

Emotions and Society

Special Issue: Call for Papers

Emotions, the Rich and the Poor: Affective hierarchies, boundaries and distinctions in class relations and social structure

Guest Editors: **Nina Margies**, Humboldt University of Berlin and **Elgen Sauerborn**, Free University of Berlin

Background to the call

In recent years, the interplay between emotions and social class has received recurrent attention. Scholars from various disciplines have primarily investigated the impact of class structures and inequalities on individual and collective feelings and emotions. Research addressing questions such as how class feels and how affects shape class relations (Emery, Powell & Crookes 2023; Skeggs 2012) as well as the effect of social mobility and class shifts on emotional states (Born 2023; Friedman 2016; Jaquet 2018), enhance our comprehension of economic and social disparities and their association with psychological states and mental health.

Social, economic and ecological crises such as climate change or the current inflation intensify social inequalities, which in turn leads to a shift in class boundaries and a reconfiguration of social hierarchies. Many groups are pushed into poverty or the lower class, who never perceived themselves as being at risk of poverty. At the same time, the ultra-wealthy exacerbate existing crises (Chancel 2022; Neckel 2023), and affluent individuals seek to distinguish themselves from ostentatious wealth through new cultural and habitus practices (Friedman & Reeves 2020; Prieur & Savage 2013; Sherman 2018). This leads to new forms of distinction within both the rich and the poor, which involve emotional practices as well as affective meanings and relations. Recognizing the critical importance of emotions and affects in creating social distinction, questions arise about how they operate as tools for forming hierarchies and class boundaries within emerging rearrangements of established classes. Moreover, it prompts an exploration of how emotions or affects are used to either maintain an individual's class identity or, alternatively, to separate oneself from it.

In this special issue, our aim is to redirect the emphasis away from individual emotional states. Instead, we welcome contributions that scrutinize the practical, organizing, and segregating functions of emotions, including collective emotions and affects. The special issue aims to contribute to the exploration of how emotions and affective relations serve to separate or connect social classes and stratification. We are particularly interested in understanding how social closure and opening processes relate to emotions and the emotional or affective practices, techniques, and strategies employed to preserve or challenge class boundaries and orders.

We are interested in predominantly empirical but also theoretical contributions that explore, among other things, the following questions:

- What functions do emotions and affects have in processes of social closure and opening?
- How do emotions solidify class structures, and how do they loosen or open them and how do individuals employ emotions to assert and preserve social distinctions?
- What role do collective emotions and affects play in processes of maintaining and reproducing social and economic inequality?
- What is the relationship between emotions and money, wealth and capital, or their absence?
- What are class-based differences in emotion norms, rules, and values, or affective regimes?
- How do manifestations of class-based stigmatization interact with emotions and emotional stereotypes?
- Which institutions and actors contribute to the establishment of class-specific emotional norms?
- How are emotional deviance associated with class affiliation?
- What role do emotions and affects play in the intersection of class and other aspects of social inequality, such as gender, race, or nationality?
- What role do affective phenomena such as atmospheres and moods play in social inequality and class differences?

Information for contributors

If you are interested in this call, please submit your abstract (200–300 words) no later than 01 Dec 2023 to the Guest Editors Nina Margies (nina.margies@sowi.hu-berlin.de) and Elgen Sauerborn (elgen.sauerborn@fu-berlin.de).

We will inform authors by mid-January whether we would like them to submit a full paper. Full papers will be due for submission by 15 June 2024 and will undergo the journal's standard double-anonymous peer review process.

Please see our [instructions for authors](#) for guidance on preparing your submission.

Timeline

- 01 December 2023: Deadline for submitting abstracts to Guest Editors
- Mid-January 2024: Feedback and decision on the acceptance of proposals
- 15 June 2024: Deadline for submitting full draft papers for review
- November. 2025: Publication of the special issue

Literature

Born, A.M. (2023) 'The price of the ticket revised: Family members' experiences of upward social mobility', *The Sociological Review*, 0(0)

Chancel, L. (2022) 'Global carbon inequality over 1990–2019', *Nature Sustainability*, 5: 931–938.

Emery, J., Powell, R. & Crookes, L. (2023) 'Class, affect, margins', *The Sociological Review*, 71(2): 283–295.

Friedman, S. & Reeves, A. (2020) 'From Aristocratic to Ordinary: Shifting Modes of Elite Distinction', *American Sociological Review*, 85(2): 323–350.

Neckel, S. (2023), 'Zerstörerischer Reichtum. Wie eine globale Verschmutzer-Elite das Klima ruiniert', *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 68(4): 47–56.

Prieur, A. & Savage, M. (2013) 'Emerging Forms of Cultural Capital', *European Societies*, 15(2): 246–267.

Sherman, R. (2018) "A very expensive ordinary life": consumption, symbolic boundaries and moral legitimacy among New York elites', *Socio-Economic Review*, 16(2): 411–433.

Skeggs, B. (2012) 'Feeling Class: Affect and Culture in the Making of Class Relations', in: G. Ritzer (ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Sociology*, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 269–286.