New styles of parenting and the transformation of cultural capital

Frederick de Moll
Developments in Cultural Capital theory (see Davies & Rizk, 2017)

Variations within the broader Bourdieusian framework

- **Cultural mobility hypothesis** following DiMaggio (1982)
  “Culture is not perfectly transferred across generations, but is more generally accessible and has the same positive effects for everyone.” (Aschaffenburg & Maas, 1997, p. 575)

- **Home advantage tradition** (e.g., Lareau, 2011)
  “Without a focus on the activation of cultural resources, much of the analytic power of the concept is missed. To exploit the concept, a key priority will be to expand the focus to include the standards for advancement in an institution and the way in which individuals activate cultural capital to gain social profits.” (Lareau, 2000, p. 179–180)

- Incorporated **traits, work habits and skills** (Farkas, 2003, 2018)
  → Non-cognitive dispositions towards school = expression of students’ cultural capital
Historical stages and branches of cultural capital research

- **Initial** scepticism in philosophy of education: *Bildung* as capital? vs.
critical educational science: critique of schools as stabilizers of inequality

- Sociology of lifestyles and social milieus:
  - Integration of Bourdieu’s focus on lifestyles into market-research and individualistic turn following Ulrich Beck (1986) = individualization beyond classes, since 1980s
  - Replication of *Distinction* since late 1990s → milieu-specific habitus and cultural fit/mismatch in educational institutions as causes of educational inequality
Example of Bourdieusian class analysis in Germany (Jodhka, Rehbein & Souza, 2018, p. 33)
Historical stages and branches of cultural capital research

- Increased use in **quantitative research** after PISA “shock” 2000 → focus on high-status activities and cultural goods (“books”-variable)

- Qualitative educationalists: Insist on habitus and cultural capital as part of a broader conceptual framework (capital, field, class, practice…)
  - More orthodox reading of Bourdieu (1986): in defense of grand theory
  - Three forms of cultural capital (institutionalized, objectified, incorporated)
  - Empirical reconstruction of students’ habitus, class-specific family cultures and institutional habitus of schools
Theoretical framework

Bourdieu’s conceptual repertoire

- **Social position and class**
  - result of one’s economic and cultural capital

- **Cultural practice and lifestyle**
  - focus on how parents are positioned and what they do in fields and contexts, e.g. education, family → parenting practices and styles

- **Habitus**
  - “schemes of perception, thought and action” (Bourdieu, 2010, p. 54)
    → parental beliefs, attitudes, self-views
    → children’s attitudes towards school; *traits, work habits and styles*
  - But how do the actual transmission processes work?
Bourdieu’s (1986) theory of cultural transmission and educational inequality

Figure 1. Cultural transmission of educational advantages and disadvantages
Lareau’s assertion

Transmission processes are best understood as a specific constellation of class-related practices in the family (Lareau, 2011)

“I have sought to draw a more comprehensive picture by moving beyond the walls of the home and by exploring social class differences in the organization and experiences of childhood” (Lareau, 2000, p. 167)

Goal → Reconstruct (Lareau, 2011) qualitative differences in parenting

underlying logics of parenting and family life
Concerted Cultivation (Lareau, 2011)

- Parents promote child’s talents and skills
- Children enrolled in multiple organized activities
- Negotiations and reasoning characterize parent-child discourse
- Children can contest adult’s decisions
- Parents act on behalf of child, e.g. in school
- Parents train child to act confidently when dealing with adults
International research on concerted cultivation: North America

**United States**

- Concerted Cultivation strongly associated to SES (Cheadle & Amato, 2011), leads to higher cognitive skills (Bodovski & Farkas, 2008; Cheadle, 2009)
- mediates effect of SES on test scores/GPA (Redford, Johnson & Honnold, 2009)
- participation in organized activities mediates SES effect on (non-)cognitive skills (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010)
- But: parents across classes try to provide learning opportunities to children (Chin & Phillips, 2004)

**Canada**

- School choice part of concerted cultivation practices (Davies & Aurini, 2008)
- Intensive parenting increasingly adopted by lower-class parents (Aurini, 2015)
International research on concerted cultivation: Europe and Asia

Ireland
- Concerted Cultivation prevalent in high-SES families (McCoy, Byrne & Banks, 2011)

England
- middle class parents arrange for ‘enrichment activities’ in early childhood to promote children’s talents and skills (Vincent & Ball, 2007)
- divergent orientations toward education between and within classes (Irwin & Elley, 2010)
- class not a convincing predictor of parenting (Henderson, 2013)

Scotland
- four classed types among mothers with preschool children (Wood, 2014)

Japan
- variant of concerted cultivation in higher-class families = higher emphasis on shadow education (‘juku’) and organized activities more directly related to enhancing school performance (e.g., Matsuoka, 2019; Matsuoka, Nakamuro & Inui, 2015)
Models of lower-/working-class parenting

**Accomplishment of Natural Growth** (Lareau, 2011) → U.S.
- Children are often left to their own devices
- Limited resources determine major parts of daily life
- Clear boundaries between adults and children
- Frequent use of directives

**Active Cultivation** (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2011) → UK
- Children engage in educational activities and seek supporting peers
- Family practices often with some relation to learning (e.g. reading)
- Parents and children share daily chores like cooking
- Parents look for affordable organized activities
- Positive attitude towards school
- Sense of self-efficacy regarding ability to support child’s learning despite limitations to cultural and economic capital
Research gaps and objectives

Methodological

• Test how Lareau’s (2011) concepts work in Europe / Germany
• Transfer of qualitative findings into quantitative paradigm (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005)
• Quantify Bourdieuian concepts (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014)

Substantive

• Typological exploration of parenting practices
• Include parents’ own views on family life and their assessment of their child’s home learning opportunities (Hughes, 2008)
• Further validate social class differences: between and within
EDUCARE-study (2010–2016): “Childhood education and care from the perspective of policy makers, professionals in kindergartens and primary schools, parents and children”

EDUCAREplus (2017–2020): “Milieu-Specific Self-Views and Practices of Children, Parents, and Educators in Education and Care Settings of Early and Middle Childhood”

- Funding: Volkswagen foundation
- IDeA research center and Goethe University Frankfurt
- Team: Tanja Betz (PI), Stefanie Bischoff, Frederick de Moll
- Cross-sectional mixed-methods study involving parents, children, teachers from 16 primary schools in 2 major urban areas in Germany in 2012/2013

Middle childhood / Primary school sample

- $N = 503$ parents of children in 3rd and 4th grade
- 16 primary schools in 2 major urban areas in Germany
Research questions

1. Are there specific patterns of parenting practices that reveal classed parenting styles in Germany?

2. How do parenting styles relate to parenting beliefs (parental habitus) and social class?
1. Measurement of parenting practices and beliefs
   - Factor analyses
   - Composite scales

2. Latent profile analyses with 8 indicators
   - Identification of best fitting model: $c = 3$ latent profiles
   - Use of covariates to optimize and validate the solution: 
   - Compare predicted probabilities for parenting styles

3. Regression models: multinomial logit model | linear regression
   - Dependent variables: parenting style | parental beliefs
   - Independent variables: social position | + parenting style
   - Control variables: place of residency, immigrant, child’s age and sex, mother’s employment status, marital status
   - Compare predicted values
Methods: Variables

**Parenting practices: Language Use**

1. **Parent-child discourse** (5 Items, $\alpha = .69$)
   - e.g. “My child and I discuss strategies on how to solve problems.”

2. **Strengthen child’s confidence** (3 Items, $\alpha = .72$)
   - e.g. “I encourage my child to take up its position when interacting with adults.”

3. **Use of directives** (8 Items, $\alpha = .77$)
   - e.g. “I take care that my child isn’t too cheeky toward other adults”.

(5-point scales from 1 = never to 5 = always)
Methods: Variables

**Parenting practices: Organization of Daily Life**

1. **Cultural parent-child activities** (5 Items, \( \alpha = .68 \))
   - e.g. “We read books together.”

2. **Involvement of the child in adult activities** (5 Items, \( \alpha = .63 \))
   - e.g. “We go shopping together (e.g. to buy groceries).”

3. **Home family activities** (3 Items, \( \alpha = .44 \))
   - e.g. “We cook together.”

4. **Child’s participation in organized activities** (5 Items)
   - e.g. athletics, music lessons

(5-point scales from 1 = never to 5 = every day)
Parenting practices: Interventions in institutions

Parental participation at school
(4 Items, $\alpha = .66$)
- e.g. “I participate in the parent council.”

(4-point scale from 1 = never to 4 = often)
Parental habitus: What does your child learn and experience in your family?

1. **Self-Assuredness** (5 Items, $\alpha = .68$)
   - e.g. “Compared to other children, my child has a broad general knowledge”, “My family has more to offer to our child than most families do.”

2. **Eagerness/Keenness** (3 Items, $\alpha = .81$)
   - e.g. “At home, my child is encouraged to work hard”, “My child learns that effort pays off.”

3. **Sense of constraint** (4 Items, $\alpha = .74$)
   - e.g. “I have too few opportunities to nurture my child’s interests”, “At home, my child doesn’t get enough incentives for a positive development.”

(4-point scales from 1 = disagree to 4 = agree)
Methods

- **Social Position/Class** → standardized composite variable
  - **Monthly household net income (economic capital)**
    \[ M = 4046.77 \text{ €} \ (SD = 2393.28) \]
  - **Parents’ level of education (institutionalized cultural capital)**
    Min: 1 = *no school degree*; Max: 8 = *university degree*
    Average level of education: \[ M = 6.58 \ (SD = 1.58) \]

Table 1.
*Average income and education at different levels of social position*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social position</th>
<th>Net household income</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper</strong> ((1.00 \ SD \ to \ max.))</td>
<td>( Md = 8000 \text{ €} )</td>
<td>University degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong> ((-1 \ SD \ to \ 1 \ SD))</td>
<td>( Md = 3500 \text{ €} )</td>
<td>Abitur + vocational training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower</strong> ((\text{min. to } -1.00SD))</td>
<td>( Md = 1900 \text{ €} )</td>
<td>10th grade secondary ed. + vocational training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2. Average z-scores of practices for each parenting style

- Natural growth parenting
  - Strengthen child's confidence
  - Cultural activities
  - Involvement at school
  - Use of directives
  - Parent-child discourse
  - Parent-child home activities

- Concerted cultivation
  - Strengthen child's confidence
  - Cultural activities
  - Involvement at school
  - Use of directives
  - Parent-child discourse
  - Parent-child home activities

- Ambitious parenting
  - Strengthen child's confidence
  - Cultural activities
  - Involvement at school
  - Use of directives
  - Parent-child discourse
  - Parent-child home activities
  - Organized activities
Figure 3. Parenting styles at different levels of social position

Y = 1 ‘Concerted cultivation’ | Y = 2 ‘Natural growth’ | Y = 3 ‘Ambitious parenting’

Low social position

High social position

Predicted Values: Y|X

Y = 1
Y = 2
Y = 3

predicted values

low = −1 SD | high = +1 SD
Figure 4. Confirmatory factor model for parental habitus

Note. The model is based on the data of n = 498 parents. The coefficients shown in the figure are standardized loadings and between-factor correlations. All coefficients are significant at the 5%-level. The model fit is $\chi^2(41) = 80.48, p < .01$, RMSEA = .04 (90% C.I. [.03, .06]), CFI = .95.
Table 3
Predicted values of parents’ views of themselves in relation to parenting style and social position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social position</th>
<th>Parenting style</th>
<th>Self-Assuredness</th>
<th>Eagerness</th>
<th>Sense of constraint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Natural Growth</td>
<td>−.86</td>
<td>−.39</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>Concerted Cultivation</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>−.31</td>
<td>−.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Predicted values are based on regression models with all other variables held constant at their mean (continuous variables) or mode (dummy variables). The dependent variables were standardized with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1; the values are pooled over \( m = 5 \) imputed data sets with \( N = 503 \).
### Table 4

**Log-odds based on multinomial logistic regression for parenting styles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Concerted cultivation parenting</th>
<th>Accomplishment of Natural Growth parenting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social position (z-scores)</td>
<td>1.65*</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic control variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother works half-time</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.96*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother works full-time</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.90*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>−.55</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married/parents living together</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than two children in household</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>−.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's age</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.53*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's gender: male</td>
<td>−.14</td>
<td>−.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Reference group are parents with an interactive parenting style. *N* = 503 parents. *p* < .05
Summary: Classed patterns in middle childhood parenting

- 3 Types of parenting styles in middle childhood
  1. Concerted Cultivation (Lareau, 2011)
  2. Ambitious parenting → *Active Cultivation* (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010), *Promotive Strategies* (Furstenberg et al., 1999)
  3. Low degree of adult involvement in child’s daily life → Accomplishment of Natural Growth (Lareau, 2011)

- Importance of social class for parenting in Germany
  - Profound differences between lower and upper classes
  - Heterogeneity in parenting styles among middle and lower class
  - Eagerness strongly associated with ambitious parenting
  - Lower class ‘natural growth’ parents → sense of constraint (Lareau, 2011)
  - Upper class parents feel confident about their parenting skills and children’s education
Limitations in state-of-the-art research on ‘home advantage’

- Concerted cultivation and variants of intensive parenting → dominant pattern of upper middle-class family life across countries → trickling down to lower classes
- Focus mostly on cultural reproduction: → What about innovation and new modes of distinction?
- Shortcomings of survey research
  - Cultural innovations hard to detect
  - Elites and non-conformists usually underrepresented
- Shortcomings of interview studies
  - Recruitment mostly in suburban areas and established neighbourhoods
  - Focus on established middle-classes in contrast to working-class
Who could those cultural innovators be?

New urban class-faction: ‘digital hipsters’

- A ‘creative class’ of professionals in technology, media and business
- Transform urban social spaces and workplaces
- Live in gentrified formerly industrial and inner-city neighbourhoods

What happens when ‘digital hipsters’ become parents?

- How are they reshaping family and children’s lifestyles?
- Will they become innovators as well in the realm of parenting?
- Or will parenthood function as a conservatizing force?
Hipster parents?

Five hipster parenting trends

Julie Scherer - 12:06, Dec 12 2016

When hipsters have children, they don’t stop being hipsters. Oh no!

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Michael Chabon
Surprisingly Parenting Advice

TAMARA REESE  SEP 29, 2016 4:06PM
Research objectives

• Describe current social and cultural position of ‘digital hipsters’ in broader (urban) society → compare to established professional elites

• Examine unfolding debates on parenting in online media that engage both digital enthusiasts and established upper middle classes, e.g.
  • blogs on gender-creative parenting, vegan parenting
  • Instagram parenting influencers; children growing up with self-marketing

• Compare parenting practices between ‘digital hipsters’ and traditional professional-managerial classes.
  • Observations in families, workplace and interviews with parents
  • family lifestyles, children’s leisure, childcare and education arrangements
Four guiding concepts

Valuation = How do hipster parents infuse cultural practices with social prestige, thereby foregrounding new forms of cultural capital?

Capitalization = processes by which valued cultural practices become resources in institutions such as schools and universities (e.g. Wildhagen, 2010).

Adaptation = processes by which families adjust their home practices in ways that align with schooling requirements

Socialization and childhood agency: How do children themselves actively contribute to cultural change?
Focus on creative urban centres: Berlin, Paris and Toronto

1. Explore class structures in each society to explore avantgarde milieus working in the digital industries and compare them to people working in established sectors

2. Combine quantitative and qualitative analyses of texts to uncover contemporary parenting philosophies: web scraping techniques and quantitative content analysis

3. Interview $N = 40$ parents from hip avant-garde and established upper middle-class backgrounds in each city and engage in in-depth ethnographic studies on subsamples to more closely investigate cultural consumption, digitalization, family life, and children’s socialization
Additional interview study in North-East Ontario

Goals

- Compare up-and-coming groups of parents in dynamic metropolitan area to parents in the economically struggling hinterlands

- How do parents in both regions try to prepare their children for the new globalized economy?
  - How does the prospect of youths’ inner-provincial migration shape parenting practices and children’s educational trajectories in the North Bay region?
  - Which challenges, in contrast, do upper middle-class parents in Toronto see and what educational strategies do they employ to prepare children for the new digital economy?
References


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References


Thank you!

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