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Cultural Transmission, Educational Attainment and Social Mobility

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between socialisation into cultural practices during one's youth, educational attainment and intergenerational mobility. Using data from the 'Taking Part'-Survey of England, we analyse how far socialisation into cultural activities and encouragement play a role in educational attainment, in intergenerational mobility and in the reproduction of class. The transmission of cultural capital is captured by questions asking whether the respondents had been taken to museums/art galleries, theatre/dance/classical music performances, sites of historic interest, and libraries when they were growing up. A second set of variables gives information on how much parents or other adults encouraged the respondents to read books or to be creatively active in different domains of the arts, literature and music.

Descriptive and multivariate quantitative analyses show that part of the effect of parental class on educational attainment is due to this transmission of cultural capital. Moreover, this transmission also has a direct effect on the level of educational attainment. In a similar fashion, respondents who have experienced a higher intensity of cultural socialisation are more likely to be upwardly mobile, and likewise, cultural transmission has a positive effect on the prevention of downward mobility among service class children. These results are discussed in the light of current issues in British mobility research and its treatment of cultural aspects of class and mobility.

Cultural transmission, educational attainment and social mobility¹

During the past two decades major advances have been made in comprehending both the scale and extent of mobility in the UK, and its core economic and social dimensions. There is now a widespread recognition that there can be general stability over time in the relative chances of children from different social classes in moving into the most attractive occupational positions, at the same time that occupational change allows a considerable amount of mobility because it brings about more ‘room at the top’ (Goldthorpe 1980 and 1987; Marshall et al. 1997; Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007). There has, however, been considerable uncertainty in examining the cultural dimensions of mobility, including both the effect of mobility on cultural practices and tastes, and the role of cultural processes themselves in affecting mobility outcomes. This issue is linked to the existence of unresolved theoretical issues in the study of mobility which pit rational action approaches against those who argue for the importance of cultural capital as a key force in the structuring of social mobility (see Goldthorpe 2007a and b; Savage et al. 2005; 2007). This uncertainty also bears on the analysis of the role of educational attainment as a key mediator of social mobility, given current debate about its significance as a lever for upward mobility (consider the contrasting arguments of Marshall et al. 1997; Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007), and especially on the question of whether the role of educational qualifications in affecting life chances is to be understood as evidence of meritocracy or the power of cultural capital.

Our paper uses the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) *Taking Part*-Survey conducted in 2005 and 2006, to deliver the most comprehensive study of the relationship between parental cultural practices and respondents’ social mobility in contemporary Britain. The *Taking Part*-Survey contains an extensive battery of questions on social and cultural engagement, and data not just on the occupational class of the respondent’s father, but also on cultural activities encouraged by parents or other adults when the respondents were growing up. This makes it a rich survey to analyse since it allows us to assess how socialisation into cultural activities may have an effect on both educational attainment and social mobility. We thus have the unusual scope to unpack the dynamic of those cultural processes which might structure social mobility.

The first part of our paper examines how social mobility researchers have reflected on the significance of cultural processes. We take up the discussion around cultural capital, merit, education and mobility, and report the results of studies that have been carried out in this field so far. The second part of our paper reviews the nature of the *Taking Part* dataset, and explains the selection of our variables. In the third section we examine the extent of parental socialisation and its association with age and class. In the subsequent fourth part of the paper, we demonstrate that cultural socialisation has a major impact on educational attainment, over and above the effect of class. Finally, the fifth part shows that parental encouragement and socialisation into cultural activities also have a marked effect on the prospects of upward mobility for the working and intermediate classes, even when controlling for educational attainment, gender, ethnicity and age. The same applies to the prevention of downward mobility for service class children. In the sixth and last section we finish with some conclusions regarding whether our results can be taken to indicate the existence of parental cultural capital as a significant feature in the shaping of children’s mobility prospects.

1. Issues in mobility research and the need for cultural analysis

Although cultural factors are frequently mentioned in passing, they have rarely been given major emphasis in British analyses of social mobility which have been couched within a class structural approach centred on the study of movement between occupational class positions.

In part because of the way that this approach has been pitched against status attainment perspectives (see for example Blau and Duncan 1967), which focus on the correlates of ‘who gets ahead’, British research has not focused on the people’s individual characteristics which may be associated with mobility. Instead, analytical attention has centred on differentiating between absolute and relative mobility. Goldthorpe’s influential account of inter-generational social mobility was originally dependent on data gathered in 1970 to 1972 (Goldthorpe 1980), but has been updated extensively in the light of more recent survey evidence (Goldthorpe 1987; Heath and Payne 2000; Goldthorpe and Mills 2005; Goldthorpe and Jackson 2007). He claims that there is considerable upward absolute mobility in post-war Britain, since the expansion of professional managerial jobs has required the promotion of those from working and intermediate class backgrounds. Although this perspective was developed in the 1970s, it has proved to be of enduring importance. Goldthorpe has argued against those (notably Blanden et al. 2004; 2005) who have detected a fall in social mobility in recent decades. Goldthorpe and Jackson (2007) indicate that this view is based on the economists’ definitions of income mobility and that if social class categories are used, less change in the rate of social mobility is revealed. The second aspect of Goldthorpe’s and Jackson’s argument is that the relative chances of working class against service class sons in reaching service rather than working class positions have changed very little (see also Goldthorpe and Mills 2005, 2008). Heath and Payne (2000), in contrast, find slightly increasing fluidity, i.e. in their study the differences between working class children and service class children in the chances of reaching the salariat decrease (though do not disappear).

As the most important mediating factor between class origin and class destination, the significance of educational attainment takes a key role in discussions of the mechanisms which produce mobility outcomes. The major issue here is whether educational attainment can be attributed (to a greater or lesser degree) to cultural capital, notably that associated with parental support and socialisation, or whether it should be identified with innate meritocratic variables, such as intelligence. Over the past ten years there has been a growing interest in how educational attainment is associated with measures of intelligence and ‘merit’ (see Saunders 1995; Savage and Egerton 1997; Breen and Goldthorpe 1999). This work has shown that there is a strong link between scoring higher in intelligence and other tests and coming from more advantaged social backgrounds. So, the connection between class of origin and educational attainment can in part be traced back to class differences in ability. Even if these class differences are partly due to differential genetic endowments, socialisation in early childhood also seems to play a role in shaping class differences in ability which would then at least in part be socio-culturally produced (Jackson et al. 2007, Marshall et al. 1997: especially 141ff, Saunders 1995). However, over and above these “primary effects” of ability, “secondary” effects of educational choices also contribute to class differences in educational attainment. In the study of Jackson et al. (2007), secondary effects account for at least one third of the class differences, and probably more – when individual performance is held constant, children of lower class backgrounds are significantly less likely to reach higher education.

It is difficult to know how far these primary and secondary effects are related to cultural processes such as those based on parental socialisation and the household activities when children are growing up. Our paper is able to report unusually detailed items on encouragement and activities undertaken by respondents when they were growing up, which allows us to explore the significance of cultural socialisation processes. These measures are important because they bear on arguments about the importance of cultural capital raised most notably by Bourdieu (1984). He argues that educated middle class parents bring up their children in a manner which allows them to acquire the skills and capacities to do well at school and in the educational system more generally. His account of how this happens is imprecise (Sullivan 2001), but seems to involve familiarising children with the range of cultural and art forms which are taught within the school system. Perhaps more importantly it also means providing the dispositions which allow children to appreciate abstract cultural

forms which are removed from the ‘culture of the necessary’ (see the discussion in Bennett et al. 2009). Many qualitative studies of educational processes draw attention to the way that middle class parents mobilise cultural capital in supporting their children through the educational sphere (Walkerdine 2000; Reay 1998; Lareau 2000; Ball 2003; Butler and Robson 2003; Savage et al. 2005). Middle class parents in the UK and in the U.S. are concerned with additional voluntary lessons and providing a repertoire of cultural activities, thereby imparting the capacity to acquire educational competences (Devine 2004; Lareau 2000). Close relationships between parents and school, cultural and economic resources to prevent underachievement (Lareau 2000) and the transmission of a work ethic that puts high value on learning and aspiration (Devine 2004) all contribute to children of middle classes being successful in school.

Quantitative studies have demonstrated too that cultural capital has a positive effect on educational attainment, measured as performance at school, prevention of dropping out of school early, or simply the level of qualification reached in school or further education such as vocational training or university. Cultural interests and attitudes, the existence of objectified cultural capital in the parental home, cultural activities and the connected knowledge all have a positive effect on children’s educational attainment (DiMaggio 1982, DiMaggio and Mohr 1985, de Graaf 1986, de Graaf et al. 2000, Teachman 1987, Sullivan 2001). Although most of the studies have been carried out in the U.S. or in the Netherlands and are difficult to compare because of different dependent variables and different temporal references, there are some results that seem to be valid across all of them. Although parental education and parental cultural activities sometimes have effects on their children’s school attainment, it is the children’s activities that are most important. Reading, in particular, influences the children’s performance at school positively, whereas the results for formal or ‘legitimate’ cultural activities (like visiting galleries or going into classical music concerts) are on the whole contradictory – sometimes they have, sometimes they don’t have an effect on school attainment. This also depends on which other variables are included in the analysis. After including these cultural resources, the effects of parental class, parental income and parental education are at least reduced. Moreover, the positive effects interact with class of origin and gender; for example, they tend to be stronger for children of lower and middle class origins in comparison to children from upper class backgrounds (di Maggio 1982, de Graaf et al. 2000).

In order to examine the relationship between mobility and education and the role of cultural capital in it, not only the connection between class of origin and educational attainment is important but also the final outcome of the latter: the class of destination. In the study of the role of educational qualifications in shaping intergenerational mobility prospects, issues of cultural capital are considered in a rather indirect way. Marshall et al. (1997) compare the Oxford Mobility Study of 1972 with surveys conducted in 1987 to 1992 to claim that social class inequalities in social mobility are being reduced by the role of educational factors, or, more exactly that the advantages of the sons of the professional and managerial service class are increasingly due to the propensity of their sons to obtain better educational qualifications (Marshall et al. 1997: p. 128). Relative class advantages in reaching an occupational position in the service classes appear to be mediated increasingly by educational qualifications (see also Blanden et al. 2005). More recently, Jackson et al. (2005) have argued that there is actually no trend towards the increasing importance of educational qualifications in shaping social mobility, suggesting by default that social factors remain linked to the prospects of different groups. On the contrary, effects of education seem to be diminished. This is also the conclusion of Tampubolon and Savage (2009) who compare data from the National Child Development Study (1958) and the British Cohort Study (1970). These research findings alert us to the need to recognise the importance of class effects which work in other ways than that of education. We should not assume that educational qualifications are necessarily the only, or even main, requirement for upward mobility (see further, Schroeder et al. 2009).

The research on trends in absolute and relative mobility rates in Britain has been couched, increasingly explicitly, within a rational action theory which lies in contrast to those – notably Pierre Bourdieu – who argue for the importance of cultural processes for affecting mobility (see Goldthorpe 2007a). This perspective assumes that those of working class backgrounds predominantly pursue the rational practice of acquiring the kind of qualifications which are likely to lead to realistically attainable occupational outcomes (like successful vocational training) rather than risky high level educational qualifications in which they might fail (see Goldthorpe 2007b). This has tended to marginalise an interest in the cultural processes of social mobility which were evident in earlier work, for instance that of Jackson and Marsden (1962). However, as Devine (1998; 2004) discusses, a certain ambiguity in Goldthorpe’s commentary regarding the potential for cultural processes to influence mobility remains – as manifest in his asides about the possible importance of cultural factors, which are never developed or elaborated, and his reference to the importance of ‘cultural resources’ in Goldthorpe (2007a) (see also the discussion in Savage et al. (2007)). Devine (2004) herself examines some of the cultural processes by which middle class parents, notably school teachers and doctors, can use resources which allow their children advantages in social mobility.

Although Goldthorpe’s critique of Bourdieu and the use of his theory cannot be discussed in detail here (see Goldthorpe 2007a, Goldthorpe 1996, Savage et al. 2007, Devine 1998), it might be worth bearing his critique in mind when studying the influence of socialisation variables on school attainment and mobility. Goldthorpe sees a strong version of Bourdieu’s theory of reproduction as failed because it cannot explain why, despite the stability of relative mobility rates, nonetheless so many children of working class backgrounds have been successful in moving into the salariat – or, as Heath and Payne (2000: 269) put it, why the salariat is much more diverse in its origins than the working class. As Devine (2004: 93) notes, in agreement with Goldthorpe rather than Bourdieu, there is clearly no “lack of aspiration” in the working class. The results of some qualitative studies confirm this. The middle class parents in Devine’s study who came from a working class background reported that their working class parents had applied strategies similar to that of the middle classes in order to help them in their educational success although they were somewhat less ambitious than their middle class counterparts (Devine 2004: 69-94). Jackson and Marsden (1962) describe an upper stratum of the working class which strongly supports their children in their education.

Only a few quantitative studies deal with the relationship between cultural capital and mobility. Blanden (2006) looks at which children from financially poor backgrounds “buck the trend” and are able to overcome poverty in their own adult life. He highlights the crucial role of cultural factors for intergenerational upward (income) mobility. Parents’ reading to the children, and parental interest in their child’s education (which are statistically interconnected to each other), both have a positive effect on the probability of not being poor anymore as an adult. There are only a few other studies examining the impact of cultural capital on mobility over and above the class effects on education. Although one can think of several ways in which cultural capital and related socialisation processes could have such an impact, including occupational choice and self-selection, the role of employers seems particularly worth thinking about. Jackson et al. (2005) argue that the diminishing effect of education is caused first by educational expansion which weakens the role of educational qualifications as signals and certificates, and second by the growth of personal service industries which demand skills that aren’t captured by educational qualifications. In the course of these changes, attributes such as field of study, university, social background, and physical or psychological features of the applicant can become more important. Although Jackson et al. can’t directly prove the impact of these in part ascribed and non-meritocratic factors, they demonstrate that the role of educational qualifications in gaining certain (privileged) occupational positions is highly variable. Useem and Karabel (1986) show that individual class background and the reputation of the institution where somebody has obtained their degree influence the probability of

gaining higher positions within corporate management. Although this finding is related to the U.S. and to the movement within the service class it might also be applicable to upward mobility into this part of the service class.

This raises the question whether the factors leading to upward *mobility* are the same as those entailing the intergenerational *reproduction* of service class positions. There could be different mechanisms at work, or the same mechanisms could lead to different results (see also Savage's (1997: 308) critique of individually based models in the status attainment tradition). In his framework of rational action, for example, Goldthorpe (2007b) distinguishes "strategies from below" and "strategies from above". Some of the discussed results of qualitative studies, however, suggest that there is at least an overlap in the kinds of (cultural) resources that are mobilised by the middle and the working classes in order to enhance their children's chances to stay in or reach the service classes.

Our empirical analyses therefore are not only aimed at clarifying the association between the transmission of cultural capital, educational qualification and intergenerational social mobility. We are also interested in examining whether cultural factors are equally important for the educational attainment in different classes, and whether they play a role in both individual upward mobility *and* in the reproduction of class, i.e. the prevention of downward mobility. For this reason, some of our descriptions and multivariate analyses will be stratified by class.

The subsequent part of our paper provides descriptive frequencies on cultural socialisation variables from the *Taking Part*-Survey. We present these in a relatively detailed way because British survey based research has rarely explored these issues, largely because of the lack of relevant data. We show that there is significant variation in the extent to which respondents are culturally engaged in their childhood, which might be consistent with the possibility that they are significant factors in influencing mobility.

2. Data and Variables

This paper draws upon the data of the *Taking Part*-Survey of England. This Survey, commissioned by the DCMS, the Arts Council of England and other cultural agencies, aims at giving comprehensive information on participation in arts activities (e.g. playing a musical instrument or painting), attendance at arts events (e.g. cinema or classical music concert), in sports, heritage culture, museums, libraries, archives, and in other fields. Additionally, the survey contains information on the socio-economic position of the respondent, their social origin, residential area and much more. The data have been collected in 2005 and 2006 and comprise a representative sample of the English population outside institutional accommodation, from age 16 up. Although some questions have only been asked to parts of the sample, the survey has an unusually large sample size, with approximately 28,000 interviews (for more information see Aust and Vine 2007, Williams 2006). In all descriptive findings presented in the following, the data have been weighted to reduce bias from non-random non-response. All case numbers are unweighted, as are the multivariate analyses.

The survey asks an extensive battery of questions on respondents' social and cultural participation (see Scherger 2009), as well as questions on respondent's socio-economic position, educational attainment, and parental occupation. We are particularly interested in two sets of variables on parental cultural socialisation which have rarely been asked in British surveys. The first four variables refer to the following kind of question: "When you were growing up, how often did your parent(s) or other adult(s) take you to ...?" This was asked (1) for museums or art galleries, (2) for theatre, dance or classical music performances (3) for sites of historic interest, and (4) for libraries. The five possible answers were "never", "less often than once a year", "one or two times a year", "less often than once a month but at least

three or four times a year”, “at least once a month”, and “don’t know”. It is clear that these variables predominantly tap ‘high’ cultural capital, and can be therefore taken as evidence of parental interest in ‘legitimate culture’. Unfortunately, we have no further information on who exactly carried out the named activities with the respondents or on when exactly that was. However, we assume that it will in most cases be the parents who take their children to these events and facilities; other relatives, the parents of other children and teachers will play a minor role here.

The second set of variables goes back to the subsequent question “How much did they encourage you to...?” that was asked for (1) reading books “that were not required for school or religious studies”, (2) for drawing or doing painting, writing stories, poems, plays or music, (3) for taking part in sport and (4) for playing musical instrument(s), acting, dancing or singing. For these four questions the answer categories were “encouraged you a lot”, “encouraged you a little”, “didn’t encourage you at all” and “don’t know”. Again, we do not know who exactly encouraged the children in these things. Although teachers might be more important here than in the first set of questions, we again assume that most of this encouragement has come from the respondent’s parents.

The strength of these items lies in the fact that they don’t directly measure cultural capital of the parents, other adults or the children as such, but they focus on practices relevant to the transmission of cultural capital, either in the form of the parents doing something with the children or encouraging them. Both potentially entail not only the transfer of interests, but also of knowledge. This is closer to what actually happens in the socialisation process; parental cultural capital as such is not necessarily being activated in socialisation processes. Unfortunately, the eight questions were only asked of half of the sample; excluding the few persons who have answered the questions with “don’t know”, between 13,721 and 13,779 respondents have answered to the single questions. This is, however, still a large sample.

Apart from these variables on socialisation, we use the information on the respondent’s gender, ethnicity, age, highest educational qualification, their occupational class, and the occupational class of the chief income earner of the respondent when aged 16 (which will in the majority of cases be the father).² Variables on mobility are derived from a combination of the latter two.³ Unfortunately, no information on the educational qualification or financial resources of the respondents’ parents was available.

3. Patterns of cultural socialization

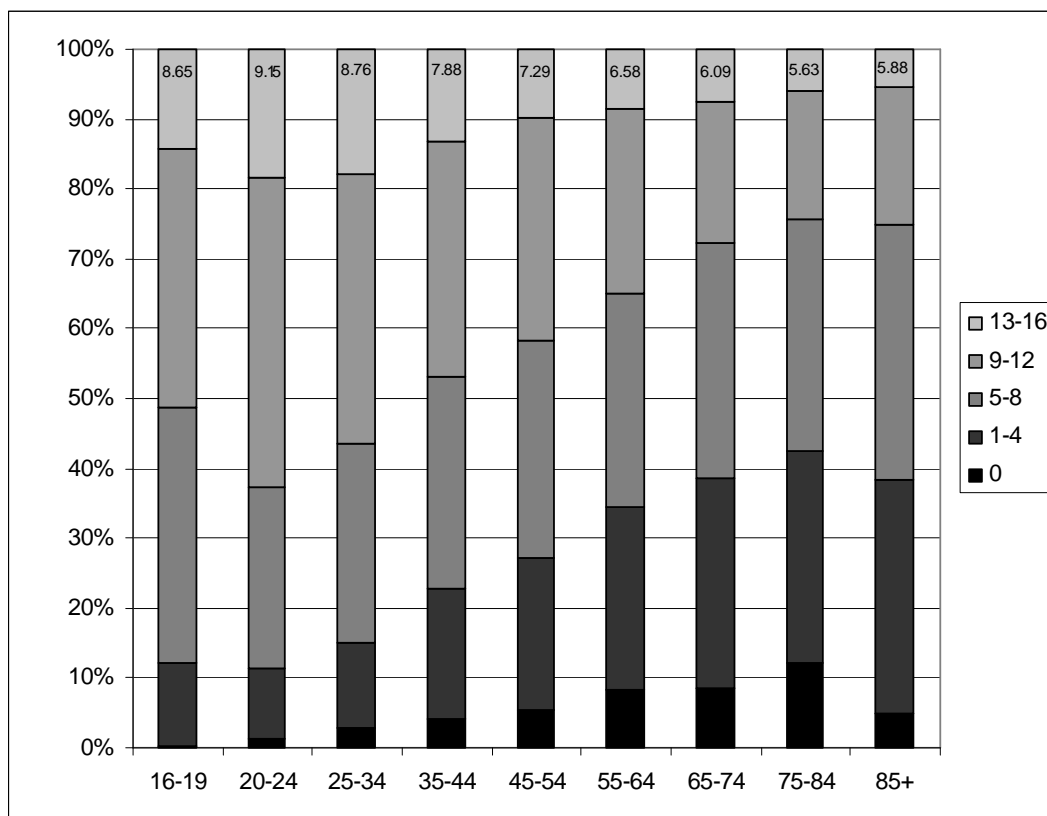
For the variables on attending cultural activities together with parents or other adults, the lowest frequencies are found for going to the theatre, dance or classical music performances.⁴ Slightly more than 50 per cent of respondents had never been taken to such performances and only around 12 per cent had been taken at least three times a year.⁵ Museums or art galleries have a quite similar distribution, though at a slightly higher level. Historic sites are the item with the lowest proportion of respondents that have never been taken there at all – though it is still around 35 per cent. Regarding libraries there is, unlike the other examples, a quite strong polarisation between those who never went there with their parents or other adults (around 43 per cent) and those who went there at least three times a year (46 per cent).

Encouragement rates are highest for reading books other than school or religious books – around half of the respondents were encouraged a lot to read. They were lowest for playing musical instrument(s), acting, dancing or singing and for drawing or doing painting, writing stories, poems, plays or music; around one third were encouraged a lot to do these things. Encouragement to do sport, experienced strongly by 41 per cent, is between these two extremes.

We developed an additive index including both activities and encouragement, consisting of all eight variables. This has been constructed by adding up the respondent's scores in all variables. For this purpose, the first four variables had to be used in a summarised three-category version ("never", "less often than once a year to two times a year", "at least three times a year") so that both sets of variables have the same weight in the index. With the lowest category of each variable being assigned zero points and the highest two points, respondents can score between zero and a maximum of 16 points. A cronbach's alpha of 0.78 for this construct confirms its reliability. As the questions were only asked to half of the sample and the additive index could only be calculated if all eight questions were answered no more than 13,457 respondents have a valid value for it. Around six per cent of them have zero points on the index – i.e. they have never been taken to any of the events and facilities listed and have not been encouraged at all to engage in music, arts, sport and reading. 20 per cent have one to four points, 30 per cent five to eight. Slightly more than 30 percent report between nine to 12 points, and have experienced more intense cultural socialisation, and around 11 per cent score very highly, with between 13 and 16 points on the index.

The descriptive data showing how patterns of participation are related to age is revealing. As the single variables, the additive index and its mean score (Figure 1) show an almost linear relationship with age, with the youngest age group displaying the highest level of encouragement and cultural activities in their childhood and youth. There are only a few exceptions to this pattern: the very youngest (aged 16 to 19) show, in contrast to the trend, slightly less intense levels of cultural socialisation than the following age group, the ones aged 20 to 24. This latter difference is probably not a very serious one as numbers are small amongst the youngest cohorts and some of them might still be living at home. Therefore (and for other reasons), both of these age groups are excluded from later analyses. The second deviation from a linear age pattern can be seen in the oldest age group (85 and older) which displays slightly higher levels of cultural activities and encouragement in their youth than the next youngest age group. This is probably a selection effect, with the better off living longer than other respondents. And third, there is a small outlier in the linear trend regarding being taken to the theatre, dance or classical music performances: here those aged 65 to 74 and also the adjacent age groups report slightly higher levels of activities than the subsequent middle age groups.

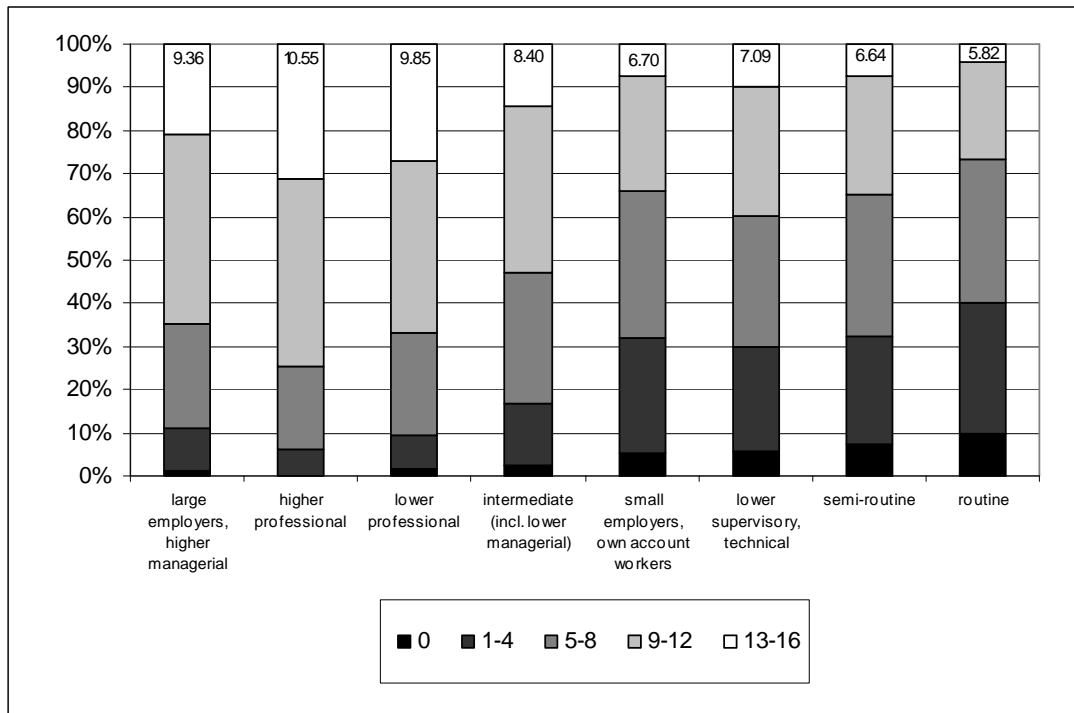
Figure 1: Cultural socialisation (frequencies and mean score) by age cohort



Weighted percentages. Unweighted n=13.446

Recall bias, with older people being more likely to forget their childhood activities, might contribute to the important difference between the oldest and youngest groups, but the difference might also be due to demographic shifts, with increasingly educated middle class parents amongst the parents of the youngest cohorts who are more likely to socialise their children in these ways. Desirability effects that are unequally distributed over the age groups are also possible, with the younger ones being more aware of the importance of encouragement and cultural activities.

Figure 2: Overall-index parental socialisation for different parental classes



Weighted percentages. Unweighted $n=10,568$

Figure 2 indicates the relationship between cultural socialisation and class background, using measures of class which distinguish between professionals and managers. This is important in view of the arguments by Le Roux et al. (2008) and Bennett et al. (2009) that the distinction between the service class and other classes is a less useful boundary for differentiating cultural practices than one which distinguishes a professional executive class of higher and lower professionals, and large managers and employers, from an intermediate class which includes lower managers. Figure 2 shows that the children of higher professional fathers score systematically higher than any other class, with around one third of children from these households scoring the maximum of 13 to 16 points (with a mean of 10.55). This is a very sharp contrast to those in routine occupations where only three per cent score so highly. By contrast, 40 per cent of routine workers are in households with very low scores (4 or less, and a mean score of 5.82) compared to eight per cent of higher professionals. Lower professionals are closer to higher professionals (mean score of 9.85), with the higher managers and large employers rather further behind (9.36). The mean score of the higher managers is more similar to the intermediate classes (8.40) than it is to the higher professionals. This suggests some differentiation between more cultured professional households and those in business and managerial contexts as suggested by Savage et al. (1992) and consistent with the emphasis in Le Roux et al. (2008). The self employed petit bourgeoisie score low, with only slightly more intense cultural socialisation than the routine workers and with a mean score (6.70) well below the mean for the sample as a whole (7.49).

We need to emphasise that in addition to this clear link with social class, other variables associated with parental socialisation and encouragement can also be found. A multinomial regression model examining the main influences on cultural socialisation (see Table 1)⁶ shows that father's class is the paramount determinant, even when controlling for age, gender, and ethnicity – though each of these is also important. The odds ratios distinguishing those with the highest scores (13 to 16) compared to a score of zero are exceptionally high for higher professional households compared to the households of routine workers (69.27), and they are

also very strong (35.85) for the lower professional occupations compared to the routine workers. Lesser effects can be found for the other class groups compared to the routine workers, confirming that the fundamental divide separates out the professionals from other groups.

Table 1: Multinomial logistic regression on index of cultural socialisation (summarised)

points on cultural socialisation index (ref.: 0 points)	13-16	9-12	5-8	1-4
	Exp (b)	Exp (b)	Exp (b)	Exp (b)
class of chief income earner when aged 16 (ref.: routine occupations)				
Large employers, higher managerial and higher professional occupations	69.27***	21.16***	7.96***	3.43**
Lower professional occupations	35.85***	12.03***	4.55***	1.89
Intermediate occupations (including lower managerial)	10.53***	5.55***	2.96***	1.67**
Small Employers and own account workers	3.12***	2.16***	1.76***	1.65***
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	3.44***	2.31***	1.59**	1.41*
Semi-routine occupations	2.03***	1.50**	1.24	1.02
age of respondent (reference: 75+)				
25-34	14.93***	9.60***	4.37***	2.01**
35-44	7.62***	5.82***	3.07***	2.01***
45-54	2.74***	2.57***	1.57**	1.15
55-64	2.12***	1.85***	1.36*	1.15
65-74	1.61*	1.42*	1.25	1.21
gender (ref.: female)				
Male	0.38***	0.68***	0.94	0.96
ethnicity (ref.: white)				
Other	1.02	0.81	1.06	1.53
Black	0.39**	0.58*	0.62	1.03
Asian	0.15***	0.22***	0.36***	0.51***
Mixed	0.34*	0.36*	0.57	0.54
n	9,954			
Nagelkerke r^2	0.184			

*** $p=0.001$, ** $p=0.01$, * $p=0.05$

Table 1 also shows that the powerful, linear effect of age is confirmed in the multivariate model, with the extent of socialisation increasing steadily amongst the younger groups. We do need to be alive to issues of recall and of social desirability here: younger cohorts are perhaps more aware of the value of cultural participation as cultural capital and may over-report actual participation and encouragement during their youth. Even when this is taken into account, an increase seems plausible because of the increasing level of education in each generation of parents – as educational qualification of parents is not controlled for.

Boys are considerably underrepresented in the group of most intense cultural socialisation, compared to girls; just as respondents of most ethnic minorities, notably Asian minorities are, compared to Whites. For other scores on the additive index (9-12, 5-8 and 1-4 points) in comparison to 0 points, there are similar patterns of class, age, gender and ethnicity in a descending order, with the odds ratios weakening as the score bands become closer to those of the reference category.

Detailed similar models for the single items (which are not shown here) clearly indicate that activity is more structured than encouragement by class and other factors. Amongst the activity items, class differences are largest for taking children to historic sites (with an odds ratio of around ten comparing higher professionals and managers to routine workers, indicating a contrast between at least three times a year and not at all). There are slightly lower equivalent odds ratios for attending theatre, classical music or dance events, and for going to museums and art galleries. Although the class differences in attending the library are still significant, this is the least class specific and most 'democratic' activity. Amongst the encouragement items, the highest odds ratio (of almost 5) is for reading books, followed by playing a musical instrument/acting/dancing/singing, playing sport, and finally drawing/painting/writing stories, plays or music.

Compared to the linear effects of class, the impact of age is less predictable in multivariate models including the single items. Compared to older people, younger age groups are more likely to have visited historic sites. This is probably the result of the vast expansion of the heritage sector over the post war years and the increasing availability of historic sites of various kinds (Urry 1990: p 104ff). Probably for similar reasons, younger respondents show higher attendance at museums or art galleries, once all other influences are controlled for. More surprising, in view of the cutting of public library provision since the 1980s, is the fact that younger respondents are also overrepresented amongst library attendees; on the other hand, public libraries have broadened their offering in the last decades, including CDs etc., and are often used as spaces for events around books and reading which might attract parents with their children. However the most interesting finding here is that, controlling for all other factors, the younger and middle age groups are less likely than the oldest one to have attended theatre, dance, or classical music events (although these differences are only in part significant). This finding is no doubt attributable to the rise of television and broadcast media which echoes the arguments of Bennett et al. (2009) that classical music and 'legitimate culture' more generally are losing popularity amongst younger age groups (see also Scherger 2009, Kolb 2001). Age differences are also evident, though not as strong, for encouragement, with younger respondents being more likely to be encouraged to draw, paint, and write, to take part in sport, to play music, dance or sing, and to read for pleasure. The odds ratio for reading is the weakest and possibly testifies to the relative weakening of cultures of book reading compared to other cultural activities. As the detailed multivariate models also show, the lower overall score of the boys is principally due to their being taken less frequently to theatrical, dance or classical music performances and to the library, and to their being less strongly encouraged in all domains except sport, where they are supported significantly more strongly than girls.⁷

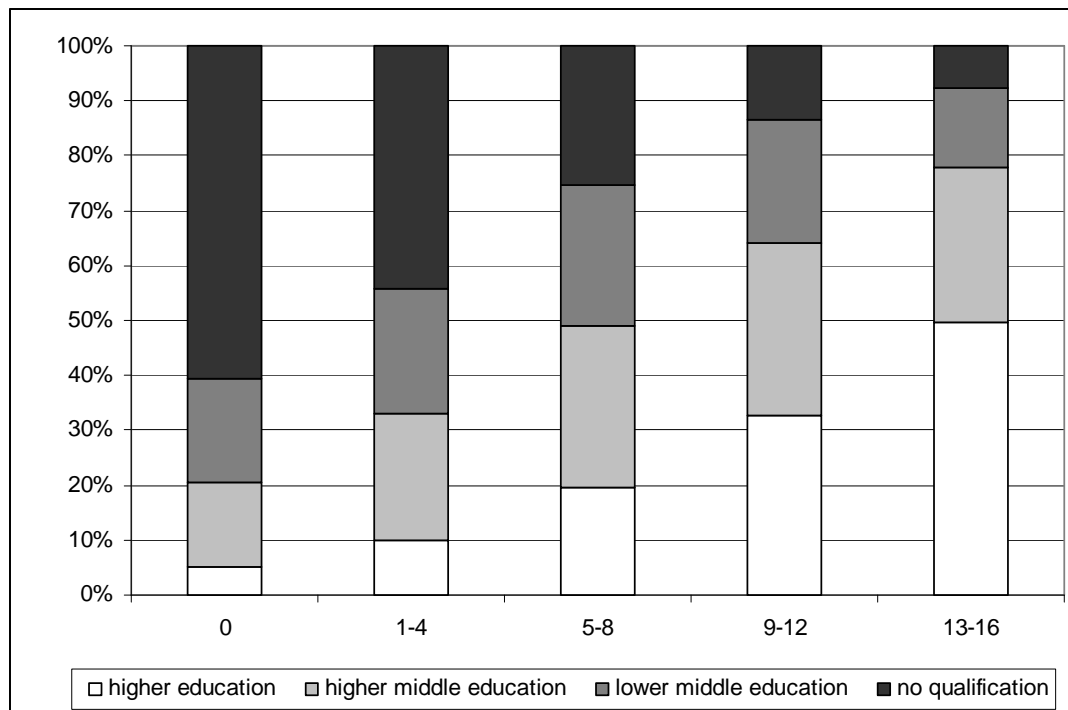
It seems clear that there are marked differences in how far respondents have been encouraged to undertake various cultural activities, and these relate systematically to ethnicity, gender, age and class, with those activities which are most associated with high culture being the most skewed towards the professionals. What we now examine is whether such patterns have any role to play in predicting educational attainment.

4. Patterns of educational attainment

We can easily identify an association between socialisation and educational attainment (Figure 3).⁸ These differences are dramatic and equal in importance to those of class of origin. More than half of those with a very low intensity of cultural socialisation do not attain any educational qualification, compared to less than ten percent in those with the highest intensity. By contrast, 50 per cent in this group reach higher education, five to ten times more than in the two lowest groups. However, the connection between cultural socialisation and educational attainment might be a function of that between class of origin and education: the

privileged classes provide their children with more cultural resources, and their children are simultaneously more successful in attaining higher educational qualifications.

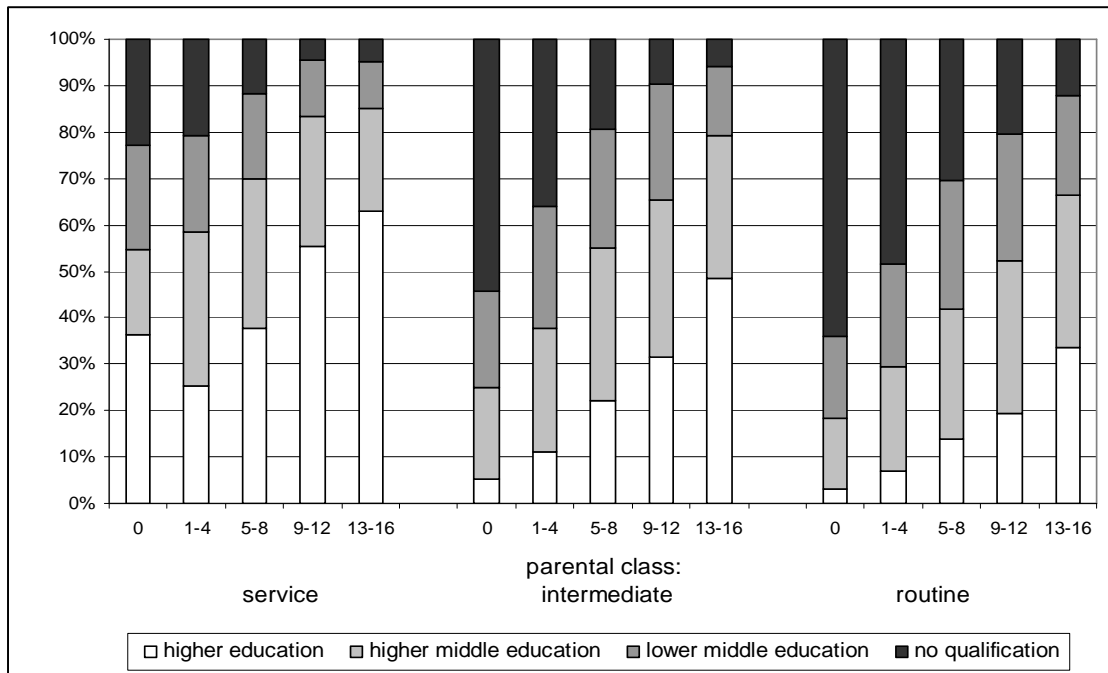
Figure 3: Educational attainment for different intensities of cultural socialisation⁹



Weighted percentages. Unweighted n=12,056

Figure 4 reveals that strong effects for the socialisation score remain even when controlling for class. Respondents from service class homes who score highly for encouragement and activities very rarely gain no qualifications, whereas among those with a low score one fifth earns no qualifications. By contrast nearly two thirds of service class respondents with high scores are degree holders, compared to around one third of those with a low score. For the respondents of intermediate class backgrounds, socialisation scores make a bigger difference. Over half of those who score zero also earn no qualifications. Those who score highly, however, are almost as likely as respondents from service class backgrounds to go to university. These findings indicate a clear differentiation within the intermediate class, with one group being rather encouraging and supportive of cultural activities. This leads to an educational profile of these respondents which is relatively similar to that of the service class. Another group within the intermediate class reports less encouragement, which results in educational achievements more similar to the working class. This difference might also map onto that between white collar workers and the petit bourgeoisie which we discussed above. The patterns for the working class also show large differences. Those with low scores on the socialisation index are likely to have no educational qualifications, whereas those who have high scores nearly always obtain some qualifications, and one third goes to university.

Figure 4: Educational attainment by points on cultural socialisation index, stratified by parental class¹⁰



Weighted percentages. Unweighted $n=9,953$

A multinomial logistic regression model (Table 2) shows that the socialisation index has a marked effect on educational attainment, over and above the effects of class, age, gender and ethnicity. Parental class, age, and gender also have a significant impact on the prospects of attaining a higher educational qualification, so further underlining the highly uneven acquisition of educational qualifications. Men are more likely than women to have gained higher and middle educational qualifications, and Asian minorities are much less likely than Whites to have earned middle and lower qualifications. The age effects can be seen as a control for the historically different opportunities to reach different levels of schools and qualification, thus taking into account educational expansion. These cohort differences are particularly strong for reaching a higher educational qualification. As parental socialisation is included as a linear variable, the positions after the comma indicate how much the odds ratio (the probability of reaching the respective qualification vs. the probability of not attaining any educational education) increases *per 1-point-step of the variable*.¹¹

The Nagelkerke r square (0.347) indicates that this is a powerful model. If we remove the socialisation variable, it falls to 0.270.¹² In comparison to a model without the parental socialisation variable, the effects of parental class and of birth cohort are clearly reduced in the model presented in table 2, indicating that parts of the association of educational attainment to class and to cohort are explained by different intensities of parental socialisation.

Similar models using the single items instead of the overall index show that activities, rather than encouragement tend to have stronger effects on educational attainment, although all single effects are significant. Among the activities, being taken to historic sites has the strongest impact, and being taken to the library the weakest. Being encouraged to read books is more important than all other forms of encouragement, and interestingly its explanatory power is also larger than that of being frequently taken to the library.

Table 2: Multinomial logistic regression educational attainment¹³

educational qualification respondent (ref.: no educational qualification)	higher education	higher middle education	lower middle education
	Exp (b)	Exp (b)	Exp (b)
index of parental socialisation (0-16)	1.32***	1.19***	1.13***
class of chief income earner when aged 16 (ref.: routine and manual)			
managerial and professional	7.23***	2.93***	1.67***
intermediate (incl. lower managerial)	2.36***	1.68***	1.41***
age (reference: 75+)			
25-34	18.85***	10.70***	13.07***
35-44	15.06***	9.20***	11.45***
45-54	9.31***	6.05***	6.76***
55-64	5.05***	3.37***	3.52***
65-74	1.95***	1.70***	1.93***
gender (reference: female)			
Male	2.47***	2.17***	1.18*
ethnic group (ref.: white)			
Other	2.01	0.96	1.03
Black	1.53*	1.32	0.91
Asian	1.07	0.53***	0.49***
Mixed	0.99	1.20	0.83
n		9,934	
Nagelkerke r ²		0.347	

*** $p=0.001$, ** $p=0.01$, * $p=0.05$

Table 3 displays the same model, this time stratified by class.¹⁴ This allows us to address the question of whether cultural socialisation is equally important for educational success across all classes. In the literature, there are some indications that the effect of cultural resources on educational attainment is not the same across all classes. In our model, however, the differences between the exposed values of b for the three different class backgrounds are negligible.

Table 3: Multinomial logistic regressions on educational attainment,¹⁵ stratified by parental class

	parental class	model 1: service classes	model 2: intermediat e classes	model 3: working classes
educational qualification (ref.: none)		Exp (b)	Exp (b)	Exp (b)
higher education	cultural socialisation (0-16)	1.28***	1.35***	1.31***
	age (reference: 75+)			
	25-34	17.38***	16.05***	17.21***
	35-44	11.72***	11.86***	17.65***
	45-54	9.55***	7.30***	9.93***
	55-64	5.93***	5.08***	4.76***
	65-74	2.49**	1.35	2.30**
	gender (ref.: female)			
	Male	2.02***	1.87***	2.79***
	ethnic group (ref.: white)			
	non-white	1.24	0.97	1.58**
higher middle education	cultural socialisation (0-16)	1.13***	1.21***	1.19***
	age (reference: 75+)			
	25-34	7.10***	11.00***	11.20***
	35-44	7.80***	7.50***	10.02***
	45-54	5.10***	5.22***	6.65***
	55-64	3.96***	3.36***	3.28***
	65-74	2.22*	1.22	1.91***
	gender (ref.: female)			
	Male	1.36	1.66***	2.75***
	ethnic group (ref.: white)			
	non-white	0.93	0.61**	0.91
lower middle education	cultural socialisation (0-16)	1.10**	1.14***	1.13***
	age (reference: 75+)			
	25-34	7.88***	11.50***	15.03***
	35-44	8.25***	8.62***	13.67***
	45-54	6.69***	5.50***	7.38***
	55-64	4.16***	3.02***	3.75***
	65-74	2.31*	1.51	2.12***
	gender (ref.: female)			
	Male	1.07	0.99	1.25**
	ethnic group (ref.: white)			
	non-white	0.84	0.61**	0.62**
	n	1791	3007	5136
	Nagelkerke r ²	0.167	0.259	0.295

*** $p=0.001$, ** $p=0.01$, * $p=0.05$

Age stands again for the historical chances of reaching a certain level of education (with younger persons being structurally advantaged). The historically expanding possibilities of obtaining middle and lower educational qualifications are particularly apparent among the intermediate and the working classes where cohort differences are stronger. The educational privilege of men is somewhat more pronounced in the working class. Similarly, differences in ethnic background carry more weight in the intermediate and the working class.¹⁶

As we have seen, class differences in educational attainment are in part mediated by cultural activities and encouragement. Furthermore, these socialisation experiences also have a clear direct effect on educational attainment, over and above class effects. This relationship between socialisation and educational qualification appears to be roughly the same for different classes, indicating that these effects are important in and of themselves, even though they are also class related. In the following and final part of the empirical investigation, we examine whether parental socialisation has any effect on social mobility, over and above its role in affecting educational attainment.

5. Cultural socialisation and intergenerational social mobility

Among those where we know the class of the chief income earner when aged 16, almost 60 per cent come from a lower or intermediate class background (i.e. routine, semi-routine, lower supervisory, technical, intermediate or lower managerial occupations, or small employers or own account workers), and within those, a good fifth (22 per cent) move into the service classes. In the following analysis, only the cases with valid values for parental socialisation can be included. Amongst them slightly more than 60 per cent come from a non-service class background. As in the overall sample, slightly more than a fifth of them are upwardly mobile.

What determines upward mobility is modelled in Table 4. The models only include those whose father's class is low or intermediate (as just defined). Within this group, a simple logistic regression distinguishes those who remained in these occupational classes from those who moved upward into the services classes. By including the age of the respondent we control for the different points they have reached in their careers – the younger cohorts have not yet reached their final occupational position and might still experience some upward career mobility in future. Furthermore, including age can be seen as taking into account the different mobility chances of the birth cohorts. In comparison to the reference group of those being aged 75 and more, most younger groups, and most clearly up to the age of 45, display lower odds of being upwardly mobile.

Higher education boosts the odds of being upwardly mobile. The intensity of parental socialisation into cultural activities has a clearly significant effect over and above that of education.¹⁷ After the inclusion of the additive index of parental socialisation, the explanatory power of the model rises slightly, and the effects of educational achievement become slightly weaker. Being taken to arts events or to the library, and being encouraged to be active in the arts, in sport or in reading enhances the chances of being upwardly mobile and makes a difference within the lower and intermediate classes. Part of the effect of education on mobility chances can be traced back to differences in cultural socialisation.¹⁸ Gender, ethnicity and exact class of origin do not have any significant effects. Whether someone has grown up within the working or the intermediate class does not make a significant difference for the odds of moving into the service classes.

Table 4: Logistic regressions on upward intergenerational social mobility (only respondents with working and intermediate class origin)

	model 1	model 2
	Exp (b)	Exp (b)
respondent's age (reference: 75+)		
25-34	0.49***	0.45***
35-44	0.52***	0.49***
45-54	0.74*	0.73*
55-64	0.72*	0.71*
65-74	0.91	0.90
gender (ref.: female)		
male	1.05	1.11
father's occupational class (ref. routine occ.)		
Intermediate occupations (incl. lower managerial)	1.16	1.08
Small Employers, and own account workers	0.91	0.89
Lower supervisory and technical occupations	1.22	1.18
Semi-routine occupations	1.14	1.11
educational qualification respondent (ref.: none)		
Higher Education & professional/vocational equivalents	40.75***	34.60***
Other Higher Education below degree level	16.18***	14.26***
A levels, vocational level 3 & equivalents	5.01***	4.45***
Trade Apprenticeships	3.38***	3.20***
5 or more GCSE/O Level grades A* -C and L2 equivalents	4.06***	3.68***
GCSE/O Level grade A* -C(< 5 A*-C) and L1 equivalents	1.86**	1.76**
Other qualifications: level unknown	2.89***	2.72***
ethnicity (ref.: white)		
Mixed	0.76	0.79
Asian	0.89	0.96
Black	0.73	0.78
Other	1.27	1.34
cultural socialisation (0-16 points)	----	1.05***
constant	0.06***	0.05***
n	7,664	7,664
Nagelkerke r²	0.337	0.342

*** $p=0.001$, ** $p=0.01$, * $p=0.05$

Finally, similar models for downward mobility are shown in table 5. They only include respondents from service class backgrounds. There are barely any differences between cohorts, but being male and having experienced a more intense cultural socialisation when growing up both have a preventive effect on the odds of being downwardly mobile. In comparison to persons with higher education every other educational qualification entails a higher probability of leaving the service classes. These education effects are only very slightly reduced by the involvement of the socialisation index. In contrast to the dynamics for upward mobility, there is a differentiation according to class origin, with respondents whose father has a lower professional occupation being more likely to be downwardly mobile.

Table 5: Logistic regressions on downward intergenerational social mobility (only respondents with service class origin)

	model 1	model 2
	Exp (b)	Exp (b)
respondent's age (ref.: 75+)		
25-34	1.52	1.56
35-44	1.61	1.65
45-54	1.77*	1.75*
55-64	1.50	1.47
65-74	1.80	1.77
gender (ref.: female)		
male	0.76*	0.72**
father's occupational class (ref. large employers, higher managerial and professional occupations)		
Lower professional occupations	1.27*	1.27*
educational qualification (ref.: higher education & professional/vocational equivalents)		
other higher education below degree level	2.33***	2.19***
A levels, vocational level 3 & equivalents	7.36***	6.93***
trade apprenticeships	19.43***	18.47***
5 or more GCSE/O Level grades A* -C and L2 equivalents	10.16***	9.53***
GCSE/O Level grade A* -C(< 5 A*-C) and L1 equivalents	10.11***	9.07***
other qualifications: level unknown	8.89***	8.38***
none	20.15***	17.62***
ethnicity (ref.: White)		
Mixed	0.83	0.80
Asian	1.09	1.00
Black	1.89*	1.74
Other	1.15	1.13
cultural socialisation (0-16 points)	----	0.95**
constant	0.29***	0.49*
n	1,691	1,691
Nagelkerke r^2	0.302	0.307

*** $p=0.001$, ** $p=0.01$, * $p=0.05$

6. Discussion and conclusions

We have demonstrated that the disposition of parents (and other adults) to take children to cultural events and facilities and to encourage them to read, to do arts, music, and sport is unequally distributed across classes. This is part of the reason why children of less privileged class backgrounds obtain lower levels of educational qualification. Furthermore, and over and above the class effect, the transmission of cultural capital also has a direct impact on

educational attainment. Yet the benefits of activities and encouragement don't stop with education – having experienced higher levels of these as children raises the chances of intermediate and working class children being upwardly mobile, even taking the effects of educational attainment into account. The same applies to the prevention of downward mobility in children of service class backgrounds but the model explains less of the overall variation in the outcomes. Regarding the single variables of our index, actions clearly speak louder than words – more detailed models (not displayed here) show that activities prove to be more important in educational attainment and in being upwardly mobile than encouragement. Being taken to historic sites stands out as the influence with the biggest single effect, and being encouraged to do sport is the least influential of all eight variables.

However, a number of limitations need to be considered when interpreting our results, in addition to the usual caveats of the survey method.¹⁹ First, our central variable is based on a set of rather general questions: We do not know who exactly took the respondents to cultural events or facilities or who encouraged them to do certain things. Nor do we know exactly when this was – the expression “when you were growing up” could not be less precise. Second, recall biases or biases induced by social desirability may affect the respondents' answers. Third, our information on the class destination of the respondents is not very accurate because we only know their occupational position at the time of the interview for the *Taking Part*-Survey and the respondents are of very different ages. We have tried to alleviate the consequences of this by including only respondents aged 25 and over in the analysis, but in any event it has to be kept in mind that many of the respondents have experienced or will experience significant career mobility, and this will not be evenly distributed across age groups. Fourth, important information on other determinants of educational attainment and intergenerational mobility are not available in the survey; especially the financial resources of the parents, the parents' education and the child's ability have been shown to be important. In addition to this very concrete missing information, there are other factors which might account for our results – the exact mechanisms of how the activities and the encouragement the respondents have experienced are linked to education and mobility are not clear.

The connection between these socialisation characteristics and our two dependent variables: educational attainment and social mobility could work in a number of different ways. As discussed in our introduction, primary effects of ability on educational attainment have to be distinguished from those that are connected to educational choices. We cannot separate primary (ability) from secondary effects (choice) on school attainment here, but it is very probable that cultural socialisation is connected to both, i.e. it has the potential to improve the child's ability in important areas of school performance, and it might be an indicator of attitudes and preferences in the family of origin that go together with more ambitious educational choices. As a third possible mechanism, being taken to cultural events and facilities and being encouraged to read, do arts and music etc. may be more about learning tastes and preferences of “legitimate” culture than about actual skills – this would be a more specific version of Bourdieu's cultural capital hypothesis. These three mechanisms are also the most important ones discussed in the literature – De Graaf (2000), for example, mentions self-selection, i.e. different educational choices, indirect exclusion (through worse school performance) and teacher selection for example by criteria that are connected to the cultural resources in the family of background.

Other factors which might contribute to the impact of cultural socialisation because they are correlated with it are in particular financial and social resources (see also Savage and Egerton 1997). As discussed at the beginning, financial resources can help in realising more ambitious educational choices or in preventing failure. Social networks including other parents, teachers or other persons with expert knowledge on the educational system can help to gain support or access to further resources, reputed educational institutions etc. Or put otherwise, not only the substantial side of cultural practices (“contents”, knowledge, tastes, preferences) may play a role, but also the social organisation of participation in arts (Ostrower 1998).

All these factors probably also affect the chances of being upwardly mobile or of preventing downward mobility. Education clearly is the most important motor of intergenerational mobility, and this is in part due to processes of cultural transmission. However, as for education itself, the positive effect of cultural socialisation may reflect a whole range of attitudes and preferences that facilitate becoming a member of the service classes. Having visited many historic sites as a child as such is perhaps not hugely useful in the selection process for a professional or managerial job but it entails interests and attitudes that might leave a potential employer with a positive impression of an applicant for a job. Apart from what happens during the selection process for a job, self selection through ambition and self-confidence also contribute to the mechanisms that connect cultural socialisation and upward mobility.

As in the case of education, the positive effect of the transmission of cultural capital on mobility may also be due to other resources that are connected to them: our socialisation variables probably are indicative of the parents' contacts and networks, their knowledge about, and access to, the world of the service classes. These could all facilitate getting a job in the service classes, perhaps through intermediate steps like internships – which is particularly plausible for managerial occupations (and not only in view of big family companies). Finally psychological mechanisms can also account for the connection of class to school attainment and mobility prospects. As Walkerdine et al. (2001) describe, gaining higher educational qualifications or entering into higher occupational positions can involve difficult emotions of separation from the family of origin. Circumstances that attenuate, offset or compensate these dynamics (such as one parent with higher education) could have a positive effect on educational attainment and the likelihood of upward mobility.

Because of the manifold interconnections between all these influences, we need to be cautious in drawing clear causal connections. This is not only due to the lack of adequate data to sufficiently map the underlying processes, but also due to the complex nature of these biographical processes themselves. Parents' interest in cultural activities and their higher ambitions for their child seem to go together – but is this because culturally more active persons are more ambitious or because their ambitions for their children (or for themselves) make them more active and encouraging? Does the high performance of a child in school lead to educational decisions in favour of higher education, or does parents' ambition for their child lead to high performance which then reinforces the respective decision (see Jackson et al. (2007) for this idea of “anticipatory effects”). The “baseline” ambition of parents might also be influenced by the perceived ability of the child in its early childhood: faced with a particularly bright or interested child, parents might decide to make an effort, to encourage it in certain activities and to take it to specific events. As with most processes unfolding in the individual life course, this is more about complex reciprocal interconnections than about clear causes and consequences (see also Bertaux and Thompson 1997b: 17), and often there are self-reinforcing cycles whose description sounds somewhat tautological – as for example the accumulation of capital explaining the reproduction of class. Nonetheless, findings as presented here can give an idea of the factors that matter within these processes – and the transmission of cultural capital in the form of activities and encouragement clearly matters.

Our results do have implications for the question of class formation and reproduction. Clearly, the transmission of cultural capital – as measured here in terms of encouragement and supporting activities of children – contributes to the reproduction of class. At least as important as this connection is our finding that cultural socialisation also makes a difference within lower (non-service) classes. That is what the final upward mobility model tests for – cultural socialisation and the connected family background *beyond* parents' class figure as possible means of differentiation within working and intermediate classes. By applying stratified models we have also examined whether the transmission of cultural capital has the same effects (in particular similarly sized effects) in different classes. For education, the direct positive impact of cultural socialisation is surprisingly similar across the working, the

intermediate and the service classes (whereas other effects are somewhat different), and the same applies to upward mobility in comparison to downward mobility, i.e. upward mobility and the reproduction of class are at least in part determined by the same influences.

Many of the “individual” factors discussed so far are not of a totally accidental nature but can be connected to class dynamics. Obviously, there are some intermediate and working class families who are more similar to the service classes in their cultural capital than others. Classes aren’t monolithic entities as the simple class schema used here suggests – they rather are a “moving target” (Savage 1997: 300). Classes don’t show completely consistent and uniform patterns of cultural participation and socialisation. In particular middle class culture in Britain is very broad and by no means limited to highbrow culture (see also Savage et al. 1992, chapter 6). Because of frequent upward mobility in the decades after WWII the middle classes come from more diverse backgrounds and display more heterogeneous patterns of cultural consumption than before (van Eijck 1999). This might also apply to educational practices.

In this vein, class dynamics can also be at the bottom of some working and intermediate class families displaying more middle class cultural attitudes and educational practices than others. Possibly these families have either some kind of service class origin, with for example one of the parents stemming from a service class family, or there are service class members in the larger family network, for example among the siblings of the parents. In their study, Jackson and Marsden (1962: 53-58)²⁰ characterise some of the working class families with educational ambition for their children as “sunken middle class” families, in which particularly the mothers often have fathers in the service class. In their view, this could not only explain the higher amount of cultural capital in these families but may also be a motive for a higher degree of ambition. As the qualitative studies in Bertaux and Thompson (1997a) show, tracing the wider (geographical and social) mobility histories of families is a fruitful approach to a more comprehensive understanding of mobility and the connected aspirations and strategies.

In a certain way this last argument would fit well part of Goldthorpe’s argument: In working class families with some “connection” to the middle classes, for example through the family’s history or through the wider family network, the risk of failure when pursuing more ambitious aims for the children’s education and career might be reduced. However, cultural resources seem central to this: It is the value that is put on education and ambition, the knowledge about the educational system and cultural preferences and attitudes more close to those of the middle classes that seem to distinguish the working and intermediate class families with upwardly mobile children – which does not imply that financial resources do not play a role too. The “strategies from below” (Goldthorpe 2007b) applied by the working classes cannot be fully understood without referring to cultural capital. Educational and occupational choices and the perception of risk are part of class cultures, as especially the cited qualitative studies show. Applying a completely acultural characterisation of the underlying decision processes would mean to argue completely abstracted from individual views and strategies. Although the class typical conditions of educational and occupational decisions will partially work “behind the back” of individual actors their interpretations give valuable clues of what matters in their decisions – and the value attributed to certain (more or less conscious) aims cannot be understood without referring to class cultures (understood as multi-faceted and differentiated sets of views on the world, attitudes, preferences etc.).²¹

Future research should assess the influence of cultural resources and their different dimensions more precisely, for example regarding the time, place and agents of their transmission to children (parents/home, teachers/school, other adults etc.). A concentration on highbrow cultural activities does not seem appropriate although they should still be included. Reading together with children, days out and all kinds of organised activities for children and young people (for example in clubs etc.) should be analysed in more detail. The connection of

cultural socialisation to education can be better understood if there is information on ability or at least school performance available. Furthermore, more information on other, such as financial and social resources is necessary, including wider family networks and contacts. Assessing the mobility history of families – and not only fathers – might give further valuable clues about the underlying dynamics of individual mobility. A closer examination of individual (respectively family) decisions and strategies, and on the exact temporal order of decisions, activities and consequences, would shed further light on the conditions and consequences of mobility and its connection to educational qualifications. Qualitative research on these processes seems indispensable in order to fully understand how individual decisions on education and occupation are made, and this should involve the decisions of gatekeepers like teachers and employers.

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- 1 We are thankful to the members of the European Network for the Study of Cultural Distinctions and Social Differentiation, in particular to Semi Purhonen, and to Madeleine Reeves for their very helpful comments.
 - 2 In the publicly available dataset the standard occupational classification 2000 (SOC 2000) was given for this chief income earner. From this, the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) could be derived. Due to the lack of further information on the occupation of the chief income earner (employment status and size of company in the case of self-employed), only the simplified derivation method could be used, resulting in around 17 percent incorrectly allocated cases. As we use a seven-category reduced version of the variable, and especially in the further summarised version with only three categories of parental class, this error won't reduce the validity of our results. We have information on the occupational class of chief income earner when aged 16 for slightly more than three quarters of the sample. Cases with missing information (including cases without any income earner at age 16) are excluded from analysis.
 - 3 Cases without information of occupational class (including those respondents still in education) weren't included in any of the analyses on mobility, but nonetheless in the earlier descriptive analyses.
 - 4 For an overview over encouragement in arts attendance and arts participation during childhood and youth and its effect on arts participation and attendance in adult life see Oskala et al. (2009).
 - 5 These and all other descriptive statistics have been weighted to adjust for non-response.
 - 6 We do not apply a logistic model for ordinal outcomes because such a model would be based on the assumption of proportional odds, i.e. the assumption that the cumulative odds ratio for any two values of the covariates is constant across response categories, and this assumption is broken for our variable (as are the assumptions a linear regression would be based on).
 - 7 This interesting finding might reflect parents' assumptions about typical interests of boys and girls, or it might be a reaction to the actually larger interest of boys in sport, or both.
 - 8 Only those aged 25 and older are included, as in figure 4.
 - 9 *Higher education* = Higher education, professional/vocational equivalents; *higher middle* = other higher education below degree level, A levels, vocational level 3 and equivalents, trade apprenticeships; *lower middle* = 5+ GCSE/O Level grades A* -C, L2 equiv./GCSE/O Level grade A* -C(< 5 A*-C), L1 equivalents other qualifications: level unknown
 - 10 See footnote 9.

- 11 The roughly linear influence of the socialisation-variable has been checked before applying this model.
- 12 A comparison of two models, one using a class schema which distinguishes between service class including the lower managerial occupations and the intermediate class, the other between a professional executive excluding the lower managerial and an intermediate class including the lower managerial (and a similar working class in both cases), shows a slight preference for the latter model, lending further support to Le Roux et al.'s (2008) analysis of class divisions in contemporary Britain.
- 13 See footnote 9.
- 14 It is also possible to run separate models on different cohorts to assess whether the strength of these relationships is changing over time. The effects of parental socialisation remain strong, whereas the effects of class, gender and ethnicity become markedly weaker in the youngest age groups. However, we can not exclude that this is due to the fact that the youngest cohorts have not yet reached their final occupational position. The most striking of these shifts is for gender, where older men had enjoyed great advantages in the prospects of attaining higher education compared to girls. These advantages have now been much diminished.
- 15 See footnote 9.
- 16 This summarising category has been applied because of insufficient case numbers for the different subgroups of non-whites.
- 17 The coefficient gives the change in the odds ratio (that means the probability of being upwardly mobile divided by the probability of *not* being upwardly mobile) caused by a one step change in the index of cultural socialisation.
- 18 In single models including the single items respectively, all activities prove significant, in particular visiting historic sites and galleries/museums. In the respective four models for the single items of encouragement, the encouragement to read has a significant positive influence, and the encouragement to draw/paint/write and to play a musical instrument or sing exert a small significant influence too. In corresponding models including all the single items (or two different indices for encouragement and activities) only some of the activities (or the activities index, respectively) are significant.
- 19 See for example Savage (1997). In our context, the often discussed issue of defining mobility by the job of the father (which is the "chief income earner" in the household at age 16 in most cases) may be a problem: very often, mothers are more important in educational processes than fathers, and this is probably even more so the case for older respondents (see also Thompson 1997).
- 20 According to Marsden and Jackson, other groups that display more educational ambition for their children than the average working class are foremen and other parts of the working class "aristocracy". At least in our mobility model there is no indication of such a differentiation within the working class relative to exact occupational position.
- 21 In this sense, "strategies from below" are "rational" according to the values, preferences etc. that are at the disposal of actors within certain class cultures. Goldthorpe is right in emphasizing that these strategies from below should not be dismissed as "irrational" or ignorant. But this rationality cannot be reduced to a mathematical calculation of stakes and risks, amongst others because perceptions of risk are culturally shaped and because means and ends are connected to values: reaching an economically more advantaged position is not the only thing people strive for.

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