No Child Left Behind?
Role/Identity Development of the "Good Student"

Alison J. Bianchi
& Donna A. Lancianese
Kent State University

Abstract: Using a new method to measure identity, we attempt to capture salient identities of young children developing into "good students." Using a nationally representative sample of American kindergarteners who advance to the first grade, derived from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, we examine identities based on socio-economic status, motor skills and weight that affect school performance as measured by both cognitive and non-cognitive skill assessments. Results reveal that identities derived from socio-economic status and motor skills are positively linked to school performance outcomes, and parents of first graders negatively link identities derived from body weight to first graders' non-cognitive skills. Our findings have implications for policies that concentrate on cognitive skills and ignore work habits when evaluating performance. We discuss the importance of linking identity development to both types of skills because American teachers and parents, unlike teachers and parents in East Asia, do not recognize the need to stress ability and effort equally when assessing schooling. We also interpret the meaning of our results for the No Child Left Behind Policy.

Address all correspondence to: Alison J. Bianchi, Department of Sociology, Kent State University, 323 Merrill Hall, Kent, OH 44242-0001. E-mail: abianchi@kent.edu

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Social roles are positions within a network of relationships that have expectations attached to them (Stryker 1980; Stryker & Burke 2000). When an actor inhabits a social role for a length of time, she internalizes the associated role expectations. The definitions and meanings that constitute expectations become a part of her self-concept, the collection of meanings, or identities, that she possesses and would use to describe herself (Stets & Burke 2003). While embedded in a role, an actor performs according to role expectations, and thus expresses her self-meanings through behavior (Burke 1980). A tacit association between identities and role performances can be made, providing that actors within a social context share the same understanding of how one's self meanings and performance are related to one another (Burke & Tully 1977; Burke & Reitzes 1981; Burke & Franzoi 1988).

The association between identity and role performance can be examined with actors who can validly and reliably answer such questions as: "who am I?"; "how do I perform?"; and "which actors in this context are expected to perform in a certain way?" (Burke 1989; Burke, Stets & Pirog-Good 1988; Nuttbrock & Freudiger 1991; Simon 1992; Thoits 1995). However, the concepts of "identity" and "role performance" are not so readily operationalized with actors that lack the level of sophistication to understand these concepts, such as young children. Nonetheless, despite these methodological issues, evidence does exist that children develop and invoke identities, and the role performances indicative of these identities (Marsh, Craven & Debus 1991; Eccles, Wigfield, Harold & Blumenfeld 1993), although confirmation of these findings lacks reliability across studies (Wylie 1989; Byrne 1996). If a more valid and reliable way to measure identities of children were found, researchers would be better able to explore the link between self-meanings and behavior in young children.

The purpose of this paper is to explore a new method of identity measurement, developed by Jasso (2003, 2004), to determine if salient identities can be recognized without explicitly measuring the shared meaning system in which they are embedded. Specifically, we use this methodology to capture salient identities of very young students that are based on social status, the prestige one possesses based on one's differentially valued social distinctions. Using a nationally representative sample of kindergarteners that advance to the first grade, we examine the salient, status-based identities that may be linked to school performance as measured by both cognitive and non-cognitive skill assessments.

We feel this research is important because, in the U.S., there is a general tendency for policies pertaining to children's school performance to concentrate on testing and evaluating ability only. The latest example

of this tendency is the No Child Left Behind policy of the Bush Administration. This policy forces U.S. elementary schools to focus primarily on cognitive skills associated with testing well in math and reading (Paige 2003a). Research has shown, however, that non-cognitive behaviors, such as work habits, are also essential to academic achievement (Farkas 2003), and so we assume that performance in these skills is also important to the identity development of the "good student." Therefore, our results have implications for this social policy that does not emphasize the full toolkit of skills needed to develop the identities required for both academic and later career success (Rosenbaum 2001).

Identity and Social Status in Young Children

Soon after the age of three, children begin to develop a sense of the self from expectations and evaluations of others (Stipek, Recchia & McClintic 1992). These evaluations develop into "self-guides" that regulate behavior (Higgins 1991), although children still lack the ability to evaluate the self independently by ages five to seven (Selman 1980). Five-year-old children nonetheless have a rudimentary set of self-definitions and meanings that represent the beginnings of a self-concept (Verschueren, Marcoen & Schoefs 1996), even though this self-concept is strongly associated with significant others' appraisals of the self, especially evaluations by caretakers (Harter 1989).

Researchers have also shown that young children are sensitive to differences in social status and that understandings of these differences are being internalized as part of their self-meanings. For instance, Nesdale and Flesser (2001) conducted an experiment where 5-year-olds were told to draw self-portraits, and then these pictures were randomly assigned as "excellent" and "good." Essentially, differential status beliefs were created characteristic of Ridgeway's (2001) status value theory, whereby differences in competence become associated with differences in social prestige. Two main effects in the study were found: the "excellent drawers" felt they had performed considerably better than the "good drawers," and the "good drawers" concurred; to be precise, a status hierarchy based on ability had developed. The other important effect was that the "excellent drawers" felt their self-portraits revealed that they were much more similar to other "excellent drawers" than to "good drawers;" the same was true of the "good drawers." In other words, during a classic in-group/out-group exercise (Tajfel & Turner 1979), randomly assigned "high status" and "low status" children came to understand that they were part of a high or low status group, and that idea became part of their self-definition: "I am high status and like these children; I am not like low status children."

This self-categorization delineates how actors form identities based on group distinctions (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell 1987); this process differs from the identification required for forming an identity based on a social role (McCall & Simmons 1978). Nonetheless, Stets and Burke (2000) emphasize that actors concurrently occupy a role and belong to a group, and so identity formation is comprised of both processes. We concur with this observation, and believe what is necessary for the study of identity development is a method that captures both self-categorization and identification. For example, a young child can define herself in the role a "student," but also in a group, such as a "rich student," adding social status based on wealth to the meaning of her student identity.

Jasso's Common Core Theory and Its Present Application

In studies involving adults, identity theorists have shown that social status moderates one's ability to construct and verify identities derived from role expectations (Cast, Stets & Burke 1999; Stets & Harrod 2004). What these studies do not show is that actors can construct and maintain an identity based on social status while in a social role. To capture such status-based identities, Jasso (2003, 2004) scrutinized four socio-behavioral theories—identity theory, social identity theory, comparison theory, and status theory—and discovered that these theories share a common core of three basic elements to describe the self: personal quantitative characteristics, personal qualitative characteristics, and primordial outcomes. She defines *personal quantitative characteristics* as those attributes that can be ranked as more or less, be they cardinal characteristics, such as wealth, or ordinal characteristics, such as beauty. *Personal qualitative characteristics* are those attributes that cannot be ranked, such as race, gender or language. *Primordial outcomes* consist of ultimate or quasi-ultimate interactional ends, such as happiness, self-esteem, self-worth and status and justice processes. Primordial outcomes are the engine by which quantitative and qualitative characteristics manifest themselves during interaction. Using various combinations of these three elements, an identity can be modeled, and effects of this identity on myriad social outcomes can be done. We focus on the primordial outcome associated with status processes.

Jasso (2001) developed an equation to explore how personal quantitative and qualitative characteristics can be modeled for identities based on social status. By using an observation made by Goode (1978), namely that as rank increases, status increases at an increasing rate, and Sørensen's (1979) mathematical representations of these observations, the basic equation measuring status-based identities is:

$$\text{Status-Based Identity} = \ln(1/1\text{-}r)$$

with *r* denoting the relative rank (between zero and one) on a personal quantitative characteristic.

For children, personal quantitative characteristics, such as their family's socio-economic status, gross motor skills and body mass index could be used to explore the impact of status-based identities derived from wealth, physical coordination and weight on school performance outcomes. These three characteristics represent gradations of social labels: being rich versus poor, active and physically vigorous versus uncoordinated, or fat versus thin. These labels have the potential to be internalized by children, and could inform their identities. These labels, if internalized, could have effects on the projection of social status: (a) a rich child may feel more entitled to better grades than a poor child; (b) a physically-coordinated child may feel more accepted and noticed by peers and teachers; and (c) a child who perceives herself to be fat may be looked down upon by the same actors. All of these circumstances reflect possible disparities in social prestige, and if this stratification exists, the differences in social prestige may be related to differential school performance.

Measuring these types of characteristics would not require that the children under study have sophisticated cultural understandings of role expectations or even knowledge of the concept; these characteristics could be measured by responses from parents and teachers. Jasso's (2003, 2004) statistical methodology may be very useful in studying the development of identity in young children who lack the aptitude to articulate shared role meanings and their links to identity and behavioral performance. Accordingly, we use this method to capture salient status-based identities and their effects on school performance outcomes. Also, studying status-based identities for actors who differ on attributes of qualitative personal characteristics, such as males and females, would provide a comparison of how much different groups use status-based identities as part of their self-concept.

Performance in School: Just a Math and English Test?

Farkas (2003) argues that both cognitive skills, such as Math and English competencies, and non-cognitive skills, such as work habits and sociability, contribute to the stratification process throughout children's school years. For instance, both of these variables have independent effects that strongly predict the grades attained in middle school (Farkas 1996) and high school (Rosenbaum 2001), with non-cognitive skills being the stronger predictor of the two. And, of course, grades do largely determine if students can go to college or not.

We feel it is important to evaluate both such outcomes in light of the No Child Left Behind policy of the Bush administration. This policy uses only school-wide averages for competencies to gauge whether or not a school is acceptably meeting minimum standards of schooling. Specifically, the policy states:

> The first principle of accountability for results involves the creation of standards in each state for what a child should know and learn in reading and math in grades three through eight. With those standards in place, student progress and achievement will be measured according to state tests designed to match those state standards and given to every child, every year. (Paige 2003b)

However, if non-cognitive skills are ultimately the stronger predictor of grades, why are average assessments not calculated for these variables? This lack of emphasis on work habits to assess school performance is not only the fault of the Bush administration. One could argue that these policies merely reflect a culture consisting of both parents and teachers who believe, despite the research, that ability is the principal causal factor of academic success (Stevenson & Stigler 1992).

For the current study, we take seriously the research suggesting that non-cognitive skills development is an equally important measure of school performance, and use both cognitive and non-cognitive skill assessments as outcomes that measure performance in school.

Methodology

Sample

We derived our data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Class (ECLSK)[1], a nationally representative longitudinal survey of American kindergarteners and their teachers, parents and school administrators that is collected by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). Respondents began kindergarten in the year 1998-99, and were surveyed in four waves during their kindergarten and first grade semesters: Fall 1998, Spring 1999, Fall 1999, and Spring 2000. We chose data from waves 1, 2 and 4 because the wave 3 data included only 27% of the original student respondents.

The sample we chose consists of data that are generalizable to kindergarten and first grade students in the U.S. for the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years who did not repeat kindergarten. However, because we do list-wise deletion for missing cases, an attrition analysis[2] reveals that we must be conservative when interpreting our estimates about students from the West, from non-intact families, with parents who read to their children 1 to 2 times per week compared to those who are

read to everyday, African Americans, Hispanics, and those with lower socio-economic status, since the original survey's sample is more inclusive of students with these characteristics. Similarly, we must be conservative when interpreting our estimates of Midwestern students and those who attended private school, since these measures are over-represented in the sample after list-wise deletion as compared to the original survey's sample. After list-wise deletion, our longitudinal sample consists of 4,554 cases.

Table 1 reports mean statistics for demographic variables after the list-wise deletion.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables are measures of reading and math cognitive skills done by survey personnel and teachers, and both parent and teacher assessments of children's work habits and attitudes toward learning.

For independent evaluations of students' math and reading competencies, in-person, face-to-face direct cognitive assessments were conducted

Table 1
Percentages for Categorical Independent Variables (N=4,554)

	Kindergarten	First Grade
Female	50.0	50.0%
African American	10.7	10.7
Hispanic	11.0	11.0
Asian American	4.0	4.0
Morning Only Kindergarten Class	27.4	
Afternoon Only Kindergarten Class	16.6	
Year-Round School (First Grade Only)		2.8
Midwest	27.9	27.9
South	35.2	35.2
West	18.2	18.2
Private School	24.6	24.5
Suburb	42.9	42.9
Rural	20.6	20.6
Non-Intact Family	25.3	27.1
Did Not Attend Preschool	8.7	
Read to Child 1 to 2 Times Per Week	13.5	17.0
Read to Child 3 to 6 Times Per Week	36.3	34.9

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten (Fall 1998)-First Grade (Spring 2000).

by survey administrators. These tests included assessments of grade-level appropriate items. For math skills, tests for counting, numbers and shapes, relative sizes, number sequence and ordinality, adding and subtraction, and multiplication and dividing were done. Students were given a score between 1 and 5 for each item. For reading skills, tests for letter recognition, beginning and ending sounds of words, identifying words on sight, and words within reading contexts were done, and again, students were given a score between 1 and 5 for each item (NCES 2001-029). NCES uses an IRT based system of assessment with these measures.

Confirmatory factor analyses were performed on math and reading skill items to determine validity of items for scales representing overall math and reading assessments; scale reliability was also evaluated. As Table 2 reveals, factor loadings for reading skills item scores ranged from

Table 2
Factor Loadings[a] for Dependent Variables Measuring Independent Assessments of Reading and Math (N=4,554)

	Kindergarten		First Grade
	Fall 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000
Reading Cognitive Skills			
Letter Recognition	.773	.685	.844
Beginning Sounds	.970	.970	.937
Ending Sounds	.993	.971	.969
Sight Words	.811	.632	.793
Words in Context	.761	.502	.573
Cronbach's Alpha	.935	.880	.779
Math Cognitive Skills			
Count, Number, Shape	.938	.321	.806
Relative Size	.765	.801	.937
Ordinality, Sequence	.723	.954	.906
Add/Subtract	.904	.689	.696
Multiply/Divide	.950	.311	.405
Cronbach's Alpha	.923	.749	.577

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study: Waves 1, 2 and 4, Kindergarten (Fall 1998 and Spring 1999) and First Grade (Spring 2000)

[a] Waves 1 and 2 Factor Loadings are derived from Maximum Likelihood factor analyses to better represent the dependent variables as indices. However, Wave 4's Maximum Likelihood factor analyses did not converge, and so Principal Component factor analyses were used to create the scores.

.77 to .99 for the first round of tests in the Fall of 1998 (Cronbach's = .94), and for the same school semester, factor loadings for math skills item scores ranged from .72 to .95 (Cronbach's = .92). As a result of these fortuitous validity and reliability analyses, dependent variables for reading and math cognitive skills for waves 1, 2 and 4 were constructed by saving the factor scores from each analysis. This ensured that scores were standardized.

Factor loadings on items for reading remained very high for Spring 1999 and 2000 assessments, with only one factor loading, for the "words in context" skill, dipping below .60. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) classify the .6 level of factor loading as "very good." For math skill sets, however, factor loadings for counting and multiplying/dividing assessments dipped below .4, indicating that these skills were not varying consistently with other math competencies. However, this situation corrects itself in the Spring 2000 semester assessments, as only the multiply/divide assessments stay below a .6 "very good" threshold. Since reliability scores for all skill sets were also consistently high (Cronbach's = .88 and .78 for reading skill sets of Spring 1999 and 2000, respectively, and Cronbach's = .75 and .58 for math skill sets of Spring 1999 and 2000, respectively), and since confirmatory factor analyses are the most strident test of whether or not variables "hang together" for a valid measure (as compared to principle component factor analyses, for example), we proceeded in saving these factor scores for reading skill assessments to create an overall reading assessment measure by wave.

To examine the reliability of the effects of our identities modeled by Jasso's (2003, 2004) methodology, we also use teachers' assessments of students' cognitive skills as outcomes. Teachers were asked to rate each student on proficiency in speaking, listening, early reading and writing and computer literacy. The scores from each of these items were reconfigured by NCES as a scale having a low of 1 and a high of 5. Means and standard deviations of these variables are reported in Table 3.

Labeled "language and literacy" by NCES researchers, we rename this scale "teacher assessments of reading." These assessments are comparable to the reading assessments done by surveyors, and are highly correlated. The Pearson *r* correlation statistics for teachers' and independent surveyor reading assessments are also presented in Table 3. We standardize the scale when doing regression analyses.

Scales comprised of teacher assessments of mathematical thinking are also constructed by NCES. Teachers were asked to rate students on concepts of numbers, solving number problems, use of math strategies, data analysis (graphing) and measurement. The scores from each of these items were reconfigured by NCES as a scale having a low of 1 and a high

Table 3
Means (and Standard Deviations) and Correlational Analyses of Teacher Assessments of Reading and Math and Teacher and Parental Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills (N=4,554)

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 4
Means of Teacher Assessments of Reading	2.717	3.576	3.588
	(.683)	(.761)	(.867)
Pearson's *r* for Correlations between Independent Surveyors and Teacher Assessments	.430***	.149***	.560***
Means of Teacher Assessments of Math	2.765	3.754	3.601
	(.796)	(.778)	(.843)
Pearson's *r* for Correlations between Independent Surveyors and Teacher Assessments	.513***	.364***	.412***
Means of Teacher Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills	3.087	3.207	3.112
	(.639)	(.642)	(.682)
Means of Parental Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills	3.174	3.167	3.138
	(.456)	(.458)	(.471)

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten (Fall 1998)-First Grade (Spring 2000)

***p<.001

of 5. Renamed "teacher assessments of mathematics," we present means and correlation analyses for these variables in Table 3. Again, these assessments are comparable to mathematic skills assessed by independent surveyors, and are highly correlated. We standardize the scales when doing regression analyses.

The dependent variables for the non-cognitive skills consist of composite scales constructed by NCES administrators pertaining to learning styles of children (NCES 2001-029). Both parents and teachers rated their students for work habits and attitudes toward school, and a composite measure ranging from 1 to 5 scored these perceptions. Items evaluated for these scales were child's attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, learning independence, flexibility and organization, all work habits that affect the ease with which children can benefit from the learning environment. We name these scales "teacher and parental assessments of non-cognitive skills" and present their means in Table 3. We standardize the scale when doing regression analyses. We analyze both parent and teacher measures for reliability comparisons. However, we recognize that unlike teacher and independent surveyor assessments,

these variables measure responses from adults that inhabit two very different social spheres in children's lives, and therefore may not capture attitudes reflective of each other.

Independent Variables

Independent variables were models of status-based identities composed of the three quantitative personal characteristics. We are limited by the data in the number and type of characteristics we could use. We also code personal qualitative characteristics to compare the extent to which different groups use status-based identities to define the self.

Personal quantitative characteristics: *Socio-economic status* is a composite variable created by the administrators of the ECLSK survey. It takes into account each parent's income, education level and occupation to measure students' family financial environment. *Composite motor skills* is also a composite variable created by ECLSK administrators that takes into consideration hand-eye coordination, balance and motor planning. *Body mass index* (BMI) is a ratio of each student's height to weight. These variables were all standardized by the NCES. We recoded them to reflect measures from 0 to 1 by dividing the positive values by the maximum value for each variable. We then transformed each variable using the status-based identity equation (ln(1/1-transformed variable). Note that, with this logarithmic function, as the scores (rank) increase, the rate of the status effects increase, and so higher numbers represent greater impacts of the status effect for that identity.

Status identities derived from socio-economic status and BMI were calculated for the Fall 1998 and Spring 2000 semesters, the first semester of kindergarten and the Spring semester of the first grade, respectively. Status identities derived from motor skills are calculated for the Fall 1998 wave. Constraints on doing more calculations existed as these measures were available only for the given semesters. However, these status identities allowed us to test their effects cross-sectionally as well as longitudinally.

Table 4 presents statistics describing the shape of the distributions for the computed status identities. Note that all variables, except the Wave 4 status identity derived from socio-economic status, are leptokurtic, demonstrating very peaked distributions. The status identities derived from socio-economic status have almost no skew, but the identities derived from motor skills and BMI are negatively skewed, indicating scores leaning toward the high end of the distributions.

Personal qualitative characteristics: The two personal qualitative characteristics we used were gender and race/ethnicity. The percentage of children in our sample who are female is 50.0%, and the percentages

Table 4
Distribution Statistics for Independent Variables: Status-Based Identities Derived from Socio-Economic Status, Body Mass Index and Motor Skills (N=4,554)

Status Based Identities:	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Derived from Socio-Economic Status						
Wave 1 (Fall 1998)	-.98	.60	.061	.165	.085	1.599
Wave 4 (Spring 2000)	-.55	.63	.058	.169	.368	-.037
Derived from Body Mass Index						
Wave 1 (Fall 1998)	-1.97	6.94	3.556	.519	-1.508	30.402
Wave 4 (Spring 2000)	-1.97	9.79	3.453	1.235	-2.822	11.058
Derived from Motor Skills						
Wave 1 (Fall 1998)	-1.97	3.74	2.745	.778	-2.348	10.357

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten (Fall 1998)-First Grade (Spring 2000).

of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans are 10.7, 11.0, and 4.0% respectively, as reported in Table 1.

Control Variables

No prior measures of cognitive and non-cognitive skills were measured during this survey, so we controlled for variables that have effects on these competencies, such as preschool attendance, number of hours parents read to their children (the left-out category was "read to child every day", and the dummy variables were "read to child 1 to 2 times per week" and "read to child 3 to 6 times per week"), type of kindergarten class (AM and PM class versus all day class) or year-long school for first graders. We also controlled for region of the country, private versus public school, urbanicity and non-intact family. All control variables were dummy-coded as equal to 1 if included in category and 0 otherwise. For kindergarten analyses, we coded relevant controls using wave 1, Fall 1998 data; for first grade analyses, relevant controls were coded using wave 4, Spring 2000 data. The percentages of students who are classified according to these dummy categories are reported in Table 1.

Brief Overview of Statistical Procedures

We use complex survey regression analyses to allow for proper estimation of standard errors. To correct for over- and under-estimation

of standard errors, values for primary sampling units and strata, along with sample weights correcting for design effects, were included in regression calculations.

We model identities formed in the kindergarten year, and examine their association to cross-sectional, longitudinal and longitudinal change outcomes in order to explore the salience of these identities over time. We also model identities in the first grade for cross-sectional analyses.

Results

Following Jasso's (2004) methodology, we first examine mean differences in identity measures by groups characterized by personal qualitative characteristics. In so doing, we explore gender and race-specific subgroups of American children and how these groups differ in their expression of identity based on social status.

T-tests of status-based identities modeled for socio-economic status and BMI reveal no significant differences by gender in kindergarten or first grade. A significant difference between males and females does exist for status-based identities modeled for motor skills in kindergarten. Young girls have a slightly higher mean (M=2.82, SE=.021) than young boys (M=2.64, SE=.018), as is revealed by t-test analysis (t=-7.48, p<.001). This suggests that young women derive their status from motor skills more than young boys do in this age group – a result that is somewhat counterintuitive. However, while significant, the absolute mean difference between males and females is very small. This difference could not be explored in the first grade, as motor skills are measured only in kindergarten.

Means tests of status-based identities by race show similar patterns for motor skills and BMI as was found in the analyses by gender, but strikingly different patterns for status-based identities derived from socio-economic status resulted. When comparing African Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanics to European Americans, no differences in identities based on motor skills were found. For identities based on BMI, Hispanics differed significantly from European Americans in kindergarten (t=2.43, p<.016), but not in the first grade. African Americans differed from European Americans in the first grade (t=3.10, p<.002), but not in kindergarten. Again, the absolute mean differences were not striking.

Differences were dramatically different when considering identities derived from socio-economic status. In kindergarten, compared to European Americans, Asian Americans had much higher levels for status-based identities derived from socio-economic status (t=4.20, p<.001); Hispanics and African Americans, on the other hand, had comparatively

lower levels of these measures (t=-8.68, p<.001; t=-10.85, p<.001, respectively). These patterns of significance and direction were mirrored in results of *t*-tests for first grade measures. Using Jasso's (2004) interpretation scheme, these results suggest that Asian American children derive their status from their families' wealth much more than European Americans and that European Americans derive their status from their families' wealth much more than African Americans and Hispanics. What these results reveal are the differences in identity formation by racial subculture. How do these differences matter? For our regression analyses, these means tests point to the need to examine interaction effects between race and status-based identities derived from socio-economic status.

When doing regression analyses, we found that using complex survey methods allows us to generalize results to approximately 1.1 million kindergarteners and first graders. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that about 3.8 million students were enrolled in kindergarten in October, 1998 (Jamieson, Curry, and Martinez 2001). This number is higher than our estimates as it includes second-time kindergarteners, as well as population trends for enrollment ECLSK does not take into consideration. Given the large number of students to which we claim to generalize our results, we feel comfortable with the weighting factors provided by the ECLSK, and feel overall generalizability of results is acceptable.

Also, we assume that when students are being assessed by teachers, parents and NCES surveyors, one of their salient identities is the "student identity." Our regressions investigate other salient identities during assessments of school-based performance, as multiple identities are usually invoked in social settings (Smith-Lovin 2002).

Regression models for Tables 5 through 7 all use control and independent variables derived from data measured in the Fall 1998 semester; in other words, we study effects of kindergarten variables cross-sectionally and longitudinally. Table 8's regression models are first grade cross-sectional analyses, and so the control and independent variables for these models were measured in the Spring 2000 semester.

Table 5 displays the effects of status-based identities on reading assessments done by NCES surveyors and teachers. We use two assessments of reading ability to verify the reliability of our results.

For status-based identities derived from socio-economic status in the first semester of kindergarten, there are strong, significant positive associations with reading assessments done both by surveyors and teachers, all other things being equal. This effect can be seen on cross-sectional reading assessments collected during the first semester (Fall 1998) and on reading assessments collected during the Spring 1999 and 2000. When controlling for reading assessments done in the first semes-

Table 5
Unstandardized Coefficients[a] for the Cross-Sectional, Longitudinal and Longitudinal Change Regressions of Independent Surveyor and Teacher Assessments of Reading on Control[b] and Status Identity Variables Measured in Kindergarten (N=4,554)

Dependent Variable Measure: Independent Reading Assessments					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	1.298***	1.422***	1.008***	.843***	.624***
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.295***	.279***	.139***	.147***	.051
Status Identity — BMI	.002	.025	-.028	.024	-.029
Constant	-.770**	-.842***	-.353**	-.528**	-.125
R^2	.173	.227	.110	.394	.178
Dependent Variable Measure: Teacher Reading Assessments					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change:	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	Kindergarten Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	1.246***	1.128***	1.008***	.396***	.550***
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.284***	.290***	.319***	.123***	.214***
Status Identity — BMI	-.033	-.004	-.026	.016	-.013
Constant	-.692***	-.778***	-.705***	-.371**	-.451**
R^2	.176	.149	.152	.432	.261

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study: Kindergarten (Fall 1998)-First Grade (Spring 2000) *** p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

[a] Standard Errors not reported, but are available upon request.
[b] All models control for gender, race/ethnicity, type of kindergarten class (AM or PM), year-round school, region of the country, private school, urbanicity, intact family, preschool attendance and amount of hours read to by parents. The longitudinal change models also control for the respective dependent variable measure for the Fall 1998 Kindergarten period.

Table 6
Unstandardized Coefficients[a] for the Cross-Sectional, Longitudinal and Longitudinal Change Regressions of Independent Surveyor and Teacher Assessments of Math on Control[b] and Status Identity Variables Measured in Kindergarten (N=4,554)

Dependent Variable Measure: Independent Math Assessments					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change:	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	.347**	1.212***	.866***	1.159***	.842***
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.292***	.410***	.329***	.366***	.308***
Status Identity — BMI	-.034	.007	.042	.013	.044
Constant	-.617**	-1.016***	-1.059***	-.922***	-1.016***
R^2	.084	.250	.142	.268	.146

Dependent Variable Measure: Teacher Math Assessments					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change:	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	1.099***	.923***	.989***	.335**	.708***
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.247***	.309***	.308***	.177***	.245***
Status Identity — BMI	-.027	-.017	.005	-.002	.011
Constant	-.429**	-.723***	-.707***	-.494***	-.597***
R^2	.146	.127	.145	.359	.198

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study: Kindergarten (Fall 1998) - First Grade (Spring 2000) *** p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

[a] Standard Errors not reported, but are available upon request.
[b] All models control for gender, race/ethnicity, type of kindergarten class (AM or PM), year-round school, region of the country, private school, urbanicity, intact family, preschool attendance and amount of hours read to by parents. The longitudinal change models also control for the respective dependent variable measure for the Fall 1998 Kindergarten period.

Table 7
Unstandardized Coefficients[a] for the Cross-Sectional, Longitudinal and Longitudinal Change Regressions of Parent and Teacher Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills on Control[b] and Status Identity Variables Measured in Kindergarten (N=4,554)

Dependent Variable Measure: Parental Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change:	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	.541***	.560***	.517***	.275*	.266*
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.164***	.175***	.160***	.089***	.084***
Status Identity — BMI	-.041	-.060	-.066*	-.038	-.047
Constant	-.186	-.251	-.263	-.153	-.177
R^2	.075	.075	.066	.330	.265
Dependent Variable Measure: Teacher Assessments of Non-Cognitive Skills					
	Cross-Sectional:	Longitudinal:		Longitudinal Change:	
	Kindergarten Fall 1998	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000	Kindergarten Spring 1999	First Grade Spring 2000
Status-Identity Variables					
Status Identity — SES	.603***	.646***	.712***	.257**	.485***
Status Identity — Motor Skills	.315***	.300***	.278***	.097***	.160***
Status Identity — BMI	-.307	-.023	-.024	.002	-.010
Constant	-.905***	-.980***	-.768***	-.396***	-.428***
R^2	.141	.152	.153	.506	.273

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study: Kindergarten (Fall 1998)-First Grade (Spring 2000) *** p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

[a] Standard Errors not reported, but are available upon request.
[b] All models control for gender, race/ethnicity, type of kindergarten class (AM or PM), year-round school, region of the country, private school, urbanicity, intact family, preschool attendance and amount of hours read to by parents. The longitudinal change models also control for the respective dependent variable measure for the Fall 1998 Kindergarten period.

ter of kindergarten, the effect of this identity on reading assessments collected during the second semesters of kindergarten and first grade remains strong and significant.

Status-based identities derived from motor skills have similarly strong patterns of effects, all else equal. One exception to these findings is the non-significant effect of this identity on surveyors' assessments of reading, controlling for reading assessments done in the first semester of kindergarten.

Table 6 displays the effects of status-based identities on math assessments done by NCES surveyors and teachers, with remarkably similar results to analyses of reading assessments. Again, status-based identities derived from socio-economic status and motor skills have strong, positive associations to math assessments for cross-sectional, longitudinal and longitudinal change models, all other things being equal. Status-based identities derived from BMI do not have effects on math assessments.

Table 7 displays the effects of status–based identities on non-cognitive skills assessments. Teacher and parent assessments are compared for reliability. The results are a near mirror of regression models for math and reading assessments: status-based identities for socio-economic status and motor skills have strong, positive associations with non-cognitive skill assessments, all else equal; status-based identities derived from BMI do not.

Table 8 shows regression results for first grade cross-sectional analyses. Note that the control and independent variables are measured in the Spring 2000 semester. Also note that measures for motor skills were not provided for the first grade. Once again, status-based identities derived from socio-economic status have a strong positive association with reading, math and non-cognitive skill assessments, when all else is equal. What we find in the first grade is that there is a negative association between status-based identities derived from BMI and parents' assessments of non-cognitive skills, all other things being equal. We reiterate that parents are assessing school-based work habits, such as child's attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, learning independence, flexibility and organization. These habits are typically not associated with physical exertion, an outcome that might be more logically linked in a negative way to identities based on weight. In fact, one could argue that weight has almost nothing to do with these measures of school-based effort; for example, what does a child's weight have to do with their eagerness to learn? Nonetheless, parents are associating activities that require very little, if any, physical action with their children's identities based on BMI.

Table 8
Unstandardized Coefficients[a] for First Grade Cross-Sectional Regressions of Independent, Parent & Teacher Assessments of Reading, Math & Non-Cognitive Skills on Control and Status Identity Variables Measured in the First Grade[b] (N=4,554)

	Reading Assess-ments	Math Assess-ments	Teacher Reading Assess-ments	Teacher Math Assess-ments	Parent Non-Cog Asses-ments	Teacher Non-Cog Assess-ments
Independent Variables						
Status Identity — SES	1.136***	1.054***	1.186***	1.158***	.640***	.875***
Status Identity — BMI	-.011	.001	.005	.021	-.029*	.007
Constant	-.062	-.110	-.098	.006	.032	-.135
R^2	.097	.080	.087	.090	.049	.111

Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—Kindergarten (Fall 1998) -First Grade (Spring 2000)

*** p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

[a] Standard Errors not reported, but are available upon request.

[b] All models control for gender, race/ethnicity, type of kindergarten class (AM or PM), year-round school, region of the country, private school, urbanicity, intact family, preschool attendance and amount of hours read to by parents.

In sum, as young students derive more status from socio-economic status and motor skills in kindergarten, they are, in general, assessed positively by parents, teachers and even independent researchers on school performance. By the first grade, parents begin to negatively assess the work habits of students who increasingly derive their identity meanings from weight. In other words, the heavier the child, the more he or she derived social status from BMI, and this status has negative effects on parental assessments of non-cognitive skills.

While not reported in the tables, we did investigate interaction effects of race/ethnicity by status-based identities. Significant interaction effects were found in 11 of the 36 regression models, with sporadically significant results found only for these 2-by-2 interactions: African-American by identities derived from motor skills, Asian American by identities derived from motor skills, Asian American by identities derived from socio-economic status and Hispanic by identities derived from socio-economic status. These few interaction findings with no real patterns suggest that while children in different racial/ethnic groups may be deriving status in different ways, there is little evidence that teachers, parents and independent researchers recognize these identity differences when assessing young children.

Discussion

This study endeavored to find linkages between a new measure of status-based identities and role performance in kindergarteners and first graders. With a nationally representative sample of this population, we show that parents, teachers and independent surveyors assess those students that derive their identities based on family wealth as better students in reading and math compared to students of lower socio-economic status. Parents and teachers also assess those same students as displaying more effort toward academic work, another indicator of a "good student." All of these results suggest a perpetuation of proficiency differences by socio-economic status, with wealthier students garnering high skill assessments.

As we offer these results, we also recognize the limitations of the new methodology we use. Basing her claim on the plethora of research by psychologists (specifically, self theorists) and sociologists (specifically, symbolic interactionists), Harter (2003) asserts that there are two main antecedents to the definition of the self: a cognitive-based construction of meanings and a socially-based component. Children are both active agents in the formation of their identities and receivers of socialization from those that interact with them. The Jasso methodology measures exclusively the socialization aspect of children's identity development, as it takes into consideration the social-structural effects of personal attributes and then relates them to teacher, parent and others' assessments. What this methodology does not capture are the voices of the children themselves: how do they define their identities in terms of socio-emotional status, motor skills and weight? Even though Harter's own research shows a strong association between significant others' appraisals of the self and children's self-concept (1989), she, and we, recognize that a more complete picture of children's identities would require both social and cognitive measures.

The repercussions of our results are many, but we concentrate on two: the implications for the social policy No Child Left Behind and the social psychological implications for identity development.

We have shown how students with identities based on high socio-economic status are evaluated as performing better than those disadvantaged by a lack of family wealth. At the level of analysis of the individual student, which is also used in our study, the focus of the policy No Child Left Behind is on reading and math instruction and evaluation. We have no doubt that these areas of learning are important parts of young children's cognitive growth, but they are certainly not the only components. Other factors beside instruction, such as the child's living conditions, affect

cognitive development. Without a more holistic approach to enhancing this growth, one that includes funding for medical care, nutrition and early education for students disadvantaged by socio-economic status, any attempt at changing instruction is bound to fail. By equalizing these aspects of children's lives related to socio-economic status, students may not develop identities that link wealth inequalities to schooling outcomes.

The policy makers of No Child Left Behind also want teachers to be more accountable for reading and math learning. One way that teachers and other adults in students' lives can be more conscientious is to be aware of the effects of status-based identities on performance. Since these persons, along with peers, are the primary actors who interrelate with young children, their assessments have a bearing on children's self-appraisals. For example, research conducted almost 30 years ago demonstrated how teachers' expectations of student achievement based on socio-economic status became the beliefs, and then the self-fulfilling prophecies, of the students themselves (see Murphy 1974; Wilkins 1976). If teachers' negative evaluations of young students' academic development are based at least partially on the identity projection of the child, strategies can be adopted to better inform these primary caregivers of the risks for linking assessment of role performance to status markers. Since the publication of *Pygmalion in the Classroom* in 1968, numerous programs, such as the Connecticut School Model (Proctor 1984) and the Teacher Expectancy and Student Achievement Program (TESA) of Los Angeles County Unified School District (Columbus Public Schools 1982), have been designed to help teachers recognize their expectation biases and eliminate them during student-teacher interaction. What these types of programs might include is the recognition that expectations originate not only from teachers' learned biases, but also from interactions with students that present status-based identities.

Parents too need to be informed of the dangers of allowing children to perceive that school performance is linked to socio-economic status, no matter how this status affects other aspects of their identity. Oftentimes simple awareness can change the behavior of both the evaluator and the person being evaluated. Teacher and parental awareness programs could be a part of the No Child Left Behind policy.

Our study examined not only math and reading skill tests, but also non-cognitive skill measures regarding work habits and attitudes toward school. We recognize that math and reading learning is associated with effort and attitudes, and that improving math and reading scores requires students to have positive work habits and attitudes. However, the heavy emphasis on math and reading scores as assessing levels of ability and development by No Child Left Behind reifies the typically American belief

that ability is the principal cause for individuals' academic success (Stevenson, Lee & Stigler 1986). American parents and teachers both tend to hold this view. Conversely, in East Asian societies, such as China, Korea and Japan, the emphasis on ability in the schools is low (Stevenson, Lee, & Stigler 1986). Differences in performance are viewed as predominantly the product of differences in effort. It is assumed that almost all students have a level of ability that permits high achievement. This belief is deeply held by East Asian teachers and parents, who strive to inculcate it in their children (Hess et al. 1986; Holloway 1988). We suggest that non-cognitive skill assessment might also be emphasized by policies attempting to augment academic outcomes as a way to combat the culturally-held notion that ability is a fixed entity. Any policy that enhances the belief that ability and not effort predominantly predicts math and reading outcomes is unbalanced. These policies may lead students not faring as well on reading and math tests to become fatalistic, and not try as hard as they could to reach achievement goals.

In our study, we showed that assessment of work habits and positive attitudes toward schooling is linked to children's identities based on socio-economic status. This is a grave finding, indicating that students from richer families are better at learning and internalizing the practices necessary for present and future academic achievement. (Two mechanisms might explain this finding: (a) students from wealthier families have more resources for schooling or (b) the organization of schools is set up to serve children from middle- to upper-class families, and so these children perform better in these environments.) Kindergarten-aged children from lower socio-economic statuses must also be socialized to work hard at school or they will be further disadvantaged later on in their academic careers. These findings suggest that behavioral and attitudinal inequalities by family wealth are being learned and internalized very early in children's academic life, a serious result in need of attention for all U.S. school systems purported to support avenues of social mobility.

Policy makers for The No Child Left Behind policy may consider including measures of individual effort, which we feel are equally as important as math and reading skills in the long run of a students' school performance. The policy could especially promote the significance of academically related work skills to parents and students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds, and also provide support to these families for emphasizing positive work habits. It should also encourage teachers to evaluate effort in a more rigorous way, so that long-term improvements can be tracked.

Finally, for first graders, parents of students deriving status-based identities based on weight are judging their children as exerting less

effort in schoolwork than students not deriving their identities in this fashion. This interesting finding suggests that very young children with weight problems are being negatively evaluated by parents, not for their performance related to physical activity, but for performance in other spheres of their lives. Again, awareness of the problem may stymie any deleterious consequences resulting from these types of judgments.

What does this finding mean for teachers and schools? According to Brint, Contreras and Matthews (2001), it is primarily teachers during classroom interactions who convey the socializing messages for what is desirable and undesirable school-related behavior, especially concerning effort. Teachers could have much influence on "de-coupling" beliefs about one's weight and school-related work habits by praising attempts at hard work and emphasizing that physical appearance has nothing to do with effort. As Cohen and Lotan (1997) argue, elementary school teachers have the legitimate authority to intervene during classroom processes when social status is being linked to performance outcomes; students will listen, and these socializing messages do have an impact.

Conclusion

Bronfenbrenner (1943) was the first social scientist to advocate the idea that social status should be viewed as a process and not simply as a marker of difference. However, few social scientists have done so beyond those who use experimental methods to study social interaction. Jasso (2003, 2004) suggests we model identity as a process, even if we are using surveys. We then can explore the impact of these processes on performance outcomes – an interesting innovation for survey methodology and its concomitant statistical analyses. We have shown the effects of status-based identity processes on schooling outcomes.

The next wave of the panel data collected by surveyors of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study will include questions responded to by the students themselves. Wave 5 of this study will directly ask students, now in the third grade, their impressions of who they are and how they assess their school performance. This will afford us with an opportunity to compare status-based models of identities that do not include student responses with measures of identity that come entirely from students. This check of Jasso's method of identity modeling is crucial to show support for its validity. Reliability of these new identity measures will require replication in other sets of data. Only with full validity and reliability tests can we strongly support results.

We also intend to use growth models for these analyses to explore the possibility that identity growth accelerates and decelerates during impor-

tant periods in children's lives. These types of analyses require at least three waves of distinctly independent measures to execute; wave 5 data will provide us with this opportunity. Finding those periods during which students' status-identities accelerate could provide policy makers with time dependent targets to impede the negative consequences associated with relations between status-based identities and performance outcomes.

In the meantime, the results of our current study reproduce decades of research that shows the impact of socio-economic status on young student performance. These results have been interpreted in the framework of the most recent federal schooling policy, No Child Left Behind. Given the policy's nearly singular focus on students' math and reading scores, we suggest changes to the policy that may better serve the educational outcomes of our nation's students. Using Jasso's (2004) new measures of identity, we have found instances where sociological social psychology may contribute to the debate surrounding No Child Left Behind programs. Our aim is to contribute ideas that may improve the educational development of American children so that No Child Left Behind indeed leaves no child behind.

Notes

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[1] For more information about this survey, its administrators and their qualifications, methodology for assessment and inter-coder reliability for measures, see the *User's Manual for the ECLS-K Longitudinal Kindergarten-First Grade Public-Use Data Files and Electronic Codebook* located at: http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002149.

[2] While data interpolation techniques exist to "fill in" missing cases potentially lost from list-wise deletion that are generally accepted in journals of sociology, we have been strongly urged by statisticians at the National Center for Educational Statistics to abstain from using this technique. Instead, they urge us to warn readers of potential biases by examining the variable distributions for the selected sub-sample and the sub-sample not selected. When significant ($p<.05$) differences do occur, a caution for each affected variable should be noted.

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