



# Economic mobility and parents' opportunity hoarding

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Creating opportunities for people to achieve socioeconomic mobility is a widely shared societal goal. Paradoxically, however, achieving this goal can pose a threat to high-socioeconomic-status (SES) people as they look to maintain their privileged positions in society for both them and their children. Two studies evaluate whether this threat manifests as “opportunity hoarding” in which high-SES parents adopt attitudes and behaviors aimed at shoring up their families’ access to valuable educational and economic resources. The current paper provides converging evidence for this hypothesis across two studies conducted with 2,557 American parents. An initial correlational study demonstrated that believing that socioeconomic mobility is possible was associated with high-SES parents being more inclined to attempt to secure valuable educational and economic resources for their children, even when doing so came at the cost of low-SES families. Specifically, high-SES parents with stronger beliefs in socioeconomic mobility exhibited decreased support for redistributive policies and viewed engaging in discrete behaviors that would unfairly advantage their children (e.g., allowing them to misrepresent their identities on school and job applications) as more acceptable relative to both low-SES parents with similar beliefs and high-SES parents who were less optimistic about socioeconomic mobility. A subsequent experimental study established these relationships causally by comparing parents’ responses to different types of socioeconomic mobility. Together, the current findings merge insights across psychology and economics to deepen understandings of the processes through which societal inequities emerge and persist, especially during times of apparently abundant opportunity.

opportunity hoarding | socioeconomic status | parenting | inequality | redistributive policy

“America is rising, we have the best economy in the world.”—President Joe Biden, 2024 State of the Union (1).

“It felt like I had to give my daughter a chance at a future... which meant I had to break the law.”—Actress Felicity Huffman following her incarceration as part of the Varsity Blues College Admissions Scandal (2).

Despite economic fluctuations over time, the notion of the “American Dream”—the idea that everyone has the opportunity to climb the socioeconomic ladder—remains deeply woven into the fabric of the United States (3). To date, many Americans continue to believe that there is ample opportunity for people to achieve socioeconomic mobility even as the United States faces historic levels of economic inequity (4, 5). Although people’s beliefs about socioeconomic mobility do not always reflect economic reality (6), they remain powerful predictors of how people engage in their lives and pursue their goals. For example, thinking that socioeconomic mobility is possible can be highly motivating and leads people to participate in productive actions to increase their likelihood of ascending the socioeconomic hierarchy (7). However, there may also be unexplored consequences of perceiving opportunities for people to climb the socioeconomic ladder that paradoxically increase social and economic inequalities. Specifically, the current research tests whether believing that socioeconomic mobility is possible leads high-socioeconomic-status (SES) parents to hoard opportunities in order to secure important resources for their families, often at the expense of those available to low-SES families.

Research across psychology, economics, and sociology consistently demonstrates that people are highly attentive to signals regarding their current and future positions on social hierarchies (8–10). Scholars have highlighted the importance of understanding socioeconomic mobility as more than an objective macro-level trend to also consider how it operates as a psychological force that shapes people’s attitudes and behaviors (11). This insight is supported by a budding field of work demonstrating that cues regarding people’s

## Significance

Two studies examine how American parents’ beliefs about the economy affect their support for policies and behaviors that give them and their child a “leg up,” even when this comes at the cost of other families’ access to educational and economic opportunities. Counterintuitively, the results show that believing in the American Dream increases affluent parents’ likelihood of engaging in such opportunity hoarding. In other words, affluent parents responded to the possibility that other people would be able to climb the socioeconomic ladder by trying to secure their own children’s future opportunities and limiting those available to less affluent parents and their children. These findings deepen understandings of the factors that contribute to rising economic inequalities.

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position on the socioeconomic hierarchy influence a variety of important outcomes, including their interpersonal interactions (12), academic motivation (13), and even their cardiovascular health (14).

Although members of all social strata are sensitive to thoughts about socioeconomic mobility, high-SES people appear especially motivated to maintain their elevated position on the socioeconomic hierarchy (15). Believing that mobility is possible can challenge this privileged position as it implies that other people may ascend the socioeconomic ladder and vie for the limited resources available to oneself and one's family. **Put differently, believing that the American Dream is alive and well signals that the boundaries between levels of the socioeconomic hierarchy are permeable.** The established research on social identity and status threat suggest that perceiving such permeability can motivate high-SES people to attempt to shore up their dominant position and reinforce the status quo (e.g., through opposing policy changes that will primarily benefit low-SES people) (16–21).

The current research tests this possibility through examining attitudes and behaviors that stem from these goals and have particularly important implications for societal inequalities. Specifically, we examine whether socioeconomic mobility leads high-SES parents to engage in “opportunity hoarding.” Within the context of the current work, this construct is defined as parents attempting to secure educational and economic resources to directly or indirectly benefit their families, typically at the expense of other families’ comparative access to these resources (22). Although opportunity hoarding can occur outside of the familial context, we focus on parents given the central role that they play in shaping children’s access to resources and their broader development (23). While this role is typically examined in terms of how parents’ practices influence their own children’s outcomes (24), high-SES parents also have significant opportunities to use their privileged positions to influence the opportunities afforded to children from other families.

Importantly, parents’ opportunity hoarding can and does manifest in a myriad of ways across different ecological systems (25, 26). This ranges from parents adopting specific policy positions—such as opposing tax code changes that benefit other children’s access to high-quality education—to engaging in discrete behaviors that similarly bolster their child’s relative competitive advantage—such as meeting with teachers to ask them to increase their child’s grades. Collectively, these manifestations of opportunity hoarding have been proposed as a crucial mechanism through which high-SES people accumulate advantage and inequalities become a calcified feature of modern societies (27–29). We advance this area of work in two studies testing the hypothesis that believing in socioeconomic mobility will increase high-SES parents’ support for opportunity hoarding. Study 1 evaluates this prediction using correlational data collected with parents who reside in the United States regarding their socioeconomic mobility beliefs and multiple indicators of their likelihood of engaging in opportunity hoarding. Study 2 provides experimental evidence regarding the causal effects of shifting parents’ beliefs about socioeconomic mobility on their support for opportunity hoarding. For additional information regarding all of the study materials and supplemental analyses, see [SI Appendix](#).

## Results

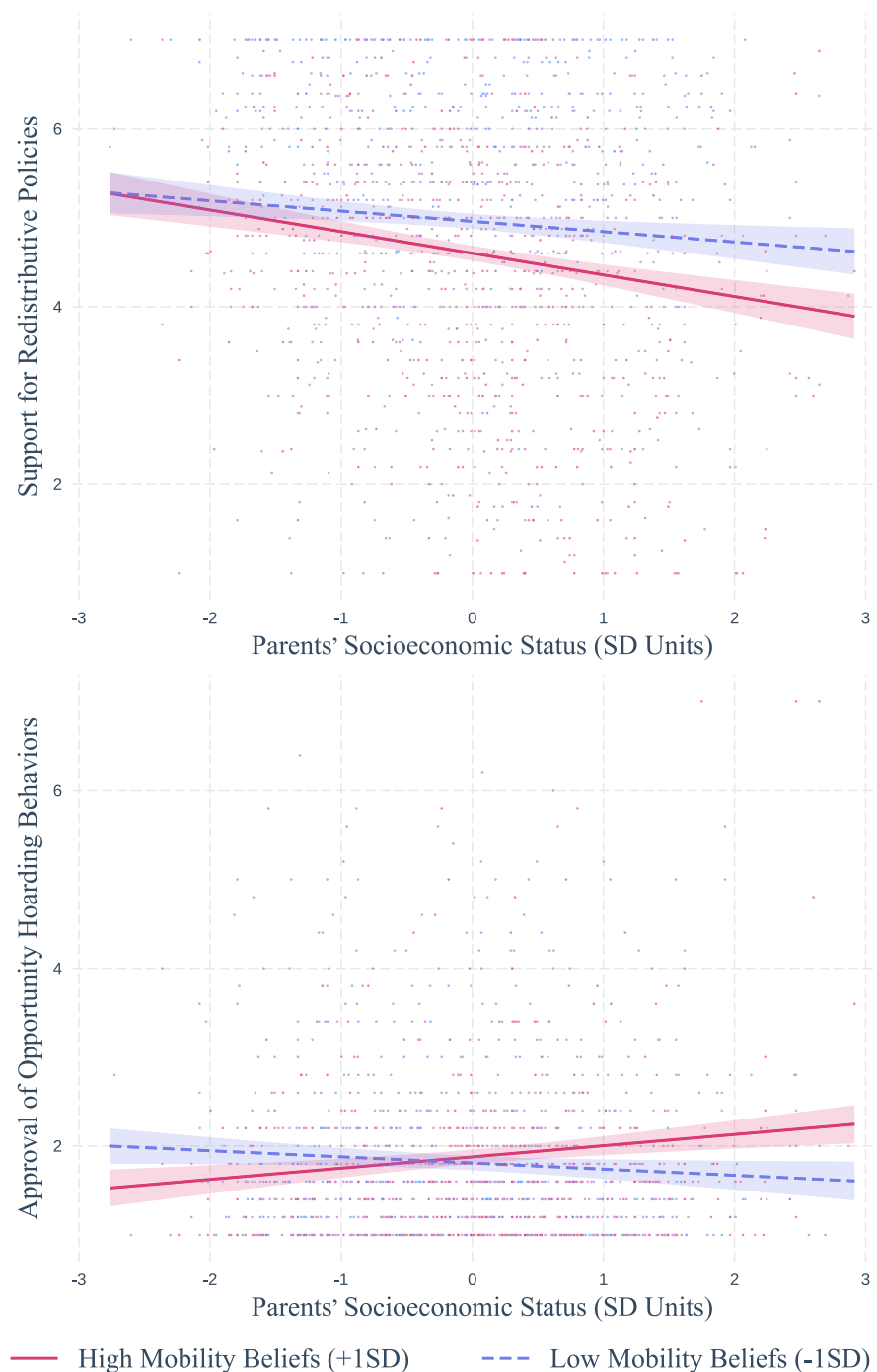
**Do High-SES Parents’ Beliefs in Socioeconomic Mobility Lead to Opportunity Hoarding?** For additional information regarding the preregistered hypotheses for Study 1, as well as the data and code

for Studies 1 and 2, see the following link: <https://osf.io/mvwdw5/>. Study 1 provides correlational evidence for our hypothesis among a sample of 1,548 parents of school-aged children (i.e., between the ages of 5 and 17). It examined the relationships between parents’ beliefs about socioeconomic mobility and two measures of parents’ likelihood of engaging in opportunity hoarding. The first measure captured parents’ attitudes toward opportunity hoarding at a broad level through asking them about the degree to which they supported changes to redistributive policies that were specifically relevant to families’ access to educational and economic resources (example item: “Charging wealthier parents higher college tuition to increase subsidies and fellowships for lower income students.”). In this way, we extend research that consistently demonstrates a strong negative relationship between SES and support for redistribution (30). Given that recent studies indicate that this link is dependent on parents’ perceived fairness of and satisfaction with the current economic system (31, 32), it is possible that high-SES parents’ beliefs that socioeconomic mobility can occur in society reinforce these factors and further encourage their opposition to redistributive policies.

The second measure extends these insights to a more individual-focused manifestation of opportunity hoarding: parents’ likelihood of engaging in discrete behaviors that unfairly advantage their child specifically. This measure asked parents how acceptable they believe it would be for them to engage in specific opportunity hoarding behaviors at the potential indirect cost of other families’ relative access to valuable opportunities (example item: “Make a donation to a school to increase [child name]’s chances of getting accepted.”).

As predicted, multilevel regression analyses indicated that the relationships between parents’ beliefs about socioeconomic mobility and their attitudes toward redistributive policies varied based on parents’ SES, even when controlling for parents’ levels of economic and political conservatism ( $\beta = -0.04$ , 95% CI  $[-0.08, -0.005]$ ,  $P = 0.027$ ). Simple slopes analyses revealed that, although high-SES parents held only slightly less favorable attitudes toward redistributive policies than low-SES parents when they did not believe that socioeconomic mobility was possible ( $\beta = -0.07$ , 95% CI  $[-0.13, -0.02]$ ,  $P = 0.005$ ), among parents who did think mobility occurred in society, high-SES parents were 11% less supportive of these policies than low-SES parents ( $\beta = -0.16$ , 95% CI  $[-0.21, -0.10]$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ;  $z$ -test of difference between coefficients = 2.16,  $P = 0.031$ ). In turn, high-SES parents were half a Likert scale point less likely to support policies that would provide additional support for low-SES people when they perceived that socioeconomic mobility was possible in society compared to when they did not ( $\beta = -0.16$ , 95% CI  $[-0.21, -0.10]$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Although the relationship between socioeconomic mobility beliefs and support for redistributive policy was also statistically significant among low-SES parents ( $\beta = -0.07$ , 95% CI  $[-0.13, -0.02]$ ,  $P = 0.005$ ), it was less than half as large as the one for high-SES parents ( $z$ -test of difference between coefficients = 2.09,  $P = 0.037$ ; see Fig. 1).

The predicted SES by belief in socioeconomic mobility interaction on parents’ approval of discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors was also statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.10$ , 95% CI  $[0.05, 0.15]$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Simple slopes analyses indicated that, although neither high-SES nor low-SES parents approved of these behaviors when they did not think that socioeconomic mobility was occurring in society ( $\beta = -0.03$ , 95% CI  $[-0.10, 0.04]$ ,  $P = 0.340$ ), high-SES parents who did think that socioeconomic mobility could occur were 17% more likely to view the behaviors as acceptable than low-SES parents who were similarly optimistic about the prospect of socioeconomic mobility ( $\beta = 0.16$ , 95% CI  $[0.09,$



**Fig. 1.** Study 1 interactions between parents' socioeconomic status and belief in socioeconomic mobility on opportunity hoarding measures. *Note.* Parents who were one SD above (below) the mean of the measure of socioeconomic mobility beliefs were considered as having high (low) mobility beliefs. Findings indicate that believing in socioeconomic mobility was especially closely linked to high-SES parents being less likely to support redistributive policies and more likely to think that it would be appropriate for them to engage in discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors. SD = Standard Deviation, SES = socioeconomic status.

0.23],  $P < 0.001$ ). This aligns with the fact that believing that socioeconomic mobility is possible in society was uniquely and positively associated with high-SES parents being more willing to engage in discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors to unfairly advantage their own child ( $\beta = 0.16$ , 95% CI [0.08, 0.23],  $P < 0.001$ ). The relationship between these two variables among low-SES parents was not statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.04$ , 95% CI [-0.11, 0.03],  $P = 0.292$ ; see Fig. 1).

Study 2 aimed to establish causal relationships between different beliefs that parents might hold about socioeconomic mobility and their likelihood of engaging in opportunity hoarding among a

sample of 1,009 US resident parents. Half of the parents were randomly assigned to an *upward mobility* condition in which they were asked to watch a 1-min video describing real economic trends indicating that millions of children would be able to increase their position on the US socioeconomic hierarchy. The other half of the parents were randomly assigned to a *downward mobility* condition that involved a similar video manipulation that oriented parents toward real economic trends indicating that millions of children would experience a decrease in their position on the US socioeconomic hierarchy. We tested the effects of the upward mobility condition relative to a downward mobility condition rather

than a passive control condition based on a pilot experiment conducted with 101 parents prior to the administration of Study 2. The results of this pilot study indicated that parents responded similarly on the outcomes of interest in the downward mobility condition and a passive control condition (SI Appendix). Thus, in order to maximize statistical power while ensuring that any effects of the upward mobility condition were not simply due to the process of orienting parents to the socioeconomic hierarchy or concept of mobility, Study 2 only included an upward and a downward mobility condition. This design also has the benefit of contributing to recent calls for research that parses different forms of socioeconomic mobility (12). For additional within-person analyses indicating that the effects of the upward mobility condition may be ascribed to increases in parents' perceptions of socioeconomic mobility, rather than decreases caused by the downward mobility condition, see SI Appendix.

We first conducted a manipulation check to test whether the upward mobility condition increased parents' beliefs about socioeconomic mobility. The manipulation was successful as parents who were randomly assigned to the upward mobility condition were significantly more likely to think that socioeconomic mobility was possible compared to parents who were randomly assigned to the downward mobility condition ( $\beta = 0.08$ , 95% CI [0.02, 0.14],  $P = 0.011$ ).

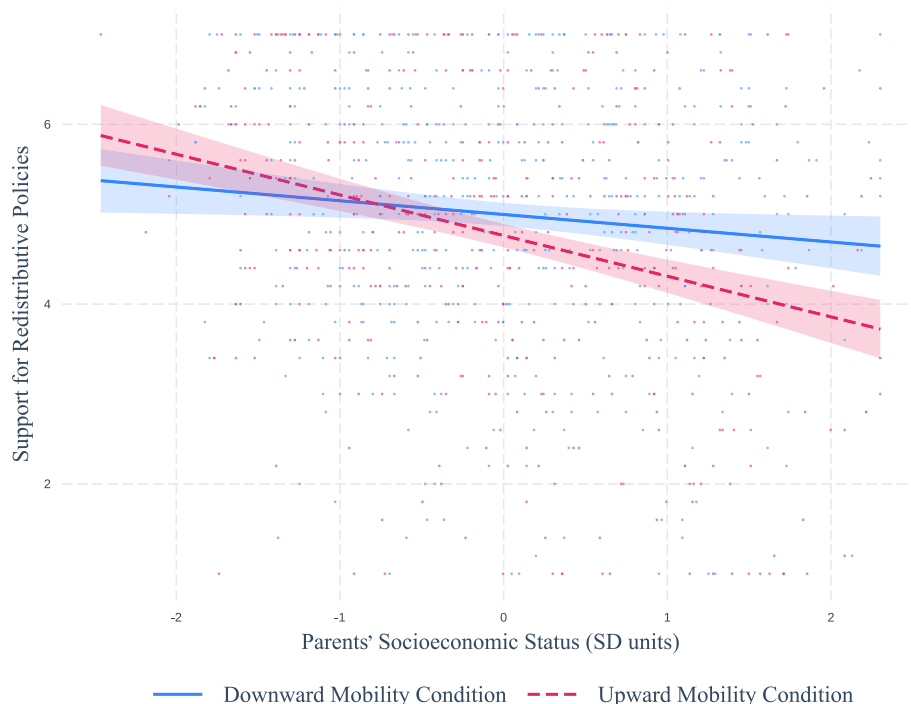
As predicted, the effect of parents' conditional assignment on their attitudes toward redistributive policies varied by parents' SES ( $\beta = -0.10$ ,  $P = 0.001$ , 95% CI [-0.16, -0.04]). Among participants in the downward mobility condition, high-SES parents held only slightly less favorable attitudes toward these policies than low-SES parents ( $\beta = -0.10$ ,  $P = 0.023$ , 95% CI [-0.18, -0.01]). In the upward mobility condition, however, high-SES parents were 17% less likely to support redistributive educational and economic policies than low-SES parents ( $\beta = -0.30$ ,  $P < 0.001$ , 95% CI [-0.38, -0.21]);  $z$ -test of difference between coefficients = 3.19,  $P = 0.001$ ). This latter pattern of effects is largely driven by the fact that the upward mobility condition

significantly decreased high-SES parents' support for these policies relative to the downward mobility condition ( $\beta = -0.18$ , 95% CI [-0.26, -0.09],  $P < 0.001$ ). Low-SES parents, on the other hand, held similarly positive attitudes toward redistributive policies regardless of whether they were randomly assigned to the upward or downward mobility condition ( $\beta = 0.02$ , 95% CI [-0.06, 0.11],  $P = 0.624$ ; see Fig. 2).

The interaction between condition and SES on parents' approval of discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors did not reach statistical significance ( $\beta = -0.02$ , 95% CI [-0.08, 0.04],  $P = 0.549$ ). As can be seen in Fig. 3, however, exploratory moderated mediation analyses indicated the possibility of an indirect effect of the upward mobility condition on parents' support for these behaviors through their beliefs about socioeconomic mobility. In other words, the upward mobility condition increased high-SES parents' perceptions that people could experience socioeconomic mobility which, as in Study 1, was subsequently positively correlated with their likelihood of engaging in discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors (indirect effect  $\beta = 0.02$ , 95% CI [0.01, 0.04],  $P = 0.007$ ). Although this evidence is cross-sectional, the fact that similar psychological processes did not occur among low-SES parents (indirect effect  $\beta = 0.00$ , 95% CI [-0.005, 0.001],  $P = 0.990$ ) provides further evidence for the notion that high-SES parents and their likelihood of engaging in specific behaviors to bolster their children's relative competitive advantage may be uniquely sensitive to cues regarding upward socioeconomic mobility.

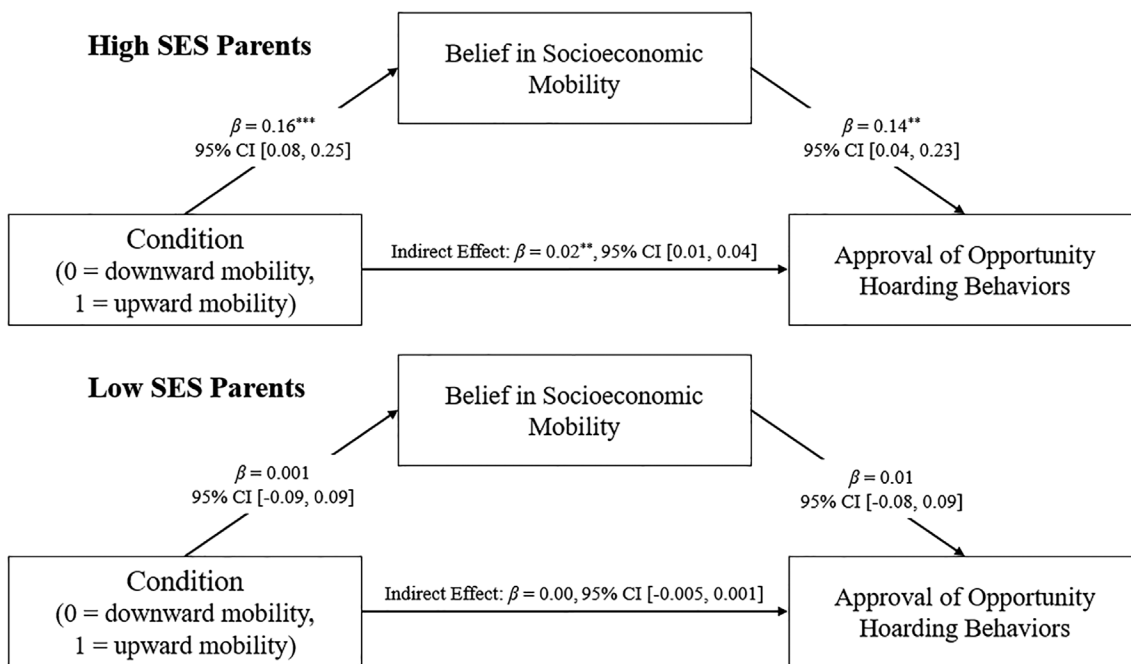
## Discussion

Opportunity hoarding has garnered recent popular attention in light of several highly publicized examples, including the Varsity Blues Scandal in which high-SES parents used their status and financial resources to engage in illegal behaviors to increase their children's likelihood of being admitted to university. Although these events represent, in some ways, extreme examples of opportunity hoarding, they have inspired broader discourse regarding



**Fig. 2.** Study 2 effect of the upward mobility condition on parents' support for redistributive policies by socioeconomic status. *Note.* Findings indicate that the upward mobility condition decreased high-SES parents' support for redistributive policy relative to the downward mobility condition. SD = Standard Deviation. SES = socioeconomic status.





**Fig. 3.** Study 2 evidence for indirect effects of the upward mobility condition on parents' approval of opportunity hoarding behaviors through beliefs in socioeconomic mobility among high socioeconomic status parents. *Note.* Findings suggest an indirect effect of the upward mobility condition on high-SES parents', but not low-SES parents', approval of engaging in opportunity hoarding behaviors through increasing their beliefs that socioeconomic mobility is possible in society. SES = Socioeconomic Status. \*\* $P < 0.010$ , \*\*\* $P < 0.001$ .

the policies and daily behaviors that allow high-SES parents to accumulate advantage, frequently at the expense of low-SES families (25). The current studies advance this discourse through providing unique insights into the factors that motivate high-SES parents to engage in opportunity hoarding. Specifically, although socioeconomic mobility is essential to a healthy economy and the American Dream, our findings suggest that it may also encourage high-SES parents to reinforce societal inequity through engaging in various forms of opportunity hoarding. In particular, perceiving an abundance of opportunity in society leads high-SES parents to be more likely to favor policies that both shore up their families' access to those opportunities and limit other families' prospects of climbing the socioeconomic hierarchy.

Although prior work suggests that cues regarding socioeconomic mobility affect a range of outcomes among low-SES people (33), in line with the predictions made by the social identity and status threat literatures, there was no evidence that low-SES parents' beliefs about socioeconomic mobility were associated with their being more likely to engage in opportunity hoarding. In fact, even when low-SES parents did not think that socioeconomic mobility was occurring in society or were led to believe that they may face downward socioeconomic mobility, they were not any more likely to adopt attitudes or behaviors to secure opportunities for their children than high-SES parents. Thus, socioeconomic mobility appears to serve as a unique signal for high-SES parents as they look to solidify their children's futures.

Together, these findings suggest that optimistic messages regarding people's socioeconomic opportunities—such as the one from President Biden's 2024 State of the Union speech quoted above—may have paradoxically negative ramifications for society's ability to advance social and economic equality. Although such ideas may motivate a variety of productive actions among people who are enthusiastic about the opportunity to advance their socioeconomic standing, they may also elicit negative intergroup behaviors among people hoping to maintain their privileged positions in the social hierarchy. Future research on socioeconomic mobility should

attend to this possibility to help advance current understandings of the relationships between macro-level economic trends, people's beliefs about opportunity, status threat, and societal inequality. Such work would also benefit from additional measures of opportunity hoarding, especially related to people's actual levels of engagement in discrete behaviors that unfairly advantage their children. The current studies examined this construct through measuring how acceptable parents thought it would be for them to participate in these behaviors for their own children. In this way, we sought to tap into the moral valence, norms, and affordances that parents ascribe to discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors—each of which are central inputs to people's actual behaviors (34)—while reducing the possible influence of social desirability biases that may have been particularly active had parents simply been asked how likely they were to engage in the behaviors. The current measure's focus on parents' approval of these behaviors has the additional benefit of mitigating potential issues with measurement variance due to SES-based differences in parents' abilities to actually engage in the discrete behaviors. Nonetheless, future studies may broaden the implications of the current work through directly examining the relationships between parents' beliefs about socioeconomic mobility and their behavior.

Additional studies may also extend the current findings outside of the US context. Although the United States is often discussed as an outlier case in which ideas about socioeconomic mobility are especially central to people's lives, the dynamics described in this article are observed throughout the world (35). Such work may further outline the psychological factors that shape the conditions under which parents engage in opportunity hoarding, as well as the consequences that it has for society at large. Transnational research also presents a unique opportunity to examine whether actual rates of socioeconomic mobility, beyond people's beliefs about mobility, serve as a distal predictor of the outcomes examined in the current work. These insights would particularly benefit emerging perspectives on the relationship between actual and perceived mobility, as well as their consequences for individuals'

outcomes. The current findings can help guide these studies while outlining fruitful vantage points from which research can evaluate the policy-level factors that disproportionately benefit high-SES families' access to opportunities (e.g., tax-advantaged college savings plans) (25). In doing so, researchers will provide needed empirical guidance to help direct individual and structural efforts to mitigate the negative consequences that opportunity hoarding has for societal equity.

## Materials and Methods

**Participants.** Studies 1 and 2 were conducted online with parents recruited on Prolific Academic. Both studies were approved by the Institutional Review Board at Northwestern University. Parents provided their written informed consent prior to entering the studies.

Most relevant to the current hypotheses, the studies were designed to provide representative and generalizable insights into the psychological processes of interest through sampling parents evenly across US income quintiles in Study 1 (15.9% first quintile, 20.6% second quintile, 19.9% third quintile, 27.1% fourth quintile, and 16.5% fifth quintile) and Study 2 (17.8% first quintile, 20.4% second quintile, 19.4% third quintile, 23.0% fourth quintile, and 19.6% fifth quintile). Parents were also well balanced across genders in Study 1 (41.2% men, 57.0% women, 0.8% nonbinary, and 0.9% unspecified) and Study 2 (37.4% men, 60.3% women, 0.9% nonbinary, 0.1% agender, and 1.3% unspecified) relative to similar studies on parenting behaviors. Additionally, the samples were representative of the ideological leanings of American adults at large. On scales of political and economic conservatism (0 = *extremely liberal*; 10 = *extremely conservative*), parents in both Study 1 ( $M_s = 4.05$  to  $4.20$ ,  $SD_s = 2.86$  to  $3.00$ ) and Study 2 ( $M_s = 3.96$  to  $4.24$ ,  $SD_s = 2.94$  to  $3.05$ ) reported having slightly more liberal attitudes though, on average, trended toward the midpoint on both scales. Complete demographic information for parents and children across studies is provided in *SI Appendix*.

**Measures of Socioeconomic Mobility.** Both studies measured parents' beliefs that socioeconomic mobility was occurring in society using a 5-item scale (36). Four of the five items were measured on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) and captured parents' beliefs about both upward socioeconomic mobility (e.g., "There are a lot of opportunities for people to move up the social ladder.") and downward socioeconomic mobility (example item: "If you are born rich, it is very unlikely you will ever be poor."). The final item asked, "These days, how easy is it to change one's social class?" and was rated on a scale of 1 (*very hard*) to 7 (*very easy*). The scale was coded such that higher values indicated that parents were more likely to believe that socioeconomic mobility—both upward and downward—occurred in society ( $\alpha_{\text{Study 1}} = 0.85$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 1}} = 3.81$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 1}} = 1.33$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Study 2}} = 0.80$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 2}} = 3.96$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 2}} = 1.31$ ).

**Measures of Opportunity Hoarding.** Studies 1 and 2 included two measures of opportunity hoarding to provide converging evidence for the hypothesized relationships across ecological systems. To capture opportunity hoarding at the policy level, we measured the extent to which parents supported a variety of family-relevant redistributive educational and economic policies on a scale of 1 (*strongly oppose*) to 7 (*strongly support*; example item: "Charging rich parents higher college tuition to increase subsidies and fellowships for lower-income students.");  $\alpha_{\text{Study 1}} = 0.87$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 1}} = 4.78$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 1}} = 1.56$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Study 2}} = 0.87$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 2}} = 4.88$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 2}} = 1.52$ ) (37). To capture opportunity hoarding at the behavioral level, we measured the extent to which parents viewed specific hoarding behaviors as acceptable for them to engage in on a scale of 1 (*not at all acceptable*) to 7 (*very acceptable*; example item: "Permit [child name] to misrepresent something about their identity (e.g., belonging to a socially disadvantaged group) to qualify for additional resources or initiatives (e.g., scholarships, affirmative action programs).";  $\alpha_{\text{Study 1}} = 0.78$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 1}} = 1.93$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 1}} = 0.98$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Study 2}} = 0.82$ ,  $M_{\text{Study 2}} = 2.10$ ,  $SD_{\text{Study 2}} = 1.16$ ). At the beginning of each study, each parent provided

the name of their oldest child between the age of 5 and 17, and this name was included in each of the opportunity hoarding behavior items. In this way, the measure provided insights into parents' willingness to participate in each behavior to specifically benefit their own children. This scale was developed for the purposes of this work and refined across multiple studies based on psychometric analyses (*SI Appendix*).

**Measures of Socioeconomic Status.** Following recommendations from prior research regarding the importance of conceptualizing SES as being comprised of a variety of interrelated factors that shape people's access to educational and economic resources, Studies 1 and 2 utilized a standardized composite of parents' SES (38). The composite included standardized measures of parents' annual household income, the highest level of education that they or the other person whom they considered their child's parent/guardian (if applicable) completed, and their subjective belief about where they stood in the socioeconomic hierarchy using the MacArthur Ladder scale (39). Among parents who were considered low SES (i.e., 1 SD below the mean of the composite), the median household income was \$20,001 to \$30,000, the median parental level of education was "Completed some college," and the median subjective SES was a 3 on the 10-rung ladder in both Studies 1 and 2. Among parents who were considered high SES (i.e., 1 SD above the mean of the composite), the median household income was \$180,001 to \$190,000 in Study 1 and \$190,001 to \$200,000 in Study 2, the median parental level of education was "Graduated college" in both studies, and the median subjective SES was a 7 on the 10-rung ladder in both studies.

**Analytic Approach.** For the complete model results from each of the studies, see *SI Appendix*. Study 1 was conducted as an integrated analysis, merging data from two separate surveys collected 6 mo apart in order to both maximize our statistical power and derive more generalizable insights into the processes at hand (40). Thus, the regression models predicted parents' responses to the opportunity hoarding measures from their SES, socioeconomic mobility beliefs, and the interaction between these two variables while including a random intercept to account for the fact that parents' responses were nested within one of two surveys. Given previous work demonstrating consistent relationships between people's political orientations and their support for redistributive policies (41), these models also included covariates to account for parents' political and economic conservatism. The analyses in Study 1 were conducted using the "lme4" package in Rv4.3.2 (42).

The primary results from Study 2 are based on single-level regression models predicting parents' responses to the opportunity hoarding measures from their conditional assignment, SES, and the interaction between the two variables. The exploratory mediation analysis on parents' approval of engaging in discrete opportunity hoarding behaviors was conducted using the "mediate" package in Rv4.3.2. with 10,000 bootstrapped simulations (43).

**Data, Materials, and Software Availability.** Anonymized 1 correlational survey study, 1 experimental study data have been deposited in Open Science Framework ([https://osf.io/mvwdw5/?view\\_only=a4f3e53016ed499d8a7882757766831d](https://osf.io/mvwdw5/?view_only=a4f3e53016ed499d8a7882757766831d)) (44).

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