicator is included here for objectified cultural capital, that is, the number of books a person has. In a previous study I used the field someone majored in as a third indicator for cultural capital—referred to at the time as someone's "sociocultural position"—distinguishing between "technical" and "sociocultural" fields (Houtman 1994). Applying this distinction confronted me, however, with considerable coding problems, and, probably partly as a consequence of this, this third indicator hardly added explanatory power to cultural participation and educational level. This applies even more to the present study, probably because of an improved operationalization of cultural participation, which is obviously related to the field a person has majored in and therefore erodes the explanatory power of the latter even more. In this study cultural capital is therefore measured by means of education and cultural participation only. The coding problems referred to above are of two types. In the first place, even though most vocational and academic study programs can be categorized as being either "technical" or "sociocultural," this distinction is hard to apply to nursing, for example, where acquiring technical skills and learning to deal with people both play an important role. This is why a third "neutral"/"mixed" category must be added, which would of course also contain general preparatory study programs at elementary school and second-

ary school. In the second place, and even more importantly, a person's education simply does not provide enough information to make adequate coding possible. It overlooks theoretically important differences between taking cultural subjects such as languages or history, or technical subjects such as mathematics, physics, and chemistry in secondary school. It also overlooks the difference between attending law school and specializing in fiscal law or in human rights, between studying sociology and specializing in qualitative or quantitative research methods, between studying medicine and specializing in surgery or psychiatry and so forth.

9. No information is available on the educational level of 2.7 percent of the respondents.
10. Of course independent entrepreneurs are not asked this question. They are given the same score for this question as people who have a permanent contract (0).
11. There are six response categories for the question about how many books a person has: (1) fewer than fifty, (2) from fifty to 100, (3) from 100 to 250, (4) from 250 to 499, (5) from 500 to 1,000, and (6) more than 1,000. The question on how many novels a person has read in the past three months is an open question recoded into five categories: (1) none, (2) two, (3) three or four, (4) five to nine, and (5) ten or more. The three questions on how often a person goes to concerts; to plays, shows, or ballet performances; and to art exhibitions, have four response categories: (1) never or almost never, (2) once or twice a year, (3) three to six times a year, and (4) more than six times a year. The question about how often a person discusses art and culture also has four response categories: (1) never or almost never, (2) sometimes, (3) quite frequently, and (4) every day or almost every day. The question about the extent to which a person sees himself as an art and culture lover, finally, has three response categories: (1) definitely not, (2) to a certain degree, and (3) absolutely.
12. In addition, there is a dramatic decrease in the average income of small self-employed businessmen (class IV). This is obviously because in most cases, they work far more hours than wage earners.
13. There are two possible reasons for this, which are not mutually exclusive. The first possibility is that as part of recent economic changes Beck (1992) refers to as the rise of the risk society, nowadays job insecurity is no longer exclusively a characteristic of the working class (e.g., Steijn et al. 1998). If this is the case, then because of these changes in the "real world," the EGP class schema has become less useful. The second possibility is that this class schema, based on occupational title, number of subordinates, and being self-employed or not, has never really tapped the degree of job security. If this is the case, EGP class was a weak indicator for job insecurity in the past as well.
14. With this stepwise option independent variables are only added to the regression equation if—given the effects of the independents already included—they can still make a significant contribution to the explanation of the dependent variable. This option also makes it possible to present seven instead of six dummy variables for seven EGP classes for possible inclusion in the second step. In an ordinary regression analysis this would cause multicollinearity.

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