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# **Social Status and Cultural Consumption: the Classification of European Countries**

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# Theoretical Background

Lifestyle as a mean to manifest social position

Status groups (Weber 1946)

Conspicuous consumption (Veblen 2007)

Lifestyle homology (Bourdieu 1984)

# Homology thesis

Every social position implies certain set of practises and tastes which are adopted during socialization;  
The practices are stratified and create the field of symbolic inequality;  
These practices are perceived as personal choices, yet, they are the product of social environment  
(Bourdieu 1984)



# Omnivory: Re-orientation of Lifestyle Stratification

Lifestyle dimensions redefined from «highbrow-lowbrow» opposition to «omnivorous-univorous» patterns (Peterson & Kern 1996)



# Lifestyle and Social Position

Different bases for social stratification definition  
(class, status, education, identity etc)

By far, social status is a better predictor than class (Chan & Goldthorpe 2007)

Controversial findings in different countries:

Omnivorous can be found among different social statuses  
(Katz-Gerro 1998)

No impact of class or status (Priou 2008)

Education and income are more important than status  
(Reeves 2014, Chan & Goldthorpe 2007 (2))

# Comparative perspective

Problems when comparing tastes (different perception of products)

Findings:

Controversy in the effects of cultural policies (Feder & Katz-Gerro 2012, van der Ploeg 2006)

Positive effect of economic development on the variety of practices (Hek, Kraaykamp 2013)

Economic inequality increases the impact of status upon lifestyle (Hek, Kraaykamp 2013)

Modernization reduces the effects of social position (Gerhards et al. 2014)

# Indicators

The case of cultural consumption and social status

Cultural consumption as a process of consuming of any type of symbolic goods or obtaining cultural tangibles

Chan and Goldthorpe's social status scheme (Chan & Goldthorpe 2005) as a type of occupation (authority, education and income)

# Data and Method

Eurobarometer 79.2 (Spring, 2013);  
27 European countries;

Measures of cultural consumption:

How many times in the last 12 months have you:

- seen opera or ballet;
- been to the cinema;
- the theatre;
- a concert;
- visited a museum or gallery;
- watched or listened to a cultural programme on TV or on the radio?

Recoded into 0-did not participate, 1-participated;

Social Status: 4 bands (band 1: professionals, employed professionals, general management and business proprietors; band 2: middle management, employed white collars and small shops owners; band 3: service job, supervisors and responsible for ordinary shopping; band 4: skilled and unskilled manual workers, farmers and fishermen) and students and not working people.

Method: MLCA, multinomial logistic regression



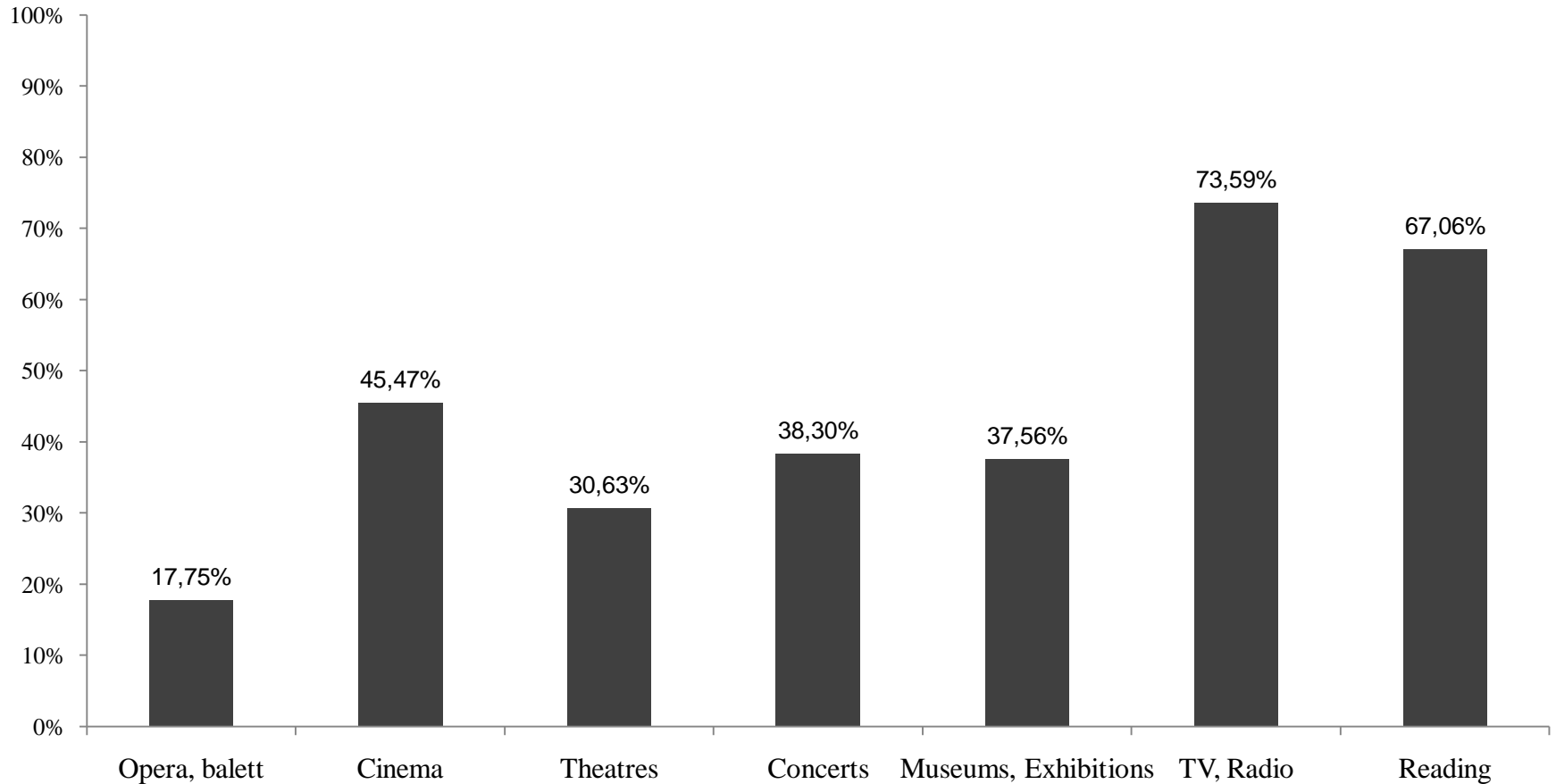
# Hypotheses

Structure of cultural practices is based on the range of practices („omnivorous-univorous“ thesis) but not on the type of practices („highbrow-lowbrow“)

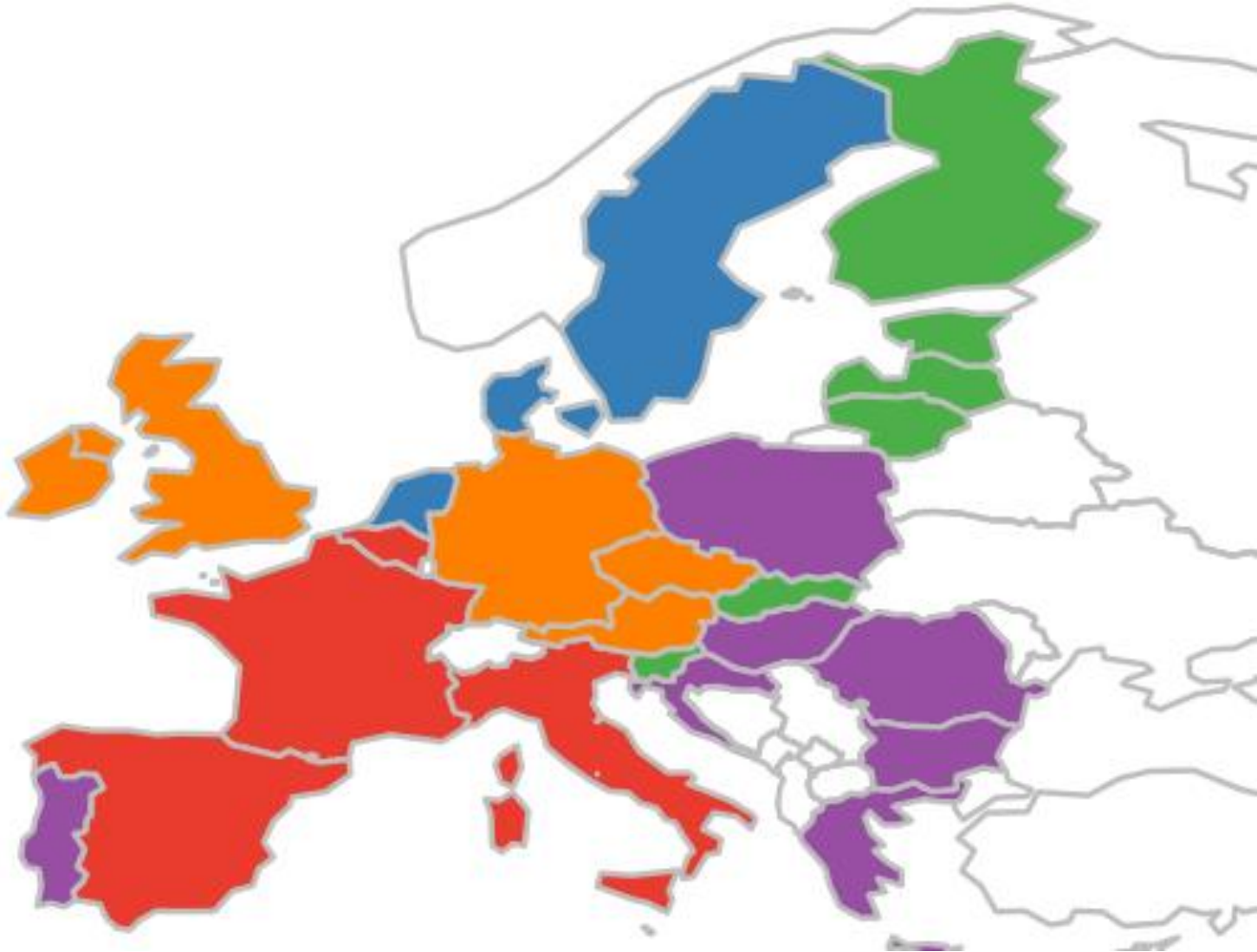
The higher social status is the higher is probability to have the pattern with greater number of practices

In Northern Europe region status and cultural consumption are less associated

# The Number of Engaged in Cultural Practices (in %)



# The Classes of Countries



# Characteristics and Abundance of the Latent Classes among Country Groups

Country Classes	Classes of Cultural Consumption: Features & Abundance				
	'mass'	'omnivorous'	'inactive'	'popular'	'private'
1. Belgium, France, Italy, Malta, Spain	low activity; highbrow practices eliminated - 9%	"omnivorous" - 6%	all practices eliminated - 26%	popular practices: cinema, TV, books - 31%	private practices: TV, books; highbrow practices eliminated - 28%
2. Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, United Kingdom	low activity; highbrow practices eliminated - 12%	"omnivorous" - 11%	all practices eliminated - 12%	popular practices: cinema, TV, books - 36%	private practices: TV, books; highbrow practices eliminated - 29%
3. Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia	low activity; highbrow practices eliminated - 5%	"omnivorous" - 11%	all practices eliminated - 7%	popular practices: concerts TV, books - 38%	TV; public practices eliminated - 40%
4. Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden	low activity; highbrow practices eliminated - 6%	"omnivorous" - 19%	all practices eliminated - 1%	popular practices/ "paucivores": museums, cinema, TV, books - 51%	private practices: TV, books; public practices eliminated - 23%
5. Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania	low activity; highbrow practices eliminated - 7%	"omnivorous" - 5%	all practices eliminated - 43%	popular practices: TV, books - 20%	private practices: TV, books; public practices eliminated - 26%

	<i>Dependent variable (baseline: popular practices)</i>			
	“Mass”	“Omnivorous”	“Inactive”	“Private”
Social Status (Band 2)	-0.154 (0.284)	-0.354 (0.255)	-0.121 (0.226)	0.364* (0.216)
Social Status (Band 3)	-0.052 (0.295)	<b>-0.870***</b> <b>(0.290)</b>	0.197 (0.228)	<b>0.491**</b> <b>(0.222)</b>
Social Status (Band 4)	0.459 (0.307)	<b>-0.905**</b> <b>(0.384)</b>	<b>0.584**</b> <b>(0.243)</b>	<b>0.766***</b> <b>(0.239)</b>
Social Status (Students)	0.304 (0.332)	-0.093 (0.318)	0.497* (0.277)	0.075 (0.267)
Social Status (not working)	-0.224 (0.287)	-0.549** (0.267)	0.211 (0.221)	0.639*** (0.215)
Gender (F)	-0.219* (0.126)	0.324* (0.142)	-0.106 (0.090)	-0.016 (0.085)
Age when completed Education (20+)	-0.553*** (0.150)	0.464*** (0.160)	-1.079*** (0.113)	-0.529*** (0.098)
Age	-0.004 (0.004)	0.011** (0.005)	0.010*** (0.003)	0.001 (0.003)
Difficulties Paying Bills (yes)	0.255* (0.123)	0.022 (0.141)	0.171** (0.087)	0.097 (0.084)
Size of the Community	0.051 (0.046)	-0.070 (0.052)	-0.143*** (0.034)	-0.059* (0.032)
Constant	-1.000*** (0.373)	-1.881*** (0.402)	-0.268 (0.279)	-0.335 (0.270)
AIC	12,146.230	12,146.230	12,146.230	12,146.230

*Note:*

*Class 1:*

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01  
Belgium, France, Italy, Malta, Spain

	<i>Dependent variable (baseline: popular practices)</i>			
	“Mass”	“Omnivorous”	“Inactive”	“Private”
Social Status (Band 2)	0.333* (0.191)	-0.298* (0.167)	0.177 (0.198)	-0.045 (0.135)
Social Status (Band 3)	<b>0.614***</b> <b>(0.207)</b>	-0.276 (0.194)	<b>0.456**</b> <b>(0.214)</b>	0.146 (0.150)
Social Status (Band 4)	<b>0.771***</b> <b>(0.209)</b>	-0.300 (0.221)	<b>0.530**</b> <b>(0.218)</b>	<b>0.337**</b> <b>(0.155)</b>
Social Status (Students)	0.156 (0.244)	-0.068 (0.224)	-0.330 (0.320)	-0.009 (0.193)
Social Status (not working)	0.348* (0.203)	-0.212 (0.178)	0.467** (0.200)	0.252* (0.138)
Gender (F)	-0.277*** (0.096)	0.352*** (0.101)	-0.214** (0.096)	-0.067 (0.071)
Age when completed	-0.371*** (0.115)	0.324*** (0.111)	-0.445*** (0.118)	-0.327*** (0.085)
Education (20+)				
Age	-0.021*** (0.004)	0.005 (0.004)	0.008** (0.004)	0.009*** (0.003)
Difficulties Paying Bills (yes)	0.133 (0.096)	-0.166 (0.107)	0.352*** (0.098)	0.073 (0.074)
Size of the Community	-0.045* (0.024)	-0.009 (0.025)	-0.023 (0.024)	-0.018 (0.018)
Constant	-0.250 (0.253)	-1.533*** (0.259)	-1.646*** (0.263)	-0.656*** (0.189)
AIC	15,699.270	15,699.270	15,699.270	15,699.270

*Note:*

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01

*Class 2:*

Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, United Kingdom

	<i>Dependent variable (baseline: popular practices)</i>			
	“Mass”	“Omnivorous”	“Inactive”	“Private”
Social Status (Band 2)	-0.089 (0.267)	-0.180 (0.145)	0.602 (0.408)	<b>0.431</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.154)</b>
Social Status (Band 3)	0.194 (0.287)	<b>-0.653</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.178)</b>	<b>1.699</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.396)</b>	<b>1.137</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.157)</b>
Social Status (Band 4)	0.424 (0.273)	<b>-1.255</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.248)</b>	<b>1.815</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.386)</b>	<b>1.222</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.157)</b>
Social Status (Students)	0.197 (0.298)	-0.351 <sup>*</sup> (0.188)	<b>1.130</b> <sup>**</sup> <b>(0.517)</b>	<b>0.608</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.198)</b>
Social Status (not working)	0.455 <sup>*</sup> (0.270)	<b>-0.486</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.160)</b>	<b>1.998</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.378)</b>	<b>1.518</b> <sup>***</sup> <b>(0.146)</b>
Gender (F)	-0.562 <sup>***</sup> (0.139)	0.633 <sup>***</sup> (0.102)	-0.716 <sup>***</sup> (0.119)	-0.261 <sup>***</sup> (0.068)
Age when completed Education (20+)	-0.759 <sup>***</sup> (0.164)	0.787 <sup>***</sup> (0.108)	-1.448 <sup>***</sup> (0.158)	-0.815 <sup>***</sup> (0.073)
Age	-0.034 <sup>***</sup> (0.005)	0.008 <sup>**</sup> (0.004)	0.018 <sup>***</sup> (0.004)	0.019 <sup>***</sup> (0.003)
Difficulties Paying Bills (yes)	-0.252 <sup>*</sup> (0.140)	-0.060 (0.098)	0.668 <sup>***</sup> (0.118)	0.384 <sup>***</sup> (0.068)
Size of the Community	0.289 <sup>***</sup> (0.064)	-0.133 <sup>***</sup> (0.047)	0.032 (0.057)	0.098 <sup>***</sup> (0.032)
Constant	-0.966 <sup>***</sup> (0.365)	-1.807 <sup>***</sup> (0.256)	-3.670 <sup>***</sup> (0.443)	-1.878 <sup>***</sup> (0.199)
AIC	13,326.800	13,326.800	13,326.800	13,326.800

*Note:*

*Class 3:*

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01

Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia

	<i>Dependent variable (baseline: popular practices)</i>			
	“Mass”	“Omnivorous”	“Inactive”	“Private”
Social Status (Band 2)	-0.097 (0.312)	-0.145 (0.180)	-0.436 (0.780)	0.055 (0.209)
Social Status (Band 3)	0.136 (0.341)	-0.275 (0.212)	-0.730 (0.943)	0.390* (0.224)
Social Status (Band 4)	0.179 (0.366)	-0.497* (0.278)	0.639 (0.759)	0.491** (0.248)
Social Status (Students)	-0.361 (0.410)	-0.274 (0.281)	-10.197*** (0.0001)	0.012 (0.316)
Social Status (not working)	0.047 (0.315)	-0.180 (0.183)	0.501 (0.653)	0.545*** (0.198)
Gender (F)	-0.226 (0.170)	0.355*** (0.103)	-0.224 (0.327)	-0.054 (0.098)
<b>Age when completed</b>	<b>-0.452**</b>	<b>0.500***</b>	<b>-1.456***</b>	<b>-0.530***</b>
<b>Education (20+)</b>	<b>(0.181)</b>	<b>(0.121)</b>	<b>(0.355)</b>	<b>(0.101)</b>
Age	-0.024*** (0.007)	0.007 (0.005)	0.010 (0.014)	0.008* (0.004)
<b>Difficulties Paying Bills (yes)</b>	<b>0.858***</b> <b>(0.196)</b>	<b>-0.456**</b> <b>(0.189)</b>	<b>0.890**</b> <b>(0.404)</b>	<b>0.268*</b> <b>(0.146)</b>
Size of the Community	0.065** (0.028)	-0.043** (0.018)	0.056 (0.056)	0.032* (0.017)
Constant	-0.997** (0.476)	-1.502*** (0.321)	-3.902*** (1.036)	-1.455*** (0.314)
AIC	6,954.201	6,954.201	6,954.201	6,954.201

*Note:*  
*Class 4:*

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01  
Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden



	<i>Dependent variable (baseline: popular practices)</i>			
	“Mass”	“Omnivorous”	“Inactive”	“Private”
Social Status (Band 2)	0.432 (0.264)	<b>-0.550<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.205)</b>	0.280 (0.171)	0.056 (0.166)
Social Status (Band 3)	<b>0.911<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.282)</b>	<b>-0.602<sup>**</sup></b> <b>(0.265)</b>	<b>0.930<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.184)</b>	<b>0.636<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.181)</b>
Social Status (Band 4)	<b>0.923<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.286)</b>	<b>-0.991<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.324)</b>	<b>1.173<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.186)</b>	<b>0.905<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.184)</b>
Social Status (Students)	0.183 (0.292)	-0.268 (0.250)	<b>0.427<sup>**</sup></b> <b>(0.207)</b>	<b>0.193</b> <b>(0.201)</b>
Social Status (not working)	0.910 <sup>***</sup> (0.272)	-0.457 <sup>**</sup> (0.232)	<b>1.214<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.174)</b>	<b>0.894<sup>***</sup></b> <b>(0.169)</b>
Gender (F)	-0.499 <sup>***</sup> (0.109)	0.184 (0.131)	-0.438 <sup>***</sup> (0.071)	-0.259 <sup>***</sup> (0.076)
Age when completed Education (20+)	-0.317 <sup>**</sup> (0.133)	0.470 <sup>***</sup> (0.157)	-0.902 <sup>***</sup> (0.087)	-0.417 <sup>***</sup> (0.090)
Age	-0.023 <sup>***</sup> (0.004)	0.008 (0.005)	0.018 <sup>***</sup> (0.003)	0.017 <sup>***</sup> (0.003)
Difficulties Paying Bills (yes)	0.347 <sup>***</sup> (0.113)	-0.074 (0.129)	0.447 <sup>***</sup> (0.073)	0.169 <sup>**</sup> (0.077)
Size of the Community	-0.133 <sup>***</sup> (0.032)	0.022 (0.035)	-0.171 <sup>***</sup> (0.021)	-0.059 <sup>***</sup> (0.021)
Constant	-0.203 (0.340)	-1.810 <sup>***</sup> (0.349)	-0.194 (0.220)	-0.676 <sup>***</sup> (0.222)
AIC	17,886.740	17,886.740	17,886.740	17,886.740

*Note:*

\* p<0.1; \*\* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.01

*Class 5:*

Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Portugal,  
Romania

# What does it all mean?

Cultural consumption distinction varies across regions:

All have “omnivorous-univorous” opposition;

WE & LE: “highbrow-not highbrow”

NE, Sc, SE: “public-private”

Cultural policies and institutional environment as possible explanations of the phenomenon

# What does it all mean? (II)

Cultural practices are not always associated with social status

Cultural consumption is losing its ability to demonstrate social status in several societies, while in others it still matters

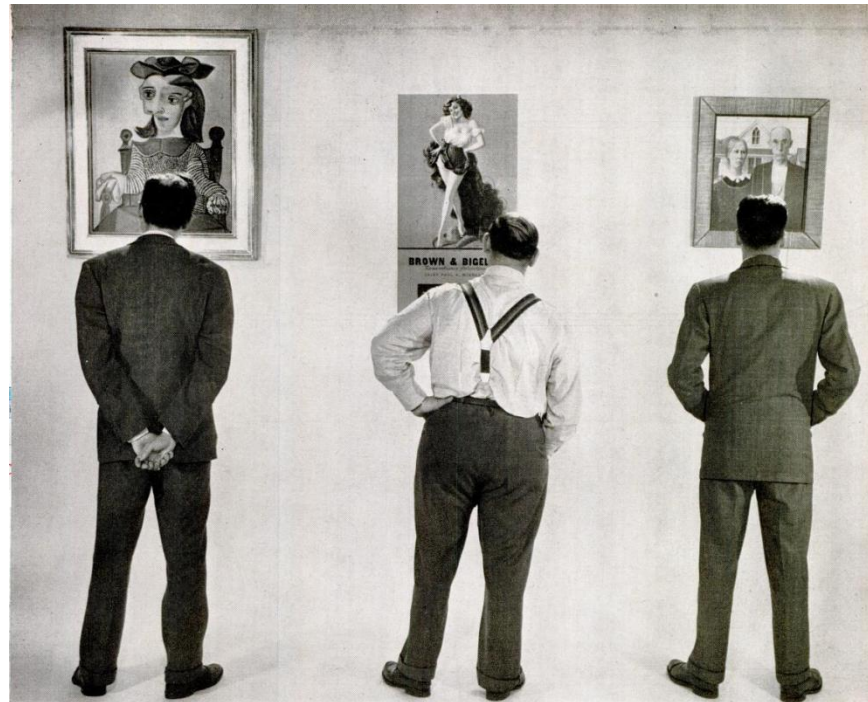
The results may signify the difference in the perception of social inequality

# What to consider?

Cultural practices are becoming more common so social stratification is revealed in different forms

Competence is more important

Social status is not that important to be shown symbolically: other identities are more important



IN CLOTHES CHARACTERISTIC OF THEIR CULTURAL STATIONS, A HIGH-BROW (LEFT), LOW-BROW AND MIDDLE-BROW (RIGHT) LOOK AT THE PICTURES THEY PREFER

**HIGH-BROW, LOW-BROW, MIDDLE-BROW**



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for your attention!

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