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Mental Simulation of Causality: The Role of Social Class

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ABSTRACT This study investigated the mental simulation of counterfactuals and the moderating role of social class ranking on mutability, causality, and blame. An event is considered causal (not responsible) if it is psychologically mutable. Some recent literature on the topic, however, challenges this counterfactual explanation that it just does not work *now*. In an attempt to understand the conditions under which we simulate causality or not, a total of 128 participants were randomly assigned to four conditions involving counterfactual and social class rank manipulations to determine causality. Using a 2x2 Analysis of variance design, the researchers found only main effects of social class ranking on mutability. The high social class ranking group psychologically muted events more than the low social class ranking group. The results and the discussion of the simulation and the role of social class could contribute to the debate of rationalization of causality and blame in modern times.