

# **When Red Sox beat Harvard**

The Liability of High Status, Why it Occurs, and Why it Matters

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## Abstract

This thesis analyzes the liabilities of high status through the lens of the 2012 Massachusetts election, with a sharp focus on the 20% of voters that split their ticket between Democrat Barack Obama for President and Republican Scott Brown for Senate. Given that the most popular framework for analyzing the transmission between status and power—Cultural Capital—does not factor in this liability, I introduce a modified term—*Cultural Currency*—to define the variety of criteria groups may utilize to determine how given dispositions, values, lifestyles, and tastes lead to a given level of power in a given field. I then discuss the mechanism—a *Horizontal Power Setting*—which determines the extent to which the dominant Cultural Currency in the field *actually* dictates the transmission between various permutations of habitus and power in a field. Given that an election is a field in which all members are granted equal power with regards to the franchise, elections are one such example of a Horizontal Power Setting. Through content analysis of candidate stump speeches, debates, campaign e-mails and newspaper articles, I describe why voters who shared Warren’s political platforms, but did not share Warren’s Cultural Currency, were socially incentivized to vote for Obama and Brown. Given this analysis, I present a model of voting which, unlike previous models, factors in the social impact of one’s voting preference.

*To Abby Blum and Morgan Warners,  
Who told me they appreciate my input  
But I should sit down  
And get back on the phones  
Because people with better degrees than ours  
Are figuring out campaign strategy as we speak*

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## **Introduction**

“Let me tell you a story,” Elizabeth Warren’s stump speech for United States Senator from Massachusetts began. The story, one memorized by nearly all campaign interns after a week of work, was of a tireless fighter for the middle class naive to the “rigged” Washington system. The punch line was this: “I went to both Democrats and Republicans with the idea for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The response from both Democrats and Republicans was: ‘This is great. We really need this. It will never happen.’” Warren then describes how she, nonetheless, “fought every day,” and, that as a result of this fighting, “Today, we have a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.” She ended her story with this: “Anytime anyone says you can’t do anything, that the fight is too hard, that the game is too rigged, just tell them 4 words: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.”

Scott Brown pulled up to his stump speeches for the United States Senate in his pick-up truck. Towards the end of the campaign, he starting using a campaign bus, so he could travel with his entire family; a family, which, according to Brown’s wife, is comprised of “Ayla, Arianna, Scott, me, Koda is the Yokie, he has a broken leg, so he hobbles around the bus and we have a Shitzu, Snuggles, he’s a little old but he’s managing.”<sup>1</sup> The core of Brown’s message, according to Brown: ““It’s people over party, it’s putting our state and us as Americans first over any particular party or any interest group.”<sup>2</sup> Throughout his stump speeches, Brown discussed political independence in the

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<sup>1</sup> WGGB. "Sen. Scott Brown Campaigns by Bus in Western Mass."  
<http://www.wggb.com/2012/11/02/sen-scott-brown-campaigns-by-bus-in-western-mass/>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

same hallowed manner he discussed “integrity, character, and trustworthiness.”<sup>3</sup> Brown touted these attributes as the most important attributes for a United States Senator from Massachusetts to have. After listening to Brown discuss his opponent, Elizabeth Warren, one could tell Brown thought Brown possessed more independence, integrity, character, and trustworthiness than Warren. The tagline on the Brown for Senate posters in the crowd, or the Brown for Senate frame at the end of his campaign commercials, read, “He’s for Us.”

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012—the culmination of seemingly interminable stump speeches by Elizabeth Warren, her opponent, Republican Senator Scott Brown, President Barack Obama, and Republican challenger Mitt Romney—the Massachusetts electorate voted for Barack Obama over Mitt Romney, 60.7% to 37.5%, and for Elizabeth Warren over Scott Brown, 53.8% to 46.2%.

The question this thesis tackles is: Why was there a 22.2% difference between Obama and Romney, but only a 7.6% difference between Warren and Brown?

This question has prompted a flood of answers. The most frequently offered answer: Brown was independent<sup>4</sup>—more so than Obama, Warren, or Romney—and 15% of voters identified with his issue mix more than the platforms of a single party.

Another answer: Elizabeth Warren is a woman—this hurts her politically.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> WBZ. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #1." 2012.; UMass Lowell, The Boston Herald. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #2." 10/1/2012.; Consortium, Western Massachusetts. "Massachusetts Senate Debate #3." 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Weir, Richard. "Gail Huff Touts Scott Brown's Independent Spirit." McClatchy - Tribune Business News Aug 23 2012. ProQuest. Web. 3 Feb. 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Payne, Lien. "A Study of Newspaper Treatment of Male and Female Political Candidates." Order No. 1481477 University of Missouri - Columbia, 2009. Ann Arbor: ProQuest. Web. 3 Feb. 2014.

Another answer: Elizabeth Warren is a Harvard professor—affiliation with Harvard is a political liability in Massachusetts.<sup>6</sup>

Another answer: Elizabeth Warren is inauthentic<sup>7</sup>—she self-reported as a Native American to the Harvard professor search committee.

Another answer: Scott Brown was more likeable—Boston Herald columnists thought this<sup>8</sup>, but so did Boston Globe columnists<sup>9</sup> and even self-described Elizabeth Warren supporters<sup>10</sup>.

None of these explanations can be invalidated. As long as one of the Obama/Brown voters on November 6<sup>th</sup> utilized one of the aforementioned criterion to inform their voting decision, that criterion contributed to the Obama/Brown ticket split.

I will, however, call some of these explanations into question, and put forth my own. My theory is not a weighted blend of the aforementioned answers. Rather, my theory is a thorough distillation of a vague criterion that almost everybody believes Brown possessed over Warren: “likeability.”

After four years of undergraduate social life at the University of Michigan, I have identified two ways to define, and therefore assess, likeability. The first is what I will call the Greek Life approach. The second is what I will call the significant variable isolation approach.

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<sup>6</sup> Schwartz, Jason. "Why All the Harvard Hating." *Boston Daily*, August 31, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Joyce, Rosemary. "Politics of Authenticity: Elizabeth Warren Edition." *Psychology Today*, September 26, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Grey, Rob. "Warren Is Waning." *Boston Herald*, 9/6/2012, 22.

<sup>9</sup> Johnson, Glen. "Brown Banks on Likability, but Warren has Room to Grow." *Boston Globe*: B.3. Apr 22 2012. ProQuest. Web. 21 Apr. 2013

<sup>10</sup> Phillips, Frank, and Noah Bierman. "Brown, Warren Deadlocked, Poll shows." *Boston Globe*: A.1. Apr 01 2012. ProQuest. Web. 21 Apr. 2013

The “Greek Life Approach” assumes that likeability is an objective, invisible criterion bounded into one’s personality that, although impossible to define, is recognized by all. In other words, if you have a group of Massachusetts residents invite Warren and Brown over for beer and pizza, kick the candidates out after two hours, go into a dark room and throw Warren and Brown’s images up on a projector, Scott Brown will get the bid every time.

My goal in this thesis is not to define likeability—that task is, as a president who simultaneously polls at 50% likeability and 13% “Anti-Christ”<sup>11</sup> says, “above my pay grade”<sup>12</sup>. Instead, I will isolate one variable that appeared to have significantly (negatively) impact Warren’s likeability perception, explain how this variable came to be grafted onto Warren, and explain why this variable matters in the context of voting.

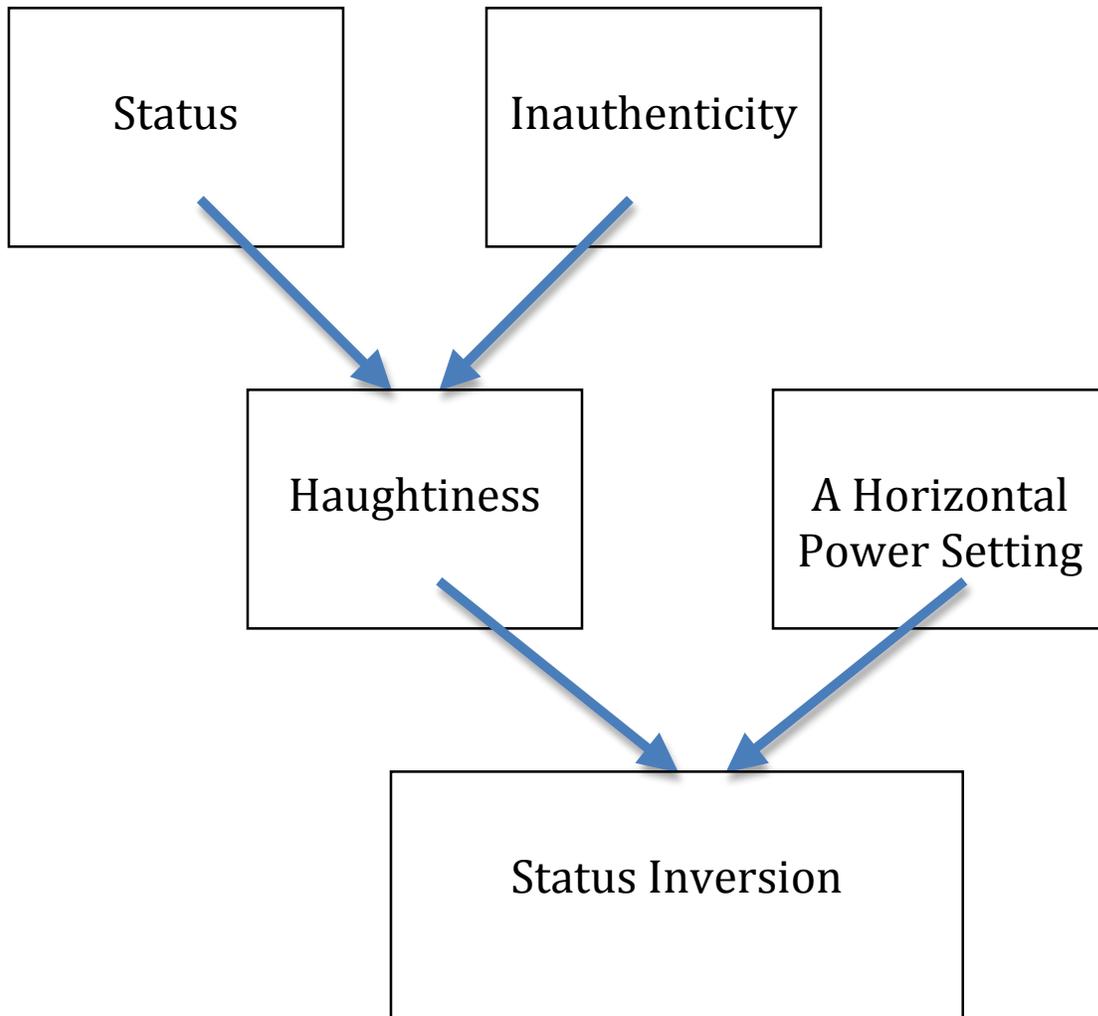
I argue that this variable is the ethos of “Warren-thinks-she’s-better-than-you-ness”—or, termed more concisely, “haughtiness.” Contrary to popular reporting, this haughtiness derived not from *just* her high status (as conferred by her Harvard professorship) or her inauthenticity (as primarily conferred by her claims about being Native American), but rather by a combination of the two. I posit that this haughtiness only negatively affects the individual who is believed to be “haughty” within a *Horizontal Power Setting*. I define a Horizontal Power Setting as a setting through which Population B, who believes Person A thinks she’s better than Population B, can affect Person A in a manner which Population B believes Person A believes is substantial. I then claim that a combination of an ethos of haughtiness, combined with a Horizontal Power Setting, leads to *Status Inversion*. I define Status Inversion as a situation in which

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<sup>11</sup> Bennet-Smith, Meredith. "Some Americans Still Believe Obama Is the Antichrist, Bigfoot Is Real, Poll Shows." *Huffington Post*, 4/03/2013.

<sup>12</sup> Obama, Barack. Saddleback Presidential Candidates Forum, 8/17/2008.

*Model 1: The Derivation of Status Inversion*



those with low cultural capital are motivated to hinder the goals of a person or group with higher cultural capital, *and are able to do so*. I then discuss, therefore, how Status Inversion is a situation in which those with low cultural capital have more power than those with high cultural capital in a setting significant to those with high cultural capital. This thesis draws heavily upon Max Weber and Pierre Bourdieu, as this thesis is concerned with the transmission between status and power, and these two scholars are the most prominent with regards to the analysis of status and power.

This paper is organized in the following manner. Chapter 1 will analyze the theories of ticket-splitting in the current academic literature; this chapter will also underscore where these theories can be questioned in regards to their applicability to the Warren/Brown campaign. Chapter 2 will highlight Weber's contributions to the understanding of "status" and "class," as I argue that the former is a significant factor in the Obama/Brown ticket split, while the latter is less relevant. Chapter 3 will highlight Pierre Bourdieu's contributions to the understanding of distinction, as "inauthenticity"—the act of placing oneself in a distinct group in which others do not believe one belongs—is a function of distinction. Then, connecting these threads, chapters 4-8 will present my theory of Status Inversion. These chapters will explain how and why high status, in some cases, leads to low *power*—a ramification of high status that Bourdieu never discusses, but that surfaced in the Warren/Brown campaign. Chapter 4 defines "haughtiness" as a function of status and inauthenticity. Chapter 5 formally introduces the theories of Status Inversion and Horizontal Power Settings, and explains how Status Inversion is a function of "haughtiness" and the presence of a Horizontal Power Setting. Chapter 6 explains how the rhetoric of the Brown campaign was structured to both prime and capitalize upon

Status Inversion, and how the Warren campaign made itself susceptible to Status Inversion. In Chapter 7, I will present a novel model of voting behavior, which bridges the gap between “Status Inversion” and ticket-splitting prevalence. This model frames ticket-splitting as a function of Status Inversion. Chapter 8 will then offer a research design to test this theory. Chapter 9 will broaden the search for Status Inversion by highlighting this phenomenon in two other modern political media storms: Barack Obama’s comments about guns and religion before the 2008 Pennsylvania Democratic Primary, and the attacks on Senator Ted Cruz by his Republican colleagues during the 2013 Debt Ceiling fight. In Chapter 10, I will list a series of recommendations for strategies the Warren Campaign could have employed to blunt Status Inversion. This chapter will also generalize these theories into strategies for any campaign to utilize to blunt Status Inversion, and, therefore, prevent the loss of votes. In Chapter 11, I will conclude this thesis by discussing why my theory of Status Inversion matters within political settings, outside political settings, and to me.

## **Chapter 1: Contributions from Ticket-Splitting Research**

All the models of split-ticket voting I have encountered assume the following framework: that one's propensity to split one's ticket is a function of 'X,' where X represents each theorist's criterion. For example, ticket-splitting is a function of campaign spending, or a function of an ingrained preference for Republicans to control the White House and Democrats to control Congress, or a function of whether or not two candidates (from different parties) are more ideologically congruent than any other permutation of candidate pairs. However, for all of these frameworks, this 'X' variable does not apply to *both* Obama *and* Brown more than any other candidate pair. Therefore, none of these theories can answer my research question, because none of them can explain why a voter would vote Obama/Brown instead of Obama/Warren, Brown/Romney, or Warren/Romney.

As a concrete example of ticket-splitting theories which are not a function of political ideology, let us analyze Burden and Kimball's<sup>13</sup> argument that split-ticket voting is a function of campaign spending. As Warren outspent Brown, this theory would predict Warren to garner a higher vote total than Obama. This did not occur.<sup>14</sup>

One of the most prominent tropes in this literature posits both that ticket-splitting is a sole function of ideology, and that the fundamental particle of ideology is political party identification. I disagree with this trope on both counts. Candidates are more than just issue platforms sown up in a body. Since I believe voters are influenced by qualities

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<sup>13</sup> Burden, Barry C., and David C. Kimball. *Why Americans Split Their Tickets : Campaigns, Competition, and Divided Government*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> LeBlanc, Steve. "Elizabeth Warren, Scott Brown Spend Nearly \$68 Million in Senate Race." *Huffington Post*, 11/01/12.

other than a candidate's platform, I must question theories that imply voters are only influenced by candidates' platforms.

Some theories in this vein can be questioned simply by the results of the November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 election. One of the two most cited arguments is from Gary Jacobson's *The Electoral Origins of Divided Government: Competition in U.S. House Elections, 1946-1988*. This position is best summed up by the following: "According to Jacobson, the electorate, in effect, prefers its President Republican and its Representatives Democratic"<sup>15</sup>. This, obviously, does not explain the motivations of the Obama/Brown voter.

Another subset of these prominent theories takes more work to question, because they are less specific. I will call this subset of theories 'general preference responses,' as this subset posits that voters have a 'general preference' as to how the legislative or executive branches of the Federal Government should interact, or 'general preferences' as to where on the political spectrum Congress and the Presidency should lie. To reiterate, these models are incompatible with my thesis because these models imply that the *candidate* does not matter; only the *party* of the candidate matters. Therefore, voting for *any* person of one party for President and the candidate of the other party for Senate will satisfy the 'general preference' of the voter.

One of the most widely cited ticket-splitting theories is that of Morris Fiorina. His "policy-balancing model"<sup>16</sup> posits that moderate voters, unsatisfied by the offerings of both parties, must cobble together representatives from both parties in order to satisfy

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<sup>15</sup> Mattei, Franco, and John Howes. "Competing Explanations of Split-Ticket Voting in American National Elections." *American Politics Research* 28, no. 3 (July 1, 2000 2000): 379-407.

<sup>16</sup> Fiorina, Morris P. *Divided Government*. New Topics in Politics. 2nd ed. Boston, Mass: Allyn and Bacon, 1996. 97.

their political urges. Fiorina adds, “In this simple policy-balancing model, ticket-splitters come from the central, moderate range of the ideological spectrum. More extreme voters cast straight tickets, where moderate voters are more likely to split their tickets.”<sup>17</sup> Analysis of this model “have provided, at best, very limited empirical support (Alvarez & Schousen, 1993; Born, 1994; Burden & Kimball, 1997; Fryner, Kim, & Bimes, 1997; Lichtl & Garand, 1997; Siegelman, Wahlbeck, & Buell, 1997; Soss & Canon, 1995)”<sup>18</sup>; however, I must specifically question this theory in the context of the 2012 Massachusetts election.

Let us assume that Massachusetts voters abided by both the aforementioned implicit assumptions and explicit dictates of Fiorina’s policy-balancing model in 2012. Under this assumption, 8% of MA voters are moderates, as 8% of MA voters split their tickets between Obama and Brown. So, then, why did moderate voters choose to satisfy their moderate urge by splitting Obama/Brown instead of Warren/Romney? The model provides no set of tools to determine this. The model necessitates that there be *some* core preference almost all moderates use to choose one party for President and the other party for Senate: if this ‘core preference’ didn’t exist, the choice of which way to split would be arbitrary; if the choice were arbitrary, given a 2,000,000+ sample size, probability theory would dictate that half the moderates would split Obama/Brown, and the other half would split Warren/Romney; and the final result would display the same number of votes for Obama and Warren, as well as an equal number for Romney and Brown. Since Warren trailed Obama by 8 points, however, the method of ticket-splitting was not

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>18</sup> Mattei and Howes, "Competing Explanations of Split-Ticket Voting in American National Elections," 382.

arbitrary. There was a clear preference among moderates to graft their moderation onto the Federal Government by voting for a Democratic President and a Republican Senator.

Let us now look at the 2008 Presidential and Senate election in Massachusetts. Obama earned 61.8% of the vote, McCain earned 36.0%; Kerry earned 65.8%, Beatty (the Republican Senate candidate) earned 31.0%. In 2008, then, under Fiorina's definition of "moderates," only 4% of the electorate was comprised of "moderates," and these moderates all decided to split their ticket by voting Democratic for *Senate* and Republican for *President*. In numerical terms, there were 55,546 splitters in 2008, who all split Republican for President and Democrat for Senate (notation: R/D), and 240,538 splitters in 2012, who split D/R. Since the total electorate only grew by 66,570 between 2008 and 2012, this model requires that *at least* 118,442<sup>a</sup> partisans transformed into "moderates," unless all 118,442 partisans left the state between 2008 and 2012 and were replaced by out-of-state moderates who all voted. (Of course, any combination of the two adding up to 118,442 would suffice as well.) Furthermore, all of the new 66,570 registered voters must be moderates<sup>b</sup>. Furthermore, the 55,546 moderates who all cast their ballots for McCain and Kerry (R/D) must have all switched methods of grafting their moderation on to Washington by voting D/R.

These assumptions are infeasible.

Let us turn to other factors that can explain the shift that occurred from splitting R/D (McCain/Kerry) to D/R (Obama/Brown).

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<sup>a</sup> (# of Splitters in 2012)-(# of Splitters in 2008)-(# of new registered voters between 2008 and 2012)

<sup>b</sup> If not, the equation '66, 570-x; 118,442+x' must hold

Proposition #1: Massachusetts moderates became enamored with Barack Obama between 2008 and 2012, shifting their 'Democratic' vote to him and then satisfying their desire for Congressional moderation by voting for a Republican Senator

I will first question this by demonstrating how an assumption of this explanation conflicts with an assumption of Fiorina's model, and then I will question it a second time by evaluating the statement through the lens of Massachusetts electoral data.

As previously written, a central (unstated) assumption of Fiorina's model is that nothing about a candidate matters to voters besides that candidate's party. This assumption exists because the split-ticket voter is not voting for the candidate because they like the candidate personally, or even because they like his issue platform, but rather because they like *moderation*, and the candidate—in combination with a candidate from the other party—is a *means* to this moderation. An example of this thought process would be a person who goes to their doctor for a flu shot: the person does not get the flu shot because he likes getting shots, but because he does not want to get the flu. Since Fiorina describes no "personality spectrum" on which moderates stake out an ideal spot and split their ticket in order to calibrate Washington to that spot, considerations other than a candidate's issue platform do not matter to moderates. Therefore, the only way that moderates would 'become enamored with' Obama from 2008 to 2012 would be if Obama dramatically lurched to the center (where the ticket-splitting moderates are, according to Fiorina). However, if vast majorities of independents in the country are moderates, and these voters are equally bounded by the assumptions of Fiorina's model, then this model would *still* not explain the Massachusetts 2012 election, as Obama's 'moderate shift'

between 2008 and 2012 did not take place. Obama lost support among these independents from 2008 to 2012 by 9 points in Ohio, 9 points in Wisconsin, and 6 points in Virginia.<sup>19</sup>

Since a huge moderate swing to Obama did not occur, any further defense of Fiorina's theory must utilize Thomas Schelling's game theoretical notion of "focal points"<sup>20</sup> as a crutch. If Massachusetts split-ticket voters do not always split DR (see 2008) or RD (see 2012), and do not all collude to split one way or the other, and do not each arbitrarily split their ticket, and there are no other factors besides a candidate's position on the political spectrum that contribute to ticket-splitting, then *something* must be tipping these moderates to split their tickets one way or the other. According to Schelling, this "something" is "each person's expectation of what the other expects him to expect to be expected to do."<sup>21</sup> I will now demonstrate the value of Fiorina's model with this final modification in order to question this model specifically and question all models of this schema—that split-ticket voters are only concerned with grafting their moderation onto Washington—generally.

Proposition #2: The "Schelling Point" is incumbency. Even if moderates themselves don't factor incumbency into their decision, they know that they are expected to, and therefore vote for the incumbents of one party and split by voting with the non-incumbent of the other party for the other office. This ethos of incumbent favoritism in which these "Schelling Points" are rooted is illuminated by current academic literature on voting.

When looking only at Massachusetts and the small sample size of elections within, this argument appears persuasive. In 2008, the only office (out of Senator or President) with an incumbent was Senator; the moderates voted Kerry back due to

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<sup>19</sup> Negrin, Matt. "Exit Polls: Obama's Winning Coalition of Women and Non-Whites." <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/OTUS/exit-polls-obama-loses-independents-swing-states/story?id=17656990#.UJ3S02hwa20>.

<sup>20</sup> Schelling, Thomas C. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.

<sup>21</sup> Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, 57.

incumbency, and then affected their “party balancing” by splitting at the Presidential level (by voting for McCain). In 2012, these Schelling points made the task of deciding how to split very easy for split-ticket voters: the moderates could vote for the incumbents *and* “policy balance” by voting Obama/Brown.

The sparse amount of Massachusetts election data with which to further test this theory (there was no Senate office up in MA during the 2004 election) forces me to draw outside Massachusetts for evidence to refute this. In North Dakota and Indiana in 2012, the only incumbent on the ballot was Obama, which, according to this defense, would imply a D/R split. The results, however, were an 11.6% R/D split in North Dakota and an 11.2% R/D split in Indiana. There might be other Schelling points that can explain the electorates in these two states (for example, in Indiana, as explained below), but these Schelling points have nothing to do with incumbency.

Proposition #3: The Schelling point is “the candidate who is *not* ‘terrible’ due to opinions of the candidate that lie far outside the mainstream,” given that there is such a candidate in the race. Beatty and Romney were ‘terrible’ candidates

Refuting this necessitates defining criteria for a ‘terrible’ candidate, and then showing that Beatty and Romney were not terrible candidates. Unlike the rebuttal to ‘Proposition #2,’ this does not attempt to question that the criteria laid out cannot serve as a Schelling point, but rather that the candidates do not fit the criteria laid out.

I present two objective criteria for a ‘terrible’ candidate—one qualitative, one quantitative—that must both be met for such a designation. The qualitative criterion is that members of the ‘terrible’ candidate’s own party distance themselves from that candidate. The quantitative criterion is that there is at least an 8% vote differential between the ‘terrible’ candidate and all the other candidates in the ‘terrible’ candidate’s

party for which the ‘terrible’ candidate’s electorate votes. This quantitative criterion is dangerously circular: the candidate lost because he is terrible; the candidate is terrible because he lost. I add in the qualitative criterion of ‘party abandonment’ in order to blunt this circularity.

Based on these criteria, 2012 presented us with three ‘terrible’ candidates: Todd Akin of Missouri, Richard Murdoch of Indiana, and Mark Clayton of Tennessee. The ‘terrible’ status of the first two can be derived from a single quote; the ‘terrible’ status of the last one requires a wider lens.

Todd Akin’s belief that lay ‘far outside the mainstream’ was articulated by the Republican Senate candidate from Missouri on a local news channel in St Louis: “If it’s a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try and shut that whole thing down.”<sup>22</sup> The ramifications from said view: the Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Reince Priebus, stated in an interview on CNN, “I think [Akin] should step aside...we’re not going to send any money toward that race or spend money on the ground in that particular race.”<sup>23</sup> Akin lost to incumbent Claire McCaskill 39.2% to 54.7%; in Missouri, Romney beat Obama 53.9% to 44.3%. There was a 14.7% vote differential between Republican Todd Akin and Republican Mitt Romney. Todd Akin, therefore, qualifies as a ‘terrible’ candidate.

Richard Murdoch’s belief that lay ‘far outside the mainstream’ was articulated by the Republican Senate candidate from Indiana during a televised debate with his Democratic opponent, Joe Donnelly: “Life is a gift from God that I think even if like

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<sup>22</sup> Akin, *The Jaco Report*, 8/19/2012.

<sup>23</sup> "The Situation Room." In.: CNN. 4-6, 8/21/2012

begins in that horrible situation of rape, that it is something God intended to happen.”<sup>24</sup> The ramifications from said view: John McCain and Indiana Representative Mike Pence, who was running concurrently for Governor, called on Murdoch to apologize. Murdoch lost to challenger Joe Donnelley 44.4% to 49.9%; Romney beat Obama in Indiana 54.3% to 43.8%. There was a 9.9% differential between the Republicans. Richard Murdoch, therefore, qualifies as a ‘terrible’ candidate.

Mark Clayton, a conspiracy-theorist who won the Democratic primary due to an alphabetical ballot and a last name that began with ‘C’,<sup>25</sup> had warned his fellow Tennesseans that “the U.S. government might be replaced with a ‘North American Union’ and that Google was working against him at the behest of the Chinese government”;<sup>26</sup> and, for those of his potential constituents with small kids, he warned that “the Transportation Security Administration mandates [transsexuals] and homosexuals grabbing children in their stranger-danger zones.”<sup>27</sup> The Tennessee Democratic Party stated the day after the primary that “the Tennessee Democratic Party disavows his candidacy [and] will not do anything to promote or support him in any way.”<sup>28</sup> Clayton lost to Republican incumbent Bob Corker 30.4% to 64.9%; Obama lost to Romney 39.0% to 59.5%. There was an 8.6% differential between the Democrats. Mark Clayton, therefore, qualifies as a ‘terrible’ candidate.

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<sup>24</sup> "Indiana Senate Debate #2." 7-8:30. Paul W. Ogle Cultural & Community Center, Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN.

<sup>25</sup> Fahrenthold, David A. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/decision2012/2012s-worst-candidate-with-mark-clayton-tennessee-democrats-hit-bottom/2012/10/22/77da926e-1b8a-11e2-a146-ccabc9c85c53\\_story\\_2.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/decision2012/2012s-worst-candidate-with-mark-clayton-tennessee-democrats-hit-bottom/2012/10/22/77da926e-1b8a-11e2-a146-ccabc9c85c53_story_2.html).

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 10/22/2012

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 10/22/2012

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 10/22/2012

Neither Beatty, Romney, nor Warren were disavowed by their party, either at the local level or the national level. Therefore, none of those candidates can be branded as ‘terrible’ candidates and lumped together with the Akins, Murdochs, and Claytons of history. In other words, more than just name-calling is needed to explain the Obama/Warren split.

Proposition 4: Scott Brown was a moderate; since moderates aligned almost perfectly with his slate of issues, they voted for him, and then split their ticket by voting for Obama

Questioning this requires using the foundations of the “policy-balancing model” to cast doubt on the logic of the latter part of this defense.

Let us state, for the sake of argument, that Scott Brown was a moderate. If Scott Brown truly exemplified the issue stances of the moderates, then Fiorina’s model would no longer apply to these moderate voters. These voters, seeking moderation, would have a moderate on the ballot—they would no longer have to cobble together a moderate out of two different candidates. Therefore, the way for the voters to *perfectly* graft their moderation onto Washington, given that Brown is an ‘ideal’ moderate, would be to clone him and write in his clone for President. Obviously, this is not an option. Therefore, moderate voters would do the next best thing; they would vote for the candidate *closest* on the issues to Brown, in order to ‘dilute’ Brown’s moderate ‘perfection’ the least. Both Brown and Romney agree that this ‘closest’ candidate is Romney: Brown endorsed Romney, Romney endorsed Brown. Therefore, according to the logic of the “policy-balancing model,” if Scott Brown were a ‘perfect’ moderate, moderate voters would vote Brown/Romney, and there would be no ticket-splitting. This did not occur.

I believe all this casts enough doubt on the “policy-balancing model” in order to justify a search for an alternative explanation for the 2012 election in Massachusetts.

The other theories on split-ticket voting can be questioned through this same framework. There are two niches of themes in the “resource space”<sup>29</sup> of split-ticket voting models—the “motivated voter” and the “indifferent voter.” Kenneth Mulligan’s “Partisan Ambivalence Model”<sup>30</sup> posits the same motivation behind split-ticket voting as the Fiorina, but augments the quantity of factors of this motivation. In Mulligan’s words:

The party balancing explanation is similar to my partisan ambivalence model in that both positive voters split their tickets out of divided party loyalties. But the two explanations are different in one key respect: partisan ambivalence provides a broader, more general framework than that of party balancing... Partisan ambivalence is broader because it is based on inconsistent feelings and beliefs, and these considerations may be derived from ideological considerations, as in party balancing, or they may also be based on any number of non-ideological perceptions, beliefs, or feelings, such as those related to the groups represented by the parties, the parties candidates, their leadership qualities, trustworthiness, popularity, experience governing, ect. Where party balancing implies ideological balancing, partisan ambivalence suggests that voters may also balance many types of considerations. (510-511)

I did not cast doubt on Fiorina’s model by questioning its explanation for *why* voters split their ticket, but rather by demonstrating that it did not explain *how* voters split their ticket (i.e. Obama/Brown vs Warren/Romney). Any model that does not explain both *why* and *how* cannot explain the Massachusetts electorate; *therefore*, the *why* explanation cannot stand alone and, therefore, any model that solely addresses the *why* cannot *a priori* explain the Brown/Warren election results. Questioning the ‘why’ behind Mulligan’s model is therefore unnecessary, because, without explaining the ‘how,’ Mulligan’s theory will not be able explain the Massachusetts electorate, even when utilizing the aforementioned four Propositions.

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<sup>29</sup> Carroll, Glenn R. "Concentration and Specialization Dynamics of Niche Width in Populations of Organizations." *American Journal of Sociology* 90, no. 6 (May, 1985): 1262-83.

<sup>30</sup> Mulligan, Kenneth. "Partisan Ambivalence, Split-Ticket Voting, and Divided Government." *Political Psychology* 32, no. 3 (2011): 505-30.

Other landmark ticket-splitting theories falter in the same respect: even though their explanation of the ‘why’ differs from (and, at times, directly conflicts with) Fiorina’s explanation of the ‘why,’ these theories still do not explain the ‘how.’ I will concisely highlight how these things do not explain this ‘how,’ as this is the preliminary burden these theories must clear.

Another such theory in the “motivated voter” niche is the game theoretical reasoning behind split-ticket voting presented by Chari, Jones and Marimon<sup>31</sup>. This theory posits that the only way to achieve the Pareto efficient outcome in the prisoner’s dilemma of ‘everyone wanting to vote for lots of money for their district, but primarily wanting limited overall government spending’ is to vote Republican for president while voting Democrat for Representative. Obviously this does not square with the outcome of the 2012 election, but, assuming the following “John Roberts” burden of analysis:

“The question is not whether that is the most natural interpretation of the mandates but only whether it is a “fairly possible” one. *Crowell v Benson*, 285 U.S. 22, 62 (1932). As we have explained, “every reasonable construction must be resorted to, in order to save a statute from unconstitutionality.”<sup>32</sup>

Let me attempt to save this theory from invalidation by removing the “voting Republican for President” means with “voting Republican for Senate” means, as the latter accomplishes the same ends as the former (although to a lesser extent). This would explain the 2012 election perfectly—Massachusetts filled its entire delegation of ten House of Representative seats with Democrats and voted for Obama 60.7%/37.5%, yet only voted for Warren 53.8%/46.2%. This theory still comes into question, however,

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<sup>31</sup> Chari, V. V., Larry E. Jones, and Marimon Ramon. "The Economics of Split-Ticket Voting in Representative Democracies." *The American Economic Review* 87, no. 5 (1997): 957-76.

<sup>32</sup> *Hooper v California*, 155 U.S. 648, 657 (1895).” (*National Federation of Independent Businesses v Sibelius*, 567 U.S.)

when considering the Massachusetts electorate voted for Democratic Senators along with their President since 1972.

The split-ticket theories in the “indifferent” voter niche can be questioned in the context of the Brown/Warren election with less complexity. The primary theory in this vein is that of Campbell and Miller<sup>33</sup> in “The Motivational Basis of Straight and Split-ticket Voting.” This describes the “indifferent split-ticket” voter as the following:

This voter’s basic political motivation is also weak but he enters the voting booth with some superficial interest in a particular local candidates, the request of a friend, or some last-minute influence that leads him to bypass the straight party vote in order to pick out some particular candidate. Once into the individual offices, his choices are not party oriented and which result in his crossing party lines.<sup>34</sup>

I agree that the split-ticket voter’s choices are not party oriented, but simply because ‘not being party oriented’ is a logical prerequisite for split-ticket voting. This is like saying that the choice of a person who goes to the baker to buy an apple pie and a pumpkin pie is not ‘apple-oriented.’ I disagree with the proposition that a voter who votes because of the ‘Warren thinks she’s better than you’ ethos is ‘indifferent,’ but that is more of a semantics discussion than an academic one. Most likely, there were people who split their ticket based on the “request of a friend” or “a last-minute influence”; I do not believe, however, this explains away 7% of the Massachusetts electorate. Even if it did, there is nothing in this model that would suggest why apathetic voters split Brown/Obama rather than Warren/Romney; hence, this theory could not explain the Massachusetts electorate even with modifications from the four aforementioned propositions.<sup>o</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Campbell, Angus, and Warren E. Miller. "The Motivational Basis of Straight and Split Ticket Voting." *The American Political Science Review* 51, no. 2 (1957): 293-312.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

<sup>o</sup> Of course, the “friend” here would have to be a Brown/Obama voter, which would put us back at square one in terms of explaining the prevalence of the Obama/Brown voter.

The last popular trope of split-ticket voting inhabits both niches in the resource base of split-ticket voting: the power of incumbency. This trope is a restatement of ‘Proposition Two,’ and can be questioned similarly. However, the most popular of these theories—that of Richard Born<sup>35</sup>—can coexist with mine. According to Born, “incumbency accounts for a 2.2% gain in divided voting”<sup>36</sup>; Born’s theory, if valid, still leaves me with 4.8% of the Massachusetts electorate to analyze.

Another theory of ticket-splitting is “Cognitive Madisonianism”<sup>37</sup>, a concept that would not explain the Massachusetts electorate, with out without the four propositions, on its own. However, the strategy of the Scott Brown campaign begs for the consideration of a *fifth* proposition: the Schelling point for Cognitive Madisonianism should apply to the candidate that is ‘not extreme.’ This theory would justify Scott Brown’s rhetoric, which frequently labeled Warren as “extreme,”<sup>38</sup> but is not substantiated by Elizabeth Warren’s actual campaign platform in relation to Barack Obama’s.

Cognitive Madisonianism, sans Propositions, posits that ticket splitters split their tickets “after a conscious decision that it is somehow ‘good’ to check power and balance policy, as our nation’s founders might have wanted.”<sup>39</sup> However I will again assume the John Roberts burden of analysis, and rewrite this theory to consider Cognitive Madisonianism not as an independent variable (as one is either a cognitive Madisonian or is not), but instead as a dependent variable (cognitive Madisonianism is a function of the

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<sup>35</sup> Born, Richard. "Congressional Incumbency and the Rise of Split-Ticket Voting." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2000): 365-87.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 371.

<sup>37</sup> Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Richard Nadeau. "Split-Ticket Voting: The Effects of Cognitive Madisonianism." *The Journal of Politics* 66, no. 1 (2004): 97-112.

<sup>38</sup> Barnett, Jim. "Here Comes Single-Payer Warren." 6/28/2012.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

extent to which a candidate is “radical,” and the extent to which that radical candidate is able to pass her radical agenda into law [which, in turn, in this case, is a function of whether or not this radical candidate shares a party with the President]). Scott Brown’s rhetoric was based on the proposition that Cognitive Madisonianism is a dependent variable in this fashion, because his messaging strategy sought to paint Warren as an extreme candidate who would be allowed to pass her radical agenda when Massachusetts voted for Obama. In other words, Scott Brown assume that one’s cognitive Madisonianism was motivated by the following:

By endorsing the idea of moderates in both parties working together, they believe they can avoid radical extremes and achieve a mix of mainstream Republican and Democratic policies. Split-ticket voting comes about, first, because it is ideologically not much of a leap (that is, they do not see themselves as having that much policy disagreement with their opponents), and, second, because splitting the ballot helps prevent one party takeover, which would allow policies to be pushed to the party extreme, left or right.”<sup>40</sup>

Scott Brown also knew that he needed to foster much Cognitive Madisonianism in a state that was projected to go 60/40 for Obama. Scott Brown fostered this Cognitive Madisonianism by attempting to paint Warren as a member of the “radical extreme,” and by presenting himself as a way to “avoid radical extremes and achieve a mix of mainstream Republican and Democratic policies.” The following Brown campaign e-mail, sent on the day of the Supreme Court’s ruling on the Affordable Care Act, illustrates this strategy: “Although this Supreme Court victory is discouraging, we must not stand down. While Scott Brown will continue fighting to repeal Obamacare, the extreme left and Occupy crowd - led by Elizabeth Warren and her radical health care ideas - will be on the march again.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 106

<sup>41</sup> Barnett, Jim. "Here Comes Single-Payer Warren." 6/28/2012.

Scott Brown’s problem with this strategy: Elizabeth Warren and Barack Obama did not disagree on a single issue. Not one<sup>f</sup>. Therefore, Scott Brown needed to make Elizabeth Warren’s liberalism about “who she is, not what she does.”<sup>42</sup> To conclude, these theories may explain some of the variance of the 15% of Obama voters that voted for Brown. This thesis, however, will propose a theory which is more logically sound—in *the context of the Warren/Brown campaign*—than these aforementioned theories. First, however, I will discuss the two key building-blocks of this theory—status and distinction.

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<sup>f</sup> With the possible exception of Warren’s exhortation to withdraw troops from Afganistan: “We need to get out as quickly as possible, consistent with the safety of our troops and with a transition to Afghan control” (<http://elizabethwarren.com/issues/foreign-policy>).

<sup>42</sup> Markovits, Andrei S. *Uncouth Nation : Why Europe Dislikes America*. Public Square. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

## **Chapter 2: Contributions from Weber**

### Class vs Status

Max Weber defines class and status in terms of exclusion. This thesis employs Weber's definition of class and status throughout the paper. However, this thesis *challenges* the core connotation of these definitions in the context of the Warren/Brown race. Weber's core connotation of status and class is: the more status and class one has, the greater capacity one has to exclude in significant manners.<sup>43</sup>

According to Weber, class is a sole function of economic capital, and class stratification is based upon varying degrees of the monopolization of capital goods, whether these capital goods be “on the one hand, according to the type of property that is usable for returns; and, on the other hand, according to the kind of services that can be offered in the market.”<sup>44</sup> Exclusion of lower tiers in the class stratification from the upper tiers is codified into law: one cannot inhabit a home that they cannot purchase due to their inability to pay for it (or that they do not own for whatever reason). Status is also a function of economic capital, but indirectly: status is primarily a function of what Weber terms a “style of life,”<sup>45</sup> the possibilities of which are a function of economic capital (one cannot go to the opera if one cannot afford opera tickets). Status, however, is not the sole function of economic capital (one who can afford opera tickets can choose to eat all her meals at McDonald's). As Weber says, “In content, status honor is normally expressed by the fact that above all else a specific style of life can be expected from all those who wish to belong to the circle. Linked with this expectation are restrictions on social intercourse

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<sup>43</sup> Weber, Max, Hans Heinrich Gerth, and C. Wright Mills. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York,: Oxford university press, 1946.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

(that is, intercourse which is not subservient to economic or any other of business' functional purposes."<sup>46</sup> Here again surfaces the trope of exclusion—"restrictions"—except, in this case, this exclusion is not codified into law (a Dorchester McDonald's patron will not be jailed for befriending a Cambridge opera-goer). These social restrictions are a function of the same differences in stratification—in this case, status stratification, which Weber also generalizes as grounded in varying degrees of monopolization: "For all practical purposes, stratification by status goes hand-in-hand with the monopolization of ideal and material goods and opportunities, in a manner we have come to know as typical. Besides the specific status honor, which always rests upon distance and exclusiveness, we find all sorts of material monopolies."<sup>47</sup> Weber later goes on to describe how "status honor" is a function of monopolization: "The decisive role of a 'style of life' in status 'honor' means that status groups are specific bearers of all 'conventions.' In whatever way it may be manifest, all 'stylization' of life either originates in status groups or is at least conserved by them."<sup>48</sup>

I argue that the haughtiness ethos stems from Brown's claim that Warren believes no status group can exclude her, which is contingent upon Brown's claim that Warren (falsely) believes she can authentically adopt any politically advantageous 'convention.'

### Class, Less Relevant than Status

Class can be questioned as a direct determinant of the haughtiness ethos by looking at the political success in Massachusetts of ideologically incongruent politicians hailing from very wealthy families—Ted Kennedy and William Weld. Bill Weld came

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 190-191.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 191.

from a very privileged WASP family; the Kennedy surname is ubiquitous with privilege. This ‘two-line proof’ of the invalidation of haughtiness as a significant function of class concludes with the record of tremendous electoral success of both of these politicians. One cannot argue that class is a significant variable in this manner without arguing that both Kennedy and Weld ‘compensated’ for their resulting “haughtiness” with the appeal of their political views. This “compensated” addendum is infeasible, given that their political views were not congruent.

#### Status, Not a Factor On Its Own

In line with Weber’s definition, both Kennedy and Weld derived high status from their wealth. In terms of the Brown/Warren relevant Harvard variable, both were Harvard alums. Under the previous reasoning, we can discount status alone as a determinant of the ‘Haughtiness’ ethos. However, this proof is not airtight: the status hierarchy is nowhere near as linear as the class hierarchy—the status (and therefore “monopoly of conventions”) of a Harvard professor is different—not objectively better or worse—than the status of a Harvard alum (whereas the ‘monopoly of material goods’ a Harvard-alum-Bain-consultant would command would be objectively better (in value) than that of most Harvard professors). However, absent the counterfactual of another modern-day Harvard professor turned politician, or the counterfactual of Weld or Kennedy having been a Harvard professor before running for office, this is the best parallel to observe.

### **Chapter 3: Contributions from Bourdieu**

Pierre Bourdieu illuminates the general concept of being better than someone else—“haughty”—through his literature on distinction. This thesis endorses Bourdieu’s “formula” for distinction. In other words, I agree with the variables of which distinction is a function: economic capital, Social Capital, and Cultural Capital. However, this thesis *challenges* the core connotations of these definitions in the context of the Warren/Brown race: that high “cultural capital” (an abstract measure of status distinction) always leads to more power (the ability to achieve one’s goals) than does lower cultural capital.

Pierre Bourdieu’s argument is best validated by Harvard University, the preeminent beacon of status which conspicuously surfaces in the Warren/Brown campaign. The following incident illuminates the magnitude of this status beacon, along with Bourdieu’s analysis of status and distinction.

This incident was published in the *Boston Herald*—a newspaper which endorsed Scott Brown twice for Senator—approximately nine weeks before election day.

“Please respect the Harvard students. They’re better than you.”

So joked Harvard University post-doctoral candidate Rebecca Nappa yesterday, perfectly capturing the unspoken message —though not the words — of a sign posted at a Harvard construction site that’s caused a mini-brouhaha among future leaders of the free world. Actually, make that future leaders of the entire planet, and beyond.

Shawmut Design and Construction posted a sign that, basically, warned construction workers to behave themselves while allowed to step on Harvard’s hallowed ground.

“Show Respect for Harvard ... a world famous campus,” the sign read, Harvard’s Crimson reported. “Please display the highest level of respect for the students, faculty, and their campus ...”

No swearing. No “inappropriate comments” — such as remarking crudely on any future leaders of the free world in skimpy dresses. No drinking, no drugs, no loud noise, no parking on campus and, heaven help us, no sneaking into any campus buildings.

In other words, you construction workers toiling in yesterday’s broiling, blistering sun? Remember this: You’re the serfs. The Harvard crowd? They’re Masters of the Universe.

Or, to steal Occupy Wall Street's language: The workers are 99 percenters. The Harvard kids: 1-percenters. The gulf between them: from here to the moon and back.

Apparently, this sign proved too blatant, too embarrassing and too guilt-inducing even for Harvard students, who complained. And the sign is now gone.<sup>49</sup>

So, why are the Harvard students better than the construction workers?

The answer is found within Pierre Bourdieu's framework of distinction. Simply put, the things that distinguish Harvard students from construction workers are "legitimate," and the things that distinguish construction workers from Harvard students are not "legitimate." This is not a tautology ("Harvard students are distinct from construction workers because they go to Harvard; construction workers are distinct from Harvard students because they did not go to Harvard; going to Harvard is "legitimate") because, as Bourdieu demonstrates, distinction is a function of exclusion. This exclusion in knowledge (by means of attending or not attending Harvard) is the center link in a chain of exclusion that starts with one's family and ends with one's status. The economic distinction between the upper and lower classes reproduces itself in the educational opportunities between the upper and lower classes, which then cultivates distinction in taste between the upper and lower classes. This latter reproduction leads to status distinction between upper and lower classes. Bourdieu's *Distinction*<sup>50</sup> forges the link between educational opportunities in taste, and, in so doing, implies that a "legitimate" taste is something that one can be excluded from possessing, because one can only gain a legitimate taste through "the combined effects of cultural transmission by the family and

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<sup>49</sup> Margery, Eagan. "Crass Act at Harvard." *Boston Herald (MA)*, 2012, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction : A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984.

cultural transmission and by the school”,<sup>51</sup> and one can be excluded, of course, from a family (by not being born into that family) and from a school.

This argument can be simplified: Bourdieu deems these “combined effects” as “academic capital”, so, to restate, “academic capital” allows for the capacity to exclude through the ability to recognize legitimate works, and people can be excluded from possessing “academic capital,” regardless of their effort to attain it. Bourdieu argues that academic capital “allows for the ability to recognize legitimate works”: “through its value–inculcating and value imposing operations, the school also helps to form a general, transposable disposition towards legitimate culture, which is first acquired with respect to scholastically recognized knowledge and practices but tends to be applied beyond the bounds of the curriculum, taking the form of a ‘disinterested’ propensity to accumulate experience and knowledge which may not be directly profitable in the academic market.”<sup>52</sup> Bourdieu states that through this “cultivated disposition” attained through “academic capital” one has the capacity to exclude: “In fact, the generalizing tendency of the cultivated disposition is only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition for the enterprise of cultural appropriation, which is inscribed, as an objective demand, in membership of the bourgeoisie and in the qualifications giving access to its rights and duties”.<sup>53</sup> All this, according to Bourdieu, leads to “the very principle of the disposition to recognize legitimate works, a propensity in capacity to recognize their legitimacy and perceive them as worthy of admiration in themselves, which is inseparable from the capacity to recognize in them something already known, i.e. the stylistic traits appropriate to

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 23

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 23.

characterize them in their singularity ('It's a Rembrandt', or even 'It's the *Helmeted Man*') or as members of a class of works ('It's Impressionist')".<sup>54</sup>

To sum up, all this forges the following chain:



Let us understand how the existence of the aforementioned construction sign implies that Harvard students are better than construction workers through this framework of this chain, as we will later see that the same tropes surface in Scott Brown's rhetoric.

Let us begin with the premise that the existence of this sign implies that whoever put the sign there (the construction company) believed that the workers whom it addressed needed the instruction, either because they were unaware of the regulations or were predisposed not to follow them. The first part of the sign read "Show respect for Harvard, a world-famous campus." This implies that the workers did not know Harvard was a world-famous campus *and* that they were not predisposed to show respect. The former implication spotlights the perceived flaw in the 'understanding of legitimate culture' link in the Bourdieu status chain. In other words, the construction workers 'lacked the propensity and capacity to recognize Harvard's legitimacy and perceive Harvard is worthy of admiration in itself.' The latter implication spotlights a perceived flaw in the 'legitimate habitus' link in the Bourdieu status chain. The "No swearing/No inappropriate comments/No drinking/No drugs/No loud noise" part of the sign implies that these construction workers share the same habitus—the same disposition towards swearing, inappropriate comments, drinking, drugs, and loud noise—and that this habitus

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 26.

is not legitimate, as these actions are equated with not showing respect and are therefore forbidden. The explication of these traits further demonstrates the belief that construction workers did not even recognize that their habitus was illegitimate. The reason this sign proved “too blatant” and “too embarrassing” is that these two links obviously led to the next link—status—and therefore imply that the status of these workers is lower than the status of Harvard students, solely due to the fact that they are construction workers and the Harvard students are Harvard students. The “Better-than-you effect” did not derive solely from “the gulf between [construction workers and Harvard students] from here to the moon and back”; it stemmed from the fact that this sign clearly demonstrated that Harvard was at the *legitimate* end of the gulf, and that, therefore, the construction workers were a galactic—“from here to the moon and back”—distance away from high status.

So how does this relate to the Warren/Brown campaign? The sign, and the “minor brouhaha” which accompanied it, pinpoint the spot where the rungs on the Bourdieu ladder I have used to ascend to the answer of my research question run out. *‘Being better than someone’ is much more of a cultural liability in America in 2012 than it seems to have been in Bourdieu’s France of the 1960s.*

This thesis argues that Bourdieu’s theory needs to be tailored to accommodate this reality. Bourdieu *does* warn against projecting the value *between* economic capital, Social Capital, and Cultural Capital on to a single axis:

“Projection onto a single axis, in order to construct the continuous, linear, homogenous, one-dimensional series with which the social hierarchy is normally identified, implies an extremely difficult (and, if it is unwitting, extremely dangerous) operation, whereby the different types of capital are reduced to a single standard. This abstract operation has an objective basis in the possibility, which is always available, of converting one type of capital into another; however, the exchange rates vary in accordance with the power relation between the holders of the different forms of capital. By obliging one to formulate the principle of the convertibility of the different kinds of capital, which is the

precondition for reducing the space to one dimension, the construction of a two-dimensional space makes it clear that the exchange rate of the different kinds of capital is one of the fundamental stakes in the struggles between class fractions whose power and privileges are linked to one or the other of these types. In particular, this exchange rate is a stake in the struggle over the dominant principle of domination (economic capital, cultural capital or social capital), which goes on at all times between the different fractions of the dominant class.”<sup>55</sup>

However, when Bourdieu writes, with regards to Cultural Capital,

Thus ... the social order is progressively inscribed in people’s minds. Social divisions become principles of division, organizing the image of the social world. Objective limits become a sense of limits, a practical anticipation of objective limits acquired by experience of objective limits, a ‘sense of one’s place’ which leads one to exclude oneself from the goods, persons, places and so forth from which one is excluded.<sup>56</sup>

he implies that “the social order”—the basis for the evaluation of one’s Cultural Capital versus another’s Cultural Capital, which leads to the “sense of one’s place,” which leads to the ability to exclude (or exclusion), which leads to power (or a lack thereof)—is both *understood by* and *submitted to* in a homogeneous fashion amongst people, regardless of field.

This thesis warns against projecting the value *within* Cultural Capital onto a single axis. Bourdieu argues that the power of one’s economic capital and Cultural Capital differs in relation to each other with regard to the “field” one occupies. This thesis argues that, in addition, the translation of the inputs of one’s Cultural Capital into Cultural Capital (and therefore power) differs in relation to the field one occupies. This thesis agrees with Bourdieu insofar as the exchange rates between economic capital, Cultural Capital, and Social Capital with regards to power are a function of field. However, I believe more attention needs to be paid to how the exchange rates between the inputs of Cultural Capital—the social ordering (i.e ranking) of lifestyles, or of values, or of dispositions, or of tastes—with regards to Cultural Capital are a function of field.

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<sup>55</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 125.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 471

Brown understood that the “social order” which valued a Harvard Degree more than a worn Fenway seat cushion was *understood by, but not submitted to by*, all Massachusetts voters. Therefore, Brown attempted to paint Warren as ‘someone who thinks she’s better than you.’ This was done by attempting to paint her as both having a higher status and being inauthentic. The following chapter explains how and why high status *and* inauthenticity are essential to create an ethos of haughtiness.

## Chapter 4: ‘Status+Inauthenticity=Haughtiness’

### The Theoretical Proof of When “Status=Haughtiness”

Let us begin with two separate fields of status.<sup>‡</sup>

π

Ω

Given this setup, there is only one way in which the “Haughtiness” ethos can apply to field π: if the person in field π says or does something that implies that his or her status or habitus (for the two are intimately correlated) is superior to field Ω. I observe three examples of this in recent political history, two of which involve Massachusetts politicians.

#### Scott Brown vs Martha Coakley, January 2010

Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley, Scott Brown’s previous opponent, stated to a Boston Globe reporter who suggested that her campaign was too passive: “As opposed to standing outside Fenway Park? In the cold? Shaking hands?”<sup>57</sup> This statement proved to be the final dagger in her campaign because it denigrated the habitus of Red Sox fans. The habitus of Red Sox fans is grounded in a devotion for their baseball team so strong that they would stand outside Fenway Park in the cold, perhaps waiting in line for the one game that their income would permit them to attend, perhaps just soaking in Yawkey Way before grabbing a beer and watching the game at the Cask and Flagon with other Red Sox fans. The last two questions in Coakley’s statement

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<sup>‡</sup> I chose two Greek symbols so as not to imply one is greater than the other

<sup>57</sup> Filipov, D. (2010, Jan 13). In short race, coakley picks targets carefully. Boston Globe.

address the habitus of Sox Fans specifically, because these questions imply that the values and dispositions of these Red Sox fans are misplaced, and therefore inferior. The fact that Coakley frames ‘standing outside Fenway Park in the cold’ as absurd implies that the Red Sox game is being valued too highly (as standing outside in the cold for a Red Sox game isn’t ‘worth it’). The framing of “shaking hands” as absurd implies a distaste of those who place value on the cultural ritual of shaking hands with strangers who you meet. This ritual is of course amplified in sporting contexts—much physical contact with strangers occurs upon the home team making a great play—so it is fair to say that the  $\Omega$  of the (non-luxury-seats) Red Sox Nation is even more predisposed to value this contact. For Coakley to denounce the value of physical contact suggests that ‘she knows better,’ which squarely places her set of values and dispositions above those of Red Sox fans. It is worth noting that the statement had little to do with class—Red Sox nation displays an astounding homogeneity of habitus at Red Sox games from the \$26 bleacher seats to the \$210 dugout seats.

Her loss in the Senate race to the man who shook hands outside Fenway Park followed seven days later.

#### Barack Obama vs Mitt Romney, 2012

Mitt Romney’s statement that placed his  $\pi$  above a substantial slice of the electorate’s  $\Omega$  was, on the surface, class-based, but implied a near-parallel relationship between class and status. Romney’s statement: “There are 47% of the people who will vote for the president no matter what...Who are dependent upon government, who believe they are victims...These are people who pay no income tax... And so my job is not to worry about those people. I will never convince them that they should take

personal responsibility and care for their lives.”<sup>58</sup> As Romney is a member of the upper class by any standard, Romney’s statement suggested that the rich’s habitus was superior to the lower class’ habitus, not due to class *in itself*, but due to the *dispositions* of this class.<sup>†</sup>

To reiterate, ‘being exempt from income tax’ is not a habitus, nor is ‘being dependent upon government’. However, the disposition to ‘believe you are a victim’ and the disposition to ‘not take personal responsibility and care for your life’ falls under the umbrella of habitus, and Romney explicitly states that these “47%” all have this habitus. Therefore, according to Romney, the  $\pi$  are the income taxpayers and the  $\Omega$  are non-income taxpayers, not because of the *income tax* distinction, but because of the *habitus* which Romney claims is a *condition* of this distinction.

The ramification of the statements of both Romney and Coakley was the charge of elitism. To highlight only two of the most impassioned reactions: Chris Matthews deemed Romney’s recorded remarks as “the most elitist putdown of the American people in history”;<sup>59</sup> Curt Schilling, on his blog right after he posted the Coakley quote, wrote “There are just so many things wrong with this statement. It shows her elitism and arrogance unbelievably.”<sup>60</sup> As Coakley is a Democrat and Romney is a Republican, one can see from the following reactions to these quotes that the negative salience of ‘elitism’ is bipartisan, and, therefore, shared by a significant number of Americans.

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<sup>58</sup> Barack Obama, as quoted in Christofferson, John. "Romney's '47%' Chosen as Year's Best Quote." *USA Today*, 12/14/2012.

<sup>†</sup> An interesting side note: Romney’s statement shows Romney to be the mirror-image of Bourdieu—Romney claims that one’s habitus determines one’s class [“Not taking personal responsibility,” “believing they are victims” leads ‘them’ to a class which requires no income tax], whereas Bourdieu claims that one’s class determines one’s habitus.

<sup>59</sup> Matthews, Chris. "Hardball." NBC, 9/18/2012.

<sup>60</sup> Schilling, Curt. In *38 Pitches*, 1/14/2010.

These two examples demonstrate three things about the  $\pi / \Omega$  Figure 1: one, that this causes the ethos of ‘Haughtiness’; two, that these statements—and therefore that ethos—had a negative effect on the candidates polling<sup>6162</sup> (Linkins 2010; Silver 2012); and three, that political candidates are foolhardy enough to make the statements anyway.

#### Mayor Bill de Blasio, 2014

Self-imposing haughtiness does not require words. Forgoing one custom over another, when the customs are mutually exclusive for a given setting, can also place one’s  $\pi$  over a vast majority of the electorate’s  $\Omega$ .

For Bill de Blasio, this  $\pi$  concerned New York pizza. The incident was no more complex than the *New York Post* headline which described it: “Bill de Blasio uses a fork and knife to eat pizza.”<sup>63</sup> This does not fall in line with the habitus of a New Yorker:

“Some New Yorker!

Mayor de Blasio shunned years of Big Apple custom Friday by digging into a slice of Staten Island pizza with a knife and fork.

With the move, Hlizzoner joined the ranks of real estate mogul Donald Trump and former GOP vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, who were ridiculed in 2011 for not eating New York City pizza like a New Yorker—with their hands.<sup>64</sup>

As this article makes clear, being an *authentic* New Yorker is an intimate function of “custom.” In this case, the custom is “eating New York City pizza like a New Yorker.” Custom—in non-Staten Island academia-speak, dispositions—is a significant factor of habitus. Therefore, the act of eating his pizza with a fork and knife, instead of his hands,

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<sup>61</sup> Silver, Nate. "Sept. 27: The Impact of the ‘47 Percent’." In *FiveThirtyEight*: New York Times.

<sup>62</sup> Linkins, Jason. "Democrat Martha Coakley: An Object Lesson in Complacency and Detachment." *The Huffington Post*, 3/21/2010.

<sup>63</sup> Cusma, Yoav Gonen and Kathryn. "Bill De Blasio Uses a Fork & Knife to Eat Pizza." *New York Post*, January 10, 2014.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

was inflated to an act of social exclusion. The New York media ensured that this social exclusion would be mutual, obfuscating which habitus is in fact superior. Said the *New York Daily News*, “The Mayor of New York City eats his pizza like a tourist.”<sup>65</sup> Said Charles Greinsky, “a longtime friend of Mr de Blasio’s,” “He’s from Boston. He doesn’t know any better.”<sup>66</sup>

“Forkgate”<sup>67</sup> (Fermino, 2014) serves as another illustration of how “the social order”—in this case, the allocation of status based upon how one consumes pizza—is not absorbed in a homogeneous fashion by people.

I cannot analyze Warren’s campaign as a parallel to de Blasio, Romney, or Coakley. Warren never made a statement that spread throughout the media that strongly suggested her habitus was above those of a broad swath of the Massachusetts electorate.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, the ‘Haughtiness’ of the Warren campaign needs to be derived from the model with one more variable. This variable is inauthenticity.

### Status+Inauthenticity=’Haughtiness’

Let us return to figure 1.

Figure 1 works by demonstrating the candidate believes her or his habitus to be superior to a broad swath of the electorate’s habitus. The only way to objectify this claim

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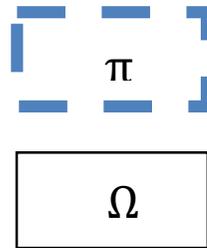
<sup>65</sup> Fermino, Jennifer. "Forkgate for Bill De Blasio in Staten Island! Mayor Uses Cutlery to Eat His Pizza " *New York Daily News*, Friday, January 10th, 2014.

<sup>66</sup> Grymbaum, Michael M. "A Fork? De Blasio’s Way of Eating Pizza Is Mocked." *The New York Times*, 1/10/2014.

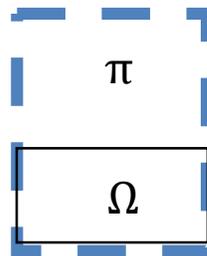
<sup>67</sup> Fermino, "Forkgate for Bill De Blasio in Staten Island! Mayor Uses Cutlery to Eat His Pizza."

<sup>68</sup> One interesting—and potentially significant way of statistically supporting this—is by testing whether or not the search “Romney elitist,” “Coakley elitist,” “de Blasio elitist” and “Warren elitist” in Google leads to a display of results clustered around certain dates (the dates of, and directly after, the aforementioned quotes came out) for Romney, Coakley, and de Blasio, but not for Warren (implying that there’s no one quote of hers that caused this impression).

is via the candidate saying something (recorded) that strongly suggests this superiority. (Or, more concretely, that the voters believe a given statement suggests this superiority). Now, let us look at how inauthenticity eliminates the candidate ‘faux pas’ prerequisite for haughtiness.



Inauthenticity, by definition, makes the field of one’s habitus variable, as it is not fixed by the bounds of their authentic dispositions and tastes. Therefore, the candidate can claim that their field of habitus expands beyond what it actually is.



This makes the candidate’s habitus *objectively* better:  $\pi$  can exclude  $\Omega$  from its field, but  $\Omega$  cannot exclude  $\pi$  from anything. I posit that Warren’s ‘Haughtiness’ stems not from drawing a distinction between herself and a broad swath of the Massachusetts electorate (as Scott Brown’s former opponent did), but rather from implying, through her campaign rhetoric, that no member of the Massachusetts electorate can draw any distinctions against her.

## **Chapter 5: A Formal Introduction of the Theory of Status Inversion**

Status Inversion describes the phenomenon by which one's membership in a high status group, which is a function of distance and exclusiveness, leads to low status honor among a significant portion of a significant population. What classifies "significant," in this case, is a function of one's goals. For example, in a workplace setting, one's co-workers would be a "significant population," and a "significant portion" of this population is a portion which is able to impede one's goals in the workplace. For politicians, the "significant population" is the electorate, and a "significant portion" of this population is found within the majority of voters.

Weber states that status honor is conferred based on the following structure: "For all practical purposes, stratification by status goes hand in hand with the monopolization of ideal and material goods and opportunities, in a manner we come to know as typical...specific status honor...always rests upon distance and exclusiveness."<sup>68</sup> I argue that Status Inversion favors one who monopolizes *not monopolizing* "ideal and material goods and opportunities;" the capitalization of Status Inversion "rests upon" *being* "distant and excluded."

Not to monopolize "ideal and material goods and opportunities," to be excluded, someone else has to monopolize these ideal and material goods and opportunities. In other words, in order to be excluded, someone has to exclude you. Therefore, in order for Status Inversion to exist, an ethos of "haughtiness" must also exist. This ethos is caused by someone (Person A) who is believed to believe they are just as good as, or better than, someone else, in every aspect or aspects believed to be considered legitimate by Person

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<sup>68</sup> Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, 190-1.

A. Note that this ethos is not automatically triggered by those who are believed to believe that “she” is better than someone in *one* legitimate regard: this, then, implies that another person is better than her in a different legitimate regard; then it is subjective as to who is “better.”

The “Haughtiness” ethos explains one of two factors which allow Status Inversion to occur. It does not explain *how* Status Inversion occurs, or *why* Status Inversion matters in the context of the Warren/Brown campaign. The following section will address the two latter questions, first with an explanation of the second factor of Status Inversion: A Horizontal Power Setting.

#### The Importance of a Horizontal Power Setting to Status Inversion

In order for Status Inversion to matter, as a theory, it must have an impact on the individual whose status is being inverted. In other words, the individual’s low status honor must impact this individual in a substantial manner. What a “substantial manner” constitutes is subjective, but what one individual deems substantial is objectively what that one individual deems substantial. Therefore, the second condition of status inversion is a *Horizontal Power Setting*. A Horizontal Power Setting is a setting through which Population B, who believes Person A thinks she’s better than Population B, can impact Person A in a manner which Population B believes Person A believes is substantial. Absent this second condition, Status Inversion would not matter. The poor can all think Marie Antionette believes she is better than them. However, if the poor have no mechanism through which to vent their disdain caused by the “Haughtiness” ethos, in a manner that affects Marie Antionette in a manner which the poor believe Marie

Antionette believes is substantial (such as through deposing her of power, either through revolutionary or electoral means), then let them eat cake.

### Status Inversion Contrasted With Bourdieu's Framework of Cultural Capital: A Summary

My framework of Status Inversion contrasts with Bourdieu's framework of "Cultural Capital," as this framework claims Cultural Capital is not the linear phenomenon as described by Bourdieu. In other words, under the Status Inversion theory, it is misleading to state that Person A has more Cultural Capital than Person B, if, by stating this, one implies that Person A has more Cultural Capital than Person B *in all significant fields*. A better metaphor is that Cultural Capital has different *currencies*, which, based on the degree to which a Horizontal Power Setting exists for those who hold this cultural currency, can have varying *exchange rates* in regards to *power*.

Cultural Currency is a group's ranking system of lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes; in other words, Cultural Currency is the ordered rubric of permutations of habitus, in which the order is based upon the status value of each of these permutations of habitus.<sup>69</sup> Cultural Currency therefore allocates status proportional to its ordered rubric of permutations of habitus; those who share a habitus with the highest ranked habitus in Cultural Currency A are perceived to have more status than those who share a habitus with the lowest ranked habitus in Cultural Currency A *by groups that assess value with Cultural Currency A*. The exchange rate of a Cultural Currency dictates the extent to

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<sup>69</sup> The distance between Cultural Currency and habitus is a function of the fact that one can value something without embodying these values. A crude proof: 63% of Americans ranked "Firefighter" as a "Very Prestigious" job, and given that this was the job with the highest percentage of "Very Prestigious" votes, and less than 1% of Americans are firefighters, and that "Very Prestigious" votes were not proportional with the occupational breakdown of the sample of American citizens (which implies that a significant number of people did not vote their own profession as "Very Prestigious"), a sizeable amount of Americans voted for a profession that was not theirs as "More Prestigious" as their own. ([http://www.forbes.com/2006/07/28/leadership-careers-jobs-cx\\_tvr\\_0728admired.html](http://www.forbes.com/2006/07/28/leadership-careers-jobs-cx_tvr_0728admired.html))

which “the manner in which one’s Cultural Currency claims *status* should be allocated” ultimately allocates *power* in a field. Cultural Currency may have a very high exchange rate in one field and very low exchange rate in another *significant* field. The exchange rate of one’s Cultural Currency in a given field is proportional to the extent to which those who value this Cultural Currency are in a Horizontal Power Setting with all members of this given field.

### Status Inversion in Politics

Political elections are the setting which provides the most fuel to Status Inversion. Political elections are the purest form of Horizontal Power Settings: One man, one vote. Furthermore, it is very simple to assess what a “substantial impact” for someone who “thinks-she’s-better-than-you” may be: it is common sense to believe that a candidate believes winning the election—and therefore garnering a majority of votes—is “significant.” Therefore, taking efforts to make the candidate *not* have a majority of votes is also a “significant impact,” if a significant portion of the electorate (the majority) do so.

### Status Inversion: A Summary

This thesis focuses on the value of two different frames of analyses for the ramifications of status. The first frame is that of Weber and Bourdieu, the logic of which follows:

#### *Weber and Bourdieu Frame of the Ramifications of Status:*

- Warren has more Cultural Capital than Brown, due to her Harvard professorship
- Cultural Capital is proportional to power

∴ Warren has more power than Brown

- Given that Weber defines power as “the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the same action” (CITE):
- ∴ Warren’s Cultural Capital assists Warren in realizing her will to win the Senate election over Scott Brown

The second frame is that of Status Inversion.

*Status Inversion Frame of the Ramifications of Status:*

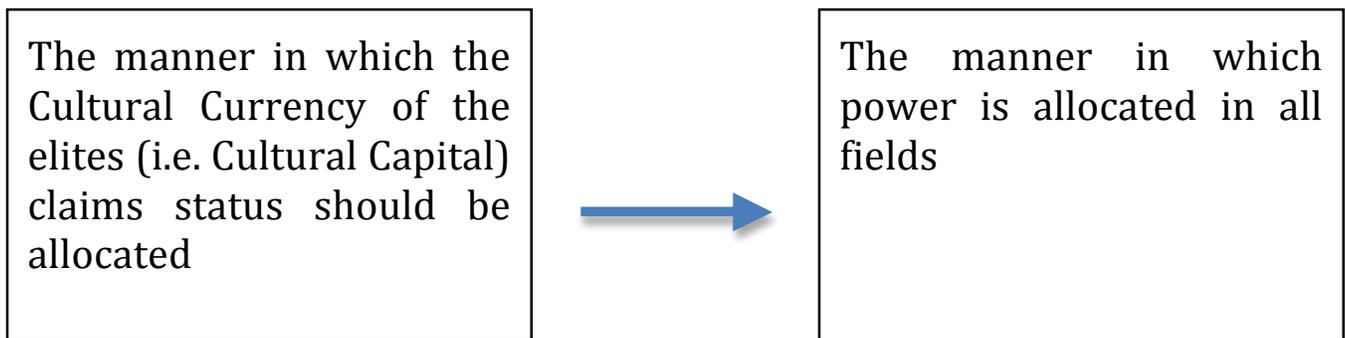
- Warren has more Cultural Currency than Brown with regards to voters who value Harvard due to her Harvard affiliation
  - Brown has more Cultural Currency than Warren with regards to voters who disdain haughtiness due to his non-Harvard affiliation<sup>§</sup>
  - The Horizontal Power Setting of an American election equalizes the exchange rate between the Cultural Currency of voters who value Harvard and the Cultural Currency of voters who disdain haughtiness<sup>¥</sup>
- ∴ Scott Brown can leverage the disdain of haughtiness to achieve his goal of winning the Senate election over Warren
- Given that the status of Harvard is a factor (along with inauthenticity) of haughtiness:

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<sup>§</sup> This thesis is not arguing “Harvard, ipso facto haughty.” This thesis instead argues that Warren can be far more easily painted as haughty due to her combination of Harvard credentials and inauthentic perception than Scott Brown.

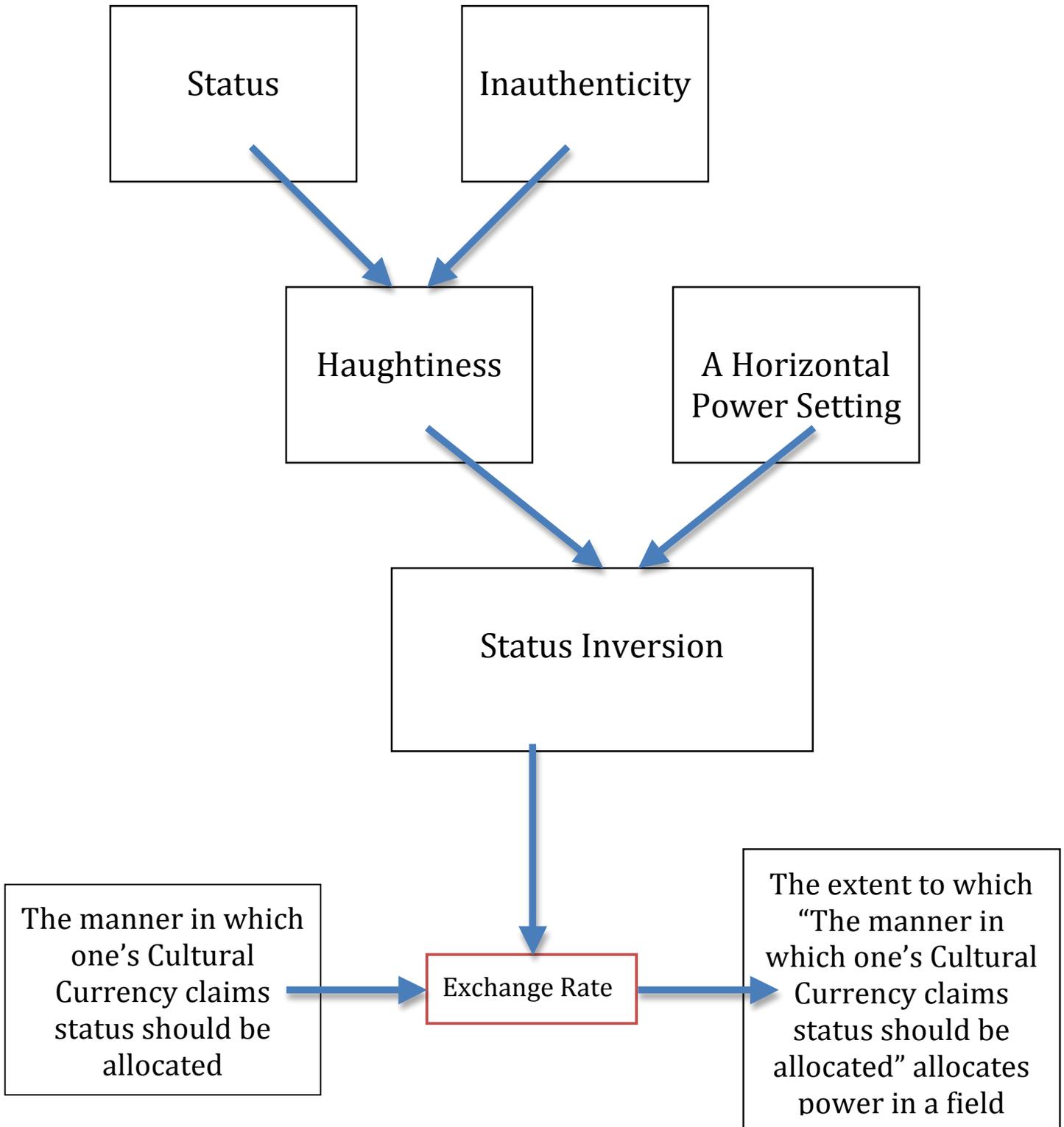
<sup>¥</sup> “Valuing Harvard” and “Disdaining haughtiness” are not mutually exclusive. However, since I argue both that status combined with inauthenticity leads to a perception of haughtiness, and that Brown’s rhetoric painted Warren as inauthentic, if one values Harvard (presumably due to its status), then they will perceive Warren as haughty. Therefore, if they both value Harvard and disdain haughtiness, their Cultural Currency would be more congruent with Scott Brown’s values.

*Model 2: Weber/Bourdieu Framework of the Exchange Between Cultural Capital and Power*



In other words, the manner in which power is allocated in all fields is the manner in which the Cultural Currency of the elites (i.e. Cultural Capital) claims status should be allocated.

*Model 3: Status Inversion Framework of the Exchange Between Cultural Capital and Power*



∴ Warren's status (and therefore Cultural Capital) led to a *subtraction* of power, rather than an *addition* of power, for Warren

∴ Both Weber and Bourdieu's link between status and power does not apply to the Massachusetts 2012 election, and should therefore be further qualified

In other words, Status Inversion shifts the "exchange rate" between "lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes" and power to an "exchange rate" other than the one which provides the most power to those with the highest Cultural Capital (i.e. the elites). This shift *can* occur because, even though the *knowledge* about how the elites rank lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes (i.e. knowledge about the Cultural Currency of the elites) is "progressively inscribed in people's minds," this "*inscription* "*does not compel the adoption of the social ordering which is adopted by the elite*. This shift *does* occur when those who adopt a social ordering different than that of elites are placed in a setting in which non-elites, who believe an elite thinks she's better than a non-elite, can impact the elite in a manner which the non-elites believe the elite believes is substantial.

Therefore, in the Massachusetts 2012 election, Status Inversion could and did occur. This Status Inversion affected the extent to which "the manner in which the Cultural Currency of those who disdained haughtiness claimed *status* should be allocated" ultimately allocated *power* to the candidates. As "power," in the context of an election, is "the extent to which one achieves their will to win the election even against the resistance of others who are participating in the election," the allocation of power was achieved in the 2012 Massachusetts election through the allocation of votes. The following is an analysis of how the interplay between the Warren/Brown campaigns sewed a fertile ground for this Status Inversion.

## **Chapter 6: Qualitative Evidence—An Analysis of the Three Warren/Brown Televised Debates, Campaign E-mails, Stump Speeches, and Partisan Literature**

In order to argue that Status Inversion is both valid and politically significant, it must first be substantiated that campaigns meld their strategy around leveraging the full electoral benefit of Status Inversion, and that this strategy is *at least correlated with* split-ticket voting. This section attempts to do this. Specifically, this analysis demonstrates how Scott Brown framed Elizabeth Warren’s Harvard professorship and her Native American self-reporting on Harvard’s job application in a manner that enhanced the “Warren-thinks-she’s-better-than-you” ethos. This analysis then demonstrates that this ethos, in conjunction with the Horizontal Power Setting of voting, led to Status Inversion. First, this analysis presents how Elizabeth Warren’s messaging primed Scott Brown’s attempts to paint Warren as haughty.

### **Warren’s Emphasis on Her Role in Creating the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau**

Just as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) was the core of her stump speech, the CFPB was the first bullet that topped our call scripts, the first thing campaign volunteers were directed to say at the doors, and the reflexive response campaign interns were conditioned to deliver every time any Massachusetts voter confessed that they were not familiar with Elizabeth Warren.

This is the most consistent example of the Warren campaign propagating the ethos of haughtiness due to the discrepancy between what the campaign *says* Warren *did* and what kind of *person* the campaign says Warren *is*. The campaign’s first point of evidence to support their claim that Elizabeth Warren is “a fighter for middle-class

families” and that “she’ll work to fix what’s broken in Washington”<sup>70</sup> was that she came up with the idea for and fought for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The campaign stated that the CFPB was a watchdog agency designed to level the playing field for consumers and to hold big banks and other financial institutions accountable. The campaign stated that the CFPB did – in this case, “is working on”—“easier to understand mortgages, credit cards, and student loans”.<sup>71</sup> If any voter asked volunteers, in response to that, what the CFPB *has done*, the volunteers were told to say that the CFPB made credit card companies show how long it would take to pay off your debt under various monthly payments. In summary, the argument that the campaign told us to deliver to voters boiled down to this: Elizabeth Warren is a fighter for middle-class families and she’ll fix what’s broken in Washington because she made credit card companies calculate how long it will take to pay off your credit card debt on your bill.

Bourdieu<sup>72</sup> shines light on how the discrepancy between the claims about what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau *is* and what it *does*—and, by extension, the claims about who Elizabeth Ward *is* and what she *did*—lead to the propagation of the ethos of “haughtiness.” In Bourdieu’s context, the sociological ramifications of the discrepancy parallel those of “The Aristocracy of Culture”<sup>73</sup> (9-97) in relation to art:

Thus, nothing more rigorously distinguishes the different classes than the disposition objectively demanded by the legitimate consumption of legitimate works, the aptitude for taking the specifically aesthetic point of view on objects already constituted aesthetically—and therefore put forward for that admiration of those who have learned to recognize the signs of the admirable—and the even rarer capacity to constitute aesthetically objects that are ordinary or even ‘common’ (because they are appropriated, aesthetically or otherwise, by the ‘common people’) or to apply the principles of a ‘pure’ aesthetic in the most everyday choices of everyday life, in cooking, dress, or decoration, for example.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Elizabeth Warren for Massachusetts. "Campaign Lit." 2012.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 1984.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 9-97.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 40.

For the Warren campaign, the “legitimate consumption of the legitimate work” of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is that the CFPB is a totem to Elizabeth Warren’s ability to overcome doubters who say “you can’t do anything, that the fight is too hard, that the game is too rigged.” Therefore, by extension, the Warren campaign believes an illegitimate consumption of this legitimate work is to state that ‘it just requires credit card companies to calculate a payment schedule on a bill.’ The problem for the Warren campaign is that “working-class people, who expect every image to fulfill a function, if only that of the sign, refer, often explicitly, to norms of morally or agreeableness and all their judgments”.<sup>75</sup> In other words, a large swath of the Massachusetts electorate (“working-class people”) judges the CFPB on its mundane functionality, but is being told by the Warren campaign that the CFPB is in fact a totem of efforts of the highest order. The response to this dissonance is the following: “If formal explanations, in avant-garde theater or non-figurative painting, or simply classical music, are disconcerting to working-class people, this is partly because they feel incapable of understanding what these things must signify, insofar as they are signs. Hence the uninitiated may experience as inadequate and untrustworthy a satisfaction that cannot be grounded in a meaning transcendent to the object.”<sup>76</sup> In the context of Scott Brown’s messaging painting Warren as the most elite of elites—a Harvard professor—the messaging of the Warren campaign is structured to make working-class people feel inferior. The working class people will not agree with Warren’s assessments of her CFPB, and this ‘non-agreement’ will reinforce the ethos of ‘Warren thinks she’s better than you’ because it establishes that

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 43.

these working-class people are not equal to Warren *in the way that Scott Brown says Elizabeth Warren thinks she is not equal to them*—intelligence—due to their class’ inability to assess the CFPB in the way Warren wants it assessed.

Brown’s Leveraging of Warren’s *Harvard Professorship* for Status Inversion:

As previously discussed, the “Harvard” label implies the highest degree of status and exclusion. The Harvard label is crucial to the haughtiness ethos; I believe, had Warren been a professor at Boston College Law School, the electoral data on which this paper is based would have been significantly different. An analogy to help understand the potency of the professor label in relation to the Harvard label is that of an atomic bomb: the uranium represents the college (and the “enrichment level” of the uranium is proportional to the college’s status) and the “professorship” (a dummy variable) represents the catalyst. Given a mildly enriched atomic bomb, a catalyst (and therefore the bomb) would have no impact; given a highly enriched atomic bomb, a catalyst would unleash a massive explosion.

Scott Brown, however, never explicitly connected ‘being a professor’ with ‘elitism’; in fact, when David Gregory asked Brown in the second debate, due to Brown’s consistent “Professor Warren” epithet towards his opponent, if a connection between ‘being a professor’ and ‘elitism’ existed, Brown claimed that he always employed “Professor” as a term of respect.<sup>77</sup> It does not require an Honors thesis to reveal that the “Professor Warren” label was not innocuous; this section of the thesis instead reveals *how* the “Professor Warren” label was not innocuous in Massachusetts.<sup>β</sup>

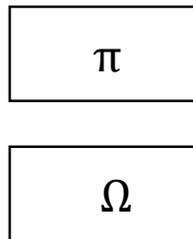
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<sup>77</sup> UMass Lowell, The Boston Herald. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #2." 10/1/2012.

<sup>β</sup> The extent to which a career as a Professor correlates with haughtiness in *other countries* merits further study. Richard Hofstadter’s “Anti-Intellectualism in American Life” (1963) is a

Let us start with how the concept of a professor mirrors the aforementioned “Haughtiness” model.

First off, let us conceptualize the job of a professor as Brown did: teaching. (Brown frequently brought up that “Professor Warren is paid \$500,000 to teach one class”;<sup>78</sup> this, of course, precludes research obligations. Warren never challenges Brown on this implicit definition.) Furthermore, as status is a function of knowledge, let us consider the two separate fields of status as fields of knowledge. In the following diagram, let the  $\pi$  represent the professor’s knowledge and the  $\Omega$  represent the knowledge base of non-professors.



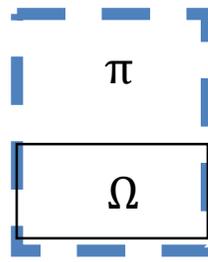
In the classroom setting (in which the  $\Omega$  represents students)—which is the only setting Brown frames professors in—the status interplay between a professor’s knowledge and their student’s knowledge *has to be* the carbon copy of the aforementioned “haughtiness” dynamic, in order for the professor to be an effective teacher.

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seminal study on why America, more so than other Western countries, maintains a negative salience towards high intellect in 1963. If both the *factors of* haughtiness, and the *disdain for* haughtiness, differs significantly between America and other Western countries, then both the structure and ramifications of Status Inversion do not extend beyond the Atlantic.

Given that Massachusetts is considered to be amongst the most liberal of states, and that a *respect* for intellectualism is most associated with liberalism, I argue that the structure and ramifications of Status Inversion in Massachusetts are *at least* as salient throughout the rest of America.

<sup>78</sup> WBZ. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #1." 2012.



First off, the professor sets the knowledge requirements of the course through the construction of the syllabus and assessment requirements. In other words, the syllabus and assessments carve the bounds of the dotted line. Hopefully, for the efficacy of the course, the knowledge requirements of the course are a subset of the professor's total knowledge base. Also essential to an effective course are knowledge requirements *greater than that of the students' knowledge base upon entering the course*. If this condition is not met, then the professor will fail at the teaching objective, as there will be nothing for the students to learn. Therefore, in order to be an effective professor (in the Scott Brown definition of the profession), the professor *must* embrace a status structure equal to that of the "Warren-thinks-she's-better-than-you" dynamic. Therefore, the reason why the professor label is not innocuous is because the status dynamic inherent in being an effective professor strongly resonates with Brown's overarching argument: Elizabeth Warren thinks she's better than you.

In order to capitalize fully on this resonance, Brown needed to graft himself and the Massachusetts electorate onto the  $\Omega$  section of the professor/student status dynamic. In the second debate, Brown accomplished this through one of the most memorable lines of the campaign: "I'm not a student in your classroom."<sup>79</sup> This grafting strategy is omnipresent in Brown's campaign e-mails as well: "Americans are tired of being lectures by Professor Warren. Her PROPOSED LESSON PLAN includes shutting down the

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<sup>79</sup> UMass Lowell, The Boston Herald. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #2." 10/1/2012.

Keystone Pipeline, supporting the Federal Healthcare Law, and hitting America's successful business owners with the 2x4 of higher taxes, and that is exactly what our economy DOESN'T NEED".<sup>80</sup> The invocation of the professor/student dynamic—with Warren playing the *status role* of a professor and Brown and the electorate playing the *status role* of the students—allows Brown to 'justify' his parallel (subjective) argument that "Warren-thinks-she's-better-than-you" through the (objective) fact that Elizabeth Warren is a Harvard professor.

Partisan literature also framed Warren's Harvard Professorship as a token of inauthenticity, albeit in a different manner. The following quote from the *National Review* cover story about Warren opines as to how she achieved her success:

The fact is, Warren's career model is not available to the great majority of the middle class, to say nothing of the poor. She has written a boring little financial self-help book (heavy on phrases such as "the Lifetime of Riches investment strategy"), but her path to prosperity, if she were to document it honestly, would look like this: 1) Get born with an XXL brain; 2) become an endowed professor at Harvard with a salary in the middle six figures and another six-figure payday from speaking and consulting fees; 3) marry same. The secret to a 1 percent lifestyle is, in Warren's case as in so many others, having a 1 percent brain. Most people are not packing the cerebral heat to do what Warren has done, no matter how much they want it, no matter how hard they work."<sup>81</sup>

Such an analysis divorces Warren's success from her effort. No effort was necessary to bridge the gap between getting born and becoming a Harvard professor. In a country which values hard work, under this analysis, *Warren's success is inauthentic*. Furthermore, this framework of success resonates with the framework of royalty: one does not become Queen due to effort, but birth. This resonance is amplified by the claim that others cannot achieve Warren's success unless they were born into her highly exclusive tier. Under the framework of royalty, one *cannot* become Queen, regardless of

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<sup>80</sup> Scott Brown, "Professor Warren Greatest Threat to Free Enterprise", 8/17/12.

<sup>81</sup> Williamson, Kevin D. "Occupy the Senate: Elizabeth Warren Meets the 99 Percent." *National Review*, April 16, 2012 2012.

effort, if they were not *born* into royalty (or if they do not *marry* into royalty, a scheme which is also attributed to Warren's success). In a country which disdains royalty, success earned through an aristocratic framework will also be considered highly inauthentic.

Brown's Leveraging of Warren's *Native American Heritage Claim* for Status Inversion:

Brown additionally employs Warren's Native American controversy to further enhance his "Warren-thinks-she's-better-than-you" trope. This strategy enhances this trope by implying Warren's response to this controversy places her at a higher 'distinction tranche'—as dug by Pierre Bourdieu—than the Massachusetts electorate. There are two sets of these high/low distinction tranches that cradle Elizabeth Warren above the electorate. The first originates from Warren's claim about how this heritage controversy *should be assessed in relation to her viability as a Senator*. The second originates from Warren's claim about *how her heritage should be perceived*.

This distinction tranches of the former set are established by the "competency" of voters to form "legitimate" political opinions; this "complacency," of course, is a function of educational capital. It is important to note that this is the *default*—albeit "naive"—belief of legitimate political participation. Scott Brown, therefore, did not construct this strawman, but rather uprooted it from the field of the implicit and staked it in the rhetorical real estate of the Warren campaign.

Denouncing at the outset (and therefore implying the prevalence of) this default belief, Bourdieu writes:

“So it would be naïve to see the very close relationship between educational capital and the propensity to answer the most specifically political questions as a simple and direct effect of the unequal distribution of specific political competence, defined, in the restricted sense, by possession of the theoretical and practical knowledge needed to produce political actions and judgments and perhaps especially by command of political language, capacities which, one may assume, vary with educational capital” (408).

In other words, through this naïve lens, Elizabeth Warren has a greater “propensity to answer the most specifically rhetorical questions” due to her higher educational capital. Therefore, Elizabeth Warren’s judgment criteria are more legitimate than Scott Brown’s judgment criteria. As this involves legitimacy—grounded in the interplay of distinction and status—this “naïve” lens presents those who agree with Warren’s criteria over Brown’s criteria as “better than” those who agree with Brown’s criteria over Warren’s criteria.

To sum up: The Harvard professorship and the Native American controversy were not separate liabilities of the Warren campaign. Rather, in addition to the “Haughtiness” ethos propagated by Brown’s framing of the Harvard professorship, this strategy produced, as a by-product, the fuel necessary to prime the rhetorical machinery which compressed all of the “Haughtiness” ethos out of the Native American controversy.

Warren’s “Catch 22” With Regards to Challenging Brown’s Leveraging of Status

#### Inversion

The Warren campaign argued that voters should weigh their congruence with Warren on the issues (and incongruence with Brown on the issues) far more than the ramifications of the Native American controversy (implicitly, character). This is manifest in Warren’s campaign e-mails, which argued that Brown was trying to “distract” from the *real criteria* voters should cherish—the issues:

If everyone in Massachusetts knew where Scott Brown stands on the important issues,

voters wouldn't give him a second term in the U.S. Senate. You know that, I know that, and he knows that, too.

That's why he has worked so hard to make this campaign about anything else — even my heritage. It's why his campaign spends so little time on what Massachusetts voters are really concerned about.<sup>82</sup>

Brown, of course, argued the opposite: that “integrity, character, and trustworthiness”<sup>83</sup> were prerequisites for political viability. The aforementioned rhetorical machinery powered a Catch-22 for Warren in regards to her political responses to Brown’s framing of the Native American issue. If she agreed, she would be at a disadvantage to Brown under these criteria in light of the Native American controversy. If she disagreed, *the act of disagreeing and proposing an alternative set of (implicitly better) criteria* would strongly resonate with the default belief that one’s educational capital is correlated with the legitimacy of one’s political views, which, due to Warren’s invocation of this disagreement, would further propagate the “haughtiness” ethos. Both foundations of this Catch-22 are apparent in Brown’s campaign issues. In regards to the first foundation, the Brown campaign states: “Character counts and issues matter. You know all about Professor Warren's elusive heritage, evasive answers and defensive double-talk that strike at the heart of her character”.<sup>84</sup> In regards to the second foundation—based on the default belief that one’s educational capital is correlated with the legitimacy of one’s political views—the Brown campaign states: “Warren and her Washington brain trust thought they would have this race in the bag by now, and they seem surprised and befuddled that any thinking person would vote for a guy from

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<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth Warren, “Who I Am”, 5/31/12.

<sup>83</sup> WBZ. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #1." 2012.; UMass Lowell, The Boston Herald. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #2." 10/1/2012.; Consortium, Western Massachusetts. "Massachusetts Senate Debate #3." 2012.

<sup>84</sup> Scott Brown, “Character Counts and Issues Matter,” 10/12/12.

Wrentham who drives a truck rather than a Harvard professor.”<sup>85</sup> In regards to the latter, the Brown campaign is arguing that the Warren campaign is “surprised and befuddled” that the aforementioned default belief is not holding true. In other words, Warren is “surprised and befuddled” that her Cultural Currency, which values the status of Harvard over the status of a truck driver—even though this is parallel to the Cultural Currency of elites—does not translate into greater power (i.e. votes) for her across the state.

Let us return to Bourdieu’s discussion of distinction in relation to perceptions of art in order to understand how the second distinction tranche originated from Warren and Brown’s disagreement over *how Warren’s heritage should be perceived*, and, in turn, how this further propagated the “haughtiness” ethos. However, in order to analyze the Native American controversy, we will need to flip the lens and focus on the commentary regarding the lower classes *deriving judgments that they shouldn’t derive* as opposed to *failing to derive judgments that they should derive* (as is the case with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau). Commenting on how the lower classes perceive images, Bourdieu writes, “Because the image is always judged by reference to the function it fulfils for the person who looks at it or which he thinks it could fulfill for other classes of beholders, aesthetic judgment naturally takes the form of a hypothetical judgment implicitly based on a recognition of ‘genres’, the perfection and scope of which are defined by *a concept*.”<sup>86</sup>

Now, through this lens, let us observe the Native American controversy as it played out in the debates.

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<sup>85</sup> Scott Brown, “Warren Going Negative,” 9/13/12.

<sup>86</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 42.

Scott Brown brought up the heritage controversy during his first segment in his first debate: “Professor Warren claimed that she was a Native American, a person of color, and as you can see, she’s not.”<sup>87</sup> Brown goes on to continue this denouncement in the same manner: “Clearly, she’s not.” The manner which Scott Brown denounces Warren’s heritage in the debates is *visual*—one should judge, by virtue of looking at her, that she’s not a Native American. This argument is contingent upon “aesthetic judgment.” Warren’s appearance leads to her classification as White, and the “concept” of whiteness is dramatically incongruent with the “concept of “Native American,” especially in regard to one’s life disadvantages, and, therefore, in regards to the amount of affirmative action assistance they deserve. Therefore, due to this framing, Warren’s disagreement with Brown not only conjures up the “haughtiness” ethos through the implied affirmation of the “default belief” that Warren has better political judgment due to her educational capital; Warren’s disagreement with Brown also conjures up the haughtiness ethos by *discrediting the lower-class method* of perception.

Therefore, Warren’s professorship and Warren’s Native American controversy propagated the haughtiness ethos through three different dynamics: the first in line with the Harvard professorship, the second in line with the Native American controversy, and the third in line with the sociological resonance between the professorship and the Native American controversy.

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<sup>87</sup> WBZ. "Massachusetts 2012 Senate Debate #1." 2012.

## **Chapter 7: Constructing a Voting Model Based on Status Inversion**

There are several ways to model voter behavior based off of Status Inversion. The most tempting model—but one the data do not support—is that Status Inversion is the sole determinate of voting behavior. In other words, voters, when presented with an ethos of haughtiness, vote against the candidate whom this ethos addresses. If this were the case, then, of course, issues don't matter at all, outside the extent to which one's issue platforms shape one's sense of haughtiness (or its corollary: exclusion). For example, Michael Bloomberg's issue platform of banning soda over 12 ounces was painted as a platform which "presumes [Bloomberg] knows what is best for each of us,"<sup>88</sup> which, of course, has sanctimonious connotations.

If one were to assume that economic class is highly correlated with status, as Weber does, then under this voting model, one would predict that a vast majority of lower class (lower status) voters voted for one candidate ('the excluded'), and a vast majority of upper class (high status) voters voted for the other candidate ('the excluder'). This prediction is resoundly false concerning the Warren/Brown results, as there was no vast majority either way in any class demographic: Warren won the "Less than 50k" demographic by 22 points, and Brown won the "100k or More" demographic by 4 points.<sup>89</sup>

Therefore, a different model is needed, one that is not a sole function of either issues or Status Inversion. The case against the former has already been staked in the first section of this thesis: if issues were all that mattered, there would be no Obama/Brown voter, as Warren was wedded to Obama on every issue.

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<sup>88</sup> Harned, Karen. "The Michael Bloomberg Nanny State in New York: A Cautionary Tale." *Forbes*, 5/10/2013.

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/election/2012/results/state/MA/senate>, 1/17/14.

### The Status-Inversion-Based Voting Model:

Let us construct a model based on one axiom, and five propositions, concerning a voter's utility:

**Axiom 1:** People (ipso facto, voters) have a set of political preferences that, if enacted, will increase their utility

**Proposition 2:** People want to be accepted by other people<sup>90</sup>

**Proposition 3:** People do not like to feel inferior<sup>91</sup>

**Proposition 4:** Voting for Candidate A is an endorsement of Candidate A's Cultural Currency

**Proposition 5:** Voting preferences are discussed with—and therefore known by— one's social circle<sup>92</sup>

**Proposition 6:** Social networks tend to share the same Cultural Currency

Let us begin with a voter-utility model in the context of these six claims. The utility of a voting action of a voter is:

$U(\text{voter}) = (\text{The enactment of the set of political preferences which will increase their utility}) + (\text{The impact of one's voting choice on one's acceptance by one's community})$

The first variable in this model is straightforward; the latter requires further exploration. Why, and under what circumstances, would one's vote for a candidate impact their acceptance in their community?

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<sup>90</sup> Bushman, C. Nathan DeWall and Brad J. "Social Acceptance and Rejection: The Sweet and the Bitter." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 20, no. 4 (2011): 256-60.

<sup>91</sup> Anderson, Fraser and Freeman, Daniel. "Socioeconomic Status and Paranoia: The Role of Life Hassles, Self-Mastery, and Striving to Avoid Inferiority." *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 201, no. 8 (2013): 698-702.

<sup>92</sup> Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty, and Conor M. Dowling. "Disagreement and the Avoidance of Political Discussion: Aggregate Relationships and Differences across Personality Traits." *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 4 (2012): 849-74.

The most simple circumstance in this vein would be that of the party outlier. The party outlier describes the lone Republican child, the lone Democrat at the Thanksgiving table, or the lone Democrat or Republican in a social network. An illuminating representation of the social ramifications of party identification occurred in the Oscar-winning movie *The Blind Side*, which centers around a college-football-crazed family—anchored by Leigh Anne Tuohy (wife), Sean Tuohy (husband), and Miss Sue (academic tutor)—in Tennessee who adopts a black football prodigy. According to the *National Review*:

Miss Sue initiates one of the funniest exchanges in the film. About to be hired by Leigh Anne, Miss Sue states that before they go any farther, there is one thing she needs to tell her. Leigh Anne hesitantly asks, “What is it?” [Miss Sue] responds, “I’m a Democrat.” Tuohy is momentarily stunned. As Miss Sue leaves, Sean wonders aloud, “How is it that we took in a young black man before we ever met a Democrat?”<sup>93</sup>

This scene demonstrates the shame associated with political identification, along with the tendency of a given social network to exhibit political homogenization. However, regardless of the validity of the ramifications addressed by this anecdotal evidence, the social ramifications of party identification do not concern the argument of this thesis, as this thesis is concerned with split-ticket voting.

Utilizing Propositions 3, 4, and 6, the social ramifications of one’s voting preference with regards to one’s acceptance within one’s community can be established. Picture two candidates, A and B, and one voter. Candidate A is believed to endorse the Cultural Currency of the voter and the voter’s community (the voter and the voter’s community share a Cultural Currency under Proposition 6). Candidate B is believed to value the Cultural Currency of a different community as superior to the Cultural Currency of the voter. Given that voting for Candidate B is an endorsement of Candidate

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<sup>93</sup> Hibbs, Thomas S. "From the Projects to the Ravens " *National Review*, 11/25/2009.

B's Cultural Currency (#4), Candidate B is now believed to value the habitus of (some in) his social circle less than if he had endorsed Candidate A's Cultural Currency. Therefore, given that people do not like to feel inferior to other people (#3), and that the voter's vote devalues his social circle's Cultural Currency more than the other decision would have in the mutually-exclusive two-decision set<sup>94</sup>, this Cultural Currency devaluation will lead to negative social ramifications.

Given the parameters of this model, the next step of establishing the model is to take the "expectation" of it; in other words, to assess and include the probability of the vote's possible ramification manifesting themselves.

For the first variable—"the enactment of the set of political preferences which will increase their utility"—the only scenario in which one's vote will impact the enactment of these preferences is if the voter's vote is the deciding vote. In other words, the difference between the two final vote columns must be one vote. The odds of this are essentially zero. Therefore, the "expectation" of that variable is  $(1/n) \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} [U[\text{The enactment of the set of political preferences which will increase their utility}]]$ . This value is zero.

For the second variable—"the social ramifications of one's voting choice"—the probability of one's vote for a candidate having social ramifications is 100%, *assuming* Proposition 5 ("Voting preferences are discussed with—and therefore known by— one's social circle") and Proposition 6 ("Social networks tend to share the same Cultural Currency"). Of course, the *magnitude* of these social ramifications is proportional to the extent to which Proposition 6 permeates throughout the *entire* social network; the

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<sup>94</sup> This Thesis ignores the social ramifications voting for a third-party, as this adds an extra layer of social deviance, and third-parties were not homogeneous nor significant in the Massachusetts 2012 election.

magnitude of these social ramifications is likewise proportional to the *magnitude* of the extent to which people want to be accepted by other people (Proposition 2) and the extent to which people do not like to feel inferior (Proposition 3). However, the precise magnitude of these variables is irrelevant. *As long as the magnitude of these variables is greater than zero, the absolute value of the expected utility from “the social ramifications of one’s voting choice” is greater than the absolute value of the expected utility from the “political preferences” variable.*

Therefore, assuming Axiom 1 and Propositions 2-6, a voter’s Expected Utility Model of Voting is:

$E[U(\text{voter})] = (\text{The impact of one’s voting choice on one’s acceptance by one’s community}) = (\text{The extent to which voting preferences are discussed with—and therefore known by—one’s social circle}) * (\text{The extent to which the voter’s social networks share the same Cultural Currency})$

*In other words, “issues” do not matter, outside of the extent to which one’s issue preferences shape and are shaped by one’s Cultural Currency. Given that “issues” do not matter in this model, and “issues” are strongly correlated with party alignment, I posit that those which reap the highest potential expected utility from voting are the most likely to split their ticket, as these voters are influenced most by a variable (the social ramifications of voting) that is the least correlated with party affiliation.*

Therefore, the final Model of Ticket-Splitting Likelihood is:

$\text{Propensity to Split Ticket} = (\text{The extent to which voting preferences are discussed with—and therefore known by—one’s social circle}) * (\text{The extent to which the voter’s social networks share the same Cultural Currency})$

## **Chapter 8: Empirically Testing This Model**

This model can be empirically tested. The following presents an initial idea of how to do so.

### Method

Conduct a survey in a setting which fulfills the following three criteria:

- A setting which contains a statistically significant quantity of people ( $n > 20$ )
- A setting in which some measure of social cohesion can be assumed (such as a workplace unit, a house of worship, a club, a sports league)
- A setting in a state which had an election for House, Senate, and President.

The survey questions would ask:

1) Who did you vote for (House, Senate, President) in the last election?

2) How much did you prefer the i) House ii) Senate and iii) Presidential candidate you voted for?

(1-3, 1=Passionately Supported Candidate, 2= Moderately Supported Candidate, 3=Barely Supported Candidate)

3) How much would you say your [workplace unit/house of worship/club] represents the core of your social circle?

(1=none are friends, 7=all of them are my friends, and they comprise a vast majority of my friends)

4) How often do you discuss politics with people in this circle?

(1=politics are never discussed, 7= politics come up in every conversation)

5) Rank the following traits in terms of the following question: If the following trait describes Person A, I would think very highly of Person A

(Top of the list=this trait would make me think the most highly of Person A out of all of the other traits in the section, Bottom of the list=this trait would make me think the least highly of Person A out of all of the other traits in the section)

i) Works as a: Farmer/at Starbucks/Professor/Doctor/Investment Banker

ii) Has a degree from: [state flagship public university (i.e. University of Michigan)]/[lower-tier state public university (i.e. Western Michigan University)]/Harvard University/[local Community College]/no college degree

iii) Has [local professional sports team (i.e. Red Sox)] season tickets in bleacher seats/third-base-line seats 17 rows up/luxury box/doesn't attend or watch sports games/doesn't attend sports games

iv) Occasionally and moderately drinks and smokes (tobacco)/occasionally and moderately drinks and does not smoke/occasionally and moderately smokes and does not drink/does not drink nor smoke

v) Prefers to eat: pork ribs/fried chicken/sushi/spaghetti and meatballs/filet mignon

vi) Drinks: Budweiser/Coors/[local beer (i.e. Oberon)]/Stella Artois/Guinness

vii) Exercises by: Yoga/lifting weights/push-ups and sit-ups/run outside/Pilates

6) Rank the following traits in terms of the following question: If the following trait describes Person A, *my [workplace unit/house of worship/club]* would think very highly of Person A

i) Works as a: Farmer/at Starbucks/Professor/Doctor/Investment Banker

ii) Has a degree from: [state flagship public university (i.e. University of Michigan)]/[lower-tier state public university (i.e. Western Michigan University)]/Harvard University/[local Community College]/no college degree

iii) Has [local professional sports team (i.e. Red Sox)] season tickets in bleacher seats/third-base-line seats 17 rows up/luxury box/doesn't attend or watch sports games/doesn't attend sports games

iv) Occasionally and moderately drinks and smokes (tobacco)/occasionally and moderately drinks and does not smoke/occasionally and moderately smokes and does not drink/does not drink nor smoke

v) Prefers to eat: pork ribs/fried chicken/sushi/spaghetti and meatballs/filet mignon

vi) Drinks: Budweiser/Coors/[local beer (i.e. Oberon)]/Stella Artois/Guinness

vii) Exercises by: Yoga/lifting weights/push-ups and sit-ups/run outside/Pilates

The following variables would be constructed:

A) A variable measuring both #3 and #4. This variable would measure (*The extent to which voting preferences are discussed with—and therefore known by—one's social circle*)

B) A variable measuring the discrepancies between one's ordering of the various lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes and the *average* ordering of the various lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes of the [workplace unit/house of worship/club/sports league]. This variable would measure (*The extent to which the voter's social networks share the same Cultural Currency*)

C) A variable measuring the discrepancies between the ordering in #5 and the ordering in #6. This variable would be an alternative measure of *(The extent to which the voter's social networks share the same Cultural Currency)*

The following correlations would be measured:

- How A and B correlate with one's propensity to split their ticket
- How A and B correlate with one's propensity to "Barely Support Candidate"
- How A and C correlate with one's propensity to split their ticket
- How A and C correlate with one's propensity to "Barely Support Candidate"

## **Chapter 9: Examples of Status Inversion Beyond the Warren/Brown Campaign**

For Status Inversion to both be valid as a theory and matter as a theory, it must apply to other campaigns beyond the Massachusetts 2012 races. This chapter presents two other recent political media firestorms, analyzed through the frameworks of both Weber/Bourdieu and Status Inversion.

### Obama, Guns and Religion, and the 2008 Pennsylvania Democratic Primary:

A week before the 2008 Democratic Primary in Pennsylvania, Senator Barack Obama said this:

“You go into these small towns in Pennsylvania and, like a lot of small towns in the Midwest, the jobs have been gone now for 25 years and nothing’s replaced them.

And they fell through the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration, and each successive administration has said that somehow these communities are gonna regenerate and they have not,” Mr. Obama went on. “And it’s not surprising then they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren’t like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or antitrade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations.”<sup>95</sup>

This statement—whether intentionally or not—frames the ownership of guns and the belief in religion negatively. Obama also claims this habitus is indicative of “small towns in Pennsylvania.” Therefore, Obama was ostensibly placing his habitus and that of the members of the “San Francisco fund-raiser” in which he made these remarks over the habitus of small-town Pennsylvania. Seizing on this, “Senator [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) activated her entire campaign apparatus to portray Mr. Obama’s remarks as reflective of an elitist view of faith and community.”<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Seelye, Katharine, and Jeff Zeleny. "On the Defensive, Obama Calls His Words Ill-Chosen." *The New York Times*, 4/13/2008 2008.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

So, both Obama (implicitly) and Clinton (explicitly) placed Obama in an elite status tranche. Under the framework of Weber and Bourdieu, this elite status tranche is uniformly recognized as elite due to the fact that “the social order [which] is progressively inscribed in people’s minds”<sup>97</sup> allocates more status to those with the habitus of wealthy San Franciscans than small-town Pennsylvanians. Therefore, this elite status translates into more Cultural Capital for Obama than Hillary Clinton, as Clinton denounced this perception of small-town Pennsylvania. This framework would then lead to Obama having more *power* over Clinton, due to his higher stock of Cultural Capital. This power would then enable him to achieve his goal of winning the Pennsylvania primary over Clinton. This, of course, is questioned by the fact that this statement “left [Obama] on the defensive.”<sup>98</sup>

The Status Inversion framework provides an alternative analysis of this phenomenon. This framework runs parallel to the Weber and Bourdieu framework insofar as Senator Obama’s elite status tranche is uniformly recognized as elite due to the fact that “the social order [which] is progressively inscribed in people’s minds” allocates more status to those with the habitus of wealthy San Franciscans than small-town Pennsylvanians. However, this elite status only translates into one denomination of Cultural Currency for Obama—the kind of Cultural Currency that is highly valued by elite San Franciscans. The Cultural Currency of wealthy San Franciscans grants more status to those who do not cling to guns and religion more than those who do; the Cultural Currency of small-town Pennsylvania grants more status to those who cling to guns and religion than those who do not.

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<sup>97</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 1984.

<sup>98</sup> Seelye and Zeleny, "On the Defensive, Obama Calls His Words Ill-Chosen."

On the other hand, Hillary Clinton's response to Obama's statement claimed that she shared a habitus with small-town Pennsylvania voters:

"I grew up in a church-going family, a family that believed in the importance of living out and expressing our faith," she said at a rally in Indianapolis. "The people of faith I know don't 'cling to' religion because they're bitter. People embrace faith not because they are materially poor, but because they are spiritually rich" (Seelye and Seleny 2008)

This response earned Clinton a *different* denomination of Cultural Currency—the kind that is highly valued by small-town Pennsylvanians. Given the Horizontal Power Setting of an election, the Cultural Currency of small-town Pennsylvanians was granted the same exchange rate as the Cultural Currency of wealthy San Franciscans. Therefore, Clinton could translate her propensity to cling to religion into more power than Obama's propensity not to cling to religion, as there are more voters in Pennsylvania who share the Cultural Currency of small-town Pennsylvanians than voters in Pennsylvania who share the Cultural Currency of wealthy San Franciscans. Therefore, *even though the* "the social order [which] is progressively inscribed in people's minds" frames "not clinging to guns and religion" as elite, *more power was in the hands of those who clung to guns and religion because the "exchange rate" of the Cultural Currency which values "clinging to guns and religion" in relation to the exchange rate of the Cultural Currency which values "not clinging to guns and religion" varies as a function of field.* In this case, Obama's Cultural Capital subtracted from his power, instead of augmenting it.

#### Ted Cruz, 2013 Debt Ceiling Battle

Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Senator Bob Corker (R-TN) got into a fight in September of 2013. The fight was about the looming Government shutdown, and the fight migrated from Twitter to the Senate floor.

The gist of the fight on the Senate floor was as follows: “At one point, Corker accused Cruz and Lee of turning Senate proceedings ‘into a show.’ Cruz countered by questioning Corker’s loyalty to the Republican Party by siding with Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.).”<sup>99</sup>

Before the fight, Senator Corker sent out this Tweet: "I didn't go to Harvard or Princeton, but I can count — the defunding box canyon is a tactic that will fail and weaken our position. –BC.”<sup>100</sup>

Why would Bob Corker send out a Tweet reminding America that Ted Cruz—an alumnus of Princeton and Harvard Law School—has more Cultural Capital than Bob Corker, B.S. University of Tennessee '74?

The answer, again, lies in the ramifications of the difference between the Weber/Bourdieu framework of Cultural Capital and the Status Inversion framework of Cultural Capital. The Weber/Bourdieu framework argues that Princeton and Harvard would bestow more Cultural Capital onto Cruz than The University of Tennessee would bestow upon Corker. Therefore, invoking Alma Maders would result in a net loss of power to Corker.

The Status Inversion framework argues that this invocation should be viewed through the lens of Cultural Currency. The two Cultural Currencies here are:

π) A Cultural Currency that apportions more status to those who attended Harvard and Princeton versus those who did not, *ceteris paribus*

Ω) A Cultural Currency that apportions more status to those who did not attend Harvard and Princeton versus those who did, *ceteris paribus*

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<sup>99</sup> O'Keefe, Ed. "Cruz, Corker Clash on Senate Floor." *The Washington Post*, 9/26/2013.

<sup>100</sup> Senator Bob Corker, edited by @SenBobCorker: Twitter, 9/19/2013.

Invoking Alma Maders provides Cruz with more  $\pi$  Cultural Currency than Corker, but also provides Corker with more  $\Omega$  Cultural Currency than Cruz. Unlike the Obama “guns and religion” faux pas, which self-engineered an ethos of haughtiness, Corker’s fight with Cruz was absent of any such faux pas from Cruz. However, Corker’s invocation of Alma Maders triggered both the “status” and the “inauthenticity” pillars of Status Inversion, *given who Ted Cruz presented himself to be politically*. The fact that Princeton and Harvard triggered the “status” pillar is obvious. The “inauthenticity” pillar, on the other hand, was triggered by the incongruence of his *politics* with the *habitus he projects*:

Cruz is from the intellectual elite, but not of it, a Tea Party conservative whose politics are considered gauche at best at the storied universities where he studied. He is, to borrow the words of the 2008 H.W. Brands biography of Franklin Roosevelt, a traitor to his class.<sup>101</sup>

Cruz’s Alma Maders were in the news the week before Corker’s Tweet due to the revelation that Cruz only studied with people from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton at Harvard Law School. The inauthenticity propagated by this revelation is best captured by the following headline: “Ted Cruz, Humble Man Of The People, Refused To Study With Anyone From ‘The Lesser Ivies.’”<sup>102</sup>

Corker’s generation of Status Inversion for Cruz serves as an insightful counterpoint to Brown’s generation of Status Inversion for Warren. Both Corker and Brown benefitted from this Status Inversion, as it allowed them to leverage power from citizens who do not hold those affiliated with the (non-”minor”) Ivies and/or those who are perceived to be haughty in higher esteem than the inverse. However, Corker was able to “kill two birds with one stone” when he brought up Cruz’s Alma Maders, as this

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<sup>101</sup> Lowry, Rich. "Ted Cruz: A Traitor to Harvard, Princeton." *The New York Post*, 8/24/2013.

<sup>102</sup> Zoom, Doktor. "Ted Cruz, Humble Man of the People, Refused to Study with Anyone from 'the Lesser Ivies'." *Wonkette*, 9/23/2013.

invocation triggered both the status and inauthenticity pillars of haughtiness; as Corker and Cruz operate in the Horizontal Power Setting of a political field, this haughtiness led to the Status Inversion which led to the aforementioned leveraging of power. Brown, however, needed to construct Warren's "status" and "inauthenticity" *separately*, as the incongruence—if any exists—between being a Harvard Law Professor and a self-described "Progressive"<sup>103</sup> is far less than the incongruence of a Tea Party Texan with Princeton and Harvard degrees. This serves to highlight the power of the qualification of the absence of "political issue congruence" in this thesis' voting model: *Issues matter insofar as they shape and are shaped by one's habitus*. The universally perceived incongruency of Ted Cruz's Alma Mater and his politics is a function of, and therefore demonstrates, how issues shape and are shaped by one's lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes.

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<sup>103</sup> Elizabeth Warren for Massachusetts. "About Elizabeth." <http://elizabethwarren.com/elizabeth>.

## **Chapter 10: Recommendations to the Warren Campaign Based off the Theory of Status Inversion**

Given that a combination of status and inauthenticity lead to ticket splitting, any steps the Warren Campaign could have taken to blunt the perception of either status or inauthenticity would have led to more straight tickets, and, therefore, more votes for Warren.

The following are three brief recommendations on specific actions, ranging from subtle to explicit, which the Warren Campaign could have taken to blunt the perception of status and inauthenticity.

### **Subtle—Mention University of Huston and Rutgers Law School Alma Maders:**

Scott Brown has more Cultural Capital from his Alma Maders than Warren has from her's. Brown attended Tufts for his B.A. and then Boston College Law School.; Warren attended University of Huston for her B.A. and then Rutgers Law School. Brown's Alma Maders rank consistently and significantly higher than Warren's Alma Maders in *U.S. News and World Report* rankings.<sup>104</sup> However, Brown seemed to constantly imply that Warren attended Harvard, such as in the following comment: "'You know what, listen: Bottom line is, you know, I didn't go to Harvard, you know, I went to the school of hard knocks.'"<sup>105</sup> Therefore, informing voters of this status discrepancy (weighted towards Brown) would blunt the status discrepancy (weighted towards Warren) which Brown evokes when he contrasts "Harvard Professor Warren" with his pick-up-truck-driving self.

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<sup>104</sup> Editors. "College Rankings and List." *US News and World Report*, 2013.

<sup>105</sup> Grim, Ryan. "Scott Brown: 'Thank God' Elizabeth Warren Didn't 'Take Her Clothes Off'." *The Huffington Post*, 10/06/2011 2011.

There are two manners with which to inform voters of this information. One is explicitly, along the lines of: “I wasn’t smart enough to go to college where Senator Brown went to college after high school.” The other is subtly, along the lines of: “Some of the money I put towards my University of Huston degree came from my wages from waiting tables at my Aunt Alice’s Mexican restauraunt ”; “I started Rutgers Law School when my daughter, Amelia, was two years old.”<sup>106</sup>

Given the specter of the Native American controversy, I believe the subtle strategy would have the biggest net benefit for the Warren Campaign. The potential cost of both strategies is to underscore Scott Brown’s claim that Elizabeth Warren’s success is inauthentic, due to the fact that he claims she benefitted from listing herself as a Native American on Harvard’s application. Therefore, the more Warren downplays her intelligence, the less the average voter is likely to believe that someone vaulted from the University of Huston and Rutgers Law School to a professorship at Harvard Law School on merit alone. Therefore, taking the explicit approach might have bolstered her inauthentic perception more than it minimized her status perception. If Warren does not establish the connection between Alma Mader status and intelligence, Brown would have to establish this connection in order to question whether one can leap from Rutgers Law student to Harvard Law professor on merit. Of course, if Brown established the connection between Alma Mader status and intelligence, this would significantly compromise his haughtiness advantage.

Therefore, the subtle approach provides a relatively risk-free manner to reduce Warren’s high status perception. Given that those who *value* high status would still

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<sup>106</sup> Information in quotes from: Elizabeth Warren for Massachusetts. "About Elizabeth." <http://elizabethwarren.com/elizabeth>.

consider Warren as a higher status figure than Brown, the *reduction* in her high status would also be relatively risk-free.

Explicit—Cede Physical Attractiveness Advantage to Scott Brown:

Common sense would dictate that, when running a political campaign for Candidate A, one should attempt to paint Candidate A as better than Candidate B among as many criteria as possible. The theory of Status Inversion clashes with this strategy. If the perception of the haughtiness of Candidate A is triggered by Candidate A's field of status wholly encompassing Candidate B's field of status, then the perception of Candidate A's haughtiness will be significantly reduced if Candidate A claims that Candidate B is better than Candidate A in regards to a criteria of status. In other words, the theory of Status Inversion would advise a candidate to cede an advantage to one's opponent in regards to one criterion of status.

Physical attractiveness is such a criterion. Many studies have documented the relationship between the perception of physical attractiveness and the perception of status.<sup>107</sup> The favorable perception of Scott Brown's attractiveness was codified in his nude photo shoot for *Cosmopolitan* magazine in 1982. If Warren adopted a refrain of "I may not get invited to model in a magazine anytime soon, but..." throughout the campaign, this would cede a criterion of status to Brown, and therefore significantly reduce her haughtiness perception.

Warren did bring up Brown's centerfold exactly once in the campaign, but she did so in such a manner that *attacked him for his judgement for choosing to do the photo*

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<sup>107</sup> Anderson, C. J., Oliver; Keltner, Dacher; Kring, Ann (2001). Who attains social status? Effects of personality and physical attractiveness in social group. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81 (1), 116-132.

*shoot*—which, in effect, placed her status over his—*instead of ceding a criterion of status to Brown*, which would have, in effect, placed her status below his.

[Warren] also made the audience laugh and applaud with the second question, which asked each candidate how they paid for college, since Brown [posed nude](#) for *Cosmopolitan* to pay.

"I kept my clothes on," she quipped. She added that she borrowed money to go to a public university and had a part-time job.<sup>108</sup>

The nude *Cosmo* shoot provided Warren an opportunity to reduce the perception of her haughtiness. Instead, Warren framed the *Cosmo* shoot in such a manner that placed her status over Brown's.

#### Explicit—Denounce Scott Brown's Interpretation of her Native American Heritage:

During the campaign, Warren never once claimed that she currently considered herself a Native American. She claimed that she was told about her Native American heritage by her mother, and that her claim of this Native American heritage gave her no advantage in Harvard's hiring process. In other words, she was misled into believing she was a Native American, but this false belief did not have any ramifications in regards to employment advantages. However, without directly stating that she considered herself a Native American, she *claimed* she possessed an attribute (when she applied for a Harvard professorship) even though she *believed* she did not possess such an attribute (at the time of the Senate campaign): this is the definition of inauthenticity. If Warren had stated "I am Native American. This is how I was raised. I don't care what Scott Brown thinks I look like," then, in order for Scott Brown to denounce this, he would have to claim that his criterion for determining heritage—looks—is more legitimate than Warren's criterion

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<sup>108</sup> Johnson, Luke. "Elizabeth Warren Blasts Wall Street, Scott Brown in First Massachusetts Senate Debate." *The Huffington Post*, 10/05/2011 2011.

for determining heritage. If Scott Brown took such a step, this would enhance the perception of Brown's haughtiness, as Brown would be claiming that he can assess Person A's heritage (through their appearance) better than Person A can assess their own heritage. Furthermore, if the strategy to explicitly cede physical attractiveness to Brown were enacted, this Native American strategy would further amplify the trope of physical appearance in the campaign. If this trope were amplified, Warren might have been able to *benefit* from Status Inversion, insofar as she could have captured those who's Cultural Currencies relegated low status to those who highly valued physical attractiveness.

## **Chapter 11: Ballot Boxes, Bars, and Battlefields—Why Status Inversion Matters Beyond the 2012 Massachusetts Election**

This thesis addresses a question pertinent to all insecure undergraduates: When do my opinions matter?

I came to the University of Michigan, in 2010, with a set of values. These values were forged by three generations of scrap-metal businessmen on my Father's side, seven generations of Rabbi's on my Mother's side, a childhood spent in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and an adolescence spent on the two-time New England Championship football team of Coach John Papas.

I valued those who were brutally honest—those whom I did not have to spend too much effort deciphering what they were thinking. I valued those who were comfortable when I introduced myself to them, even if the sole premise was that we were both students at The University of Michigan. I valued those who took pride in their academics. I valued those who shared both their triumphs and their problems, assuming they would also listen to mine. Most importantly, I valued those that didn't act like they were better than anyone else, even if they thought they were.

Over my first two years of undergraduate education, this value system was eroded by the perpetual tide of professional socialization. I learned the proper manner to treat an undesirable Rush at a Fraternity event was to smile and chat with them for two hours before deriding him in private. I learned that it was weird to introduce yourself to the person sitting next to you in lecture, unless you're carrying a pledge paddle and her laptop his bearing a Sorority sticker—people would giggle otherwise. I learned that, when you get a fantastic grade, you don't share in your happiness with friends; you only share bad grades, so everybody can laugh along and you get a pat on the back. I learned

that there was a strict hierarchy of social status, based upon which letters were on your pledge paddle, or which letters were on your laptop's Sorority sticker.

I learned this due to two reasons: these values embodied the Cultural Currency of the Greek system, and, during my first two years of college, the Greek system held an inseparable blend of status and power. Based on which Fraternity or Sorority you belonged to, you possessed a given amount of power to party with the Greeks you wanted to party with, befriend the Greeks you wanted to befriend, and sit next to the Greeks you wanted to sit next to in lecture.

Come Junior year, when the Greek system lost their power over parties and other opportunities to forge social connections, a new power emerged: The Recruiter Who Might Offer You The Internship. I noticed two very surprising things about this new field of recruitment: the recruiters within the most powerful tier in this field—those that offered access to internships with the highest salaries, compared to the other internships, within organizations within the highest status tier—valued various lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes differently from *both* the Greek system *and* each other. Huron Healthcare thought I was too loud and energetic. The Dean of the Business School hired me because of my enthusiasm. So is my level of enthusiasm a marker of high status because a person with higher status grants my enthusiasm higher status than the person with lower status did? But what if someone from Goldman Sachs thinks my level of enthusiasm is weird? Does Goldman Sachs have more status than the Ross School of Business? If they do, does that mean my level of enthusiasm is really of a low status after all? What if one Professor grades my answers to these questions on their persuasiveness and another Professor grades my argument on their formality?

I realized during Junior year that there was no one set relationship between how different people believe *status should be allocated* amongst those with differing lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes, and how *power is actually allocated* amongst people with different lifestyles, values, dispositions, and tastes. However, I also started taking Sociology classes Junior year. In these courses, along with the rigorous social science courses I took since Sophomore year, I learned about Cultural Capital. Cultural Capital was a measure of how well one's habitus aligned with the habitus of the powerful. Since power is a function of Cultural Capital, everyone is incentivized to emulate the habitus of the powerful; therefore, the social order is constantly reproduced.

But wait—under this framework, my stock of Cultural Capital has granted me wildly different amounts of power in vastly different circumstances! Those with high power and status value my stock of Cultural Capital differently. Must I determine which member of the highest status tranche has the most status overall in order to figure out what the true factors of Cultural Capital really are? Or is there an alternative method through which to observe this phenomenon?

During my work on the Elizabeth Warren campaign, I saw one element of Cultural Capital—education—result in *a loss of power*. Elizabeth Warren wanted to become a Senator; her high stock of Cultural Capital was preventing her from doing so. For some reason, the perpetual reproduction of the social order we learned about in 300-plus-level Social Science classes seemed to stop short of Southie. The elites' system of allocating status based on habitus—Cultural Capital—was *not* indicative of how *power* was being allocated in the Massachusetts 2012 election.

I will admit that there is much of Bourdieu's work I did not have time to read, and

some of Bourdieu's work I did not fully understand. However, I can confidently state that the metaphor of the representation of the power granted by one's lifestyles, values, dispositions and taste as "capital" is imperfect. Under no circumstance does *more* money grant one *less* access to buy a given quantity of a homogeneous good than *less* money does, *ceteris paribus*. In terms of buying things, more money is better. However, as this thesis demonstrates, more Cultural Capital can be *worse* than less Cultural Capital, *ceteris paribus*.

The core weakness of this thesis is that, at times, I felt like I was taking aim at a fluid target. Does Bourdieu's theory of Cultural Capital need a fifth wheel to travel to the shore of Southie, or am I simply reinventing the fourth wheel? Perhaps one's Cultural Capital *can* take on two values at one point in time, based on *the legitimacy of Cultural Capital within a field*, which in turn in a function what those with the highest amounts of "Symbolic Capital"<sup>109</sup> say is legitimate. But is Symbolic Capital comprised of an ordered rubric of inputs which dole out the power to determine who has the power to determine who has the most Cultural Capital in a field consistently across all fields? What if someone's high stock of Symbolic Capital, based off this ordered rubric of inputs, leads them to have less power than someone with a lower stock of Symbolic Capital, based off this same ordered rubric of inputs? Is there another type of Capital which doles out the power to determine who has the power to determine who has the power to determine who has the most Cultural Capital in a field consistently across all fields?

At some point, little is gained from gazing further and further into two infinity mirrors, wholly absorbed in themselves. Pierre Bourdieu's theories regarding status and

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<sup>109</sup> Bourdieu, Pierre. *Practical Reason : On the Theory of Action*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.

power were the most impactful theories I learned as an undergraduate. The theories of Social and Cultural Capital fundamentally changed the way I perceive the world. I wrote this thesis to explore whether or not Pierre Bourdieu could explain the question no one else could give me a satisfactory answer to: Why was there a 22.2% difference between Obama and Romney, but only a 7.6% difference between Warren and Brown?

This thesis does not attempt to bash a square peg against a circular hole and giggle at the loud noises. This thesis attempts to subtly modify the pentadecagon of Pierre Bourdieu into the Hexadecagon of the Massachusetts 2012 Election.

I believe Pierre Bourdieu's theories, slightly adapted with my theory of Status Inversion, answer my question. I believe Elizabeth Warren lost 20% of the Obama vote because she was perceived as both someone with high status and someone who is inauthentic. I believe these two perceptions led to her perception as haughty. I believe this haughtiness led a group of people to believe that Warren valued her attributes—high intellectual capital, being the most prominent—as more valuable than the attributes Scott Brown projected—a high work ethic, as evident by the 200,000 miles on his pick-up truck travelled between campaign stops. I believe that people believed that a vote for Warren was an endorsement of Warren's belief that intellectual capital was more valuable than hard work. I believe that this belief had social ramifications for those who voted for Warren, if the social circle in which a given voter inhabited was populated with those who placed little value on intellectual capital. I believe that, even if a voter in this situation supported the political platform shared by Obama and Warren, they would vote Obama and Brown, because the ramifications of the practically non-existent chance that their vote will be the deciding vote was far outweighed by the ramifications of the

certainty that this support would compromise one's standing in one's social circle. I believe that this explains ticket-splitting behavior, and I have presented a method with which to test this belief.

To summarize: I believe that the Obama/Brown voter wanted to be perceived as someone who both supported Obama's political platform and supported Brown's contention that those with high Cultural Capital don't necessarily deserve more esteem than those with low Cultural Capital.

This is a brutally honest answer to that question pertinent to all insecure undergraduates. My opinions about what should constitute high Cultural Capital only matter when people are granted equal power; my opinions only matter in the setting in which this power is granted. In other words, Pierre Bourdieu's theories are so strong that it takes the full faith and credit of the United States of America to challenge them. The theory of Status Inversion completely hinges upon Horizontal Power Settings. Without a Horizontal Power Setting, the manner in which the Cultural Currency of the elites claims status should be allocated is the manner in which power is allocated in all fields.

So where are these Horizontal Power Settings? Do these glimmers of hope exist beyond Election Day?

As previously mentioned, I observed a Horizontal Power Setting in regards to some companies in the recruitment process. In a pretzel-twist of complexity, with regards to the ramifications of Status Inversion to Bourdieu's theory, this Horizontal Power Setting was a function of economic capital. Amazon believes status should be allocated to those who wear jeans to interviews over suits. Goldman Sachs believes status should be allocated to those who wear suits to interviews over jeans. Amazon pays \$85,000.

Goldman pays \$85,000. I wore jeans to my Amazon interview because the extent to which “the manner in which a company’s Cultural Currency claims status should be allocated” allocates power in job interviews is equal to the manner in which Amazon’s Cultural Currency claims status should be allocated. In other words, my desire to conform to Amazon’s Cultural Currency was a function of Amazon’s salary. If all the companies that offered \$85,000 required suits and all the companies that offered \$20,000 preferred jeans, then I would not conform to wearing jeans to any interview. However, in the Amazon and Goldman Sachs example, one firm’s Cultural Currency is not objectively better than the other’s Cultural Currency to job candidates solely concerned with salary, even though the theories of Pierre Bourdieu would predict power to be proportional to Cultural Capital, which is a function of dress. To summarize: The Horizontal Power Setting between Amazon and Goldman Sachs, which operates in the field of job candidates who only care about job salary, equalizes the power of the Cultural Currencies of Amazon and Goldman Sachs. This Horizontal Power Setting is a function of the horizontal power of money: \$85,000 from Goldman Sachs will purchase the same amount as \$85,000 from Amazon.

Horizontal Power Settings also exist in a field of people who seek companionship. Social Capital is a measure of the value of connections in regards to how much power these connections afford you. Therefore, there is large variance in the social capital provided by a connection with a given person, due to the fact that a given person could possess any level of power on a vast spectrum. However, there is a much smaller variance in the companionship that a connection with a given person can provide. Nearly everyone has the immediate capacity to grant companionship in a given setting; everyone

does not have the immediate capacity to grant power in a given setting. Therefore, those seeking companionship operate in a Horizontal Power Setting; therefore, the power to obtain companionship in this field is allocated in the manner in which the most populous Cultural Currency of this field allocates status, rather than the manner in which Cultural Capital allocates status.

An example of this phenomenon can be seen in classrooms across the University of Michigan. Imagine a lecture hall with 150 students and a Professor. If a student wishes for success (a manifestation of power) in the classroom, he would be advised to conform to the dictates of Cultural Capital, the most important of which is to engage in and value the educational content of the class. However, if the Cultural Currency of the majority of the students in the class values those who value pressing social concerns (via Facebook) over an interest in the educational content of the course, or even values indifference towards the educational content of the course over an interest in such, then conformity with Cultural Capital will *harm* one's goal of achieving camaraderie in this field, *even though* it leads to more power. This is due to the fact that although power (i.e. academic success) is a function of Cultural Capital, the goal of obtaining camaraderie operates within a Horizontal Power Setting. In other words, it does not matter whether or not the ambitious student and the Professor are the only two individuals in the 150-member lecture hall whose values align with those of Cultural Capital; the manner through which power is allocated based upon habitus is not subject to democracy. However, the capacity for one's camaraderie in this field is a function of one's alignment with the Cultural Currency which is valued by the most people in the class. The student might get a better grade in class if they raise their hand and bring up Bourdieu in the lecture about Weber,

but they might also lose esteem from—and therefore camaraderie with—their peers.

Those operating in a field of physical force also operate within a Horizontal Power Setting. Although the British fought the Colonists in a manner associated with high Cultural Capital at the time—organized, aesthetically pleasing formations—they did not have the most power in regards to achieving their outcome.

So, to return again to the initial question: opinions about how power should be allocated based upon one's habitus only matter (if these opinions differ from how the elites believe status and power should be allocated based upon one's habitus) if the actors within the field which has a plurality of those with these opinions are seeking camaraderie, political power within a Democracy, or military success. Furthermore, with extremely high amounts of economic capital, one can disrupt the manner through which Cultural Capital dictates how power is allocated, given that one can match (or exceed) the financial benefit of aligning with one's Cultural Currency, since money is homogeneous.

In other words: Beyond the ballot box, bar, or battlefield, one's opinions about which variations of habitus should be valued do not matter, unless you have a lot of money.

In regards to the political field, if my voting model is correct, this has ramifications on the impact of political activism. Social change occurs, by definition, when people change their preferences. If one's voting preferences were a function of the social ramifications of these beliefs more than the extent to which one prefers to see their preferences enacted into law, then people would be more willing to change their preferences when the social cost of doing so is reduced. The social cost of misaligning with the Cultural Currency of one's community is a function of how many connections

one has with one's community, and how much utility one draws from these connections. Therefore, the social cost of misaligning with the Cultural Currency of their community is minimized when people have fewer connections with, and draw less utility from, their community. Therefore, the more disengaged people become with their communities, the less costly it will be for people to change their preferences. Therefore, ironically, the more we bowl alone<sup>110</sup>, the greater the impact of activism, and the greater social change a society undergoes. A study about the gay rights movement over the past decade, with a focus on the social costs to those who switched support in favor of gay marriage and the social networks of these individuals, can further substantiate this claim.

This thesis is a former Elizabeth Warren campaign intern standing athwart the tide of political and sociological theory, yelling "Stop!" In the context of the Massachusetts election in 2012, something about these explanations did not seem right; something did not fit. My hope is that this thesis does not damage the integrity of these explanations in this context, but rather preserves it.

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<sup>110</sup> Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

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