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## Culture and stratification

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Canonical treatments of the link between culture and stratification in sociology typically focus on the role of culture as a resource for the formation and differentiation of status groups (Bourdieu 1984; Beisel 1997). The classical differentiation between status situation and class situation (Weber 1946: 300–01) provides the analytic foundation and the point of departure for current work on the subject. While often conflated, the terms class and status must remain analytically distinct in order for their empirical interrelationship to be meaningfully examined (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007). The class situation is best characterized by “opportunities to gain sustenance and income” (Weber 1946: 301). The status situation, on the other hand, entails “every typical component of the fate of ... individuals determined by means of a specific positive or negative social estimation” (Weber 1994: 113).

Status, in Weber’s analysis, thus “expresses itself in the specifically stylized way of life to which all aspiring members [of the relevant group] are expected to adhere” (1994: 114, emphasis added). This way of conceptualizing the status situation implies that membership in status groups can only be sustained and temporally reproduced through the “monopolization of [access to] ideal and material goods” (Weber 1994: 117, emphasis added). Accordingly, whereas “classes stratify themselves according to their relation to the production and acquisition of goods,” status groups do so according to “the principles of their consumption of goods” (Weber 1994: 119, emphasis added). It is therefore by molding the criteria of selection into status groups, as well as by providing the symbolic coordinates that differentiate lifestyles across the social landscape, that culture (and cultural goods) comes to be involved in the stratification process.

At the level of everyday experiential reality, status situations manifest mainly in individuals’ differential ability to acquire informal entry into symbolically (and sometimes spatially) delimited arenas of association. The primary role of these circles of acquaintance is to provide a sense of membership and to serve as sites of “sociability” (Simmel 1949), that is—as Simmel defined it—sites of social intercourse explicitly dissociated from direct instrumental pursuits. This is a characteristic form of association “which does not have a strictly economic or business purpose” (Weber 1994: 114). In contemporary post-traditional, market-dominated societies with very little “formal” apparatus of social

1 differentiation based on collectively defined “status orders” (Collins 1975), the primary  
2 way in which Weberian social honor is bestowed by members of one group to members  
3 of another is mainly through acceptance into informal networks of intimacy, friendship,  
4 and kinship (DiMaggio 1987).

5 After the analytical distinction between class and status has been made, the key  
6 question that emerges pertains to their relative causal priority. Most analysts agree with  
7 the general proposition that “[a] status situation can be the cause as well as the result of a  
8 class situation but it need be neither” (Weber 1946: 301). Accordingly, the relationship  
9 between class and status becomes a matter of empirical adjudication rather than a  
10 priori theoretical speculation. However, most American and European sociologists who  
11 theorize the culture–stratification link are not neutral on the question of whether status  
12 situations impact class situations. If some relation were not presumed to exist (especially  
13 going from status situation to class situation), it would diminish the warrant for being  
14 concerned with the culture–stratification link. The key question thus turns on specifying  
15 the concrete mechanisms through which status situations come to infiltrate or modify  
16 market-mediated systems for the determination of life–chances.

## 19 **The emergence and reproduction of status cultures**

### 21 ***Values, codes, and the emergence of status cultures***

23 How do distinct class cultures emerge and reproduce themselves in post-traditional  
24 societies? Post-functionalist accounts of the culture–stratification link emphasize the  
25 crucial role of differences in socialization practices across status groups, which lead to the  
26 creation and intergenerational maintenance of distinct and sometimes antithetical values  
27 and conceptions of the world (Bourdieu 1984; Kohn 1989; Collins 1975; Lamont 1992).  
28 These “status cultures” function as the primary conduit through which partially self-  
29 reproducing lifestyle groupings obtain whatever coherence they have in post-traditional  
30 societies (Giddens 1991). “Social structure” in post-traditional societies is best conceived  
31 as a loose tapestry of status groups and income classes—each endowed with different  
32 cultural and material endowments—competing to exercise hegemony over the centers of  
33 cultural authority and prestige (Bourdieu 1984; Collins 1975; Ollivier 2000).

34 Contemporary theorists are almost unanimous in suggesting that distinct status cultures  
35 originate through cultural transmission processes set within the domestic sphere. Status-  
36 based socialization not only serves to demarcate group boundaries, but has functional  
37 implications for the generation of status-linked advantages outside of the household. This  
38 can happen in several (interrelated) ways.

39 First, there is the question of the origins and consequences of different approaches  
40 to childrearing by members of different status cultures. It is clear that differences  
41 may emerge because, depending on status–group membership, parents may be endowed  
42 with different “images” of the world that serve as cognitive templates in guiding their  
43 socialization practices (Kohn 1989). These divergent cognitive and moral orientations are  
44 reinforced by the pervasive experiences and opportunities for expression of those cultural  
45 patterns that people encounter during day-to-day activity at work (Kohn 1989; Collins  
46 1975; Coser 1975).

47 These cognitive–evaluative orientations can thus be reinforced intragenerationally  
48 through the life–course as persons come to settle on one or another line of work. They

1 are also reproduced intergenerationally through parental socialization practices, such that  
2 orientations play a key role in the status-reproduction process (Kohn 1989; Collins 1975;  
3 Goldthorpe 1996). For instance, members of culturally privileged status cultures come to  
4 place a heavy weight on the value of self-direction because it is reinforced in the white-  
5 collar workplace. In the very same way, members of routine white-collar and manual  
6 occupations come to weigh conformity positively because it is reinforced in the repeti-  
7 tive, low-autonomy work found in contemporary service establishments. This difference  
8 provides an explanation for the phenomenon of status-linked differences in work-values  
9 and career preferences (Kohn 1989).

10 Second, experience with a given status culture can come to define the way in which  
11 language is used inside and outside the home (Bernstein 1971, 1964). Differential  
12 acquisition of certain linguistic and cognitive skills in status-differentiated households  
13 links socialization practices set within the domestic arena with those competences that  
14 are rewarded in educational institutions. Children of middle-class parents are immersed  
15 in a distinct linguistic environment in the home, specifically in parents who belong to  
16 high-status occupations that presume difference and “spell everything out” directly, use a  
17 wider range of both syntactic and semantic resources (e.g. larger vocabulary, more  
18 complex syntax), and attempt to abstract out from both context and time.

19 Because school curricula are presented to students in a manner consistent with this  
20 status-differentiated style of linguistic encoding, pupils from middle-class backgrounds are  
21 able to more easily decode scholastic offerings as well as produce the specific styles of  
22 linguistic presentation favored by teachers, thus being more likely to be successful  
23 in academic environments, net of cognitive ability (Bernstein 1971). Members of high-  
24 status occupations are in this way more likely to provide their children with the linguistic  
25 and cognitive tools necessary to navigate social environments premised on encountering  
26 cultural diverse others (Bernstein 1964; Coser 1975).

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### ***Status and organizational skills***

30 Status-linked parental socialization practices may serve to transmit cultural advantages not  
31 only directly (by rewarding those skills and value-orientations rewarded by educational  
32 institutions and high-status workplaces) but also indirectly, by providing children from  
33 privileged status backgrounds with a generalized competence for navigating complex  
34 bureaucratically organized institutions and effectively interacting with representatives of  
35 these organizations. It can thus be shown that the same formally organized environment  
36 (e.g. a school) can be used in a distinctive manner by parents and children of different  
37 class backgrounds, and that children of privileged status backgrounds are more likely to  
38 receive a “customized” experience (Lareau 2003).

39 Like other status-linked differences, inequalities in the ability to effectively navigate  
40 the institutions most likely to impact one’s life-chances can be magnified when parents of  
41 high-status occupations adopt a distinct (ideal-typically characterized) orientation towards  
42 childrearing, which provides children from these status groups with a host of intended  
43 and unintended cultural advantages.

44 For instance, Lareau (2003) has found that in structuring their child-socialization  
45 activities, high-status parents tend to rely on a logic of “concerted cultivation,” which  
46 involves the child’s constant participation in structured extra-curricular activities outside  
47 the home. Through these forms of social and cultural participation, middle-class children  
48 come to be endowed with a set of habitual social skills—such as the ability to treat adults

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1 in positions of authority as (relative) equals, and to demand customized treatment from  
2 representatives of bureaucratic institutions—that allow them to more deftly navigate  
3 those institutions most clearly linked to life-chances, such as schools. Parents from lower  
4 occupational status groups adopt a very different posture toward childrearing, what  
5 Lareau (2003) calls the logic of “natural growth.” In this cultural script, the primary  
6 parental responsibility is to provide for the child’s basic needs (e.g. food, shelter, safety).  
7 Because the natural-growth strategy sees children talents as inherent in their person and  
8 as following an “Aristotelian” logic of spontaneous maturation and expression (rather  
9 than a “Lockean” logic of cultivation and learning), there is less perceived need for  
10 constant, competitive cultivation of special skills.

11 This means that children from lower-status backgrounds tend to spend more of their  
12 time among familiar same-age kin in unstructured domestic activities; their parents are  
13 unable to provide their children with the same opportunities to develop the same set of  
14 social skills as their high-status counterparts. When it comes to interacting with adults  
15 and professionals in positions of power in established institutions, these children are thus  
16 at a distinct interactional disadvantage. They lack the ability to demand that institutional  
17 regulations be tailored to their particular needs. For both white and black children of less  
18 privileged status backgrounds, schools are perceived as impersonal and removed from  
19 everyday concerns; they are sites of constraint and not arenas designed for personal  
20 growth (Lareau 2003).

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### ***Class habitus***

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Parental socialization practices does not only work at the level of value-orientations, the  
creation of future expectations, and “linguistic codes.” Socialization into a status-linked  
environment affects persons in a deeper manner, at the level of unconscious dispositions,  
skills, and practices (Bourdieu 1984). The implicit immersion in status-linked home  
environments is driven both by the child’s exposure to parental practices keyed to instruc-  
tion and socialization, and by her active, bodily interaction with material objects and built  
environments, as well as her exposure to specific sensory experiences (Bourdieu 1990).

The acquisition of these tacit competences leads to the development of an uncon-  
scious, undirected (but ultimately systematically organized) set of expectations, styles of  
appreciation, schemes of perception, and systems of practical action in the world—what  
Bourdieu calls “habitus.” Habitus can be thought of as an enduring (but dynamic)  
cognitive structure that produces thoughts, reactions (aesthetic, cognitive, and moral),  
and choices (e.g. what to buy, what to major in, whom to marry) that are in tune with  
and attempts (within constraints) to recreate the environment in which it developed  
(Bourdieu 1990). This explains why we can recurrently observe individuals socialized  
within distinct status environments “constructing ... positions for themselves ... without  
awareness that they ... [are] engaged in doing so” (Bettie 2003: 190).

Status cultures in post-traditional societies are thus recurrently generated and repro-  
duced both within the household during the process of cultural socialization and outside  
the household in educational systems and the workplace. These status cultures fall  
into two general ideal-typical groups. The first is characterized by regularly occurring  
“interaction rituals” of high emotional intensity that are keyed to particularistic and  
concrete symbols of group membership (Collins 1975). The second is generated by way  
of membership in larger, loosely knit, more “cosmopolitan” networks with fuzzy  
boundaries which require more abstract and less context-specific forms of cultural

1 currency capable of generating emotionally weaker but wider-spanning forms of mem-  
2 bership across different social arenas (Coser 1975).  
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## 4 5 **Cross-cutting institutional linkages**

### 6 7 ***Institutions, capital, fields***

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9 In addition to exploring the nexus that connects status-linked socialization practices with  
10 success in key institutional sites outside the home, culture and stratification researchers  
11 have examined how implicit institutional linkages across seemingly disconnected societal  
12 domains contribute to the stratification process (Bourdieu 1984, 1996). This type of  
13 analysis combines the Weberian insight about the partial autonomy of status situations  
14 (and their ability to sometimes drive class situations), the Marxian emphasis on power and  
15 cultural hegemony, and Durkheim's concern with the social origins of shared systems of  
16 thought and classification. The key claim made by institutionally oriented theorists of the  
17 culture-stratification linkage is that status-based advantages (as produced within the family  
18 and in formal occupation-based class cultures) come to be inscribed in the very classifica-  
19 tory framework of the institutions in charge of sorting persons into positions that mono-  
20 polize the extraction of Weberian class-based advantages and thus shape "life-chances."

21 All of the major of institutions of post-traditional societies (e.g. education, science, art,  
22 the state) carry the "role imprint" (Bourdieu 1981; Burton and Beckman 2007) of  
23 the status-groups that were initially implicated in their emergence. It is therefore very  
24 difficult for social groups to achieve any type of "universal" (e.g. purely meritocratic)  
25 representation in, and access to, the institutions that determine life-chances that are not  
26 grounded in some delimited class culture. What can be shown is that different status  
27 groups compete for the claim to universal representation. This competition links to the  
28 process of status-group reproduction because, as we have seen, members of high-status  
29 occupational and professional fractions are able to impart those unofficial (and implicit)  
30 sets of habits, competences, mannerisms, and dispositions that provide their children with  
31 a probabilistic advantage of achieving success within dominant institutions. This circum-  
32 stance partially guarantees some form of intergenerational transmission of the symbolic  
33 means of institutional authority and control, but also guarantees that this control will be  
34 subject to contestation (Bourdieu 1984).

35 This sensitizing framework carries with it major empirical implications. For instance,  
36 it should always be possible for the sociological analyst to empirically link even those  
37 fields of practice most apparently removed from status-group concerns (e.g. museums  
38 [Bourdieu and Darbel 1991]; research universities [Bourdieu 1996]) back to lifestyle-  
39 linked divisions in the wider social structure. This explains why we can observe robust  
40 cross-institutional linkages between fields that explicitly disavow being the instrument of  
41 status-group concerns (such as fields of cultural production and dissemination) and the  
42 audiences that incorporate the symbolic goods produced in those fields as a constitutive  
43 part of their lifestyle (Bourdieu 1984).  
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### 45 ***Cultural capital***

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47 The term cultural capital was first used in order to better understand patterns of  
48 inequality in educational outcomes in French schools—such as "educational inheritance"

1 or the differential ability of the sons and daughters of educated parents to be judged as  
2 better students by their teachers (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). The concept of cultural  
3 capital has nevertheless enjoyed much more flexibility in studies of the link between  
4 culture and stratification. In studies of the social bases of cultural taste, the notion  
5 of cultural capital has been generalized to explain differential rates of engagement in the  
6 arts (Bourdieu 1968, 1984; DiMaggio 1987). A key argument here is that the dispositions  
7 toward collectively validated symbolic goods function as cultural capital in post-  
8 traditional societies, because it is the most institutionally legitimated (e.g. through its  
9 reinforcement by educational institutions) form of appropriation of these goods (although  
10 it is not the only existing basis of reception).

11 More contemporary studies have challenged the notion that cultural capital is inher-  
12 ently linked to the arts or other forms of institutionalized “high culture.” Instead, the  
13 empirical evidence shows that almost any set of status-based dispositions embodied by  
14 members of a privileged status group counts as “capital” when deployed to produce  
15 advantage in a concrete institutional setting. Thus, cultural aptitudes that facilitate the  
16 appropriation of locally valued cultural goods or the ability to master those forms of  
17 linguistic expression accorded the most value in the larger society—e.g. “idiomatic”  
18 English (Carter 2003)—can be thought of as dominant cultural or linguistic capital when  
19 they facilitate among the privileged classes particular styles of self-presentation perceived  
20 (consciously or implicitly) by institutional gatekeepers to be markers of a superior  
21 student, endowed with sophistication and intelligence (Bourdieu 1996: 31).

22 In the Anglo-American literature, two primary conceptualizations of cultural capital  
23 inform contemporary theory and research on the culture–stratification linkage. One,  
24 partially based on Bourdieu’s (1986) influential formulation, defines cultural capital as an  
25 aptitude or a generalized, transposable (across contexts) skill acquired in the combined  
26 realms of the upper-middle-class family and the school system (DiMaggio 1991: 134).  
27 The other major conceptualization of cultural capital perceives ambiguities in the Bour-  
28 dieuian-inspired definition of cultural capital as “skill” or “proficiency.” Instead, cultural  
29 capital is viewed from a “boundaries” perspective, and defined as “the institutionalized  
30 repertoire of high status signals” useful for purposes of marking and drawing symbolic  
31 boundaries in a given social context (Lamont and Lareau 1988: 164). This definition  
32 of cultural capital links to a Weberian theory of status-group closure; what counts as  
33 cultural capital is those symbolic resources that are actively mobilized by members  
34 of groups or class fractions to establish their difference from other groups and thus to  
35 devalue the cultural resources and symbolic practices of outsiders.

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### 38 ***The context-specificity of cultural capital***

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40 Rather than being in competition or mutually exclusive, both definitions of cultural  
41 capital are empirically relevant and theoretically useful. This is because what “counts”  
42 as cultural capital in a given interaction setting is often determined by the local institu-  
43 tional context. For instance, minority youth from status-disadvantaged backgrounds can  
44 gain interactional advantages from command of both (1) dominant cultural patterns  
45 (institutionalized and associated with the “white middle class,” e.g. the ability to speak in  
46 institutionally accepted ways)—cultural capital as competence—and (2) familiarity with  
47 minority cultural patterns (“black” slang; a taste for certain musical and sartorial styles  
48 associated with African-American oppositional youth cultures)—cultural capital as a  
49 boundary-marking resource (Carter 2003). The former allows minority youth to navigate

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1 their way through key institutions (schools, the workplace, the law), while the latter can  
2 be used to claim “authentic” membership in their ethnic subculture. Thus, cultural  
3 capital can be used not just as a boundary-drawing resource, but also as a way to claim  
4 ownership of desirable ethnic and racial identities. More importantly, precisely those  
5 youth who develop the ability to straddle the boundaries between dominant and  
6 non-dominant forms of cultural capital appear to reap the benefits of conventional  
7 success as well as acceptance by ethnic peers (Carter 2006).

### 8 9 ***Morals and manners***

10 Contemporary research attempting to conceptualize the role of culture in marking  
11 divisions across status follows Weber and Bourdieu in keying in on the role of cultural  
12 aptitudes and lifestyle consumption patterns. However, this does not mean that taste and  
13 lifestyle are the only symbolic resources that serve to structure and mark the boundaries  
14 across status groups. As research demonstrates, certain moral ideologies may be as  
15 cognitively and affectively salient as tastes in serving as criteria for membership (and thus  
16 exclusion) from specific status-based collectivities (Lamont 1992, 2000; Sayer 2005).

17 For instance, boundaries based on moral qualities associated with socioeconomic  
18 pursuits tend to be more salient among culturally advantaged members of the American  
19 and French upper-middle class. Moral boundaries based on “honesty,” however, are  
20 particularly salient in the US, whereas those associated with taste and broader  
21 cultural orientations are more salient in the French context. In addition, judgments  
22 of the worth of members of different status fractions (e.g. those who belong to occupa-  
23 tions closer to the market) made by members of culturally and economically  
24 distinct status fractions (culturally privileged but economically poor members of symbol-  
25 producing occupations) are structured by morally tinged conceptions of the propriety of  
26 profit-making versus dedication to more “transcendent,” less materialistic pursuits  
27 (Lamont 1992).

28 In addition, nationally and ethnically specific “institutionalized cultural repertoires”  
29 (Lamont 2000: 243) regulate boundary-drawing strategies among members of less  
30 privileged status groups (Lamont 2000), such as when working-class white men draw  
31 boundaries between the “morally worthy” working-class and the morally unscrupulous  
32 upper-middle class, or when boundaries are drawn laterally in order to exclude the  
33 putatively undeserving members of racial and ethnic groups of comparable socio-  
34 economic status. It is impossible to understand these patterns of exclusion and inclusion  
35 and the role played by such key values as “hard work” or “honesty” in the discourse of  
36 the white working class (or the role of “caring” in the discourse of the black working  
37 class) without getting a handle of the distinct, context-specific cultural models deployed  
38 by different working-class fractions, both within a given national context (e.g. black  
39 versus white in the US) or across national societies (e.g. the relatively higher emphasis  
40 of the French working class on cross-racial solidarity based on trade unionism)  
41 (Lamont 2000).

### 42 43 44 ***Expanding the historical scope***

45 The more institutionally oriented framework provided by cultural-capital theory has  
46 deeply affected Euro-American sociology (Savage *et al.* 2005). In particular, the concern  
47 with uncovering and delineating counterintuitive inter-institutional linkages connecting  
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1 status-based pursuits with processes of economic advancement and class-reproduction  
2 remains a key theme. Some of the best work extends this line of research by looking at  
3 the role of both moral and cultural boundaries as they play out in the constitution of  
4 status-group cultures across different historical periods.

5 For instance, Beisel (1997) shows that attempts to impose specific forms of cultural  
6 hegemony on the part of competing fractions of the economic elite stand behind such  
7 seemingly disparate episodes as the panic over “obscene art” in late-nineteenth-century  
8 America or the panic over the “corrupting influence” of literary curricula on (middle-  
9 class) children in schools. The historical evidence shows that in those cities in which  
10 elite groups perceived the most threat from mobile parvenus and newly arrived immi-  
11 grants, projects of moral reform proved to have much more support than in those cities  
12 where the upper class was comparatively shielded from threats to its status position  
13 (Beisel 1997).

14 One of the primary ways in which status groups continue to reproduce themselves in  
15 post-traditional societies is by providing persons with (apparently status-neutral, but  
16 demonstrably status-linked) cultural templates that come to govern spousal choice.  
17 The evidence shows that spousal choice is robustly impacted by status-linked factors,  
18 including the education and occupational position of each spouse and their relative  
19 familiarity with institutionally legitimated culture (Kalmijn 1991, 1994; DiMaggio and  
20 Mohr 1985).

21 Sociological studies of the history of the notion and practice of romance show an even  
22 more complicated tapestry of inter-institutional linkages uniting informal behavior in the  
23 “dating market” with processes of class and status-group reproduction (Illouz 1997).  
24 Modern notions of romance have been historically constituted through multiple cross-  
25 linkages between various institutional actors (the market, fields of cultural production,  
26 mental health). In this way, different conceptions of the “romantic” as forms of status  
27 culture become even more salient in determining status-based reproduction precisely at  
28 the point at which people experience themselves to be making the most autonomous of  
29 “choices”—whom to fall in love with. Preferences for a “soul-mate” are inseparable  
30 from other systems of preferences acquired and transmitted in the same sites dedicated to  
31 status-group reproduction, such as schools and the home (Bourdieu 1984). In this  
32 respect, homogamy based on status continues to be produced within a system dedicated  
33 to the discourse of love as an overwhelming (non-rational) emotional force or as an  
34 idiosyncratic (status-neutral) individual experience (Illouz 1997).

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### 37 **Problems and prospects in culture and stratification research**

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39 Contemporary analysts of the culture–stratification link have continued to develop the  
40 classical legacy by producing innovative lines of research. They have attempted to  
41 explore new dimensions of the culture and stratification links in two ways: “extensively,”  
42 in terms of historical nuance and scope, complexity, and the number of institutional  
43 linkages through which class cultures come to acquire hegemony over a given set of  
44 authoritative discourses; and “intensively,” in terms of uncovering process-based  
45 mechanisms through which status-based advantage is intergenerationally transmitted or  
46 produced and reproduced in concrete contexts.

47 A lot of this work, even that which takes a more comparative approach (e.g. Lamont  
48 1992, 2000), is centered on the Euro-American West, and is thus not as fully



1 geographically and cross-culturally representative as it could be (Kane 2003). Recent  
2 moves toward a more comparative approach to the study of “repertoires of evaluation”  
3 are a commendable way to radicalize the extensive strategy (Lamont and Thévenot  
4 2000). Nevertheless, we still have very limited knowledge of how the relationship  
5 between status and class situations is manifested outside of the Euro-American  
6 context. Exceptions to this general claim include scholarship that explores the relation-  
7 ship between arts consumption and social stratification, a field of study that has  
8 experienced a very healthy expansion of late (Peterson 2005). This work has extended  
9 the “cultural-capital” framework for the study of lifestyle consumption patterns to  
10 Latin America and the transition economies of Russia and the former Soviet block  
11 (e.g. Zavisca 2005; Torche 2007).

12 We know even less about how cultural repertoires deployed for the demarcation of  
13 symbolic boundaries operate in non-Western developing countries. Outside of sociology,  
14 there is a vibrant and exponentially growing literature on cultural consumption  
15 and global media in anthropology and communications. In it, researchers make use of  
16 fundamental sociological insights on the relationship between status-based stratification  
17 and lifestyle. Some of this research indicates that the cultural-capital framework can  
18 certainly be used to understand the relative appeal of global versus local cultural products  
19 (Straubhaar 2007). For instance, in the case of Brazil, evidence shows that membership  
20 in distinct status fractions shapes media and other culture-consumption choices: members  
21 of culturally advantaged status groups gravitate towards “global” (English-language)  
22 culture and those endowed with less cultural capital prefer regional and local (“cultural  
23 proximate”) materials rendered in the national language. This work represents a good  
24 first step toward greater dialogue between scholars of globalization and scholars of culture  
25 and stratification.

26 It is clear that progress in the field requires both a continuation and a radicalization of  
27 extensive and intensive strategies. For the extensive strategy, it is important to examine  
28 the ever-changing and increasingly complex inter-institutional linkages through which  
29 status systems connect to class systems of rank both in contemporary “network” societies  
30 and during the transition to neoliberalism throughout the globe. Furthermore, it is  
31 important to begin to theorize the interstitial sites in which status-based cultural practices  
32 are beginning to become objectified and institutionalized (see, for instance, Illouz 2007  
33 on “emotional capital”) so that we may continue to illuminate the sometimes surrepti-  
34 tious ways in which institutional logics based on delimited class cultures come to acquire  
35 society-wide cultural authority across and within contemporary contexts.

36 In terms of the intensive strategy, we need research designs that highlight the  
37 fine-grained processual mechanisms and processes responsible for the transmission of  
38 cultural resources within generations and across institutional sites (e.g. Carter 2003;  
39 Lareau 2003; Bettie 2003). We still know woefully little about the concrete realization  
40 and operation of the cultural and interactional mechanisms that generate status-based  
41 privilege and are therefore responsible for intergenerational transmission of cultural  
42 advantage. The intensive strategy may be harder to pursue than the extensive one but  
43 is equally essential. For only by having a clear handle on the micro-mechanisms  
44 and processes of status-based reproduction can we understand the origins of the appar-  
45 ently “natural gifts” that allow members of privileged status groups to more effectively  
46 navigate key institutional settings—settings that certify some cultural competencies as  
47 more legitimate than others and that therefore shape life-chances in post-traditional  
48 societies.

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