Supporting Information for

WHO GIVES CREDENCE TO WHOM?: EXPLORING STATUS AND RELATIONAL EQUALITY WITH EMPIRICAL TESTS

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1. Sample Characteristics

Table SI-1: Sample Characteristics

	MTurk Sample	SSI Sample
Age		
Under 30	34.19%	20.91%
30-39	35.81	22.46
40-49	18.06	16.36
50-59	8.06	17.91
60-69	3.23	15.20
70-79	0.65	6.20
80+	0.00	0.97
Gender		
Female	54.19%	51.31%
Male	44.84	48.50
Neither best describes you	0.97	0.19
Education		
No Diploma	0.65%	3.10%
High School Only	13.87	18.78
Some college	37.42	28.56
BA	40.32	29.72
Graduate Degree	7.74	19.85
Income		
$0 - $9,999	4.52%	12.00%
$10,000 – $19,999	8.71	17.23
$20,000 – $29,999	17.42	4.16
$30,000 – $39,999	15.48	1.16
$40,000 – $49,999	14.19	3.10
$50,000 – $59,999	8.71	9.58
$60,000 – $79,999	10.97	16.17
$80,000 – $99,999	8.71	2.23
$100,000 – $149,999	9.35	5.23
$150,000 +	1.94	29.14

(Table continues)

Sample Characteristics, continued

	MTurk Sample	SSI Sample
Race		
White	87.42%	98.74%[1]
Black	3.87	0.19
Asian	6.45	0.10
Other	1.61	0.68
Prefer not to say	0.65	0.29
Partisanship		
Democratic	40.32%	27.20%
Independent	22.58	38.82
Republican	33.55	27.69
Other / Don't know	3.55	6.29

[1] As discussed in the text, the SSI sample is almost entirely white, since we asked SSI to recruit an all-white sample. (The ten non-white respondents are attributable to faulty information in SSI's records, or to measurement error on our instrument.)

2. Question Wording and Experiment Stimuli

Issue attitudes

[The three issue attitudes were presented in random order.]

Trans-Pacific Partnership

As you likely know, some political leaders think that the United States should participate in more free trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). How about you? Do you generally favor the United States participating in free trade agreements, or do you oppose it?

- Favor the United States participating in free trade agreements
- Oppose the United States participating in free trade agreements
- I don't have an opinion one way or the other on this issue

Infrastructure

We'd like to ask you about government spending on roads, bridges, and other infrastructure. As you likely know, some people think the government should spend more on infrastructure. Others think the government should spend less. Do you favor increased spending on infrastructure, or do you oppose it?

- Favor increased spending on infrastructure
- Oppose increased spending on infrastructure
- I don't have an opinion one way or the other on this issue

Genetically-modified Organisms

We'd like to ask you about the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) on farms. As you may know, some people think the government should increase restrictions on GMOs. Other people oppose new restrictions on GMOs. Do you favor or oppose new restrictions on GMOs?

- Favor new restrictions on GMOs
- Oppose new restrictions on GMOs
- I don't have an opinion one way or the other on this issue

Introduction to Comment Evaluation Section

Next, we are interested in what you think about comments on these issues. In the screens that follow, you'll read three comments that were posted online in response to articles that appeared in the Des Moines Register, a newspaper in Iowa. Please read each comment, and then answer some questions about it.

Note that you do not need to read the articles these comments are responding to. We're only interested in what you think about the comments.

Reader Comments

[Each respondent saw one comment for each of the three issues. The issues appeared in random order. The randomization was structured such that a respondent saw a comment from:

- A high-status author who wrote well
- A low-status author who wrote well, and
- A low-status author who wrote poorly.

As the instrumentation presented below reflects, author status was manipulated in part by a snippet of text introducing each article comment.]

GMO Issue – High status, Polished writing

The comment below responds to an article about the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in agriculture. It was written by Paul Kline, the owner of a corporate wheat farm in Iowa.

Paul Kline *says:*

January 9, 2017 at 4:18 pm

The above article suggests that state governments should prohibit farmers from using Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). I own a wheat farm in Iowa that employs more than 200 people. My experience has shown me that GMOs are a benefit to both producers and consumers.

GMOs are very misunderstood. The name sounds scary, but there is no real evidence that they are harmful to humans. All GMOs are tested up and down before they are used in agriculture.

People also forget that GMOs have plenty of benefits. Using them helps protect plants from insects, disease, and severe weather. If GMOs were banned, there would be less food and it would be more expensive.

Finally, people don't realize that GMOs can help the environment. When farmers use GMO seeds, they need to use less pesticide, so there is less chemical runoff.

Most of the worries about GMOs are based on intuitions about a scary-sounding name, rather than the real facts. Politicians should think twice before they try to ban them.

Reply

GMO Issue – Low status, Polished writing

The comment below responds to an article about the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in agriculture. It was written by Paul Kline, a farmhand at a corporate wheat farm in Iowa.

Paul Kline *says:*

January 9, 2017 at 4:18 pm

The above article suggests that state governments should prohibit farmers from using Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). I work on a wheat farm in Iowa that employs more than 200 people. My experience has shown me that GMOs are a benefit to both producers and consumers.

GMOs are very misunderstood. The name sounds scary, but there is no real evidence that they are harmful to humans. All GMOs are tested up and down before they are used in agriculture.

People also forget that GMOs have plenty of benefits. Using them helps protect plants from insects, disease, and severe weather. If GMOs were banned, there would be less food and it would be more expensive.

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Most of the worries about GMOs are based on intuitions about a scary-sounding name, rather than the real facts. Politicians should think twice before they try to ban them.

Reply

GMO Issue – Low status, Poor communication skills

The comment below responds to an article about the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in agriculture. It was written by Paul Kline, a farmhand at a corporate wheat farm in Iowa.

Paul Kline *says:*

January 9, 2017 at 4:18 pm

This artical says that states should not let farmers use GMOS (Genetically Modifying Organizms). Im a farmhand on a wheat farm in Iowa. My experience shown me that GMOs are NOT bad and have lots of benefits. They benfit both buyers AND sellers.

PPL dont understand GMOS. The name sounds scarie, but ther is no evidence that they are hurt ppl. All GMOs are tested a lot before we can use them on the farm.

People also forget that GMOs are good in MANY ways. Using them protect plants from inseks, diseese, and bad weather. If GMOs were not alllowed to be used, ther would be less food and it would cost alot more.

Finally, people dont realize that GMOs are really GOOD for the enviroment!! When farmers use GMO seeds, they use less chemicls, so there is less runoff of bad stuff.

Most of the wories about GMOs are based on the name which sounds bad, rather than the REAL facts. Politicians should NOT ban somthing that is so good for so many people!!!

Reply

Trade Issue – High status, Polished writing

The comment below responds to an article about free trade agreements. It was written by Richard McCabe, the chief executive at an auto parts business in Iowa.

Richard McCabe *says:*

January 6, 2017 at 11:54 am

The above article suggests that free trade lowers prices of goods, but this is a narrow and misleading way to look at free trade agreements. As the chief executive for an auto parts business, I know the damage free trade agreements will do to the American worker.

In my business, we go to great lengths to make sure that everyone gets a reasonable paycheck and benefits. Trade deals force us to compete with foreign distributors that slash prices by hiring workers willing to work six or seven days a week with few benefits. As a result, we will have to lower our wages and reduce benefits for our workers.

There is also the matter of environmental regulation. These trade deals typically say that each country must follow new rules for environmental protection. Anyone can see how this will work. The rules will be enforced in the U.S., but not abroad, increasing our costs, but not the costs of our foreign competitors. Again, Americans will be at a disadvantage.

Some people say that free trade will help America and Americans compete. Nothing could be farther from the truth. More free trade agreements will mean fewer good jobs for the American worker.

Reply

Trade Issue – Low status, Polished writing

The comment below responds to an article about free trade agreements. It was written by Richard McCabe, a clerk at an auto parts business in Iowa.

Richard McCabe *says:*

January 6, 2017 at 11:54 am

The above article suggests that free trade lowers prices of goods, but this is a narrow and misleading way to look at free trade agreements. As a worker at an auto parts business, I know the damage free trade agreements will do to the American worker.

In the place I work, management goes to great lengths to make sure that everyone gets a reasonable paycheck and benefits. Trade deals force the business to compete with foreign distributors that slash prices by hiring workers willing to work six or seven days a week with few benefits. As a result, we will have to lower our wages and reduce benefits for our workers.

There is also the matter of environmental regulation. These trade deals typically say that each country must follow new rules for environmental protection. Anyone can see how this will work. The rules will be enforced in the U.S., but not abroad, increasing our costs, but not the costs of our foreign competitors. Again, Americans will be at a disadvantage.

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Trade Issue – Low status, Poor communication skills

The comment below responds to an article about free trade agreements. It was written by Richard McCabe, a clerk at an auto parts business in Iowa.

Richard McCabe *says:*

January 6, 2017 at 11:54 am

This article talks about how free trade makes things cheap, but this ignores the true FACTS of free trade agreements. Im a worker at an auto parts retailer and see the real life affects of free trade agreements on the AMERICAN WORKERS like me.

Managers at the place I work for work hard making sure that employees like me get good paychek and benefits. Trade deals force the busness to compete with foreign distributors that cut prices by hiring ppl wiling to work six or seven days a week and they dont get benefits either. As a result WE have to lower pay and cut benefits for workers here.

Its just the same with the enviornment. The the trade deals are also supposed to make countries follow rules to protect the enviornment but we all KNOW that the U.S. will folow the rules, but not the foraign countries so OUR costs will be higher but not our competitors. Once again AMERICANS will be at a disadvantage.

Some people say that free trade helps America and Americans compete but nothing could be farther from the TRUTH. Free trade means LESS good jobs for the AMERICAN worker!!!

Reply

Infrastructure Issue – High status, Polished writing

The comment below responds to an article about government funding for infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges. It was written by Mitchell Wegner, the chief executive of a shipping company in Iowa.

Mitchell Wegner *says:*

January 3, 2017 at 2:24 pm

The article above suggests that keeping tax rates as low as possible is the highest priority, even though our infrastructure received a grade of D+ from the American Society of Civil Engineers. The problem with this article is that it applies an incredibly narrow-minded approach to cost-benefit analysis. When you take account of the full array of costs and benefits, it's clear that repairing our failing infrastructure is an investment that will benefit all Americans.

I'm the chief executive at a shipping company. Whenever one of my trucks strikes a pothole, it only shortens the time before the truck will end up in the repair shop. Bad roads also make it hard for our company to maintain our delivery schedule. Sometimes we have to avoid weak bridges, and the detour costs extra time and gasoline – and once again, increases our costs. Last year, I was not able to give my employees the raises they deserved. I didn't take any more profit myself. The biggest reason is that I had to buy more trucks, to fill in for the ones that are constantly in the garage. These repair costs get passed on to consumers: when prices increase in the grocery store, it might well be because our roads are in a grave state of decay.

Of course these facts don't even touch on the safety issues. Good roads prevent accidents and save lives. An analysis that focuses only on tax rates misses the real costs of refusing to make an investment in our infrastructure.

Reply

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The comment below responds to an article about government funding for infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges. It was written by Mitchell Wegner, a shop clerk at a shipping company in Iowa.

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I'm a shop clerk at a shipping company. Whenever one of our company trucks strikes a pothole, it only shortens the time before the truck will end up in the repair shop. Bad roads also make it hard for the company to maintain the delivery schedule. Sometimes drivers have to avoid weak bridges, and the detour costs extra time and gasoline – and once again, increases costs. Last year, employees like me did not get the raises we deserved. It wasn't because management held back the profits. The biggest reason was that the company had to buy more trucks, to fill in for the ones that are constantly in the garage. These repair costs get passed on to consumers: when prices increase in the grocery store, it might well be because our roads are in a grave state of decay.

Of course these facts don't even touch on the safety issues. Good roads prevent accidents and save lives. An analysis that focuses only on tax rates misses the real costs of refusing to make an investment in our infrastructure.

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Mitchell Wegner *says:*

January 3, 2017 at 2:24 pm

This article talks about that we should have low taxes , even though our infrastructure recieved a grade of D+ from the American Society of Civil Enginers. The problem is that the article TOTALLY IGNORES a big parts of the costs and benefits that you need to take account of in the statistical analysis!!! When you account of everything that you should, its clear that repairing decrepid infrastructure is an investment that will benefit ALL Americans.

Im a shop clerk at a shipping company. Of course, our trucks can only hit so many BIG POTHOLES before they have to go to the repair shop. Also, bad roads make it so we cant keep up our persistent delivery schedule. Someimtes the driver's have to avoid weak briges, and the detour costs extra time and gas which as aforementioned increases costs Last year, employees like me did not get the raises we deserved. It was NOT because MANAGEMENT held back the profits. the biggest reason? The comapny had to buy MORE TRUCKS to fill in for the ones always in the garage. Who do you think pays these repair costs? You the consumer obviously. When prices increease in the grocery store and it costs you MORE MONEY realize that its because the ROADS are falling apart!!

OF course that doesnt even mention the SAFETY issues. Good roads stop accidents and save lives. When you only think about tax rates you miss the real cost of not spending what you need to on infrastructure.

Reply

3. External Validation of Experiment Stimuli

As the stimuli presented above show, we sought to manipulate the perceived social status of an author by modifying the person's stated occupation. This approach comes with two significant validity concerns. First, we need to be sure that manipulating author occupation in fact affects things that the relational equality literature posit to be indicia of social status. Second, to increase confidence that any effects on the dependent variables in our main studies are attributable to status (as distinct from other potential mechanisms), we need to be sure that our chosen stimuli minimally affect other author perceptions that might obscure the role of social status. In particular, we hoped to develop stimuli that manipulated author status while holding perceived author ideology and novelty of the author's message constant.

To test the validity of our chosen instrumentation, we conducted an experiment on a convenience sample of 160 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers recruited in October of 2016.[2] Experiment participants rated messages, which were randomly assigned to come from a high-status or low-status author. We present the stimuli below. As can be seen, the stimuli are formatted as letters to the editor of a newspaper. This was the context for an initial study we conducted (not reported) that focused on the effect of status alone. (That is, unlike the study in the main text, there was no manipulation of communication skills. We mention this investigation in fn 22 in the text.) For the main text's studies, we adapted the instrumentation below to become comments on a newspaper article, rather than letters to the editor. (This was necessary to introduce a manipulation of communication skills. It would not be realistic to present letters to the editor rife with misspellings, since these would be addressed by a copy editor.) As can be seen, although the format is different than the comments presented above, the text is nearly identical, save for some minor changes to shift from a letter-to-the-editor format to a commenting format. (To see this, compare the first paragraph of each stimulus below to the first paragraph of the matching comment above.)

Letters were presented in a random order. For each letter read, we asked respondents to report various perceptions of the author. We included three items designed to capture perceptions of social status. First, we asked, "What would you estimate [author's] annual income to be?" Response options were the same income categories listed in Table SI-1. Second, we asked, "What social class would you say [author] belongs to?" Responses were Poor, Working class, Middle class, Upper class, and Wealthy. Third, we asked, "What's the highest level of education you suppose [author] has completed?" Response options were, No high school diploma; Finished high school; Some college / Associate's degree; Bachelor's degree; Graduate degree.

Table SI-2 below reports how the status manipulation influenced responses on these questions. As is evident, the manipulation substantially affected perceptions of social status. All within-topic contrasts are significant at $p<.01$ (two-tailed). Moreover, the differences are large, especially for the Income measure. (For this measure, the average effect is 2.934, or more than 30% the range of the measure.)

[2] This check was not our first effort. We conducted an earlier manipulation check and made small modifications to the stimuli based on the results.

Table SI-2: Manipulating Occupation Affects Indicia of Social Status

	GMO Letter		TPP Letter		Infrastructure Letter	
	Low-status	High-status	Low-status	High-status	Low-status	High-status
Income	4.818	7.193	4.400	7.265	4.536	8.098
	(0.232)	(0.259)	(0.212)	(0.282)	(0.171)	(0.257)
Class	2.436	3.211	2.333	3.367	2.304	3.608
	(0.096)	(0.108)	(0.078)	(0.119)	(0.062)	(0.101)
Education	2.709	3.236	2.444	3.531	2.571	3.902
	(0.124)	(0.123)	(0.098)	(0.127)	(0.098)	(0.109)

All within-topic contrasts are significant at $p<.01$ (two-tailed).

Cell entries are means, by condition, with standard errors in parentheses. The Income measure ranges from 1=Under $9,999 per year to 10 = More than $150,000 per year. The Class measure is coded 1=Poor; 2=Working Class; 3=Middle Class; 4=Upper Class; 5=Wealthy. The Education measure is coded 1=No high school diploma; 2=Finished high school; 3=Some college / Associate's degree; 4=Bachelor's degree; 5=Graduate degree.

Our validation study also included measures designed to test whether the chosen approach to manipulating status had any problematic spillover effects. In particular, we hoped to create messages that were comparable in terms of novelty. After all, our main studies measured how much participants remembered from each message they read, and if the messages differed in terms of novelty, it would be more difficult to attribute differences in recall performance to status per se, as opposed to the different novelty of the messages. We also sought to created messages comparable in terms of the author's perceived ideology. After all, the main studies asked participants to evaluate the quality of the arguments presented in the messages they read, and if some messages appeared to come from individuals who were more ideologically similar to the subject than other messages, this could obscure inferences about the effect of status on quality ratings.

To examine whether the status manipulation affected the perceived novelty of each letter, we asked subjects, "How novel is this letter?" Response options were: Not novel at all; A little novel; Somewhat novel; Very novel; Extremely novel. To examine whether the status manipulation affected perceived ideology of the message author, we asked, "When it comes to politics, how liberal or conservative do you suppose [author] is?" There were seven response options (including a neutral option), ranging from Extremely liberal to Extremely conservative.

Table SI-3 below reports how the status manipulation affected these measures. Compared to Table SI-2, the contrasts here are muted and attributable to chance. The lowest p-value is for the effect on ideology within the Infrastructure topic (two-tailed p=.09). All other p-values are greater than .24.

Table SI-3: Manipulating Occupation Minimally Affects Perceptions of Novelty and Author Ideology

	GMO Letter		TPP Letter		Infrastructure Letter	
	Low-status	High-status	Low-status	High-status	Low-status	High-status
Novelty	2.418	2.667	2.489	2.408	2.304	2.509
	(0.161)	(0.145)	(0.137)	(0.162)	(0.127)	(0.138)
Ideology	4.418	4.298	4.756	5.102	4.125	4.529
	(0.209)	(0.192)	(0.201)	(0.213)	(0.155)	(0.184)

Cell entries are means, by condition, with standard errors in parentheses. The Novelty measure is coded 1=Not novel at all; 2=A little novel; 3=Somewhat novel; 4=Very novel; 5=Extremely novel. The Ideology measure is coded 1=Extremely liberal; 2=Somewhat liberal; 3=Slightly liberal; 4=Neither liberal nor conservative; 5=Slightly conservative; 6=Somewhat conservative; 7=Extremely conservative.

Altogether, these results provide assurance that the approach described in the text manipulated perceptions related to status, while minimally affecting potential confounding factors.

As a final note in this section, we wish to remind the reader that, in addition to this external manipulation check, our studies also included an internal check that verifies participants attended to the author occupation mentioned in the message they read. (See main text, fn 21.)

Stimuli for Manipulation Check

GMO, high-status

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paul Kline is the owner of a corporate farm in Clarinda, IA.

TO THE EDITOR:

I have worked in agriculture since 1996. I was disappointed to read your recent article about states prohibiting farmers from using Genetically Moified Organisms (GMOs).

GMOs are very misunderstood. The name sounds scary, but there is not real evidence that they are harmful to humans. All GMOs are tested up and down before they are used on an actual farm.

People also forget that GMOs have plenty of benefits. Using them helps protect plants from insects, disease, and severe weather. If GMOs were banned, there would be less food and it would be more expensive.

Finally, people don't realize that GMOs can help the environment. When farmers use GMO seeds, they need to use less pesticide, so there is less chemical runoff.

Most of the worries about GMOs are based on a scary-sounding name, rather than the real facts. Politicians should think twice before they try to ban them.

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Paul Kline is a farmhand at a corporate farm in Clarinda, IA.

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Paul Kline
Clarinda, IA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

As someone who has worked in the auto parts business since 1996, I get reminders of damage that the Trans-Pacific Partnership would do every day.

In my business, we work hard to make sure that everyone gets a reasonable paycheck and benefits. The trade deal would force us to compete with foreign distributors that slash prices by hiring workers willing to work six or seven days a week.

The trade deal is supposed to make countries follow new rules for environmental protection. Anyone can see how this will work. The rules will be enforced in the US, but not abroad. Again, Americans will be at a disadvantage.

Richard McCabe is the chief executive of an auto parts retailer in Saylorville, IA.

If you still need evidence that the trade deal is a sham, look at the way it was written—behind closed doors, in total secrecy. You only do that if you have something to hide.

Some people are calling this a deal that will help America and Americans compete. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Richard McCabe
Saylorville, IA

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

Yesterday, this paper published an article titled, "Infrastructure receives grade of D+ from the American Society of Civil Engineers." As someone who works for a business that transports goods all over the state, this article reminded me how important good roads and bridges are to small businesses.

For my employer, every pothole in the roads that our trucks hit costs the company extra money in repairs. My employer had to buy more trucks last year, since at least two of them are in the repair shop at any one time. What the government doesn't pay for in upkeep, the business ends up paying in repair costs.

Bad roads also make it hard for my employer to deliver products on time. My employer had to add a thirty-mile detour to one of our routes, because one bridge is too weak to support the weight of the company's trucks.

Mitchell Wegner is a shop clerk at a shipping company in Elkhart, IA.

Road maintenance is also a safety issue. When pavement is cracked and has poor drainage, cars and trucks are more likely to lose control in bad weather.

It is time to get America moving again. We can only do this with by providing enough funding to maintain our roads and bridges.

Mitchell Wegner
Elkhart, IA

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It is time to get America moving again. We can only do this with by providing enough funding to maintain our roads and bridges.

Mitchell Wegner
Elkhart, IA

Mitchell Wegner is the chief executive of a shipping company in Elkhart, IA.

4. Relationship Between Education and Income in SSI Sample

As discussed in the main text, we estimate a model that allows income and education to have separate effects on message evaluations. A potential concern with this model is that income and education are too closely associated to estimate distinct effects for each. The table below reports the relationship between our income and education categories. It confirms substantial separation. In particular, less than 50% of the high-income respondents have a graduate degree.

Table SI-4: The Relationship Between Education and Income (SSI Sample)

	Income		
Education	Low	Medium	High
Less than BA	82.12%	54.03%	15.95%
Bachelor's degree	13.91	32.55	39.53
Graduate degree	3.97	13.42	44.52
	100%	100%	100%

Low income corresponds to less than $20k per year. Medium income corresponds to $40k - $60k per year. High-income corresponds to more than $150,000 per year.

5. Full Regression Results

Table SI-5: Regression Models Underlying Figures 3 and 4

	Quality	Liking	Importance
Low-status, Polished (LP) condition	0.082***	0.078***	0.064***
	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.022)
High-status, Polished (HP) condition	0.079***	0.064***	0.055**
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.023)
Medium-income dummy	-0.038	-0.044	-0.028
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.027)
High-income dummy	-0.087***	-0.080***	-0.081***
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.030)
LP × Medium-income	0.030	0.043	0.040
	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.030)
LP × High-income	0.042	0.026	0.031
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.033)
HP × Medium-income	0.026	0.038	0.047
	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.030)
HP × High-income	0.047	0.066*	0.061*
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.034)
Medium Education dummy	-0.004	-0.007	0.026
	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.027)
High Education dummy	-0.006	-0.008	0.030
	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.032)
LP × Medium Education	0.026	0.027	-0.040
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.029)
LP × High Education	-0.002	-0.007	-0.012
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.035)
HP × Medium Education	0.028	0.009	-0.034
	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)
HP × High Education	0.019	-0.007	-0.030
	(0.039)	(0.037)	(0.035)
Infrastructure Topic	-0.002	0.028	-0.032
	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.033)
Trade Topic	0.055***	0.030*	0.022
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.016)
Agree with Author dummy	0.157***	0.138***	0.112***
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.020)
Agreement × Infrastructure topic	0.023	-0.026	0.021
	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.037)
Agreement × Trade topic	-0.003	-0.017	-0.013
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Constant	0.463***	0.423***	0.572***
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.022)
Observations	2,089	2,089	2,089
People	852	852	852

OLS models, with random intercepts for respondents. Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

6. Analysis of First Issue Evaluated

As discussed in the text, a possible concern about the within-subject design is that participants glean the purposes of the study as they proceed through several evaluations, and modify their behavior as a result. A straightforward way to assess this possibility is to examine only the first issue each subject evaluated—essentially converting the within-subject design to a purely between-subject design. Table SI-6 presents such an analysis for Study 2, where the sample size is large enough to permit such an analysis. Similar to the main results in the text, communication skills appear to influence evaluations more than social status. Differences going from column 1 to column 2 are substantial and generally statistically significant. Differences going from column 2 to column 3 are smaller and, with two exceptions, not significant.

As an additional check, we re-estimated the main models reported in the text, but included estimates of the interaction between the treatment indicators and a dummy variable identifying messages that were evaluated first. None of the nine interactions (three for each of three dependent measures) was statistically significant at $p<.05$. One was marginal: liking of the high-status author is somewhat higher when this evaluation occurs first in the series. (For the interaction, $\beta=0.061$, $SE=0.031$, $p<.06$.)

Table SI-6: Difference of Means, by Condition, for First Issue (SSI Sample)

	Study 2		
	Low-status / Unpolished	Low-status / Polished	High-status / Polished
Quality			
GMO	0.459 (0.028) [a,b]	0.615 (0.028) [a]	0.608 (0.026) [b]
Infrastructure	0.559 (0.022) [a,b]	0.644 (0.022) [a]	0.702 (0.023) [b]
TPP	0.560 (0.022)	0.584 (0.023)	0.620 (0.024)
Pooled	0.530 (0.014) [a,b]	0.615 (0.014) [a]	0.643 (0.014) [b]
Liking			
GMO	0.375 (0.026) [a,b]	0.539 (0.027) [a]	0.576 (0.025) [b]
Infrastructure	0.454 (0.024) [a,b]	0.552 (0.023) [a,c]	0.628 (0.024) [b,c]
TPP	0.487 (0.024)	0.545 (0.024)	0.538 (0.025)
Pooled	0.443 (0.014) [a,b]	0.546 (0.014) [a]	0.581 (0.014) [b]
Importance			
GMO	0.541 (0.025) [a,b]	0.642 (0.026) [a]	0.710 (0.024) [b]
Infrastructure	0.592 (0.025) [b]	0.660 (0.024)	0.704 (0.025) [b]
TPP	0.632 (0.023)	0.639 (0.024)	0.679 (0.025)
Pooled	0.592 (0.014) [a,b]	0.647 (0.014) [a,c]	0.698 (0.014) [b,c]

Cell entries are means, by condition, with standard errors in parentheses. Quality, Liking, and Importance are scaled from 0 to 1. Entries with shared superscripts are statistically distinguishable from each other ($p<.05$). The Ns for the single-topic analyses range from 324 to 379. The N for the pooled analysis is 1,060.

7. Fully Crossed Design

As the text notes, a limitation of the initial three-condition studies is that they did not include poorly-written messages from high-status authors. As we discuss in the text, we considered such messages to be somewhat unrealistic. Moreover, a three-condition approach still allows one to estimate the *ceteris paribus* effects of both communication skills and status, holding the other consideration constant. However, as a commenter noted, this design is not equipped to test a particular conjecture: perhaps poor communication skills *activate* negative feelings toward low-status individuals. In this manner, status could still matter for relational equality, but in an interactive way.

Testing this possibility requires a slightly more elaborate experiment: a four-cell design, in which status cues are fully crossed with communication skills. To address the lingering concern, we implemented such a design via Amazon's Mechanical Turk service in April of 2018. We collected 348 responses. Additionally, we used Amazon's (relatively new) survey targeting capabilities to collect a critical mass of high-income respondents. Although we could not target especially high-income respondents (ones who make more than $150,000 per year, as in the SSI study), we were still able to collect 96 responses from individuals who report making more than $100,000 per year. Because we execute a within-subjects experiment—each participant evaluates three distinct letters, wherein cues are randomly assigned—this is a reasonably well-powered approach.

The fully-crossed follow-up had an identical design to our SSI study, with a minor modification. We added three messages—one for each of our three issues (trade policy, infrastructure, and GMOs)—that were poorly written, but which came from a high-status individual. To create these messages, we simply altered the Low-status/Unpolished messages from the SSI study such that they contained the high-status cue for the relevant issue. Figure SI-1 shows one example of the new treatment stimuli.

Participants in the follow-up study evaluated three messages, subject to the following randomization scheme: each participant was guaranteed to evaluate one of the three new (High Status/Unpolished) letters. This was to maximize the amount of information we gathered about the new design component. However, we randomly assigned which issue the new letter was associated with. Additionally, each subject evaluated two letters from the remaining three status/communication skill configurations. We only presented two of the remaining three conditions because we felt that if a participant evaluated all four configurations, the study would become too long and its purpose would likely become apparent. Finally, the order in which the issues were presented was randomized for each participant.

Table SI-7 presents results relevant to the concern that poor writing activates negative feelings toward low-status individuals. Here, we use the new condition to conduct an analysis we previously could not. We present regression coefficients that characterize the effect of making a message author low-status, while holding the message quality constant (all poorly-written messages). If poorly-written messages activated negative feelings toward low-status authors, then effects of this manipulation should be negative. Looking across three outcomes (perceived message quality; liking of the message author; interest in the message), there is scant evidence for the proposed relationship: effect sizes are close to zero and not statistically significant. There is one exception: among high-income respondents, the low-status cue affects liking of the message

author. However, the effect is *positive*—precisely the opposite of what relational egalitarians fear. Upon further inspection, we believe that this significant difference is better understood as a distinctive reaction to the new treatment condition among high-income respondents. Among high-income respondents, liking of high-status authors who write poorly is extremely low (M=0.39, SE=0.029), compared to all other status/skill configuration, where the lowest mean is 0.50 (SE=0.035). Simply put we interpret the significant difference as high-income respondents disliking high-status authors who write poorly.

The design of our follow-up study allows us to evaluate whether the patterns discussed in the main text replicate. They do. Figure SI-2 parallels Figure 3 in the main text. As before, we find that participants of all income levels penalize authors for bad writing—not for their social status *per se*.

Figure SI-1: High-status / Unpolished Message

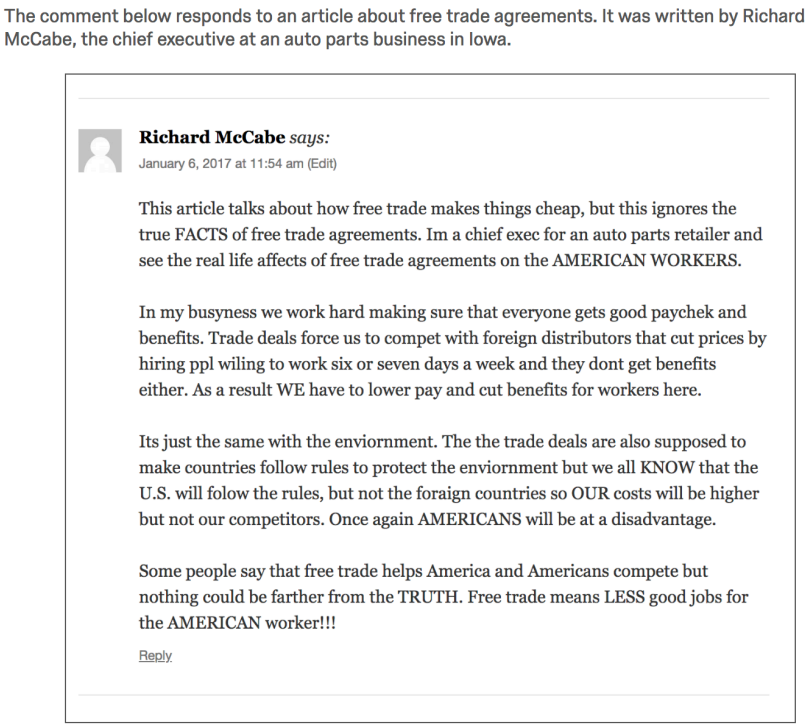


Table SI-7: Effect of Low Status, Holding Poor Communication Skills Constant

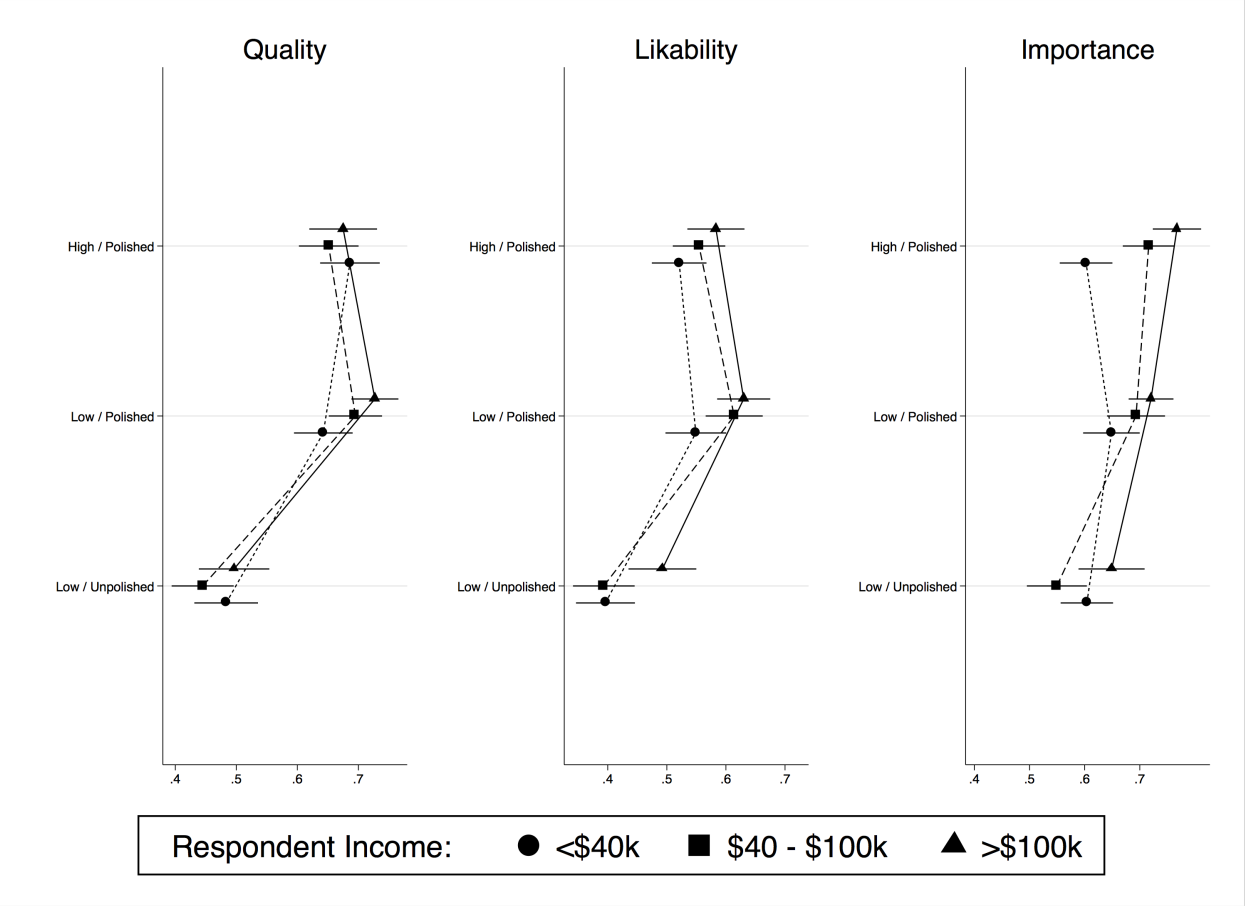
	Quality	Liking	Importance
Pooled (N=348)	0.015	0.017	0.001
	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.022)
Income <$40k (N=100)	-0.003	-0.005	0.006
	(0.042)	(0.038)	(0.037)
Income $40k-$100k (N=99)	-0.005	-0.042	-0.025
	(0.041)	(0.035)	(0.042)
Income >$100k (N=96)	0.029	0.108***	0.017
	(0.046)	(0.040)	(0.043)
Income not reported (N=53)	0.075	0.014	0.005
	(0.057)	(0.049)	(0.059)

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1, two-tailed tests

Cell statistics are regression coefficients estimating the change in the dependent measure, moving from the High-status/Unpolished Message condition to the Low-Status/Unpolished Message condition. The underlying regression model is the same as in the other studies. Standard errors in parentheses. The Ns reported in the table are the number of individuals in each income category. This analysis is limited to low-communication skill messages. Given the randomization scheme above, each respondent evaluated 1.66 such messages (in expectation).[3] Thus, the number of observations for each underlying regression is approximately 1.66 times the listed N.

[3] To see this, remember that each respondent evaluated a High Status/Unpolished letter with certainty. She also evaluated two of the three remaining letters, and one of the remaining letters was Low Status/Unpolished. Thus, she had a 2/3 chance of evaluating a second Unpolished letter.

Figure SI-2: Communication Skills, Not Status, Affect Responses to Message in Follow-up Study



Markers are predicted means, based on a regression of the dependent measure on indicators for treatment condition. The underlying model is identical to Table SI-5.