A Model Mother?
Family Policy and Childrearing in Post-Devolution Scotland

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By

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CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

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This book first published 2014

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-5601-0, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5601-0

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Alison Koslowski and Ross Bond for their advice and guidance during this research. I am also grateful to the ESRC for funding the research.

I am sincerely grateful to Thomas and Sheena Smith for their unfailing support. Finally, thank you to James and Rob:

"Aug, mein Aug, was sinkst du nieder?
Goldne Träume, kommt ihr wieder?
Weg, du Traum, so gold du bist:
Hier auch Lieb" und Leben ist."

PREFACE

This book is concerned with childrearing approach as one of the prime sites of the reproduction of social inequality. During the latter half of the 2000s, UK and Scottish government policy placed increasing emphasis on the importance of parenting and the early years as factors likely to have an impact on health, education and employment outcomes. Between 2005 and 2008 - the timeframe considered by this study - a number of policy initiatives emerged which were intended to support "better parenting". Critics of these policy initiatives argue that what was presented as a model of good parenting was in essence a model of middle class parenting which misunderstood and devalued other parenting approaches. Lareau's typology of childrearing approach is used as a means of situating the UK parenting policy discourse within a broader theoretical context and assessing critically the extent to which this policy discourse reflects childrearing approaches in Scotland.

During this period, the policy areas of parenting and neighbourhood began increasingly to overlap in the UK, both through area-based family interventions such as Sure Start and through the central role given to parents in the drive towards community empowerment, greater collective efficacy and reduced anti-social behaviour.

This book presents analyses based on data from the "Growing up in Scotland" (GUS) survey which explore whether "concerted cultivation" and the "accomplishment of natural growth" can be observed in the childrearing approaches of Scottish mothers; it assesses whether beliefs about collective efficacy and measures of neighbourhood deprivation are associated with childrearing approach; it explores whether mothers change their childrearing approach over time and considers what factors might influence changes in childrearing approach. Finally, the research examines links between a mother's childrearing approach and her child's behavioural development at entry to primary school.

This book builds on previous research into childrearing approach by testing Lareau's concepts on a quantitative sample of mothers in a different geographical locale and by exploring changes in childrearing

approach longitudinally. The analysis presented considers childrearing approach both at the individual and aggregate level. A narrative analysis technique is used to construct biographies for four mothers using the quantitative data in GUS. The constructed biographies inform a discussion of the ways in which childrearing may be experienced and made sense of by the individual. Latent Class Analysis is then used to explore whether patterns of childrearing practice can be discerned in the GUS sample.

A typology of four childrearing approaches is presented: two approaches align with Lareau's typology and two further groups are observed: working mothers and socially isolated mothers. The analysis finds that social class differences do not fully explain childrearing approach in the GUS sample. Neighbourhood measures are not found to be associated with childrearing approach when socio-economic factors are controlled for. Changes in socio-economic status are associated with changes in childrearing approach. The children of mothers whose childrearing approach aligns more closely with the "concerted cultivation" approach are more likely to display pro-social behaviours at entry to primary school than the children of other childrearing approaches; the children of mothers who adopt a childrearing approach akin to "the accomplishment of natural growth" are more likely to display conduct problems at entry to primary school. The discussion concludes that family policy between 2005 and 2008 did not fully reflect the variety of childrearing approaches in Scotland, and that mothers whose circumstances and childrearing approach diverged from the policy model may not have been adequately supported.

INTRODUCTION

This book explores the extent to which parenting attitudes and behaviours are socially patterned, and the extent to which children's psychological, social and behavioural frames of reference are influenced by the childrearing approach of their parents. Parents' frames of reference can influence children's educational attainment and choices, occupation, residential location and leisure pursuits, as well as their income and health outcomes (Reay et al. 2009; Zimdars et al. 2009; Reay 2006 and 2004a; Sullivan 2003; Nash 2002; de Graaf et al. 2000; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). This study adopts Bourdieu's concept of habitus as a way of explaining how social structures are reproduced through childrearing approach. Annette Lareau's (2003) typology of childrearing approaches is used as a means of situating the UK parenting policy discourse within a broader theoretical context and assessing critically the extent to which this discourse reflects childrearing approaches in Scotland.

In the following chapters, it is argued that the parenting and early years policies of both the Westminster and Edinburgh governments during 2005-2008 were based on a middle class model of parenting which failed to take account of other childrearing approaches, and failed therefore to adequately to meet the needs of parents whose childrearing approach diverged from the norm on which policy was based. There is some evidence to suggest that society in the UK – and Scotland in particular – is more unequal than it was thirty years ago (Hills et al. 2010; Diamond and Giddens 2005). Scotland compares unfavourably with the rest of the UK and Europe in terms of health inequalities and mortality (Scottish Government 2008b). Towards the end of the four year period on which this study is based, the Scottish Government targeted resources more systematically towards children in the early years (Scottish Government 2008) as a means of tackling the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage at its source (Scottish Government 2008d). During this period, the policy areas of parenting and neighbourhood began increasingly to overlap, both through area-based family interventions such as Sure Start and through the central role given to parents in the drive towards community empowerment, greater collective efficacy and reduced anti-social behaviour (Scottish Government 2008; 2008c and 2008d). The suite of

parenting and early years policies was intended to tackle inequality through: tax credits; health care; pre–school and early education; parenting education and local area improvement. In this research, the argument is advanced that the UK policy emphasis on the labour market activation of mothers coupled with the high cost of childcare created a gap in provision which it was easier for middle class families to bridge. This policy model was better suited to middle class mothers who might be more likely to attract higher salaries to offset the cost of childcare. Working class mothers, on the other hand, might be more reluctant to give up the valued caregiving role in exchange for possibly low-status and low-paid work (Daly 2010).

A number of the parenting support services available in the UK during 2005-2008 were superficially universal, but in effect targeted towards socially excluded parents whose childrearing approach was seen as lax, uncaring and responsible for children's anti-social behaviour (Gillies 2007; Blair 2006; Rutter 2006). Parenting advice and support focussed on developing secure attachment; authoritative parenting; and creating a stimulating home learning environment (Scottish Government 2008; Gillies 2004), all characteristics of stereotypical "middle class" parenting (Allatt 1993). It is argued that there were two key weaknesses to parenting and early years policies: firstly, parenting supports and services may not have fully taken into account the material needs of parents living in disadvantaged circumstances (it is easier to engage children in activities if parents can afford to do so), and if facilities are easily accessible. Secondly, parenting support services may have failed to take account of the social reality of parents which was manifested in their childrearing approach: children living in disadvantaged circumstances may need to develop a different set of survival skills and learn to negotiate completely different challenges than do middle class children (Gillies 2005; Lareau 2003). In summary, this book argues that parenting, early years and neighbourhood policies failed to take account of the variety of childrearing approaches which parents in different circumstances adopt, and that this impacted particularly on those parents whose childrearing approach diverged from the norm assumed by the policy framework.

The analysis presented in this book uses data from the "Growing up in Scotland" (GUS) survey to ask whether "concerted cultivation" and the "accomplishment of natural growth" (Lareau 2003) can be observed in the childrearing approaches of Scottish mothers; it assesses whether beliefs about collective efficacy and measures of neighbourhood deprivation are

associated with childrearing approach; it explores whether mothers change their childrearing approach over time and considers what factors might influence changes in childrearing approach. Finally, this study examines links between a mother's childrearing approach and her child's behavioural development at entry to primary school.

The analytical approach adopted in this study is novel (although see Irwin and Elley 2011): GUS data have been analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods in an attempt to better understand how the individual experience of childrearing may be reflected in broader social structures, and how the cultural processes that work through childrearing to reproduce social inequality may be seen to operate at the individual and aggregate level. Narrative analysis is carried out on the "text" of four individual mothers' survey responses and a biography is constructed for each. The biographies are used to triangulate the results of the quantitative analysis.

Although there has been increasing interest both in the US and the UK in childrearing approach as a possible explanatory factor in the reproduction of social inequality (Henderson 2013; Irwin and Elley 2011; Bodovski 2010; Vincent 2010; Irwin 2009; Ermisch 2008), no study of Lareau's typology has to this author's knowledge been carried out in Scotland. Scotland is an interesting field in which to study the reproduction of inequality partly because social inequality is particularly acute in Scotland (Hills et al. 2010; Scottish Government 2008b), and partly because of the political divergence from the rest of the UK which occurred with devolution in 1999 and later with the change of government from Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition to Scottish National Party in 2007. With the change of government came a change in the policy discourse, and this research discusses how that change in discourse was reflected in policies to support parenting and the early years.

Finally, many of the quantitative studies of childrearing approach cited above (for example Bodovski 2010; Vincent 2010; Ermisch 2008), have used groups of variables to measure childrearing approach. Typically, these studies create a measure for "parenting style" or "childrearing approach" based on adding together individuals' scores on a number of questionnaire items, for example the more books in the household, or the more visits to libraries, museums or concerts, the higher the score on that individual's "concerted cultivation" measure. Although these studies take account of measurement error in their models, this research treats

measurement error slightly differently by conceptualising childrearing approach as a latent variable which cannot be measured directly because not every aspect of childrearing approach can be defined and recorded. Instead, a number of survey questions which record mothers' attitudes to authority figures, their personal networks and their children's structured enrichment activities are taken together and are assumed to be (some of) the social practices which constitute childrearing approach in the round[1]. The analysis considers the association between a mother's *most likely* childrearing approach and her child's behaviour scores, therefore acknowledging the imperfect nature of the statistical measures.

The research is set out as follows: Chapter One presents a review of the literature on socially patterned childrearing approaches and neighbourhood effects research and sets out the theoretical framework on which the analysis is based; Chapter Two discusses parenting, early years and neighbourhood policies at the UK and Scottish levels; Chapter Three presents the Growing up in Scotland dataset and explains how childrearing approach was measured; Chapter Four discusses the results of the narrative analysis of four case studies from the Growing up in Scotland dataset; Chapter Five presents a typology of childrearing approaches in Scotland; Chapter Six considers the effect of neighbourhood on childrearing approach and Chapter Seven explores some of the factors associated with changes in childrearing approach over time and links between childrearing approach and children's behavioural development at entry to primary school.

[1] Henderson (2013) uses Principal Components Analysis, which also assumes childrearing approach to be a latent variable; however Principal Components Analysis groups together variables, whereas the Latent Class Analysis approach adopted in this research groups together people. It is argued that the Latent Class Analysis approach is preferable in this case because it allows the researcher to test whether Lareau's (2003) typology of childrearing approaches can be observed among mothers in Scotland.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CTC	Child Tax Credits
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EYF	Early Years Framework
GUS	Growing up in Scotland
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
LCA	Latent Class Analysis
LTA	Latent Transition Analysis
MCS	Millennium Cohort Study
ONS-SEC	Office of National Statistics Socio-economic Classification
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
WTC	Working Tax Credits

CHAPTER ONE

THE REPRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY: PARENTS, PLACES AND INSTITUTIONS

The links between parenting practices and social inequality have been the subject of a number of studies over the past two decades (Henderson 2013; Sullivan et al. 2013; Irwin and Elley 2011; Bodovski 2010; Vincent, Braun and Ball 2010; Irwin 2009; Ermisch 2008; Vincent and Ball 2007; Gillies 2007; Gillies 2005; Reay 2004a; Vincent, Ball and Kemp 2004; Lareau 2003; Sullivan 2001; Reay 2000; Allatt 1993). Common to many of these is the argument that parenting practices can serve to compound the value of existing economic advantage or reproduce disadvantage. Parenting practices are shaped by a complex set of factors including the economic, cultural and social resources available to the family. Although it is clear that access to economic capital facilitates the adoption of high status cultural practices, there is some evidence to suggest that the effects of parental income on children's educational and behavioural outcomes are not direct (Sullivan et al. 2013; Ermisch 2008; Reay 2004b; de Graaf et al. 2000), and that cultural and social resources (dispositions, modes of speech, lifestyle choices and tastes) operate to some extent independently of income or wealth to transfer advantage to the next generation. Many of the studies cited in this chapter seek to understand inequality in educational attainment or behavioural adaptation by examining differences in aspects of the childrearing approaches associated with different status groups, typically distinguishing between middle and working class parents[1]. Several authors have commented critically on the ways in which both government policy and institutions such as schools and universities absorb and reflect dominant forms of discourse around appropriate and desirable parenting behaviours, discourses in which middle class norms tend to be valorised.

[1] At this stage, these class labels are accepted uncritically because they are the currency of the majority of studies which have dealt with the issue of socially patterned childrearing approach. The issue of "class" is considered more critically later in the chapter.

The childrearing approach of middle class mothers[2] tends to be characterised in the research literature as one in which social, cultural and economic resources are employed to cultivate the child's skills, interests and networks. The child's individual abilities and talents are regarded as important and worthy of development. Parents tend to believe that individual application and effort will be rewarded with success in terms of educational and employment outcomes. Middle class mothers are likely to have sufficient social capital at their disposal to enable them to tap into a network of influential contacts to support their child, whereas working class mothers may have extensive and close networks, but with more limited influence, or whose influence is limited to particular fields.

In the policy discourse, working class childrearing approaches are othered: they are everything that middle class parenting is not. The role of economic circumstances and family social and cultural resources in childrearing is rarely taken into account explicitly in government policy; rather, lower status groups are pathologised as being an "unknowing uncritical tasteless mass from which the middle classes draw their distinction" (Reay 2006: 295). Qualitative research with working class mothers in particular has highlighted the overwhelming similarities between mothers regardless of background in terms of concern for their child's wellbeing and hopes for their future (Irwin and Elley 2011; Gillies 2007; Reay 2000). Differences in the economic, cultural and social resources of families, however, can lead to different discourses of entitlement and unequal outcomes for children.

The commonly adopted shorthand of "middle class" and "working class" is somewhat unhelpful, since these class labels obscure the considerable variety of income, education and occupation within classes. The concept of status groups may be a more useful one for explaining the relationship between economic and cultural resources and childrearing. It is not the contention of this author that family economic and cultural resources lead inevitably to a specific set of childrearing behaviours. What does seem plausible however is that certain combinations of family

[2] Mothers specifically - rather than parents - are the focus of this research because Bourdieu posits that women are "the predominant markers of taste. It is women's role to convert economic capital into symbolic capital through the display of tastes" (Skeggs 2004: 142, quoted in Vincent and Ball 2007: 1069). In other words, the tastes, attitudes and behaviours which are markers of membership in a status group are - arguably - passed on primarily through the mother.

economic and cultural capital render certain childrearing behaviours more effective.

Higher levels of income can buy a better-quality living environment; more nourishing food; more books and a quiet place to read; or activities for children such as swimming or ballet. Income is also likely to be a marker of parents' occupational prestige and educational qualifications. Better educated parents may have access to cultural and linguistic knowledge which can be passed on to their children. Parents of lower status and income may value education and structured enrichment activities just as much as higher status parents, and they may encourage and support their children accordingly. The childrearing approaches of higher and lower status parents are theorised as differing in the extent to which parents implicitly identify with and confidently reproduce the cultural norms which are valorised in policy and in the institutions of the state (Reay 2006 and 2000; Gillies 2005; Lareau 2003).

Material, cultural and social resources are not linearly related: like gambling chips individuals may possess more of one kind of resource and less of the other (Bourdieu 1993). While it would be a welcome start, more effective economic redistribution alone seems unlikely to remove social inequality: the cultural causes of inequality need to be acknowledged and understood if inequality is to be addressed more effectively.

The neighbourhoods where families live, as well as individual families, contribute to the material, cultural and social environment where children grow up. A substantial body of research (see Galster 2010 and Leventhal and Brooks–Gunn 2000 for comprehensive overviews) suggests that there is an association between neighbourhood and children's behavioural development, probably working though the effect of neighbourhood on parenting. In areas with a strong sense of social cohesion, parents are more likely to be supported in presenting norms of behaviour.

This book is concerned not just with socially patterned childrearing approaches, but with the ways in which different childrearing approaches might be experienced and made sense of by mothers. Chapter Four uses a narrative analysis technique to construct biographies for four mothers in the Growing up in Scotland sample. It uses the "text" of the mothers' survey responses to explore whether a narrative voice can be discerned for each. The aim is to consider how different economic and social circumstances may shape new mothers' sense of self and their social

practices. In constructing these biographies, an attempt is made to understand how some of the social processes involved in the reproduction of inequality may operate at the individual and family level within the GUS sample.

Various forms of capital (discussed in the next section) need to be considered in order to come closer to an understanding of how parents' material, social and cultural resources combine to bring about the transmission of differential advantages to their children. This chapter therefore presents a consideration of selected literature on cultural capital and children's educational outcomes, socially patterned childrearing approaches, neighbourhood effects and finally narrative analysis. The theoretical framework on which the research is based is presented at the end of this chapter.

Childrearing and the forms of capital

This section seeks to situate the subsequent discussion of socially patterned childrearing approaches within the context of the considerable research literature on the impact of symbolic capitals - particularly cultural capital - on the reproduction of social inequality. Bourdieu (1986) argued that there are three forms of capital: economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. Capital, according to Bourdieu, takes time to accumulate, can be employed to produce profits and has the capacity to "reproduce itself in identical or expanded form" (Bourdieu 1986: 241). Bourdieu argued that social, cultural and symbolic capital, like economic capital, are not equally distributed across members of society. In other words, it is not only differing levels of income and wealth which lead to social inequality: other factors must also be taken into consideration. Bourdieu is fairly clear that the other forms of capital do not operate independently of economic capital: the various social strategies which individuals employ - he argues - will depend on the relative availability of economic and other forms of capital and the costs of transforming one form of capital into another. For example, within the policy discourse of "school choice", parents with a lot of economic capital and less cultural capital may choose to send their child to a private school; parents with a lot of cultural capital and less economic capital may seek to gain entry to a non-fee-paying selective school for their child. Parents with limited cultural or economic capital are less likely to be able to exercise any choice over their child's school (Reay 2004a).

Arguably the most fundamental underpinning of Bourdieu's system of thought is the suggestion that dominant status groups erect symbolic barriers to exclude social groups of lower status. Modes of behaviour, speech, lifestyle choices and tastes all act as markers that individuals are members of a dominant status group and serve to limit access to individuals from lower status groups. An important characteristic of these symbolic barriers is their arbitrariness and vagueness: abstraction is used as a means of distinction. Real comfort with the modes of being of a dominant status group is, Bourdieu argues, most easily acquired when an individual is immersed in this culture from birth[3]. There has been much focus in the research literature on the impact of parental cultural capital in particular on children's educational outcomes, possibly because of Bourdieu's assertion that the transmission of

> "cultural capital is without doubt the best-hidden form of hereditary transmission of capital, and it therefore receives proportionately greater weight in the system of reproduction strategies, as the direct, visible forms of transmission tend to be more strongly censored and controlled" (Bourdieu 1986: 247).

This factor, twinned with the "prevailing fallacy" (Reay 2006: 291) that school education and qualifications are all that is needed to level the social playing field, appears to be the driving questions behind many studies into cultural capital and educational inequality.

In broad summary, many of the influential empirical studies of cultural capital (for example, Barone 2006; Sullivan 2001; de Graaf et al. 2000) have sought to do four things: to determine whether cultural capital is indeed distributed unevenly across members of society; to explore the relative influence of economic capital and cultural capital on children's educational attainment; to unpick the mechanisms within cultural capital and to measure the impact of parental cultural capital on children's educational outcomes. Bourdieu's theory of habitus - that status groups display distinct cultural identities - has been criticised in the literature (possibly most influentially by DiMaggio 1982) on the grounds that boundaries between status groups are often weak and changing and, in any case, they cannot be easily identified with class divisions. These criticisms have been countered by authors who assert that class identities are less

[3] Although these dispositions or modes of speech or behaviour can be learned, it may be more stressful for individuals to maintain them (Reay et al. 2009; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

important than the micro-processes and affective dispositions which govern individuals' interactions with the dominant set of evaluative standards (Reay 2004a; Lareau and Weininger 2003). Much of the divergence in the reported strength of cultural capital as an empirical measure is linked to the divergent ways in which the concept has been operationalised.

Barone (2006) explored the impact of social origins on children's "demonstrated academic ability" and found that across the 25 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA[4]) countries, measures of cultural possessions and cultural communication were significantly positively associated with children's literacy and maths scores, controlling for occupational status and parental level of education. He also found that parents' occupation and education shaped their occupational ambitions for their children.

Barone argues that the moderate effects of his cultural capital measures on reading and maths scores support the theory that the concept has limited explanatory use, and that inequality in educational outcomes cannot be explained entirely by means of cultural capital; rather, economic factors and social ambition may have significant roles to play in determining attainment in school. In this respect he is in agreement with Bourdieu, who was clear that the use of cultural resources depended to some extent on the availability of economic resources. While Barone's study appears to downplay the influence of cultural capital, he does not explicitly consider the effects of using parental education as a measure of social background, when it is also a measure of parents' cultural capital. Had he done so, the influence of cultural capital might have been greater.

Sullivan (2001) and DeGraaf et al. (2000) seek to draw a distinction between cultural participation and cultural knowledge, for example participation in "high-brow" or beaux arts culture such as visits to museums, galleries or concerts on the one hand and cultural awareness, cultivated through reading and conversation, on the other. DeGraaf et al. (2000) found that reading was associated with academic success, whereas beaux arts participation was not. He and his colleagues inferred from this that reading improved academic attainment through its development of analytical and cognitive skills, and that these were more important in determining academic success than the communication of high status

[4] See http://www.oecd.org/pisa/ (accessed 28/11/13)

associated with beaux arts participation. Sullivan (2001) found strong support for the theory that parents' cultural capital - in the form of cultural activities - is transmitted in the home to their children, and that a significant proportion of the variance in pupils' cultural knowledge could be accounted for by their reading and (uniquely to Sullivan) television viewing, rather than their participation in beaux arts activities. None of these three studies engage in any depth with the constructed nature of academic achievement itself, and the inability of the education system to reward ability rather than training (Zimdars et al 2009).

All three of the studies cited above concur that cultural capital explains only part of the class-based variation in children's educational outcomes, and that other factors, such as material circumstances and parental encouragement, must account for the remainder of the variation. Other authors, particularly Reay (2009; 2006; 2004a), Lareau and Weininger (2003) and Skeggs (1997) argue for a broader, more qualitative operationalisation of cultural capital which takes into account the "affective" aspects of inequality (Reay 2004a: 75), for example the extent to which individuals' interactions with dominant status groups are characterised by entitlement, aggression or timidity. That is also the stance of this author.

Bourdieu's concepts have been dismissed as "catch-alls" and as "too flexible to tell us anything interesting" (Zimdars et al. 2009: 652), but to try to operationalise complex social processes in entirely deductive ways may be to risk producing analysis which is "mere artefact" (Bourdieu 1984: 511). There appears to be a strong argument for a broader conceptualisation of cultural capital which takes account of the affective aspects of habitus. Cultural capital could more usefully be defined as a set of

> "micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills and competence comes into contact with institutionalised standards of evaluation" (Lareau and Weininger 2003: 569).

Important to this definition is the notion of the "evaluative criteria" imposed by dominant groups, and the abstract nature of these criteria which makes it difficult for outsiders to identify and comply with them. It is the belief of this author that Bourdieu intended his concept of cultural capital to be flexible precisely so that it could be applied to different countries at different times. To try to better understand the complexity of the constantly changing, evanescent abstract barriers which dominant

status groups erect, this research uses a conceptualisation of childrearing approach which includes social capital, cultural capital and the affective aspects of habitus. The research focuses on children's behavioural adaptation, rather than their educational attainment, to seek to understand whether the affective aspects of habitus are passed on from mothers to their children.

"Concerted cultivation" and the "accomplishment of natural growth"

Lareau (2003) developed a typology of childrearing with two approaches: "concerted cultivation" and "the accomplishment of natural growth". These childrearing approaches correspond to middle and working class parenting respectively, although Lareau acknowledges that there is considerable variation in childrearing approach within these categories, which she uses to summarise broad trends. "Concerted cultivation" involves parents consciously encouraging their children to cultivate their talents in a concerted fashion. Structured enrichment activities such as clubs and classes, controlled and supported by parents, often dominate the lives of better–off children. From these experiences and opportunities, a robust sense of entitlement takes root in the children. This sense of entitlement is particularly important in institutional settings such as school and in dealing with authority figures (Lareau 2003: 1).

Working class and poor parents, by contrast, tend to undertake the "accomplishment of natural growth". In the "accomplishment of natural growth", "children experience long stretches of leisure time, child–initiated play, clear boundaries between adults and children, and daily interactions with kin" (Lareau 2003: 3). Lareau is clear that there are important advantages to the "accomplishment of natural growth" approach. In many cases, the approach provides children with the skills they need to cope with the economic and social challenges they face each day. However, Lareau's argument is that "concerted cultivation" provides children with the tools to engage actively with institutions such as schools, universities and the world of work, to understand implicitly and to meet the evaluative criteria of these institutions and to know how to use the rules of the institution to mould situations to their preferences. As children brought up with "concerted cultivation" gain an increasing sense of entitlement, children brought up according to the "accomplishment of natural growth" tend to develop an emerging sense of constraint. Lareau

asserts that this leads to the "transmission of differential advantages to children" (2003: 5); in other words, to the reproduction of social inequality.

The following sections consider some important aspects of Lareau's childrearing typology: parental effort in cultivating the child's skills and talents; structured enrichment activities such as clubs and classes; personal networks; interventions in institutions and childcare.

Parental effort and structured enrichment activities

Middle class mothers are inclined to view day-to-day routines as learning opportunities: children take part in numerous structured activities from swimming to crafts and yoga. Leisure time should be directed towards self-development. The aim is to cultivate or develop the child so that they are equipped with the social and cultural skills they need to maintain their position in society. In her study of three middle class families, Allatt (1993) notes that middle class families strike a subtle balance between control and encouragement: parents act as facilitators and children are encouraged to reflect on, discuss and choose from a range of parentally-approved options. She contends that privilege is not automatically transmitted; it depends on purposeful activity directed towards the maintenance of class position. Middle class family processes encourage a self-image of individualism and personal responsibility: the freedom offered by access to material resources makes it easier for middle class children to maintain this self-image. Gillies (2005) argues that the UK's policy focus on personal responsibility validates this middle-class conception to the detriment of other parenting approaches:

> "individualised understandings of class facilitate a middle class "discourse of entitlement", which itself becomes a key resource for cementing family privilege" (Gillies 2005: 842).

The middle class approach to parenting is not entirely positive, but it is associated with higher status groups and tends to be valorised by government policy and institutions which embody the dominant discourse. Lareau notes how elements of family life cohere to form a "cultural logic of childrearing" (2003: 3): the preferences and behaviours associated with "concerted cultivation" become the dominant set of cultural repertoires (ibid.: 4) which working class parents may find it difficult or impossible to emulate. Faced with more immediate economic challenges, working class parents undertake to provide comfort, food, shelter, and other basic support: they are concerned with ensuring the child's physical wellbeing

and safety, rather than teaching them to mould interactions to suit their preferences. Working class mothers on the whole do not see themselves as educators but they are proud of their children's achievements (Irwin and Elley 2011; Vincent, Ball and Braun 2010; Lareau 2003); they tend to understand their children's characteristics, skills and talents as being more fixed and static (Vincent and Ball 2007: 1068) than do middle class parents, who see their children's skills as under development (Allatt 1993). Working class mothers may draw protective boundaries between home and school to create a nurturing space where the injuries and injustices of class can be soothed (Gillies 2007).

Working class mothers, therefore, risk being marginalised and alienated by the dominant norm of good parenting. The cultural dominance of middle class parenting approaches can have an undermining effect on working class mothers: "middle class selves are necessarily defined in relation to working class inferiority" (Gillies 2007: 77). The UK policy discourse of the Blair government (see Blair 2006; DfES 2005) implied that working class parents must be taught to raise children who are capable of becoming middle class. Poor life outcomes and anti-social behaviour were implicitly blamed on ignorant, uncaring or lazy parenting (Gillies 2007; 2005).

Vincent and Ball (2007) contend that parents' engagement with structured enrichment activities mirrors their approach to consumption in other spheres[5]: an industry has grown up around a representation of the child as a project to be developed, educated and nurtured. Toys, activities and television programmes are presented as educational, intended to improve confidence as well as cognitive, social and motor skills. Much of the informational literature around children's activities stresses the value of the skills learned for later life. Parental tastes in toys and activities become a crucial marker of class and contribute to the transmission of cultural capital in the family. Vincent and Ball argue that

> "inherited capital is supplemented by that bought in as activities. These activities contribute to the cultural capital held by and embodied in the family itself and are part of an accrual of class resources" *(ibid.).*

[5] Although both Irwin and Elley 2011 and Lareau 2003 note that working class children also take part in structured enrichment activities.

Personal networks

Parents' personal networks are central to the "cultivation" of the child. Allatt found that middle class parents offer their own social networks for their children's advantage:

> "parents possess social capital vested in the social networks they use on behalf of their children…parents also foster in the young the skills necessary for the creation of their own social capital" (1993: 143).

Allatt is clear that it is not simply having personal networks that counts: it is the quality of those networks and the ability to utilise them to achieve goals, such as work experience with a chosen firm. Children are directly involved in these transactions as part of learning how to create social capital. In contrast, the children of working class parents need to develop a different set of survival skills and learn to negotiate completely different challenges (Gillies 2005).

A number of empirical studies of social networks support the findings of Vincent and colleagues (2010), Gillies (2007 and 2005) and Allatt (1993) to the extent that they find evidence of class-based variation in the way individuals develop, maintain and use social networks. The social networks of higher-status individuals tend to be characterised by a large number of "loose" or "weak" ties through which information and other resources can be accessed. In general, all of the actors in the network have access to similar levels of economic and symbolic capital, and so are able to call on the resources of individuals in the network on the implicit understanding that they will be able to reciprocate (Burt 1992). In the context of finding a job, Burt (1992) and Granovetter (1974) found that high status individuals within a network could act as links or gatekeepers to other, higher-status networks in turn. In contrast, the social networks of lower-status individuals are often characterised by many strong ties, such as those to friends and family. In these networks, there may be many "redundant" ties, that is, many of the actors in the network may know each other, with the result that each link in the network does not bridge to a new network and the information or resources to which it might afford access (Burt 1992).

Hagan et al. (1996) and Stack (1974) found that families can compensate for a lack of social capital by emphasising family support and therefore still secure good outcomes for their children. Granovetter (1974), Lin et al. (1981) and Burt (1992) found that looser networks can benefit