The Other Pathway to the Boardroom: Interpersonal Influence Behavior as a Substitute for Elite Credentials and Majority Status in Obtaining Board Appointments

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Using survey data on interpersonal influence behavior from a large sample of managers and chief executive officers (CEOs) at Forbes 500 companies, we examine how ingratiatory behavior directed at individuals who control access to board positions can provide an alternative pathway to the boardroom for managers who lack the social and educational credentials associated with the power elite. Findings show that top managers who engage in ingratiatory behavior toward their CEO, with ingratiation comprising flattery, opinion conformity, and favor-rendering, will be more likely to receive board appointments at other firms where their CEO serves as director and at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected in the board interlock network. Further results suggest that interpersonal influence behavior substitutes to some degree for the advantages of an elite background or demographic majority status. Our findings help explain why norms of director deference to CEOs have persisted despite increased diversity in the corporate elite and have implications for research on corporate governance, social networks in the corporate elite, and for the sociological question of whether demographic minorities and individuals who lack privileged backgrounds have equal access to positions of leadership in large U.S. companies. Our study ultimately suggests that such individuals face a rather subtle and perhaps unexpected form of social discrimination, in that they must engage in a higher level of interpersonal influence behavior in order to have the same chance of obtaining a board appointment.●

Normative perspectives on corporate governance, in both academic and popular discourse, have long maintained that boards of directors have the potential to serve a critical role in protecting the interests of stakeholders of large corporations (Fama and Jensen, 1983). Outside or "independent" directors, in particular, are expected to monitor and control management decision making on behalf of stakeholders (Demsetz, 1983). A majority of outside directors at large companies are themselves top managers of other large organizations, so they should have valuable information and expertise to contribute to strategic decision making. Moreover, because they are formally independent of and hierarchically superior to management, they should be well positioned to evaluate management decision making objectively and force needed changes in corporate strategy or management personnel, fulfilling their legal obligation to oversee corporate strategy on behalf of shareholders (Black, 1998). Yet research suggests that widespread social norms for directors' behavior often prevent corporate boards from fully exercising their control function on behalf of stakeholders' interests (e.g., Davis and Thompson, 1994; Domhoff, 2002; Westphal and Khanna, 2003; for a review, see Mizruchi, 2004). A long line of research in organization theory and the sociology of corporate elites has provided qualitative evidence, as well as quantitative evidence from surveys of corporate elites, indicating that outside directors of large companies, and especially directors who also serve as senior managers of other large firms, abide by social norms in which they tend to defer to the chief executive officer's (CEO's) judgment on strategic issues and to respect the CEO's decision-making authority

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and autonomy. In a multimethod study that combined large-sample survey data with qualitative data from field interviews, Westphal and Khanna (2003: 361) found that directors who participated in actions that limited managerial autonomy at a particular firm, such as making changes in board structure that reduced the CEO's control over decision making, experienced "social distancing" from directors at other firms: they were less likely to be invited to informal meetings, their input and advice was solicited less often, and others were less likely to build on their comments, suggesting that board control over management violated social norms of directors' conduct, resulting in social sanctions. Earlier studies by Vogel (1978), Useem (1984), Davis and Thompson (1994), and others suggested that such normative expectations not only restrain directors from exercising control over CEOs but also unite them against external threats to managerial autonomy from institutional investors or government legislation.

Norms of directors deferring to top managers are thought to have persisted despite external pressure on boards to exert greater control over management in large part because of social cohesion among the "inner circle" of corporate elites, those individuals, including manager-directors, who serve in leadership positions at multiple large firms (Mills, 1956; Useem, 1984; Ratcliffe, 1987; Burris, 2001; Domhoff, 2002). From this perspective, social cohesion strengthens norms by facilitating the socialization of new directors and the social control of deviant behavior (Domhoff, 1978, 2002; Palmer, 1987; Westphal and Khanna, 2003). The social cohesion of the inner circle, in turn, has been attributed to high levels of demographic homogeneity, combined with common social ties, shared attitudes, and compatible behavioral styles that result from attendance at the same elite educational institutions, membership in exclusive social clubs, and shared upper-class backgrounds (Koenig and Gogel, 1981; Useem, 1984; Palmer, 1987; Burris, 1991; Palmer and Barber, 2001; Domhoff, 2002).

Accordingly, the literature on corporate elites suggests that persistent norms of conduct for directors, including norms of deferring to CEOs, can ultimately be traced to director-selection processes that tend to restrict entry into the corporate elite to demographically similar individuals who share certain elite social and educational credentials. Qualitative research by Domhoff and colleagues (Domhoff, 2002; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1998), as well as recent large-sample quantitative research by Hillman, Cannella, and Harris (2002), suggests that ethnic minorities and women are generally disadvantaged in obtaining board positions at large firms. Moreover, Useem and Karabel (1986) found strong evidence that managers are more likely to obtain board appointments if they have elite social and educational credentials, such as a degree from an elite college or Master's of Business Administration (MBA) program, membership in a prestigious social club, or indications of upper-class status, such as listing in the *Social Register*.

At the same time, although managers who have elite social and educational credentials have an advantage in gaining access to board positions, many managers obtain board seats without such credentials. As Useem and Karabel (1986: 198) acknowledged, ". . . there is nothing in the study's results to suggest that a social or academic elite monopolizes the ascent into the highest levels of the corporate world. . . . [The inner circle of board members] includes a significant number of individuals of non-elite origins" (see also Domhoff, 2002: 63). And the portion of board seats held by managers who lack elite social and educational backgrounds has increased over time (Domhoff, 2002). Similarly, although ethnic minorities and women are clearly underrepresented on corporate boards, their representation has increased significantly in recent years (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1998).

Accordingly, this literature leaves two interrelated questions unanswered. First, if demographic minorities and managers who lack elite credentials are disadvantaged in gaining access to board positions, how do significant numbers of such managers nevertheless ascend to the corporate boardroom? And second, if demographic homogeneity and common elite backgrounds among the inner circle of corporate leaders help to sustain widespread norms of conduct for directors, including norms of deferring to CEOs, why would the growing presence on boards of minority directors and managers who lack elite backgrounds not alter or weaken such norms? In this study, we directly address the first question, and in the process, we indirectly address the second. We draw on social psychological theory and research on interpersonal influence in suggesting that interpersonal influence behavior, in the form of ingratiatory behavior directed at CEOs, may provide an alternative pathway to the corporate boardroom for managers who lack the advantages of elite social and educational credentials or demographic majority status. We expect that ingratiatory behavior by top managers toward the CEO of their company will increase the likelihood that managers will receive board appointments at other firms by increasing the CEO's propensity to recommend them for board seats and that interpersonal influence behavior will substitute to some degree for the advantages of an elite background or demographic majority status, such that ingratiation toward the CEO will be particularly beneficial in garnering board appointments for managers who lack such credentials.

An implication of our theory is that norms of directors deferring to CEOs may persist in part because managers who tend to be deferential or submissive toward CEOs are more likely to receive board seats. Moreover, although the appointment of managers with unconventional backgrounds or demographic profiles might be expected to weaken norms of deference toward CEOs, our theory suggests that such managers must typically have been especially deferential or submissive toward CEOs in order to receive a board appointment. Thus our theory implies that the presence of demographically different managers on boards may not weaken norms of deference but may even strengthen them.

INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR AS A PATHWAY TO THE BOARDROOM

Ingratiation and Board Appointments

Ingratiation can be defined as a pattern of interpersonal influence behavior that serves to "enhance one's interpersonal attractiveness" or "gain favor" with another person (Kumar and Beyerlein, 1991: 619). An extensive literature in social psychology suggests that ingratiation comprises three distinct behaviors: opinion conformity, or verbal statements that validate an opinion held by another person, other-enhancement or flattery, and favor rendering (Jones, 1964; Tedeschi and Melburg, 1984; Gordon, 1996). Laboratory and field research in organizational behavior has linked the use of these tactics to a wide range of beneficial outcomes, including favorable performance evaluations, higher salary increases, and faster career advancement (Kumar and Beyerlein, 1991; Gordon, 1996; Westphal, 1998; Higgins, Judge, and Ferris, 2003). Reviews of this literature, including a meta-analysis of 69 studies, have generally concluded that ingratiation has positive and fairly robust effects on ratings of likeability and outcomes related to career success (e.g., recommendations for promotion) and significant though somewhat weaker effects on evaluations of performance or competence (Gordon, 1996; Higgins, Judge, and Ferris, 2003). Although earlier work on ingratiation included self-promotion or "self-presentation" as a kind of ingratiatory behavior (Jones, 1964), contemporary perspectives on interpersonal influence generally treat self-promotion as a distinct construct (Jones and Pittman, 1982; Godfrey, Jones, and Lord, 1986; Ellis et al., 2002). Whereas ingratiation tactics serve to enhance interpersonal attractiveness, and may influence performance judgments only indirectly, self-promotion involves direct attempts to influence judgments of performance or competence. Moreover, there is empirical evidence that indicators of self-promotion load on a different construct from indicators of other-enhancement, opinion conformity, and favor rendering (Stevens and Kristof, 1995; Harrison and Hochwarter, 1998), and self-promotion, compared with these other behaviors, is less consistently effective in enhancing the types of interpersonal influence (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord, 1986) that could lead to board appointments.

Ingratiation by a subordinate toward a superior engenders positive affect for the subordinate and a feeling of indebtedness toward him or her, which leads to more tangible benefits (Jones, 1964; Vonk, 1998, 2002). Other-enhancement induces liking through "the principle of reciprocal attraction" (Stevens and Kristof, 1995: 589). A basic tenet of theories of interpersonal behavior is that "people find it hard not to like those who think highly of them" (Heider, 1958; Jones, 1964: 24), and a meta-analysis showed that other-enhancement has a strong, positive effect on judgments of interpersonal attraction (i.e., liking) (Gordon, 1996). Moreover, other-enhancement can create interpersonal influence through social exchange. Based on the norm of reciprocity, when someone is "paid a compliment," he or she will feel socially obligated to return the favor (Vonk, 2002). For instance, studies have shown a strong tendency for people to reciprocate flattery by making positive remarks about the ingratiator to a third person (Jones and Wortman, 1973; Gordon, 1996).

Opinion conformity engenders positive affect by triggering similarity-attraction bias. A long line of research in social psychology and organizational behavior suggests that similarity in attitudes, values, and beliefs enhances interpersonal attraction (Byrne, Clore, and Worchel, 1966; Wayne and Liden, 1995). Thus displays of opinion conformity should tend to promote positive affect and liking (Liden and Mitchell, 1988; Stevens and Kristof, 1995). Opinion conformity can also be viewed as an indirect form of flattery. In expressing agreement with another's point of view, one validates his or her judgment. Accordingly, opinion conformity should not only enhance liking but should also engender a feeling of indebtedness toward the ingratiator. Ingratiation can also involve rendering more tangible, personal favors for another person, such as providing advice on a personal matter. This again creates influence by engendering positive affect and invoking norms of reciprocity, as the recipient feels socially and psychologically obligated to return the personal favor (Jones and Wortman, 1973; Tedeschi and Melburg, 1984; Raven, 1999: 166).

As noted previously, ingratiation can be viewed as an act of submission or deference to another person. As Jones (1964: 164) and others have proposed, ingratiatory behavior has the second-order effect of affirming the power of the influence target, which is itself a kind of other-enhancement (Shankar, Ansari, and Saxema, 1994; Vonk, 1998). People are attracted to others who affirm their power (Sadler and Woody, 2003). Thus ingratiatory behavior may engender liking even if the influence target recognizes it as ingratiation (Stevens and Kristof, 1995). As Jones (1964: 163) said, paraphrasing Emerson, ". . . we love flattery even though we are not deceived by it, because it shows that we are of importance enough to be courted." The deferential and submissive quality of ingratiation should be especially likely to engender influence in contexts in which interpersonal trust is important, such as in top management teams (Kanter, 1977). Thus ingratiation of the CEO by a subordinate top manager should engender positive affect and a feeling of indebtedness toward the manager, increasing the likelihood that the CEO will favor the manager in allocating positive outcomes. One way a CEO could favor an ingratiating manager is to recommend him or her for a board seat at another company.

Organizational research on ingratiation in superior-subordinate dyads has shown that ingratiatory behavior toward a superior can increase the likelihood of gaining positive recommendations or referrals for prestigious posts (Judge and Bretz, 1994). CEOs have the greatest opportunity to influence board appointments in firms where they serve as an outside director. Qualitative and survey research on director selection suggests that CEO-directors, or outside directors who serve as the CEO of another company, have particular influence over the director selection process, as they are routinely called upon to recommend candidates for director appointments (Lorsch, 1989; Seidel and Westphal, 2004). There is some evidence that CEO-directors are routinely called upon to recommend top managers who could replace them when they are expected to resign from a board (Demb and Neubauer, 1992), and other evidence suggests that continuing CEO-directors also routinely recommend candidates for open positions on these boards (Lorsch, 1989).

Ingratiatory behavior may also reduce uncertainty about the manager's potential social fit on boards of large companies. Qualitative studies and recent large-sample survey research suggest that there are widespread normative sanctions against challenging or substantively questioning the CEO's position on the fundamental strategic direction of the company (Davis and Thompson, 1994; Domhoff, 2002; Westphal and Khanna, 2003). As noted above, Westphal and Khanna (2003) found that directors who challenge management decision making on strategic issues tend to be informally sanctioned by other directors. Although institutional investors have pressured outside directors to adopt a more controlling posture, Westphal and Khanna (2003) found that such pressure has not weakened normative sanctions against challenging the CEO on strategic issues and may even have strengthened them as corporate leaders "close ranks" to protect their decision-making autonomy (also Davis and Thompson, 1994; Domhoff, 2002: 32–35). Given normative expectations for directors' behavior, managers who display a tendency to conform to the opinion of their CEO on strategic issues, and who otherwise adopt a deferential posture toward the CEO, might be expected to fit in socially at boards of large companies.

The ingratiation literature suggests that people who engage in submissive behavior toward higher-status others in one situation are likely to engage in such behavior in other situations (e.g., other groups or organizations). Social influence theorists have long contended that individual disposition is a significant determinant of ingratiatory behavior (cf. Liden and Mitchell, 1988; Kumar and Beyerlein, 1991; Barry and Watson, 1996), and there is growing empirical evidence that certain personality traits, such as self-monitoring, predict the use of ingratiation (Farmer et al., 1993; Farmer and Maslyn, 1999; Cable and Judge, 2003). Moreover, individual disposition appears to determine ingratiatory behavior insofar as people tend to exhibit similar levels of ingratiation across situations in which their social status is similar to that of potential influence targets. While top managers do gain status when they become an outside director, in general the social status of outside directors is substantially lower than the status of CEOs of Forbes 500 companies. Thus managers who engage in ingratiation toward their CEO are also likely to be ingratiating to CEOs as an outside director.

There is considerable evidence from the literature on management selection that social fit, or conformity to the norms of social interaction among top managers, is a primary criterion of selection into management positions and/or promotion to higher levels of management (Kanter, 1977; Ferris, Youngblood, and Yates, 1985; Kristof-Brown, 2000). By extension, social fit is likely to be an important criterion of selection onto corporate boards. Thus managers who reduce uncertainty about their potential social fit on boards of large companies by adopting a deferential or submissive posture toward the CEO may be more likely to receive recommendations for board appointments at other companies. This should be particularly important for top managers who lack board appointments, as opposed to those managers who already serve as outside directors, and whose first board appointment will admit them into the board interlock network. There is some evidence that elite social and educational credentials may be important determinants of admission into the board network but that, once admitted, a different set of factors may determine whether directors acquire additional appointments (Useem and Karabel, 1986; Davis, 1993). For instance, a manager's behavior as outside director may influence the likelihood that he or she will receive additional board appointments (Zajac and Westphal, 1996).

CEO-directors' recommendations can influence board appointments in two ways. While recommending a manager to the nominating committee can obviously influence the likelihood that the manager will receive a board appointment at that company, it can also indirectly increase the manager's chances of receiving appointments at other firms. There is qualitative evidence that when a CEO-director recommends someone to the nominating committee, that name can spread through the board network as members of the nominating committee subsequently suggest the same person as a possible director candidate on other boards on which they serve as outside director (O'Neal and Thomas, 1996). Thus ingratiation toward the CEO can increase the likelihood of gaining appointments not only at companies where the CEO serves on the board but also at companies to which the CEO is indirectly connected through a fellow CEO-director on the nominating committee. More formally:

Hypothesis 1: For top managers who lack board appointments, ingratiation toward the CEO of their company will be positively associated with subsequent appointments (1) at boards ($x_i \ldots x_n$) on which the CEO serves as an outside director and (2) at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected (i.e., companies where a fellow CEO-director on the nominating committee of x_i serves as an outside board member).

Ingratiation as a Substitute for Elite Social and Educational Credentials

Ingratiatory behavior directed at CEOs may be particularly valuable for individuals who lack elite social and educational credentials that prior empirical research has shown enhance the likelihood that managers will receive invitations to serve on corporate boards of large U.S. companies. In perhaps the most extensive study of board appointments to date, Useem and Karabel (1986) found that managers were more likely to receive outside director appointments if they possessed a Bachelor's degree (BA) from a top ranked college or an MBA from a prominent program, membership in an exclusive social club, or indications of an upper-class background, such as being listed in the *Social Register* or having attended an exclusive preparatory school.[1] On one level, these characteristics are thought to furnish social capital that can increase access to board positions. Attendance at an elite educational

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In work on the corporate elite, Domhoff (1978, 2002) has provided extensive qualitative evidence that inclusion in the *Social Register* and attendance at exclusive preparatory schools provide valid indicators of upper class status (see also Broad, 1996), and a long line of empirical studies have used these characteristics to indicate such status (e.g., Useem and Karabel, 1986; Ratcliffe, 1987; Burris, 1991, 2001; Palmer and Barber, 2001).

institution or membership in a prestigious social club "plugs [individuals] into elite social networks" (Palmer and Barber, 2001: 93). As a result, managers with such credentials tend to have more direct and indirect social ties to incumbent directors at large companies, increasing the frequency with which they are considered for board appointments.

More generally, managers who have elite social and educational credentials are more likely to ascend to the highest level of the corporation through homosocial reproduction (Kanter, 1977; Useem and Karabel, 1986; Domhoff, 2002). Given that elite credentials are overrepresented among the inner circle of corporate leaders, similarity-attraction biases should tend to favor director candidates who share them (Useem and Karabel, 1986: 193–194). Moreover, attendance at elite educational institutions and membership in exclusive social clubs is thought to acculturate managers into norms of elite behavior and socialize them into common belief systems (Domhoff, 1978, 2002; Koenig and Gogel, 1981; Useem, 1984; Palmer, 1987). Thus appointing managers who are affiliated with elite institutions, or who share the same class background, serves to reduce social uncertainty in the boardroom (Kanter, 1977; Domhoff, 2002).

For those managers who lack the elite social and educational credentials that increase the likelihood of gaining board appointments at large companies, our theoretical argument suggests that interpersonal influence behavior in the form of ingratiation tactics directed at corporate leaders may partially substitute for those credentials, providing an alternative pathway to the corporate boardroom. If such influence behavior can increase the likelihood of securing a CEO's recommendation for a board position, then ingratiation can substitute to some extent for the social capital provided by an upper class background, attendance at elite educational institutions, or membership in prestigious clubs.

Given widespread norms to conform to the CEO's preference on strategic issues, managers who engage in ingratiatory behavior and otherwise adopt a deferential posture toward their CEO may reduce uncertainty about their social fit with incumbent board members. Thus displays of ingratiation toward the CEO may help alleviate uncertainty about the social fit of managers who lack elite social and educational credentials. Conversely, there is less need to engage in ingratiatory behavior if one has elite social and educational credentials, as such credentials create the presumption of social fit with board members of large companies (Domhoff, 2002). In effect, for such individuals, ingratiatory behavior may be redundant to some degree with information conveyed by elite social and educational credentials.

Therefore, our theoretical argument suggests that ingratiatory behavior toward the CEO may interact with elite social affiliations and educational credentials to predict the likelihood of gaining board appointments. We hypothesize interactions between manager ingratiation and four characteristics that, as discussed above, are thought to furnish social capital in the corporate elite and have been shown in prior research to increase the likelihood of gaining board appointments (e.g., Useem and Karabel, 1986):

Hypothesis 2: For top managers who lack board appointments, the relationship between ingratiation toward the CEO and subsequent appointments (1) at boards on which the CEO serves as an outside director and (2) at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected will be greater if the manager (a) does not hold a degree from an elite undergraduate institution; (b) does not hold an MBA degree from an elite graduate school of business; (c) is not a member of an exclusive social club; or (d) did not attend an exclusive preparatory school and is not listed in the *Social Register*.

Ingratiation as a Substitute for Gender or Ethnic Majority Status

Interpersonal influence tactics may also be particularly beneficial in gaining board appointments for demographic minorities. There is considerable evidence from research in social psychology and organizational behavior that similarity on salient demographic characteristics enhances interpersonal affect and liking. The literature on relational demography suggests that demographic similarity in superior-subordinate dyads, such as CEO–top-manager dyads, enhances mutual affect (e.g., Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; for a review, see Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). These effects are most pronounced for easily observable or cognitively accessible characteristics such as race and gender (Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly, 1992; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

Contemporary interpretations of similarity-attraction bias are rooted in self-categorization theory. From this perspective, individuals routinely classify themselves and others into social categories in order to simplify their social world (Turner, 1987; Hewstone, Hantzi, and Johnston, 1991; Shah, Kruglanski, and Thompson, 1998). Research in the so-called minimal groups paradigm suggests that such categorization can be triggered by virtually any salient social feature, including readily observable characteristics such as race and gender (Brewer and Kramer, 1985; Messick and Mackie, 1989). There is evidence that social categorization on the basis of race and gender often occurs "automatically and without conscious awareness" (Hewstone, Hantzi, and Johnston, 1991: 579; Verkuyten, Drabbles, and Van den Nieuwenhuijzen, 1999). Because categories that include the self are held in positive regard, social categorization provides the basis for in-group favoritism, or a systematic tendency to favor others with whom one shares salient social features. People exhibit more positive affect toward in-group members and allocate more positive outcomes to them, including promotion opportunities (Hogg and Hardie, 1991; Verkuyten, Drabbles, and Van den Nieuwenhuijzen, 1999; DeCremer, 2001; Hertel and Kerr, 2001; Gardham and Brown, 2001). Accordingly, in-group favoritism can also explain why similarity in salient demographic characteristics such as race and gender increases the likelihood that superiors will recommend subordinates for promotion (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

Theory and research on similarity-attraction and in-group favoritism would suggest that similarity between CEOs and top managers on salient features such as race and gender should enhance the CEO's positive affect for the manager and lead the CEO to favor the manager in allocating positive outcomes, such as recommendations for promotion or prestigious appointments. Conversely, managers who are different from the CEO on these characteristics are less likely to engender positive affect in the CEO and are thus disadvantaged in securing such outcomes. Though there is evidence that race and gender provide a salient and to some extent "automatic" basis for out-group categorization and discrimination in a variety of social environments (Hewstone, Hantzi, and Johnston, 1991: 579), these characteristics may provide an especially salient basis for social categorization among top managers of large U.S. companies. When a demographic characteristic is relatively rare in the population, it is more distinctive and thus more salient as a basis for in-group/out-group categorization (Turner, 1987). Given that women and ethnic minorities make up a very small proportion of top executives at large U.S. companies (Daily, Certo, and Dalton, 1999), gender or ethnic minority status is likely to provide a highly salient basis for out-group categorization by CEOs (Westphal and Milton, 2000). Our theoretical perspective on interpersonal influence raises the possibility, however, that managers who lack in-group status from demographic similarity, like those who lack elite credentials, can use interpersonal influence behavior as an alternative means of gaining the CEO's favor. Because ingratiation engenders positive affect for the manager, it may be particularly valuable in securing the CEO's recommendation when managers are dissimilar from the CEO on salient characteristics.[2] In effect, positive affect from ingratiation may partially substitute for positive affect from demographic similarity to the CEO.

Moreover, ingratiation tactics may substitute for other advantages from demographic similarity. While similarity on salient characteristics can enhance positive affect, it can also create the presumption of social fit, thus giving similar others an advantage in selection decisions (Kanter, 1977). One manifestation of in-group favoritism is a pre-conscious tendency to overestimate attitudinal and behavioral differences between in-group members and out-group members, while underestimating differences among in-group members (Hewstone, Hantzi, and Johnston, 1991; Shah, Kruglanski, and Thompson, 1998). As a result, given that race and gender provide a basis for in-group/out-group categorization, managers are likely to underestimate the social compatibility of job candidates who are demographically different from a large portion of the group. Similarly, out-group bias should lead CEOs to underestimate the social fit of demographic minorities on corporate boards. Accordingly, to the extent that ingratiatory behavior reduces uncertainty about a manager's social fit on boards of large companies, displays of ingratiation toward the CEO should be particularly beneficial to demographic minorities. Such behavior should compensate to some extent for social uncertainty resulting from out-group bias toward minorities, enhancing a minority manager's chances of receiving the CEO's recommendation for a board seat. As Zweigenhaft and Domhoff (1998: 177) suggested, ethnic minorities and women "who seek to join the power elite have to find ways to . . . move into a 'comfort zone' with those who decide

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In our study, demographic dissimilarity from the CEO is effectively equivalent to having minority status, as all CEOs in our sample were white males.

who is and is not acceptable for inclusion" (see also Kanter, 1977: 61). Ingratiatory behavior is a means by which demographic minorities can move into such a "comfort zone" in their relationship to the CEO, making CEOs more comfortable about recommending them for board appointments. We thus hypothesize that minority status on salient demographic characteristics such as race and gender will moderate the effect of ingratiation toward the CEO on subsequent board appointments:

Hypothesis 3: For top managers who lack board appointments, the relationship between ingratiation toward the CEO and subsequent appointments (1) at boards on which the CEO serves as an outside director and (2) at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected will be greater for demographic minorities (ethnic minorities and women).

METHOD

Sample and Data Collection

The sample frame for this study included top managers at 350 companies randomly selected from the Forbes 500 index of large and mid-sized U.S. industrial and service firms. Following Useem and Karabel (1986), we selected up to eight senior officers from each company (excluding the CEO) with the title of vice president or higher. If the company had more than eight senior officers, we randomly selected eight, resulting in an initial sample frame of 2,477 managers. We sent a survey to each manager in the sample frame and, to permit an assessment of interrater reliability, sent a separate survey to all CEOs in the sample frame. The surveys were distributed in January 2000.

To maximize the response rate, we followed several procedures that have been shown to increase response rates of managers in prior research: (1) we conducted a qualitative pretest of the survey instrument that involved interviews with twenty top managers and directors at large and mid-sized U.S. companies and used feedback from the interviews to improve the format and instructions of the survey, reducing the time and effort to fill it out; (2) the cover letter linked the survey to an ongoing series of studies on corporate governance conducted by faculty at several leading business schools, noting that hundreds of top managers and directors had participated in prior surveys; (3) we sent two additional waves of questionnaires to nonrespondents; and (4) the survey was endorsed by directors at a major management consulting firm (Fox, Crask, and Kim, 1988; Westphal, 1998). One thousand and forty-nine managers responded, a response rate of 42 percent. The response rate for CEOs was 39 percent (N = 138). Demographic data were unavailable for 37 respondents, leaving a final sample of 1,012 top managers (41 percent).

We used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test to assess the representativeness of the sample. This procedure determines whether the mean and distribution of a continuous variable is significantly different for respondents and nonrespondents. Results showed no significant differences with respect to any of the continuous variables described below measured with archival data (e.g., firm performance, firm size, number of board appointments held by the CEO, CEO tenure at the potential hiring firm). Moreover, difference of proportions tests showed that respondents and nonrespondents were not significantly different with respect to any of the dichotomous variables measured with archival data, including measures of elite social and educational credentials and minority status. We also used a multivariate approach to testing for sample selection bias, estimating Heckman sample selection models (Heckman and Borjas, 1980) in which the selection equation estimated the likelihood of responding to the survey. The selection equation included all the independent and control variables measured with archival data, as well as variables that represent characteristics of the survey itself (e.g., when the questionnaire was distributed). The hypothesized results were unchanged from those presented below and the selection parameter was not significant, suggesting that nonresponse bias is not present in the data.

We obtained demographic and biographical data on top managers from a variety of sources that have been used extensively in prior research to measure elite social and educational credentials, including Dun and Bradstreet's *Reference Book of Corporate Management*, Standard and Poor's *Register*, the *Social Register*, Marquis's *Who's Who*, corporate proxy statements, and annual company reports (Useem and Karabel, 1986; Broad, 1996; Palmer and Barber, 2001; Burris, 2002; Domhoff, 2002). Data on director and board characteristics came from Compact Disclosure and proxy statements obtained directly from companies in the sample frame. Data on top managers' ethnicity and gender were provided by a large management consulting firm. We obtained data on firm performance and size from COMPUSTAT and EDGAR Online.

Follow-up survey. Our theoretical argument suggested that ingratiation toward the CEO leads to board appointments by increasing the likelihood that the CEO will recommend the ingratiator for a board seat. To test this argument, in January 2002, two years after the initial survey, we sent a questionnaire to directors who serve on nominating committees in the sample frame. The questionnaire asked directors to specify whether one or more CEOs who serve on the board had suggested that someone be nominated for an outside director appointment during the prior two years and if so, who had made the recommendation(s) and who was recommended. At least one member of the nominating committee responded for 77 percent of the boards in the sample frame. Using these data, we developed a dichotomous variable that indicated whether the CEO recommended the focal manager for an outside directorship at the focal board.

Measures

We used feedback from the pretest to enhance the validity of our survey measures. In our pretest interviews, we asked respondents to comment on each question in the survey in order to identify questions that were ambiguous or potentially subject to bias and to ensure that respondents interpreted the questions as expected. We used varied response formats to minimize response bias, and our scales included questions that asked respondents to report the number of times a specific behavior occurred, which tends to enhance scale validity (DeVellis, 1991).

Ingratiation toward the CEO. The ingratiation scale included 13 items that were intended to capture the three component behaviors of ingratiation, as described in the social influence literature: other-enhancement, opinion conformity, and favor rendering. Items in the scale were adapted from measures developed by Westphal (1998) and Kumar and Beyerlein (1991). We made refinements to the wording of the questions based on feedback from the pretest interviews. The survey items are listed in table 1. We conducted factor analysis on the survey items using the principal factor method with promax rotation. The analysis included ingratiation items together with indicators of self-presentation, discussed below, yielding only two factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The ingratiation items loaded on one factor as expected: loadings for each item were greater than .5 on one factor and less than .2 on the other factor, which comprised the self-presentation items. The interitem reliability of the scale

Table 1

Ingratiation Scale Items and Interrater Reliability Assessment*

	Agreement between Focal Manager and CEO	
Ingratiation Scale Items†	Observed	Kappa†
1. In talking to [the CEO], to what extent do you express agreement with [the CEO's] viewpoint on a strategic issue, even when you do not completely share his/her opinion?	96.71% (69.22%)	.89 (38.34)
2. Over the past twelve months, how often did you challenge [the CEO's] opinion on a strategic issue?‡	93.67% (62.46%)	.83 (24.37)
3. In speaking with [the CEO], to what extent do you point out attitudes and/or opinions you have in common?		
4. In talking to [the CEO] over the past twelve months, how many times did you disagree with [the CEO's] point of view on a strategic issue?‡	92.47% (60.00%)	.81 (23.48)
5. In speaking with [the CEO] over the past twelve months, to what extent have you pointed out weaknesses in his/her strategy for the firm?‡	91.24% (66.02%)	.74 (31.52)
6. To what extent do you play devil's advocate with [the CEO] in discussing strategic issues with him/her?‡		
7. In talking to [the CEO] over the past twelve months, how often have you complimented [the CEO] about his/her insight on a particular strategic issue?	95.73% (70.02%)	.86 (26.12)
8. If [the CEO] were to make an insightful comment about an important strategic issue, to what extent would you be likely to compliment him/her?		
9. In the past twelve months, how often have you expressed to [the CEO] that you enjoy working with him/her?	95.83% (54.63%)	.91 (23.95)
10. Over the past twelve months, to what extent have you sought to reassure [the CEO] about the soundness of his/her strategic judgment?	94.71% (71.54%)	.81 (25.71)
11. In talking to [the CEO] over the past 12 months, to what extent have you given him/her advice on a personal or career matter?	92.37% (61.82%)	.80 (23.37)
12. Have you done a personal favor for [the CEO] in the past 12 months?		
13. Over the past twelve months, how many times have you given [the CEO] advice or other assistance on a strategic matter that is outside your area of responsibility, even without the CEO asking for it?	95.99% (73.52%)	.85 (17.46)
Overall kappa		.83 (24.32)

* N = 416. The phrasing of each survey item is from the top manager survey; the wording was altered appropriately for the CEO survey. Four of the thirteen items were not included in the CEO survey. The expected agreement between the focal manager and the CEO is in parentheses under the observed. We calculated kappas for the continuous-scale items by dividing the values for each of these items into quartiles.

† Z-statistics (shown in parentheses below the kappas) for all kappas are statistically significant.

‡ This item was reversed scored so that higher values indicate greater ingratiation.

was acceptably high (Cronbach's α = .90). We estimated factor scores using the Bartlett method, which yields unbiased estimates (hypothesized results were robust to the regression method). The CEO survey included a parallel set of items about each top manager's behavior toward the CEO (e.g., "To what extent does [the manager] express agreement with your viewpoint . . ."). To assess interrater reliability, we compared the top manager's and the CEO's responses to the items in both surveys using the weighted kappa coefficient. Kappa is a correlation coefficient that corrects for the level of correlation that would be expected by chance and weights agreement by the degree of convergence between raters. According to Fleiss (1981), values above .75 indicate excellent agreement beyond chance, and values between .4 and .75 reflect fair to good agreement. As shown in table 1, kappas exceeded .75 for all survey items but one, and that item is still in the range of good agreement. The overall kappa for the scale was .83. The sample for this analysis included 416 manager-CEO dyads in which both the manager and the CEO assessed the focal manager's behavior. On average, assessments were available from both the manager and the CEO for 1.44 dyads per firm in the sample; the number of dyads with assessments from both parties ranged from 0 to 7 per firm.

As noted above, the social influence literature suggests that people who engage in ingratiatory behavior toward high-status others in one setting are likely to do so in other settings. Thus, as a further test of the validity of the ingratiation measure, we examined whether our measure of ingratiation toward the CEO was correlated with a measure of ingratiation by the same manager at another company. The follow-up survey included questions about the behavior of other outside directors, including items that assessed the ingratiatory behavior of directors toward the CEO. The items in this scale were a subset of the items listed in table 1. We merged these data with responses to the initial survey to generate a dataset on the ingratiatory behavior exhibited by managers at two different companies, i.e., ingratiation toward the CEO of the focal firm at time t and ingratiation toward the CEO of another firm where the manager served as an outside director at time t+2 (N = 226). This enabled us to examine whether ingratiation toward the CEO of the focal firm was correlated with ingratiation toward the CEO at another company where the manager served as an outside director. Our analysis indicated a strong correlation between ingratiation at the focal firm and ingratiation at the other company (r = .42), providing further evidence for the validity of our ingratiation measure. Additional evidence for the validity of the ingratiation scale is provided in the Appendix.

Elite social and educational credentials; gender and ethnic minority status. We created a series of dummy variables to indicate whether managers had the elite social and educational credentials specified in our hypotheses. Two dummy variables indicated whether managers held a degree from an elite undergraduate institution and/or an MBA degree from an elite graduate school of business, using elite designations taken from Palmer and Barber (2001) and Useem and Karabel

(1986) (see also Westphal and Milton, 2000, and Domhoff, 2002, for more detail on these measures). One dummy variable indicates whether managers were members of one or more of the most exclusive social clubs in the U.S., as designated by Palmer and Barber (2001) and Domhoff (1970). Another dummy variable indicated whether managers were listed in the *Social Register* and/or attended an exclusive preparatory school. Exclusive preparatory school designations were taken from Palmer and Barber (2001), Useem and Karabel (1986), and Domhoff (1970) (see also Levine, 1980). We also created a dummy variable to indicate minority status with respect to ethnicity and/or gender.

Board appointment. We developed dichotomous measures to indicate whether the focal manager was appointed to a particular board (x_j) where the CEO served as director at the time of the survey or a board to which the CEO was indirectly connected (i.e., a board where a fellow CEO-director on the nominating committee of x_j served as an outside director). We examined appointments at all firms in the Forbes listing of large and medium-sized U.S. firms for which data were available. In the primary analysis, we examined board appointments over the two-year period subsequent to the time of the survey. In separate analyses, we examined board appointments over shorter and longer time periods (one year and three years), and the hypothesized results presented below were unchanged.

Control variables. We controlled for aspects of the manager-CEO relationship that could affect the likelihood of receiving the CEO's recommendation for a board appointment. First, there is some evidence that the frequency of social interaction in superior-subordinate dyads can increase the likelihood of favoritism toward the subordinate independent of ingratiatory behavior, although the evidence for this relationship is somewhat weak and inconsistent (cf. Vonk, 2002). As a precaution, we included a survey measure that gauges the level of social interaction between managers and CEOs over the prior six-month period. The scale showed acceptable interitem and interrater reliability (α = .85, kappa = .79). We also included a survey measure of friendship between the CEO and the manager (cf. Burt, 1992), given that CEOs may be more likely to recommend their friends for board appointments. There is some evidence that friendship is negatively correlated with ingratiation (Westphal, 1998), in which case friendship may operate as a suppressor variable. There was a high level of interrater agreement (93 percent) between managers and CEOs about the status of their relationship as friends vs. acquaintances.

Some theorists have maintained that self-promotion or "self-presentation" provides an alternative source of influence to ingratiation (e.g., Jones and Pittman, 1982), in which case, self-presentation could confound the effects of ingratiation on board appointments. Although there is evidence that self-presentation is often less effective than ingratiation as a source of interpersonal influence (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord, 1986), prior studies have not examined self-presentation among corporate elites. There is some evidence that high self-monitors are relatively successful in their use of self-presentation tactics (Turnley and Bolino, 2001), and this personality trait is known to be prevalent among top managers. Thus we included a survey measure of self-presentation with items adapted from a scale developed by Stevens and Kristof (1995) (α = .87, kappa = .80).

Managers could be more attractive candidates for board positions to the extent that they have extensive prior experience in top management. Thus we controlled for the number of years the focal manager had served as a top executive of a firm in the sample frame. We also controlled for indicators of CEO status, as CEOs with high status may have more pull in getting board appointments for their managers, and managers may engage in more ingratiatory behavior toward high-status CEOs. We included several indicators of CEO status that have been used extensively in prior research to indicate the status of top managers and directors (e.g., Useem, 1984; D'Aveni, 1990; Finkelstein, 1992; Palmer and Barber, 2001; Westphal and Khanna, 2003): the size of the CEO's primary employer, measured as the log of firm sales; the performance of the CEO's firm, measured as industry-adjusted market-to-book value; and the number of board appointments held by the CEO. We also included a set of dummy variables that indicated whether the CEO had each of the elite social and educational credentials discussed above. We did not control for whether CEOs were demographic minorities, because every CEO in our sample was a white male. Moreover, while CEO-directors tend to have more influence over director selection than other board members, as discussed above, long-tenured directors may have particular influence over this process. Thus we controlled for the CEO's tenure as an outside director on the board, measured in years. We also controlled for whether the CEO left the board in the current year (i.e., the year of the survey) or the following year.

An agency perspective on director selection might suggest that independent boards will engage in a more "objective" search for new directors, so that personal recommendations would have less influence over the director selection process at such boards. Although available evidence suggests that personal recommendations are an important input to director selection regardless of the board's independence from management (cf. Seidel and Westphal, 2004), as a precaution, we controlled for several indicators of board independence that have been widely used in the corporate governance literature (Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1996; Chatterjee and Harrison, 2001; Pollock, Fischer, and Wade, 2002): separation of the CEO and board chair positions, the portion of outside directors appointed after the CEO, average director stock ownership, and relative CEO-board tenure (i.e., the average board tenure of directors divided by the CEO's tenure). We combined these measures into a single index using principal components analysis (Jackson, 1991).[3] Although the number of outside directors on the board could influence the likelihood that one or more new directors are appointed in any given year, it is not clear why the number of outsiders would confound the hypothesized effects of ingratiation, and separate analyses confirmed that the results are unchanged when the number of outside directors is added to the models.

3
Unless otherwise indicated, board-level and firm-level characteristics refer to the board or firm at which the CEO served as a director.

We also controlled for the size and performance of the potential hiring firm (i.e., the firm where the CEO served as a director or the firm to which the CEO was indirectly connected), measured as log of sales and industry-adjusted market-to-book value, respectively. Moreover, we included dummy variables to indicate the focal manager's level in the hierarchy (i.e., executive vice president or senior vice president, with vice president as the reference category). We did not control for whether the focal manager was an inside director, as this variable was highly correlated with level in the hierarchy and did not have an independent effect on board appointments. We also did not control for industry in the primary analyses, as we did not expect industry differences in the hypothesized effect of ingratiation on board appointments. Nevertheless, in separate models, we included dummy variables for the N-1 two-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes in the sample, and the hypothesized results were unchanged. In further analyses, we also controlled for whether the focal firm had an ownership position in the potential hiring firm, which may increase a manager's chances of receiving an appointment (Palmer, Friedland, and Singh, 1986). The control variable was not significant and the hypotheses were still supported. The interaction between ingratiation and ownership position was also not significant and had no substantive effect on the hypothesized results.

Analysis

We used maximum-likelihood probit regression analysis to test the hypothesized effects of ingratiation on the likelihood of board appointments. Though our sample frame included 3,251 dyadic combinations of managers and boards on which the CEO served as an outside director, our focus on managers who lacked outside board appointments narrowed our risk set to 1,478 dyads in which the manager had no board appointments (a survey question was used to verify whether or not responding managers served on a board at the time of the survey). Similarly, although our analysis of appointments at boards to which the CEO was indirectly connected was based on a sample frame of 12,698 dyads, this analysis included a smaller risk set of 5,877 dyads in which the manager had no board appointments. To ensure that probit estimates were not biased by any unmeasured differences between the narrowed sample of manager-board dyads and dyads in the total sample frame, we used Heckman selection models. The Heckman model is essentially a two-stage procedure that uses probit regression to estimate the likelihood of having no outside board appointments and then incorporates estimates of parameters from that model in a second-stage probit regression model to estimate the likelihood of acquiring an appointment at a particular board on which the CEO serves as a director.

Because our sample included multiple dyadic combinations that involved the same CEO or the same board, we had to control for the possibility that the residuals for dyads involving the same CEO or board were correlated. We corrected for observation clustering using the Newey-West robust variance estimator for clustered data (Newey and West, 1987), which treats each cluster (i.e., CEO and board) as a superobservation that contributes to the variance estimate.

To assess the robustness of our results, we ran separate models using fixed-effects logistic regression. In the first set of models, we specified the CEO as a fixed effect, and in the second set of models, we specified the board as a fixed effect. In all of these models, the hypothesized results were not substantively different from those presented below. We also ran a separate set of Heckman models in which the selection equation included all dyadic combinations of responding managers and boards in the larger sample frame and estimated the likelihood that a dyad included a board on which the CEO served as a director or a board to which the CEO was indirectly connected. The hypothesized results remained unchanged, indicating that our findings do not reflect differences between the characteristics of boards or firms where the CEO served as a director and the characteristics of boards or firms in the larger population.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are displayed in table 2. Table 3 provides the results of the Heckman selection models of board appointments. There was no evidence for multicollinearity in the models. The highest variance inflation factor (VIF) was less than ten, and the mean VIF was not significantly greater than one in all models, suggesting that multicollinearity was not a problem (Chatterjee, Hadi, and Price, 2000). Model 1 provides strong support for hypothesis 1: for top managers who lack board appointments, ingratiation toward the CEO is positively associated with subsequent board appointments at companies where the CEO serves as an outside director. The magnitude of this effect is considerable. For instance, an increase in ingratiation from the mean level that involves (1) challenging the CEO's opinion on a strategic issue one less time during the past 12 months, (2) complimenting the CEO on his or her insight on a strategic issue two more times during the past twelve months, and (3) doing one more personal favor for the CEO during the past year increases the likelihood of receiving a board appointment at a company where the CEO serves as a director by 64 percent (this figure is coincidentally the same as the probit regression coefficient for ingratiation in model 2). Results in model 3 also indicate that ingratiation toward the CEO is positively associated with subsequent appointments at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected.

Model 2 tests the interactions predicted in hypotheses 2a–2d and hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 2a predicted that for top managers who lack board appointments, the relationship between ingratiation toward the CEO and subsequent board appointments will be greater if the manager does not hold a degree from an elite undergraduate institution. Results in models 2 and 4 of table 3 strongly support this hypothesis: ingratiation toward the CEO is particularly valuable for individuals who lack a degree from an elite undergraduate institution. The shape of the interaction is displayed in figure 1. The results do not support hypothesis 2b, which predicted that ingratiation would have a greater effect for managers who do

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation Coefficients (N = 1,478)

Independent variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Ingratiation toward the CEO	.00	.98											
2. Number of board appointments held by CEO	3.21	2.15	.21										
3. Executive vice president	.18	.39	.05	.02									
4. Senior vice president	.23	.42	.02	.01	–.25								
5. Friendship tie to CEO	.39	.64	–.08	.02	.09	.05							
6. Top management experience	5.56	7.19	–.04	.01	.27	.16	.03						
7. Independence of board where CEO serves as director	.00	1.41	.00	–.01	.00	.00	.01	.02					
8. CEO tenure as outside dir.	6.67	6.19	.04	.03	–.01	.01	.01	–.02	–.08				
9. Self-presentation	.00	.83	.06	.15	.04	.03	.04	.04	.00	.02			
10. Social interaction with CEO	.00	.88	–.03	.06	.05	.03	.31	.03	–.01	.01	–.04		
11. Listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	.11	.31	–.24	.04	.03	–.02	.11	–.05	–.05	.03	–.19	.05	
12. Elite undergraduate degree	.22	.42	–.19	.04	.00	.00	.05	–.07	–.02	.01	–.11	.03	.24
13. Elite MBA	.05	.23	–.07	–.02	.01	.00	.01	–.03	–.02	–.04	–.06	.01	.02
14. Exclusive social club membership	.29	.46	–.23	.07	.02	–.02	.07	–.12	–.01	.02	–.14	.06	.32
15. Demographic minority	.08	.27	.18	–.01	–.07	–.03	–.14	.04	.00	.01	.22	–.04	–.06
16. CEO with elite undergraduate degree	.28	.45	.17	.15	.00	.00	.04	.00	–.03	.06	.12	.03	.08
17. CEO with listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	.15	.35	.14	.22	.02	–.01	.07	–.02	–.01	.10	.11	.06	.14
18. CEO with elite MBA	.08	.26	.04	.03	.00	.01	–.01	.01	–.02	.02	.01	.00	.03
19. CEO with exclusive social club membership	.30	.46	.18	.16	.01	–.02	.03	.00	–.03	.07	.09	.04	.05
20. Log of sales, potential hiring company	9.07	.89	.02	.02	–.01	.00	.00	.03	–.04	.07	.01	–.01	.02
21. Market-to-book value, CEO home company	.01	.54	–.04	.01	.00	.01	–.02	.03	.00	.01	–.06	.03	.04
22. Log of sales, CEO home company	9.30	.87	.03	.05	–.01	.01	.02	–.01	–.01	.00	.03	–.04	.02
23. Market-to-book value, potential hiring company	.01	.50	.01	.05	–.01	.00	.02	.01	.01	.04	.04	.02	–.01
24. CEO departure from board where CEO serves as director	.31	.46	.02	.31	.00	–.01	.02	.01	.05	.16	–.01	.02	.00
25. Board appointment	.09	.29	.26	.21	.08	.03	.12	.02	–.06	.04	.04	.03	.18

Independent variable	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
13. Elite MBA	.12												
14. Exclusive social club membership	.15	.03											
15. Demographic minority	–.10	.02	–.19										
16. CEO with elite undergraduate degree	.11	.06	.04	–.06									
17. CEO with listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	.20	.01	.29	–.02	.14								
18. CEO with elite MBA	.07	.09	.02	–.03	.14	.05							
19. CEO with exclusive social club membership	.04	.01	.11	–.05	.15	.18	.08						
20. Log of sales, potential hiring company	.01	.01	.00	–.01	.03	.05	.01	.04					
21. Market-to-book value, CEO home company	.03	.01	.06	–.04	.07	.04	.00	.04	.01				
22. Log of sales, CEO home company	.06	.08	.03	.01	.05	.04	.05	.02	.04	–.04			
23. Market-to-book value, potential hiring company	.00	.00	.02	–.01	.01	–.03	–.02	–.03	–.03	.02	.00		
24. CEO departure from board where CEO serves as director	.04	–.01	.01	.00	.27	.21	.03	.18	.02	–.04	–.02	–.03	
25. Board appointment	.15	.06	.13	–.20	.22	.07	.03	.06	.02	–.01	.04	–.05	–.23

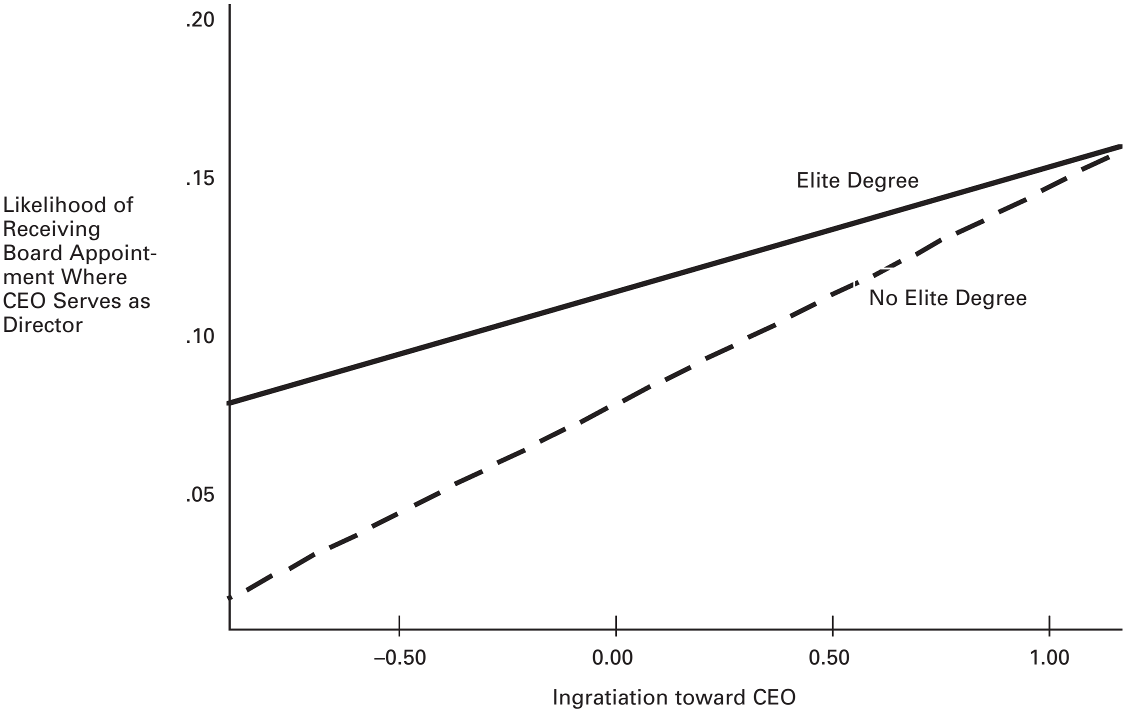
Table 3

Heckman Selection Models of Board Appointments*

Independent variable	Appointments at boards where the CEO served as director		Appointments at boards to which CEO was indirectly connected		Appointments at other boards	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Ingratiation toward the CEO	0.557•••	0.639•••	0.354••	0.383••	0.033	0.019
	(0.135)	(0.162)	(0.129)	(0.155)	(0.033)	(0.045)
Number of board appointments held by CEO	0.108••	0.111••	0.100•	0.103••	0.017	0.019
	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Executive vice president	0.497•	0.510•	0.074	0.096	0.026	0.024
	(0.245)	(0.249)	(0.232)	(0.233)	(0.100)	(0.100)
Senior vice president	0.419	0.389	0.154	0.149	0.164•	0.147•
	(0.262)	(0.258)	(0.248)	(0.262)	(0.069)	(0.069)
Friendship tie to CEO	0.368•	0.383•	0.296•	0.284•	0.043	0.044
	(0.163)	(0.167)	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Top management experience	0.007	0.006	0.003	0.003	0.002	0.002
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Independence of board where CEO serves as director	–0.123	–0.106	–0.102	–0.090	–0.012	–0.013
	(0.081)	(0.073)	(0.079)	(0.070)	(0.030)	(0.029)
CEO tenure as outside director	0.019	0.017	0.017	0.015	0.003	0.002
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Self-presentation	0.096	0.131	0.174	0.149	0.022	0.020
	(0.093)	(0.091)	(0.092)	(0.087)	(0.042)	(0.042)
Social interaction with CEO	0.088	0.140	0.112	0.126	–0.040	–0.035
	(0.126)	(0.128)	(0.111)	(0.112)	(0.052)	(0.052)
Listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	1.011•	0.955•	1.018•	1.070••	0.125	0.145
	(0.425)	(0.427)	(0.412)	(0.423)	(0.157)	(0.169)
Elite undergraduate degree	0.567•	0.484•	0.425	0.420•	0.172	0.177
	(0.249)	(0.220)	(0.219)	(0.209)	(0.089)	(0.093)
Elite MBA	0.595	0.785	0.428	0.591	0.070	0.064
	(0.490)	(0.494)	(0.470)	(0.458)	(0.138)	(0.137)
Exclusive social club membership	0.417	0.443	0.444•	0.497•	0.137	0.140
	(0.212)	(0.237)	(0.202)	(0.229)	(0.080)	(0.079)
Demographic minority	–0.629•	–.738•	–0.543•	–0.577•	–0.226•	–0.235•
	(.278)	(.324)	(0.265)	(0.287)	(0.106)	(0.111)
CEO with elite undergraduate degree	0.846••	0.850•••	0.539•	0.511•	0.012	0.007
	(0.289)	(0.263)	(0.259)	(0.242)	(0.084)	(0.083)
CEO with listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	0.548	0.539	0.571•	0.606•	0.213	0.209
	(0.300)	(0.297)	(0.277)	(0.284)	(0.131)	(0.135)
CEO with elite MBA	0.255	0.248	0.370	0.394	0.163	0.152
	(0.258)	(0.326)	(0.252)	(0.272)	(0.123)	(0.121)
CEO with exclusive social club membership	0.209	0.257	0.224	0.254	0.053	0.056
	(0.207)	(0.201)	(0.200)	(0.192)	(0.075)	(0.075)
Log of sales, potential hiring company	0.038	0.036	0.041	0.054	0.014	0.015
	(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.082)	(0.085)	(0.031)	(0.031)
Market-to-book value, CEO home company	–0.044	–0.062	0.229	0.221	0.082	0.089
	(0.174)	(0.178)	(0.155)	(0.156)	(0.076)	(0.077)
Log of sales, CEO home company	0.152	0.146	0.206	0.224	–0.033	–0.030
	(0.116)	(0.107)	(0.117)	(0.123)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Market-to-book value, potential hiring company	–0.254	–0.263	0.212	0.242	0.022	0.014
	(0.174)	(0.198)	(0.158)	(0.169)	(0.067)	(0.069)
CEO departure from board where CEO served as director	.189	.196				
	(.209)	(.212)				
Ingratiation ×						
(Lack of) elite undergraduate degree		0.899•••		0.696••		0.146
		(0.290)		(0.249)		(0.103)
(Lack of) elite MBA		–0.319		0.201		0.043
		(0.241)		(0.216)		(0.074)
(Lack of) exclusive social club membership		0.445•		0.336•		–0.014
		(0.195)		(0.181)		(0.081)
(Lack of) listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school		1.058•••		0.764••		0.080
		(0.309)		(0.293)		(0.157)
Demographic minority		1.070••		0.851•		0.160
		(0.429)		(0.411)		(0.142)
Constant	1.979•	2.122•	2.206•	2.022•	–1.189•	–1.105••
	(0.974)	(0.930)	(0.985)	(0.945)	(0.426)	(0.430)
Wald χ^2	50.66•••	85.04•••	48.98•••	77.82•••	24.91	28.70
Wald test of independent equations (rho = 0)	8.11••	8.01••	5.23•	7.15••	.64	.54
N (first-stage model; second-stage model)	3,251; 1,478	3,251; 1,478	12,698; 5,735	12,698; 5,735	767,096; 347,311	767,096; 347,311

• $p \le .05$; •• $p \le .01$; ••• $p \le .001$; z-statistics are one-tailed for hypothesized effects, two-tailed for control variables.
* Standard errors are in parentheses.

Figure 1. Interaction between ingratiation and elite undergraduate degree.



not hold an MBA degree from an elite graduate school of business on the likelihood of gaining subsequent board appointments at companies where the CEO serves as a director.

The results also support hypotheses 2c–2d. Ingratiation has a more significant effect on the likelihood of gaining appointments at boards where the CEO serves as director and to which the CEO is indirectly connected for managers who are not members of an exclusive social club and for managers who did not attend an exclusive preparatory school and are not listed in the *Social Register*. Moreover, while the main effects of elite social and educational credentials on subsequent board appointments are significant (with the exception of an elite MBA), a separate analysis of simple effects showed that these variables become non-significant at relatively high levels of ingratiation toward the CEO (e.g., one standard deviation above the mean).

Hypothesis 3, which predicted that the effect of ingratiation on board appointments would be stronger for demographic minorities, is also supported. The effect of ingratiation on the likelihood of gaining subsequent board appointments at companies where the CEO served as director is significantly greater if the manager was a woman or an ethnic minority. This interaction also significantly predicts appointments at boards to which the CEO was indirectly connected. Moreover, while the main effect of minority status is significant, a separate analysis of simple effects showed that this variable also becomes non-significant at high levels of ingratiation toward the CEO (e.g., one standard deviation above the mean). Overall, the results substantiate our contention that interpersonal influence behavior can substitute for elite credentials and demographic majority status in gaining access to board appointments. The findings indicate that ingratiatory behavior by top managers toward CEOs increases the likelihood that managers will receive appointments at boards on which the CEO serves as a director and at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected, and the effects of ingratiation are significantly more positive for managers who lack social and educational credentials and for ethnic minorities and women. In addition, ingratiation is negatively correlated with demographic majority status and each of the elite social and educational credentials, which appears to corroborate our contention that managers who have these characteristics have less need to engage in ingratiation.

We conducted a supplementary analysis to examine whether recommendation by the CEO mediates the effect of ingratiation toward the CEO on subsequent board appointments. The results, shown in table 4, provided evidence for media-

Table 4

Supplemental Heckman Selection Models of Board Appointments*

	Appointments at boards where the CEO served as director			Appointments at boards to which CEO was indirectly connected	
Independent variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Recommendation by the CEO	1.743•••				
	(0.205)				
Ingratiation toward the CEO	0.250	0.561•••	0.590•••	0.340••	0.405••
	(0.181)	(0.141)	(0.168)	(0.122)	(0.165)
Number of board appointments held by CEO	0.114••	0.104•	0.113•	0.082•	0.078•
	(0.042)	(0.049)	(0.052)	(0.036)	(0.035)
Executive vice president	0.586•	–0.030	–0.038	–0.094	0.101
	(0.289)	(0.249)	(0.250)	(0.214)	(0.214)
Senior vice president	0.382	0.260	0.261	0.167	0.126
	(0.236)	(0.257)	(0.266)	(0.231)	(0.233)
Friendship tie to CEO	0.210	0.332	0.327	0.356•	0.332•
	(0.134)	(0.170)	(0.173)	(0.155)	(0.148)
Top management experience	0.007	0.005	0.006	0.002	0.002
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Independence of board where CEO serves as director	–0.120	–0.103	–0.069	–0.141	0.141
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.091)	(0.074)	(0.076)
CEO tenure as outside director	0.028	0.019	0.019	0.016	0.016
	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Self-presentation	0.049	0.171	0.179	0.144	0.160
	(0.111)	(0.098)	(0.109)	(0.107)	(0.105)
Social interaction with CEO	0.098	0.121	0.121	0.171	0.170
	(0.144)	(0.120)	(0.122)	(0.115)	(0.117)
Listing in *Social Register*/ attendance at exclusive prep school	0.909•	1.152••	1.209••	0.933•	0.905•
	(0.435)	(0.430)	(0.453)	(0.395)	(0.406)
Elite undergraduate degree	0.519•	0.463	0.436	0.429•	0.492•
	(0.234)	(0.234)	(0.237)	(0.183)	(0.217)
Elite MBA	0.763	0.447	0.486	0.564	0.597
	(0.505)	(0.481)	(0.486)	(0.444)	(0.474)

(continued on next page)

Table 4 *(Continued)*

	Appointments at boards where the CEO served as director			Appointments at boards to which CEO was indirectly connected	
Independent variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Exclusive social club membership	0.439 (0.251)	0.463• (0.208)	0.486• (0.218)	0.475• (0.197)	0.521• (0.219)
Demographic minority	–0.632 (0.331)	–0.698• (0.291)	–0.671• (0.288)	–0.687• (0.277)	–0.722• (0.296)
CEO with elite undergraduate degree	0.789•• (0.286)	0.735•• (0.283)	0.657• (0.275)	0.520• (0.208)	0.597•• (0.235)
CEO with listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	0.498 (0.304)	0.533 (0.275)	0.562 (0.285)	0.512 (0.260)	0.481 (0.260)
CEO with elite MBA	0.440 (0.341)	0.321 (0.275)	0.314 (0.278)	0.340 (0.240)	0.349 (0.249)
CEO with exclusive social club membership	0.258 (0.205)	0.171 (0.216)	0.162 (0.211)	0.267 (0.193)	0.286 (0.190)
Log of sales, potential hiring company	0.029 (0.092)	0.094 (0.097)	0.079 (0.084)	0.050 (0.076)	0.069 (0.078)
Market-to-book value, CEO home company	–.220 (.184)	0.023 (0.179)	0.036 (0.171)	0.064 (0.152)	0.058 (0.161)
Log of sales, CEO home company	0.121 (0.103)	0.172 (0.114)	0.184 (0.124)	0.157 (0.092)	0.188 (0.116)
Market-to-book value, potential hiring company	–0.220 (0.184)	0.388• (0.172)	0.394• (0.177)	0.282 (0.164)	0.267 (0.168)
Need for power		0.116 (0.086)	0.129 (0.097)	0.114 (0.069)	0.118 (0.072)
Self-monitoring		0.103 (0.069)	0.110 (0.079)	0.064 (0.041)	0.062 (0.041)
CEO departure from board where CEO serves as director		0.180 (0.185)	0.197 (0.203)		
Ingratiation ×					
(Lack of) elite undergraduate degree	0.500 (0.305)		0.815•• (0.304)		0.607•• (0.257)
(Lack of) elite MBA	–0.301 (0.243)		–0.316 (0.185)		0.400 (0.202)
(Lack of) exclusive social club membership	0.213 (0.215)		0.430• (0.201)		0.375• (0.185)
(Lack of) listing in *Social Register*/attendance at exclusive prep school	0.363 (0.310)		1.046••• (0.329)		0.999••• (0.301)
Demographic minority	0.444 (0.431)		1.273•• (0.442)		0.958•• (0.367)
Constant	2.202• (1.029)	2.091 (1.142)	2.866• (1.352)	2.525• (1.044)	2.602• (1.136)
Wald χ^2	96.47•••	47.80••	78.15•••	45.92••	72.07•••
Wald test of independent equations (rho = 0)	8.07••	9.03••	8.39••	8.57••	6.68••
N	2,479; 1,125	1,341; 606	1,341; 606	6,632; 2,998	6,632; 2,998

• $p \leq .05$; •• $p \leq .01$; ••• $p \leq .001$; z-statistics are one-tailed for hypothesized effects, two-tailed for control variables.
* Standard errors are in parentheses. Recommendation by the CEO was measured in the follow-up survey of directors who serve on nominating committees. Need for power and self-monitoring were measured in the second follow-up survey, described in the Appendix.

tion (Baron and Kenny, 1986). As shown in model 1, when recommendation by the CEO is added to the model, the main effect of ingratiation and the interaction effects become non-significant. This result, together with the primary results discussed above, provides initial evidence for mediation. We then conducted the Sobel (1982) test of mediation, which confirmed that recommendation by the CEO significantly mediates the effects of ingratiation on subsequent appointments at firms where the CEO serves as a director (ingratiation toward the CEO increases the likelihood of receiving the CEO's recommendation for a board appointment at a particular company where the CEO serves as a director, which in turn increases the likelihood that the manager will actually receive an appointment at that firm). Analyses also confirmed that recommendation by the CEO mediates the effects of ingratiation on appointments at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected.

There is qualitative evidence that when CEO-directors are expected to resign from a board, they are often asked to recommend another top manager who could replace them (Demb and Neubauer, 1992). This raises the possibility that a CEO-director's expected departure from a board could influence the likelihood that his subordinate is appointed to that board. Thus, as noted above, we controlled for whether the CEO departed from the potential hiring board. Although this variable is significantly correlated with managers' appointments at boards on which the CEO serves as director, it is not a significant predictor of board appointments in the multivariate models. Separate analyses indicated that the correlation between CEO departure from the potential hiring board and the dependent variable may be due to the joint influence of other variables in the model: when controls for the CEO's number of board appointments and possession of an elite undergraduate degree are added to the models, the effect of CEO departure from the potential hiring board becomes insignificant. Separate multivariate models also indicated that CEO departure from the potential hiring board does not significantly moderate the effect of ingratiation toward the CEO on the likelihood of receiving an appointment. Thus, though it appears that CEOs do frequently leave a board relatively soon after recommending a subordinate manager for an appointment there, the CEO's departure (or the prospect of it) does not seem to be a significant determinant of the subordinate's appointment.

Our premise that CEO-directors' recommendations can influence appointments on other boards to which the CEO-director is indirectly connected was corroborated by qualitative evidence from our pre-test and descriptive evidence from our follow-up survey of CEOs. In the pre-test, several managers and directors suggested that when a CEO-director recommends someone to the nominating committee, that name can spread through the board network as members of the nominating committee subsequently suggest the same person as a possible director candidate on other boards on which they serve as an outside director. In the survey, we asked respondents to indicate whether it is common for CEO-directors to recommend individuals for board positions who were recommended and considered recently for appointments on other boards on which the CEO-director serves on the nominating committee. Eighty-nine percent of the responding CEOs (97 out of 109) agreed that such occurrences are fairly common or very common. Less than 5 percent of respondents felt that such occurrences are rare.

We conducted further analyses to address the possibility that the apparent effect of ingratiation on board appointments is an artifact of certain personal attributes that may covary with ingratiation and that predict executive advancement in general. First, we conducted a supplementary analysis of appointments at other boards in the sample frame where the CEO was not a director and to which the CEO was not indirectly connected through a fellow CEO-director on the nominating committee. As shown in models 5 and 6 of table 3, ingratiation toward the CEO does not significantly predict the likelihood of gaining appointments at these other boards. These results suggest that the hypothesized effects of ingratiation are not an artifact of personal attributes that determine advancement in general. Second, in separate analyses, we controlled for survey measures of self-monitoring and the need for power, which have been shown to covary with ingratiatory behavior in prior research (Kumar and Beyerlein, 1991). We developed these measures from a second follow-up survey of top managers at 300 companies in the sample frame of Forbes 500 firms (the survey and measures of self-monitoring and need for power are described in the Appendix). As shown in models 2–5 of table 4, the hypotheses are still supported after these controls are included in the models. Finally, we ran separate analyses in which ingratiation was measured from CEOs' responses to the survey. The hypothesized results were largely unchanged and remained significant.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the findings provided strong support for our theoretical perspective on how managers without elite social and educational credentials or demographic majority status can gain access to appointments on corporate boards. The first set of results showed that interpersonal influence behavior in the form of ingratiation tactics directed at CEOs increases the likelihood that managers will gain board appointments at companies where the CEO serves as a director and at boards to which the CEO is indirectly connected. Moreover, supplementary analyses validated our interpretation of the results by demonstrating that CEOs' recommendations mediate the effect of ingratiation on board appointments. Ingratiation tactics directed at the CEO increased the likelihood that the CEO would recommend the ingratiating manager for a board seat at a particular company, which in turn increased the likelihood that the manager would ultimately gain an appointment on the board of that firm or the board of another firm to which the CEO was indirectly connected. Further results showed that ingratiatory behavior is particularly valuable in gaining board appointments for managers who lack elite social and educational credentials, such as membership in an exclusive social club, an elite undergraduate degree, listing in the *Social Register* or attendance at an exclusive preparatory school, and for managers who lack demographic majority status in the corporate elite (i.e., ethnic minorities and women).

Our findings suggest that interpersonal influence behavior directed at individuals who control access to board positions provides an alternative pathway to the boardroom for corporate managers. A central proposition in the literature on corporate elites is that access to board appointments and other positions of power is restricted to some degree to individuals who are endowed with elite social and educational credentials and who are demographically similar to incumbent members of the power elite (i.e., male Caucasians) (Useem and Karabel, 1986). Yet, as several authors have acknowledged, although there is evidence that individuals who have elite credentials and demographic majority status are advantaged in obtaining board positions, a significant portion of managers who ascend to the boardroom lack such characteristics (Useem and Karabel, 1986; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1998; Domhoff, 2002). Our findings provide one possible explanation. In particular, it appears that interpersonal influence behavior in the form of ingratiation tactics directed at CEOs can partially substitute for the advantages of demographic majority status and elite social and educational credentials in gaining access to board appointments. Specific results indicated that managers who engage in a relatively high level of ingratiation toward the CEO (one standard deviation above the mean) have the same or a better chance of gaining a board seat at another company where the CEO serves as a director or to which the CEO is indirectly connected as managers who engage in average levels of ingratiation but possess elite social credentials or demographic majority status.

The findings support our theoretical argument that interpersonal influence from ingratiation can substitute to some extent for the social capital provided by an upper class background, attendance at elite educational institutions, or membership in prestigious social clubs. It appears that managers who have social capital in the corporate elite from their social and educational background have less need for interpersonal influence from ingratiation in order to secure board appointments. Similarly, the findings support our theoretical argument that positive affect from ingratiatory behavior can substitute for similarity-attraction bias from demographic majority status in gaining CEOs' recommendations for board appointments. The findings are also consistent with our suggestion that displays of ingratiation toward the CEO may reduce uncertainty about the social fit on boards of managers who lack elite social and educational credentials or demographic majority status. There is considerable evidence that widespread norms of director conduct tend to favor deferential behavior toward the CEO in the decision-making process. Given that ingratiation can be viewed as an act of submission or deference to another person (Jones, 1964; Shankar, Ansari, and Saxema, 1994; Vonk, 1998), ingratiation toward the CEO should tend to reduce uncertainty about a manager's social fit on boards of large companies, enhancing the likelihood of receiving the CEO's recommendation for a board appointment. Several authors have suggested that elite credentials and demographic majority status create the presumption of social fit with corporate leaders (Kanter, 1977; Westphal and Milton, 2000; Domhoff, 2002), such that managers who possess these characteristics may have less need to engage in displays of ingratiation to acquire board positions.

In one sense, our theoretical perspective and supportive results suggest that managers have some degree of personal control over their access to positions of power in the corporate elite. Managers who lack a privileged background or demographic majority status can overcome their lack of social endowments by engaging in a high level of interpersonal influence behavior toward individuals who control access to board positions. Thus, our findings suggest that individual agency plays an important role in gaining access to positions of power and privilege in U.S. companies. Nevertheless, macro-social factors may also help explain how ethnic minorities and women have gained access to board positions. In particular, external pressure from stakeholders to increase demographic diversity in corporate leadership may be partly responsible for the growing presence of women and ethnic minorities on corporate boards in recent years (Daily, Certo, and Dalton, 1999; Westphal and Milton, 2000).

At the same time, our findings provide evidence of a fairly subtle form of social discrimination in the corporate elite (Allport, 1954: 52; Otten and Mummendey, 1999), in that managers who represent demographic minorities or who lack privileged backgrounds must engage in a higher level of ingratiatory behavior toward the CEO than those in the majority to have the same chance of receiving the CEO's recommendation for a board appointment. Contemporary theories of discrimination such as "aversive racism" suggest that although overt prejudice and discrimination have become less pronounced in U.S. organizations in recent years, relatively subtle, "covert" forms of discrimination may have persisted (Dovidio and Gaertner, 2000: 316; Crandall and Eshleman, 2003). Systematic evidence for aversive racism and related forms of discrimination is limited primarily to experimental studies that show discrimination against ethnic minorities and women in simulated hiring decisions (Dovidio and Gaertner, 2000). The present study is unique in providing fairly direct evidence of social discrimination in actual hiring decisions (i.e., appointments to corporate boards). Consistent with aversive racism and related theories of social discrimination, our findings suggest that while ethnic minorities and women who seek access to the highest level of the corporation may not come up against a "glass ceiling" per se, they also do not receive equal treatment or consideration in the director selection process.

Our findings appear to have important implications for corporate governance. Outside directors have the potential to serve a critical role in corporate governance by actively challenging and controlling CEOs' decision making and behavior on behalf of stakeholders' interests (Fama and Jensen, 1983; Walsh and Seward, 1990; Hillman and Dalziel, 2003). As discussed above, there is considerable evidence that outside directors, and especially manager-directors, tend to abide by social norms that lead them to defer to the CEO's judgment on strategic issues and generally respect the decision-making authority and autonomy of CEOs. The reluctance of outside directors to exercise control over management decision making and behavior has been implicated in a variety of negative organizational outcomes, including strategic inertia in the face of declining performance, ill-advised corporate acquisitions, accounting scandals and white-collar crime (for a review, see Chatterjee and Harrison, 2001). Norms of directors' deferring to top managers are typically attributed to high levels of social cohesion among the inner circle of corporate elites, which is thought to facilitate socialization of new directors and social control of deviant behavior (Domhoff, 1978, 2002; Palmer, 1987; Westphal and Khanna, 2003). Social cohesion of corporate elites, in turn, is thought to result from director-selection processes that restrict entry into the corporate elite to demographically similar persons who share preexisting social ties, common attitudes and behavioral styles from joint membership in exclusive social clubs, attendance at the same elite educational institutions, and shared upper class origins.

Yet there is evidence that norms of directors' deferring to managers have persisted despite an increase over time in the portion of board seats held by managers who lack elite credentials and/or demographic majority status. The present study suggests that such norms may persist in part because managers who act in a deferential or submissive manner toward CEOs are more likely to be recommended for board appointments. Moreover, our findings indicate that managers who contribute to the demographic diversity of the corporate elite (e.g., ethnic minorities, women, or persons who lack elite social or educational credentials) must typically engage in an especially high level of submissive or deferential behavior toward the CEO in order to receive board appointments. Given that a majority of outside board members at large companies are manager-directors, and manager-directors are known to exert more influence on boards than other directors (e.g., independent lawyers or academics) (Useem, 1984; Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1996), it is perhaps not surprising that norms of passivity and deference toward top managers would persist despite an increase in the diversity of the corporate elite. As shown in our supplementary analyses, managers who engage in a relatively high level of ingratiatory behavior toward the CEO of their company also tend to engage in a high level of ingratiation toward the CEO at companies where they are appointed as an outside director. Given evidence from our primary analyses that managers who display ingratiatory tendencies are strongly favored in the director-selection process, a change in board norms toward greater decision control by outside directors may require a significant change in prevailing selection processes. For instance, it may be necessary to require boards to select more non-managers for outside director positions and to rely less on CEO-directors for nominations.

The findings of this study extend prior research by Westphal and colleagues that has examined how social psychological processes and micro-behavioral dynamics can have important effects on corporate governance. Westphal (1998) showed how social influence tactics enable CEOs to neutralize the effects of board reforms on corporate policy and strategy. The present study extends that research by showing that interpersonal influence processes are also important in determining who gains access to the inner circle of corporate elites and in explaining persistent norms of director conduct. Our findings also extend research by Westphal and Milton (2000), which examined social determinants of minority influence on boards. The present study complements Westphal and Milton's findings by examining micro-social factors that determine how minorities gain access to boards in the first place. Moreover, both studies indicate that minorities gain influence by engaging in behaviors that neutralize out-group biases, including social influence tactics that highlight similar points of view between the minority actor and the influence target, whether the CEO or fellow directors. As discussed above, our findings also extend recent research by Westphal and Khanna (2003), which demonstrated widespread social norms of director deference to CEOs. Our theory and results suggest that such norms may result in part from selection factors that favor the appointment of deferential individuals to corporate boards.

While our study examines how demographic characteristics moderate the consequences of ingratiation, contemporary perspectives on social influence suggest that the effects of ingratiation may depend on certain other characteristics of the influence target, the influence agent, and the organizational context (cf. Barry and Watson, 1996). A limitation of our theory is that it fails to take these contingency factors into account. For instance, certain personality attributes may moderate the effects of ingratiatory behavior. Influence agents who engage in high levels of self-monitoring may be more successful in their use of ingratiation than low self-monitors (Liden and Mitchell, 1988; Turnley and Bolino, 2001). Moreover, influence targets with an external locus of control may be more responsive to ingratiation than targets with an internal locus of control, because they tend to exhibit a greater need for social affirmation (Barry and Watson, 1996). There is also some evidence that the status of the influence agent moderates the effectiveness of ingratiation (Gordon, 1996). Social influence theorists have also suggested that organizational culture could moderate the consequences of ingratiation. That is, ingratiation tactics may be more effective in organizations where such behavior is normatively accepted (Liden and Mitchell, 1988; Shankar, Ansari, and Saxema, 1994). But most prior research on contingency factors in social influence has focused on how individual differences determine the choice of an influence tactic (e.g., Farmer and Maslyn, 1999; Bolino and Turnley, 2003; Cable and Judge, 2003). There is less work on how characteristics of the influence agent or target moderate the consequences of influence tactics, and there is very little research on how organizational characteristics moderate the use or consequences of social influence behavior. Future research should examine how such factors moderate the determinants and consequences of social influence behavior by corporate elites.

Some social influence theorists have suggested that ingratiation may have a diminishing marginal utility to the influence agent, such that it yields small or even negative returns at very high levels (e.g., Jones and Wortman, 1973; Gordon, 1996), but in separate analyses, we found no evidence for a curvilinear effect of ingratiation on board appointments. The linear effect in this context may indicate that managers in our sample rarely engaged in excessively high levels of ingratiation or that top managers of large companies are relatively skilled at ingratiation, compared with the typical subjects in laboratory experiments or lower-level employees. By virtue of selection factors and management experience, top managers may be better able to engage in high levels of ingratiation without eliciting negative reactions. Alternatively, experienced top managers may know when to "pull back" and avoid over-the-top ingratiation. Evidence shows that high self-monitors realize greater benefits from ingratiation than low self-monitors (Turnley and Bolino, 2001), and top managers of large companies are known to exhibit higher levels of self-monitoring than lower-level employees (Zaccaro, Foti, and Kenny, 1991). Future research could examine whether self-monitoring, experience, or other factors enable top managers to engage in more skillful ingratiation or to avoid excessive ingratiation.

Research could also extend our study by examining the use of other social influence tactics by top executives. For instance, managers may seek to influence CEOs' decision making regarding board appointments or other outcomes by displaying their skill and expertise, rather than (or in addition to) engaging in ingratiation. Such behavior can be viewed as an element of self-presentation (Godfrey, Jones, and Lord, 1986), which we controlled for in this study. Although self-presentation did not have a significant effect on board appointments in our analysis, future research should examine whether the effectiveness of this tactic depends on the subtlety and skill with which it is used (Turnley and Bolino, 2001). More generally, the effectiveness of self-presentation, like the effectiveness of ingratiation, may depend to some extent on characteristics of the influence agent (manager), the influence target (CEO), and the organizational context (e.g., culture).

On one level, our findings point to the importance of social capital in obtaining positions of power in the corporate world, given that informal recommendations from CEO-directors were shown to have a very strong effect on the likelihood of receiving board appointments. Our theory and results also suggest, however, that individuals can actively create or enhance their social capital by engaging in interpersonal influence behavior toward persons who control access to powerful positions. In this respect, our study may contribute to the larger literature on social capital, which has tended to treat social capital as exogenous and focused on its consequences, giving less consideration to the behavioral processes by which social capital may be actively created, enhanced, or maintained (see Adler and Kwon, 2002).

The results of this study also attest to the importance of social influence behavior, and ingratiatory behavior in particular, to career success and power in corporate America. Empirical research on social influence processes has shown that ingratiatory behavior has a remarkably powerful effect on the allocation of rewards at lower levels of the organization, and our findings indicate that it is similarly powerful at the highest levels. Ingratiation was the strongest predictor of board appointments in our models. Thus future research should examine how ingratiatory behavior affects the allocation of other rewards and privileges in top management teams and boards of directors, including compensation and perquisites, selection as the CEO's successor, and influence on strategy and policy. Such research may ultimately demonstrate that ingratiation and related forms of social influence are an important equalizing mechanism in organizations, giving a larger share of rewards and privileges to those who are otherwise socially disadvantaged in the corporate world.

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APPENDIX: Validity of the Ingratiation Scale

Beyond evidence for the interitem reliability and interrater reliability of the ingratiation scale, there is considerable additional evidence for the validity of this measure. The ingratiation scale developed by Kumar and Beyerlein (1991), which we adapted for the present study, has been used and validated extensively in prior research. For instance, it has been used in studies by Watt (1993), Aryee and Wyatt (1996), Orpen (1996), Wayne et al. (1997), Westphal (1998), and Colella and Varma (2001). The scale has been validated by several of these authors. Watt, Orpen, and Kumar and Beyerlein have provided particularly extensive validation of the scale. Orpen provided evidence of convergent validity of the scale, Watt and Kumar and Beyerlein provided evidence of test-retest reliability, Westphal (1998) provided evidence of interrater reliability, and Kumar also provided evidence of split-half reliability and convergent and discriminant validity. All six studies noted above provided evidence of internal consistency of the scale. Moreover, Kumar showed that the scale is highly correlated with Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson's (1980) ingratiation subscale and a refined version of this scale (Schriesheim and Hinkin, 1990), which is perhaps the other most widely used survey measure of ingratiation. The advantage of Kumar's scale is that it was designed for use in organizational settings and has been extensively validated in the field. Watt (1993: 172) noted that "to date, [Kumar and Beyerlein's scale] is the only full-scale measure of ingratiatory behavior in organizational settings."

We conducted a second follow-up survey of senior officers from 300 companies randomly selected from the sample frame of Forbes 500 large and mid-sized U.S. companies. We sent the survey to the CEO and up to four senior officers from each firm for whom demographic data were available (when the firm had more than four senior officers, we randomly selected four). The questionnaire sent to senior officers included our ingratiation scale together with questions that asked the respondent to assess how submissive, deferential, and ingratiatory each of the other top executives was toward the CEO ("Over the prior twelve months, how deferential was this manager toward the CEO?," ". . . how submissive was this manager to the CEO in his/her relations to the CEO?," and ". . . to what extent did this manager engage in ingratiatory behavior toward the CEO?"). The CEO questionnaire also included these questions, asking about the behavior of each senior officer. The response rate was 39 percent for top managers other than the CEO and 36 percent for CEOs (N = 439 senior officers and 109 CEOs). K-S tests revealed no significant differences between respondents and non-respondents on any of the managers' demographic characteristics included in the models, including the elite social and educational credentials. Using these data, we estimated correlations between responses to the ingratiation scale (i.e., flattery, opinion conformity, and favor rendering assessed by the focal manager or CEO) and responses to questions about "ingratiatory behavior," "submissive" behavior, and "deferential" behavior (i.e., as assessed by the CEO or another senior officer) for a large portion of managers in the sample frame (N = 596). There was a high correlation between the focal manager's score on the ingratiation scale and a colleague's assessment that the focal manager (1) was "deferential" toward the CEO ($r = .64$), (2) was "submissive" to the CEO ($r = .59$), and (3) engaged in "ingratiatory behavior" toward the CEO ($r = .67$). Moreover, there was also a high correlation between managers' assessments of their colleagues' ingratiatory behavior toward the CEO and their assessment of (1) how deferential their colleagues were toward the CEO ($r = .65$) and (2) how submissive their colleagues were to the CEO ($r = .61$). In addition, when the questions about submissive, deferential, and ingratiatory behavior were included in the factor analysis with questions from our ingratiation scale, all items loaded on the same factor. These supplementary results further validate our measure of ingratiation by showing that top managers view the pattern of behaviors assessed by our survey scale (flattery, opinion conformity, and favor rendering) as indicative of ingratiation.

We also examined the correlation between ingratiation and controlling behavior. If ingratiation involves submission and deference, then we would expect a negative correlation between ingratiation toward the CEO and the tendency to exercise control over the CEO as an outside director. Our survey of directors who serve on board nominating committees included questions about the extent to which directors exercise control over the CEO's decision making. The five-item scale included questions about key elements of decision control as conceived by Fama and Jensen (1983), as well as general questions about the director's propensity to exert control over the CEO's decision making (e.g., "To what extent has [the director] exerted control over CEO decision making?"). There was a strong negative correlation between scores for the decision control scale and our measure of ingratiation toward the CEO ($r = -.51$).

Social influence theorists have suggested that certain personality attributes should be associated with high levels of ingratiatory behavior. In particular, theorists have proposed that self-monitoring and the need for power should predict the use of ingratiation tactics (Schlenker and Leary, 1982; Kumar and Beyerlein, 1991). Kumar and Beyerlein (1991) measured these personality attributes and showed that ingratiation items loaded on a different factor from the self-monitoring and need for power items, and the ingratiation measure was significantly and positively correlated with measures of self-monitoring and the need for power, as expected, providing further evidence for the construct validity of their ingratiation measure. To further validate the ingratiation scale, our follow-up survey of senior officers included a shortened version of Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) self-monitoring scale, which has been extensively validated in prior research (e.g., Mehra, Kilduff, and Brass, 2001), and Steers and Braunstein's (1976) need for power scale, which has also been extensively validated in prior work (Ruf and Chusmir, 1991). Both scales showed acceptable interitem reliability, with alphas of .83 and .85, respectively. Factor analysis with promax rotation showed that items loaded on different factors as expected: items from the same scale had loadings of .5 or greater on the same factor and less than .2 on other factors. The factor scores for self-monitoring and need for power were significantly and positively correlated with our measure of ingratiation ($r = .42$ and .38, respectively), thus replicating Kumar and Beyerlein's (1991) earlier analysis and further validating our measure.