

Notes

CHAPTER I: CONCERTED CULTIVATION

1. Choosing words to describe social groups also becomes a source of worry, especially over the possibility of reinforcing negative stereotypes. I found the available terms to describe members of racial and ethnic groups to be problematic in one way or another. The families I visited uniformly described themselves as "Black." Recognizing that some readers have strong views that Black should be capitalized, I have followed that convention, despite the lack of symmetry with the term white. In sum, this book alternates among the terms "Black," "Black American," "African American," and "white," with the understanding that "white" here refers to the subgroup of non-Hispanic whites.

2. Some readers have expressed concern that this phrase, "the accomplishment of natural growth," underemphasizes all the labor that mothers and fathers do to take care of children. They correctly note that working-class and poor parents themselves would be unlikely to use such a term to describe the process of caring for children. These concerns are important. As I stress in the text (especially in the chapter on Katie Brindle, Chapter 5) it does take an enormous amount of work for parents, especially mothers, of all classes to take care of children. But poor and working-class mothers have fewer resources with which to negotiate these demands. Those whose lives the research assistants and I studied approached the task somewhat differently than did middle-class parents. They did not seem to view children's leisure time as their responsibility; nor did they see themselves as responsible for assertively intervening in their children's school experiences. Rather, the working-class and poor parents carried out their chores, drew boundaries and restrictions around their children, and then, within these limits, allowed their children to carry out their lives. It is in this sense that I use the term "the accomplishment of natural growth."

3. I define a child-rearing context to include the routines of daily life, the dis-

11. I did not study the full range of families in American society, including elite families of tremendous wealth, nor, at the other end of the spectrum, homeless families. In addition, I have a purposively drawn sample. Thus, I cannot state whether there are other forms of child rearing corresponding to other cultural logics. Still, data from quantitative studies based on nationally representative data support the patterns I observed. For differences by parents' social class position and children's time use, see especially Sandra Hofferth and John Sandberg, "Changes in American Children's Time, 1981-1997." Patterns of language use with children are harder to capture in national surveys, but the work of Melvin Kohn and Carmi Schooler, especially *Work and Personality*, shows differences in parents' child-rearing values. Duane Alwin's studies of parents' desires are generally consistent with the results reported here. See Duane Alwin, "Trends in Parental Socialization Values." For differences in interventions in institutions, there is extensive work showing social class differences in parent involvement in education. See the U. S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education, 2001*, p.175.

12. In this book, unless otherwise noted, the statistics reported are from 1993 to 1995, which was when the data were collected. Similarly, unless otherwise noted, all monetary amounts are given in (unadjusted) dollars from 1994 to 1995. The figure reported here is from Everett Ladd, *Thinking about America*, pp. 21-22.

13. This quote is from President Bill Clinton's 1993 speech to the Democratic Leadership Council. It is cited in Jennifer Hochschild, *Facing Up to the American Dream*, p. 18.

14. Paul Kingston, *The Classless Society*, p. 2.

15. As I explain in more detail in the methodological appendix, family structure is intertwined with class position in this sample. The Black and white middle-class children that we observed all resided with both of their biological parents. By contrast, although some of the poor children have regular contact with their fathers, none of the Black or white poor children in the intensive observations had their biological fathers at home. The working-class families were in between. This pattern raises questions such as whether, for example, the pattern of concerted cultivation depends on the presence of a two-parent marriage. The scope of the sample precludes a satisfactory answer.

16. As I explain in Appendix A, three of the twelve children came from sources outside of the schools.

17. Arlie Hochschild, *The Second Shift*.

18. My concern here is the vast diversity in views among white Americans as well as Black Americans. The phrase "a white perspective" seems inaccurate. This is not to say that whites don't experience considerable benefits from their race in our stratified society. They do. Whites benefit from racial discrimination in many ways, including their improved ability to secure housing loans and employment as well as relatively higher market values for their homes in racially segregated neighborhoods. There are also well-documented differences in street interaction, including the ability to secure a taxi on a busy street. Thus the question is not the amount of racial discrimination in our society. Instead the question is how much being a member of a dominant group, interested in studying racial

positions of daily life, or the "habitus" of daily life. I focus on two contexts: concerted cultivation and the accomplishment of natural growth. In this book, I primarily use the concept of child rearing, but at times I also use the term *socialization*. Many sociologists have vigorously criticized this concept, noting that it suggests (inaccurately) that children are passive rather than active agents and that the relationship between parents and their children is unidirectional rather than reciprocal and dynamic. See, for example, William Corsaro, *Sociology of Childhood*; Barrie Thorne, *Gender Play*; and Glen Elder, "The Life Course as Development Theory." Nonetheless, existing terms can, ideally, be revitalized to offer more sophisticated understandings of social processes. Child rearing and socialization have the virtue of being relatively succinct and less jargon laden than other alternatives. As a result, I use them.

4. For discussions of the role of professionals, see Eliot Freidson, *Professional Powers*; Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism*; and, although quite old, the still valuable collection by Amitai Etzioni, *The Semi-Professionals and Their Organizations*. Of course, professional standards are always contested and are subject to change over time. I do not mean to suggest there are not pockets of resistance and contestation. At the most general level, however, there is virtually uniform support for the idea that parents should talk to children at length, read to children, and take a proactive, assertive role in medical care.

5. Sharon Hays, in her 1996 book *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*, studies the attitudes of middle-class and working-class mothers toward child rearing. She finds a shared commitment to "intensive mothering," although there are some differences among the women in her study in their views of punishment (with middle-class mothers leaning toward reasoning and working-class women toward physical punishment). My study focused much more on behavior than attitudes. If I looked at attitudes, I saw fewer differences; for example, all exhibited the desire to be a good mother and to have their children grow and thrive. The differences I found, however, were significant in how parents enacted their visions of what it meant to be a good parent.

6. See Urte Bronfenbrenner's article, "Socialization and Social Class through Time and Space."

7. Katherine Newman, *Declining Fortunes*, as well as Donald Barlett and James B. Steele, *America: What Went Wrong?* See also Michael Hout and Claude Fischer, "A Century of Inequality."

8. Some readers expressed the concern that the contrast to natural would be "unnatural," but this is not the sense in which the term *natural growth* is used here. Rather, the contrast is with words such as cultivated, artificial, artifice, or manufactured. This contrast in the logic of child rearing is a heuristic device that should not be pushed too far since, as sociologists have shown, all social life is constructed in specific social contexts. Indeed, family life has varied dramatically over time. See Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925*, and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, *Death without Weeping*.

9. Elijah Anderson, *Code of the Street*; see especially Chapter 2.

10. For a more extensive discussion of the work of Pierre Bourdieu see the theoretical appendix; see also David Swartz's excellent book *Culture and Power*.

differences in daily life, precludes one from "seeing" or "understanding" important dimensions of the phenomenon. See Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid*; Kathleen Neckerman and Joleen Kirschenmann, "Hiring Strategies, Racial Bias, and Inner-City Workers"; and Elijah Anderson, *Streetwise*. Finally, there is an extensive literature on "whiteness" and the benefits that whites gain from their position of privilege. See, among others, Phil Cohen, "Laboring under Whiteness."

19. See Julia Wrigley, "Do Young Children Need Intellectual Stimulation?" and Linda A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children*.

20. As I explain in more detail in Appendix A, some of the families in the study, including the Williamses, were upper-middle class. The project, however, was hampered by its small sample size and my desire to compare different racial and ethnic groups. As a result, the differences between middle-class and upper-middle-class families are not a major focus of the work. Within the scope of the sample of thirty-six middle-class families, however, clear differences did not emerge between the middle class and upper-middle class. As a result, in this book I use only the term *middle class* to encompass both.

CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND DAILY LIFE

1. William Kornblum, *Sociology: The Central Questions*, p. 72.
2. Jepperson defines an institution as "a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property . . . Put another way, institutions are those social patterns that, when chronically reproduced, owe their survival to relatively self-activating social processes." Ronald L. Jepperson, "Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism," p. 145.
3. C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, p. 161.
4. Lower Richmond teachers also coordinate their classroom efforts with an after-school tutoring program that takes place at the local housing project, even though it is not a formal school-sponsored activity.
5. Most of the quotes reported in the book are from tape-recorded interviews or tape recordings made during family observations. At times, following traditional ethnographic work, the excerpts are from field notes that the research assistants and I wrote up immediately after the observations. In those instances, we added quotation marks only if we were certain that we could remember the exchange verbatim. As a result, there are excerpts from field notes that recount speech without the use of quotation marks. (I did not carry notebooks or permit others to write notes during field visits; rather we "hung out.") In editing the quotes for readability I removed false starts, "um," "you know," "like," and stuttering when they did not appear to be analytically significant. The signal of a . . . indicates the omission of words (or in a few cases a slight reordering of sentences). Finally, the research assistants and I had different nicknames for the family members that we used in our field notes (e.g., "Mr. Tallinger," "Mr. T." or "Don"). Rather than tamper with the text of field notes, I have allowed this variability to remain.

Brackets are used in the field notes to set off text inserted by me, usually for clarification, such as when a person's name is used in place of a personal pro-