How Schools Can Raise Property Values

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“Quintilian believed that learning through play was to be cultivated from an early age. He had argued that from the earliest years some forms of learning should be encouraged. The young child had a retentive memory, so take advantage of it, he said: aphorisms, famous sayings, and selections from poetry could all help children retain moral principles. Again, it was the constant presence of the nurse which helped develop elementary ethics and literacy. But, he said, he was not ignorant of age differentials (acetates); so the very young should not be pressed too hard or asked to do real work. ‘For our highest priority must be that the child, who cannot yet love learning, does not come to hate it and carry beyond the early years a fear of the bitterness once tasted.” (p. 127)

“Elementary education was carried out in the home in a child’s early years.” (p. 157)

**Original Helicopter parent NOT a parent!**

“Quintilian emphasizes the importance of group learning, for its pedagogical and socializing benefits, in his lengthy discussion of schools versus private tutors. He addresses the two main arguments against schools: a child’s morals are especially at risk at a young
age in the company of many other children, and a teacher who has to divide his time amongst a number of children cannot give the individual attention to one which a private tutor (Rawson 2003:162) can. He admits that there is evidence of bad influence on boys at schools, but argues that such influences can occur at home too (from tutor, household slaves, or over-indulgent parents). A trustworthy chaperone (usually a paedagus) is recommended to accompany the child to school and remain with the child there.” (p. 163)

“Competition was intense at these festivals…Composition and delivery of Greek and Latin prose and verse were appropriate preparations for future orators, and those boys who had ambitions for future public life looked to prizes in these competitions to spur them on their way.” (p. 327)


“At age twelve, boys went to the telpocalli, or House of Youth, where their instructors taught them civic responsibilities and how to soldier. Girls went to a separate school where they were taught womanly arts such as weaving and how to do the complex featherwork so valued in ancient Mexico. Both boys and girls also learned their history, traditions, and religious practices. Boys and girls of the nobility could also enter a separate school, the calmecac, which destined them for the priesthood. Their curriculum included reading and writing the pictographic language
of the region, prophecy, and the intricacies of the ritual calendar.”
(p. 57)


**From List of Illustrations**

Joost van Geel, A Visit to the Nursery
Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam

**Both schooling and education by the parents at home.**

“By the seventeenth century education, at least on the primary level, had become widespread. In the Netherlands, as in most Protestant countries, the primary purpose of education was to impart religious fundamentals and therefore was a matter which the church and state supervised closely. To properly educate a child to take his place in society as a worthy adult was a fundamental duty at the time of not only parents but the community as well. As a result this was a period of relatively high literacy. The Dutch Republic seems to have been the only country in Europe in the seventeenth century to successfully advocate and enforce a system of universal education. The schooling of everyone including peasants, was a matter of Dutch pride.” (p. 91)

**Scenes of mothers reading with children at home.**

“It was thought that the human child, like the bear cub, was, in its original state, an unruly, untamed, ill-shaped entity until the
exertions of adults “licked” or “beat” the child into its proper shape—either by the tongue (lessons) or by physical violence…In *The Village School* in Dublin the boy again is being punished for mistakes in his lessons, as witnessed by the crumpled sheet of paper covered with blots and scribbles lying on the floor between the teacher and pupil, and placed directly beneath the hand the boy holds out for the blow from the ferule.” (Durantini 1979: 120)

“Physical punishment was regarded as an essential pedagogical tool from Antiquity. Until the sixteenth century it was accepted almost unquestioningly as an inevitable facet of the schoolboy’s life…It is in the sixteenth century England, as public schools increased in number and learning became more widespread, that we find a new concern about the conditions under which schoolboys labored. Humanist writers believed that children profited most when they experienced learning as a pleasant activity. Physical discipline made them fear and loath it…Brinsley, who began to teach in 1590s …laments that children are afraid to come to school and wish to leave as soon as possible because of the severity and frequency of the whippings.” (p. 125)

“In each instance we find a teacher seated at a desk before which stands a small group of pupils. Instruction is achieved by individual study and recitation. We typically find one child reading aloud a passage from a book which the teacher indicates with his stylus. The teacher often holds a switch or ferule in his free hand, just in case the child should make a mistake.” (p. 133)

“The Dutch unruly school scenes continue this tradition of questioning and criticizing the education at hand. The disorder
continues to be characterized by degrees of chaos or improper
behavior by both the teacher and the students. The disorder usually
occurs in peasant schools. One of the most violently unruly
versions of this theme is Pieter de Bloot’s *Raucous School*. Here we see a large figure, with a pen stuck in his hat, brandishing a broom at a group of children who have been knocked on the floor. Other children seemingly battle or try to protect themselves with a wooden bench. In the doorway in the center is a laughing old man, while on the left other children try to read. The uncontrolled, topsy-turvy nature of the scene is most strikingly (p. 153) expressed by this tumultuous activity. Other details, such as the ferule in the hat of the child on the left and the book and switch on the floor suggest disorder. In this instance the traditional symbols of authority and punishment are in the wrong hands or go unused. They are instead ineffectively replaced by the broom, a tool of
“The children misbehave by fighting or mocking the teacher, who, in turn, may be unable to control the situation or else is ignorant of it…The master of the disorderly school theme is Jan Steen who repeated it several times around 670. Although he continues to depict a very large room with numerous active figures, he is able to focus upon the very essence of the subject: that the lack of vigilance on the part of the teacher leads to chaos and provides the opportunity for all sorts of impermissible actions.” (p. 154)


“Early modern Sweden provides the outstanding example: inspired by the Protestant Reformation, a Church Law of 1686 stipulated that children and servants should ‘learn to read and see with their own eyes what God bids and commands in His Holy Word’. The onus was on parents to do the teaching, and on Lutheran priests to hold regular examinations in reading and the catechism. The example of parish of Skanör reveals 58 per cent of the population able to read in 1702, and 92 per cent by 1740. Everywhere in the West the churches took it upon themselves to instruct young people in the Christian faith, by means of sermons and catechism classes. The very wealthiest parents in medieval and Renaissance Europe often hired a private tutor to teach their children at home.” (p. 159)
“Incompetent or immoral tutors were as thick on the ground as good ones.” (p. 160)

“Incompetent or immoral tutors were as thick on the ground as good ones.” (p. 160)

“If the school came to loom increasingly large in the lives of young people, it did so in an extremely long-drawn-out process (p. 161)... the seventeenth century stands out as a period of waning enthusiasm for popular schooling after the surge of interest during the sixteenth century. At the very end of the period, the early stages of the Industrial Revolution in their turn began to undermine working-class schooling in various parts of Western Europe.” (p. 164)

“About 1880 Aurelia Roth struggled in her Bohemian village with long hours grinding glass, often having to miss her lessons. I didn’t get much time to learn and still less to play’, she wrote, ‘but it hurt me the most if I had to skip school.’ During the same period, Fritz Pauk described the classroom as a welcome relief from heavy work on the farm, but admitted that there was not much to learn at his little village school beyond the catechism and ‘innumerable Bible passages.” (p. 167)

“The underlying problem for teachers was always boredom in the class. The traditional method of teaching children to read was to drill him or her first in the letters of the alphabet, secondly in syllables, and finally in recognizing words. The children spend a few minutes with the teacher individually going over their work, while the rest were left to their own devices. The result was generally anarchic, prompting hard-pressed teachers to lay into their restless and unruly charges in an attempt to maintain some control.” (p. 167)

**1800**

“It was, however, at this very moment that modern childhood was invented. Confined at first to the urban middle class, and initially limited to the years from birth to thirteen or fourteen, modern childhood was to be free from labor and devoted to schooling… Middle-class parents sheltered their children from the workplace and economic struggles and kept them in school and the family home longer than in the past. As a result, the stages of middle-class childhood were more carefully delineated, and passage through these stages became more predictable.” (p. 76)


“The idea that school should *interest* children was considered a radical new pedagogical philosophy in the United States of the 1840s…It contradicted schoolmasters’ prior assumptions that only a sense of duty or the master’s cane would motivate their learners. Yet it had become important to maintain students’ interest at least in part because the interested student was an *attentive* student.” (p. 82)

*Studies suggesting that impact of widespread public schooling on intelligence and cognitive development was enormous.*
However, since 1970, there has been a leveling or decline in intellectual growth beyond Elementary School.


“For the past few years, we have been experimenting with the use of a “natural experiment” (designated “school cutoff”) that permits assessment of the influence of a culturally valued learning experience (i.e. schooling) and circumvents some, if not all, of the serious biases found in other research…In essence our methodology involves selecting groups of children, who just make versus miss the designated cutoff for school entry. By selecting children whose birthdates cluster closely on either side of the cutoff date, we can effectively equate two groups of children chronologically on some target psychological skill or process.” (p. 163)

“Clearly, the cognitive skills of children change in important ways during this age period. Further, as our research documents, one salient environmental change, namely going to school, is responsible for major and, in some instances, unique shift to those cognitive skills.” (p. 181)

“As figure 1 showed, Full Scale IQ gains in America are impressive. I am a grandparents and a member of the WISC generation who were aged 5 to 15 when they were tested in 1947-1948. (p. 18) Let us put our IQ at 100. Our children are essentially the WISC-8 generation who were 6-16 when tested in 1972 and, against the WISC norms, their mean IQ was almost 108. Our grandchildren are the WISC-IV generation who were 6-16 in 2002 and, against the WISC norms, their IQ was almost 118. We can of course work backward rather then forward. If present generation is put at 100, their grandparents have a mean IQ of 82. Either today’s children are so bright that they should run circles around us, or their grandparents were so dull that it is surprising that they could keep a modern society ticking over.” (p. 19)

“In either event, the cognitive gulf between the generations should be huge. Taking the second scenario, almost 20 percent of my generation would have had an IQ of 70 or below and be eligible to be classed as mentally retarded [MR]. Over 60 percent of American blacks would have been MR. Anyone born before 1940 knows that all of this is absurd.” (p. 19)

“The huge Raven’s gains show that today’s children are far better at solving problems on the spot without previously learned method for doing so.” (p. 19)

“Between 1972 and 2002, US schoolchildren made no gain in their store of general information and only minimal vocabulary gains. Therefore, while today’s children may learn to master pre-adult literature at a younger age, they are no better prepared for reading more demanding adult literature.” (p. 20)
“In other words, today’s schoolchildren opened up an early lead on their grandparents by learning the mechanics of reading at an earlier age. But by age 17, their grandparents had caught up. And since current students are no better than their grandparents in terms of vocabulary and general information, the two generations at 17 are dead equal in their ability to read the adult literature expected of a senior in high school…From 1973 to 2000, the Nation’s Report Card shows fourth and eighth graders making mathematics gains equivalent to almost 7 IQ points. These put the young children of today at the 68th percentile of their parent’s generation. But once again, the gain falls off at the twelfth grade, this time to literally nothing.” (p. 21)

“My hypothesis is that during the period in which children mastered calculating skills at an earlier age, they made no progress in acquiring mathematical reasoning skills. (p. 22)

“The Wechsler-Binet rate of gain (0.30 points per year) entails that the schoolchildren of 1900 would have had a mean IQ just under 70…To make our ancestors that lacking in problem-solving initiative is to turn them into virtual automatons.” (p. 23)

“The solution to this paradox rests on two distinctions that explain in turn the huge and therefore embarrassing gains made on the Similarities subtest and Raven’s. The first distinction is between pre-scientific and post-scientific operational thinking. A person who views the world through pre-scientific spectacles thinks in terms of the categories that order perceived objects and functional relationships. When presented with a Similarities-type item such as
“what do dogs and rabbits have in common,” Americans in 1900 would be likely to say, “You use dogs to hunt rabbits.” The correct answer, that they are both mammals, assumes that the important thing about the world is to classify it in terms of the categories of science.” (p. 24)
Bush Schools

**Ghana: Mixed farming = women; Herding = men**

“Most men keep one or more sons out of school, so they can keep cows away from growing crops (nowadays these cowherds are called cow boys). Youths who have not been to school are much less likely to leave the village in adulthood. This ensures the father of their labor as adults because even after they marry he can delay freeing them to farm separately for several years...Because few children understand much of what is taught in school—and thus most conspicuously fail—many boys today are eager to escape schooling to the freedom of the herdboy’s life. Further, there is a lack of suitable role models because the few educated men from the village have not prospered.” (245)

“A recent review of basic education concluded that rural school are so poor (the few teachers come irregularly and teach badly) that in terms of schooling there are in fact two Ghanas, one for the urban elite and a different one for everyone else. The literate elite send their children to private schools, beginning with prekindergarten day nurseries. “Everyone knows” that this is necessary to get children into a “good” kindergarten, which is necessary to get the child into a “good” primary school, and so on through each step on
the educational ladder up through university. In private schools, and even in some government primary schools, children are tested to be sure they can already read and write before they are accepted into first grade. Private tutoring—evenings, weekends, and during vacations—grows increasingly important as children reach post primary levels, with the accompanying regime of examinations. The child-rearing strategies of elite parents, like those in the West, are clearly focused on educational success.” (p. 258)

“Empirically, very few children complete primary school with basic literacy skills. Nationally, fewer then 10% meet basic norms for reading and mathematics. Scores are dramatically lower in rural areas. When parents see that (p. 258) children consistently fail, they question whether attending school provides any advantages for adulthood.” (p. 259)


“What does a state hope to gain from providing schooling to children of itinerant herders in the remotest areas of the nation, and what to the herders hope to achieve by sending their children to school?” (p. 152)

“Nonetheless, the promotion of formal education has had limited success in the Ferlo. While the veranda of the health clinic is full of elderly gentlemen in large turbans and ladies in colorful dresses and large golden earrings waiting or the nurse, the school rooms
tend to be far quieter and in some cases even empty. In other cases children in blue and white school uniforms, struggling to follow what is happening at the blackboard; occupy a few of the school benches and tables. Although most of the local pupils speak Fulani as their mother tongue, the teacher, who usually comes from another region, seldom masters this language, and schoolbooks, if available, are written entirely in French. Hence, basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught in either French or Wolof (one of the six national languages of Senegal, spoken by 70 percent of the population).” (p. 153)

“These herdsmen depend heavily on the manpower of their children…Childhood consists of hard labor and many hot hours spent alone with the animals in a vast landscape of grasslands and busy shrubs. It is from the practice of herding and the lived experience of coping with a highly variable environment that the Fulani child is expected to acquire basic skills for his future success.” (p. 156)

“It was therefore surprising to find that although the situation in the borehole schools remained largely unchanged, a number of small, private schools were being established on the initiative of particularly wealthy, but also very mobile families in their (wet-season) encampment. What did these pastoral families hope to gain from hiring a private teacher and providing some secondhand school desks? And why was the formal system, provided by the Senegalese government, unable to fulfill what this alternative and unofficial educational system apparently managed to accomplish?” (p. 157)
“At the age of fifteen, a boy is expected to be able to carry out the same tasks as a grown-up herder, and thus to take over the herding tasks of his father and older relatives so that the older family members can engage in what Paul Riesman calls “socio-political work.” (p. 158)


“In reality, the child spends a very large part of his childhood in the bush separated from his parents. In contrast to the camp, which is mainly the space of adults, the bush is the space of children—a space for learning but primarily a “free” space for play and dreaming…Having a successful career as a herdsman and building up a large herd is not so much a question of acquiring skills as of having struck it lucky.” (p. 159)

“The great reluctance of the nomadic tribes to send their children to school prompted the colonial administration to set up a quota system whereby each tribe was required to send a number of children of high rank to attend school, a system that was known locally as “educational tax.”…Traditional chiefs “substituted” the children of lower-ranking relatives, often kidnapped to meet the schooling quota, for their own children.” (p. 163)


At a time of religious revival across the Muslim world, Algeria’s youth are in play. The focus of this contest is the schools, where
for decades Islamists controlled what children learned, and how they learned, officials and education experts here said.

Now the government is urgently trying to re-engineer Algerian identity, changing the curriculum to wrest momentum from the Islamists, provide its youth with more employable skills, and combat the terrorism it fears schools have inadvertently encouraged. It appears to be the most ambitious attempt in the region to change a school system to make its students less vulnerable to religious extremism.

There is a sense that this country could still go either way. Young people here in the capital appear extremely observant, filling mosques for the daily prayers, insisting that they have a place to pray in school. The strictest form of Islam, Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia, has become the gold standard for the young.

The schools are moving from rote learning — which was always linked to memorizing the Koran — to critical thinking, where teachers ask students to research subjects and think about concepts. Yet the students and teachers are still unprepared, untrained and, in many cases, unreceptive.

But the call to jihad still tugs at Malek. In his world, jihad, or struggle, is a duty for Muslims… Four years ago, Amine Aba, 19, one of Malek’s best friends, decided it was time to take his religion more seriously, to stop listening to music, to stop dancing, to stop hanging around with Malek —
Compare Morocco

The young men focused on trying to pass their exams, because Algiers is full of examples of those who have not. More than 500,000 students drop out each year, officials said — and only about 20 percent of students make it into high school. Only about half make it from high school into a university. A vast majority of dropouts are young men, who see no link between work and school. Young women tend to stick with school because, officials said, it offers independence from their parents.

Algeria’s young men leave school because there is no longer any connection between education and employment, school officials said. The schools raise them to be religious, but do not teach them skills needed to get a job.

Culturally adapted schooling…


“Although the tribal school had successfully added the teaching of Ojibwe language and culture to the curriculum, this did not necessarily produce any greater academic success than the counterpart public school, which did very little Ojibwe language and culture teaching. For example, there were no more students going on to two- or four-year colleges. Grades attendance, and test scores were not significantly better. No students gained Ojibwe language fluency for either the tribal or the public school’s Ojibwe program. However, self-esteem, self-confidence, community
empowerment, and dropout prevention are all rightful successes that culture-based school does claim, and they were observed, although not quantified.” (p. 46)

“Some students and staff discussed how they perceived the teaching of academic subjects to be at odds with teaching culture. This became an identity dilemma for some students, as they interpreted academic success as tantamount to assimilation.” (p. 46)

Paradox that failure = "resisting assimilation," yet neither the students nor the parents make any special efforts to immerse themselves in cultural traditions. That is, half-hearted engagement with schoolwork is much less likely to lead to culture loss than the simple erosion of culture through the preferential importation of foreign technology, foods, entertainment and life-styles.


One consequence of the failure of public schools serving indigenous communities to prepare students for successful adaptation to the modern sector may be “mission creep.” If schools are failing at the original mission, perhaps a new one, such as preserving indigenous languages, can be added to their brief?

The notion that children from indigenous societies and from at least some minority sub-cultures within developed countries do poorly in school because of a clash of cultures is extremely popular. So, too is the corollary notion that to enhance the success of these populations, the curriculum content, teaching methods and teaching staff should be drawn largely from the child’s natal culture. Several large-scale applications of this theory, notably for native Hawaiian and Navajo children, have been undertaken. I expressed (Lancy 1993: 42-3) considerable doubt about the success claims made on behalf of these programs some years ago. What follows is a more recent and thorough review of the literature on culturally adapted schooling which finds little basis for continuing to subscribe to this theory.

At a more profound level, the reader will, by now, have been persuaded that learning culture is what children do best. Children are far and away more facile at figuring out how other cultures work than their elders! Indeed, the very rare occasion when children teach those older than themselves occurs during rapid social change or following immigration and the children serve as culture brokers or interpreters for their older, slower-to-adapt kin. The idea that children *en masse* are unable to penetrate the *culture* of schooling, as opposed to struggling with specific aspects of schooling such as reading and arithmetic, just does not seem very credible.
“There is weak evidence that sociocultural characteristics of students and teachers have an impact on reading and literacy outcomes. One fairly consistent finding across a number of studies is that language-minority students’ reading comprehension performance improves when they read culturally familiar materials. However, the language of the text appears to be a stronger influence on reading performance: Students perform better when they read or use material in the language they know better. The influence of cultural context is not as robust.” (Goldenberg 2006:256)

“McCarthy (1993) describes a program, whose origins were in collaboration with the KEEP program (see Vogt, Jordan, & Tharpe...
1987), “that was designed to tap the language and literacy strengths of Navajo bilingual learners” (p. 183). The classrooms used pedagogy and curriculum associated with whole-language literacy approaches (e.g., children’s literature, authentic reading and writing experiences, cooperative learning, and language experience). To this extent, there was nothing unique to Navajo culture about the program. The primary cultural accommodation, in addition to use of the Navajo language in the classroom, was the content selected for the thematic units studied (e.g., wind, sheep, and corn), all of which are prominent in Navajo daily life. Students engaged in academically challenging tasks and learned basic and advanced literacy skills by studying such topics produced more favorable learning environments and enhanced literacy outcomes. McCarty reports rising scores on both locally developed and nationally standardized tests at the school, although it is difficult to link the curricular and instructional changes she describes with those changes in scores. The KEEP collaboration began in 1983 and lasted 5 years. Thereafter, a Title VII grand supported continued development and adaptation of the KEEP model with the Navajo children. The achievement data McCarty reports are for spring 1990 to spring 1991, when the Grades K-3 children in the Navajo language arts program achieved gains of 12 percentage points in locally developed literacy programs. During the same period, McCarty reports, Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) percentile scores “more than doubled in reading vocabulary” (p. 191). McCarty also presents examples of children’s writing, indicating the sorts of written work they were producing in the language arts program. McCarty’s claims of program effects are plausible, but the absence of a strong
evaluation design, primarily a comparison group, attenuates her claims. The study’s design makes it difficult to determine whether the language arts program had an effect on children’s literacy outcomes, leaving moot the question of whether culturally accommodating curriculum materials had the hypothesized effect on literacy achievement.” (p. 283)


A study by Trueba et al. (1984) is comparable to the KEEP study… in that it attempted to make productive changes in classroom practice on the basis of data about children’s homes and communities. The researchers did not begin with an a priori conception of culture. Rather, the goal of the project was to discover aspects of bilingual Latino junior and senior high school students’ home and community experiences that could inform instruction and then work with teachers to design modules incorporating that information into the writing curriculum. Lessons, discussions, and writing assignments were built around people and events in the community, such as functional writing assignments experienced by the students (paying bills or answering school-related queries for parents), low rides, a murder that had recently occurred, and a cheating survey the students had conducted. Pre- and post analyses of the students’ writing showed that the Latino students had improved, although modestly (SD=.35), during the intervention, but were still below the district mastery level. Two design problems weaken the conclusions we can draw from this study. First, there was no comparison group, so
it is impossible to interpret the growth in student writing scores; student writing and other academic skills are expected to improve over the school year even without a special intervention. Second, whatever growth in writing skills occurred could very well have been due to the students simply writing more and receiving more writing instruction. The authors report that, because writing is not part of the ESL curriculum, this was the first time some of the students had been asked to write in English.” (p. 293)


“Goldberg and Gallimore (1991) studied a predominately Hispanic elementary school with a transitional bilingual program, where first- and second-grade children’s reading achievement (in Spanish) improved substantially over a 2- to 3-year period as a result of several changes in the school’s early literacy program. One of these changed involved increased parent and home involvement in children’s beginning literacy development. Whereas in previous years no systematic attempts had been made to involve parents in helping their children learn to read, teachers began sending books and other reading materials, including homework and other assignments designed to promote literacy. The authors report that parents were willing and able to help their children progress in early reading development, but that school staff tended to underestimate their potential contribution. The authors claim that the increased home and parent involvement
helped improve early reading achievement from around the 30th national percentile to the around the 60th.” (p. 296)

Private School Students Exiting antiquities Museum – Istanbul


“Attending school full time, even for a short period, is a luxury most families cannot afford, as it means a loss of earnings. It interferes with domestic tasks, such as child care, cleaning, cooking, doing errands, fetching water, sweeping, and washing
clothes, or is at odds with peak work hours. In order to optimize earnings, children may attend school on alternate days, or one is sent one day and another on a different day. Many attend school diligently the first few weeks, only to drop out after the first month.” (p. 87)

“Those who have managed to complete some schooling do not necessarily have an advantage. Those with little or no formal study and those who have completed four years of schooling “substitute” for each other, meaning they compete equally against each other for the same jobs, and there is little differential in earnings (p. 88)…The children I met attended school sporadically and then stopped completely. Edna, a beggar, would cringe when she saw other 10-year-olds on the streets and say, “I feel ashamed, I have to put my head down. I can’t look at them. I see the kids of the tourists, rich Brazilians, staring at me. They look so nice, all dressed in nice clothes.” She dropped out of school (Kenny 2007:88) after she failed the last exam. … “Besides, I’m too hungry to go to school.”” (p. 89)


Possibility that schooling erodes traditional culture because schooled individuals contribute less to kin and community.

Education is not valued very much by most families. If a child has learned to read and write it is generally viewed as more important for him to leave school to help his parents with the tasks of the field and the household…In infancy and early childhood, weaning is gradual; walking, talking and toilet training are not pushed. Social norms are not very important until a child goes from being a *chiriz* (less than 6 years old) to a *patojo* (over 6 years old) when the responsibilities of life are said to begin for both sexes. (p. 271)


**E. Central Sudan**

“Howa’s economy was rooted in agriculture and animal husbandry. Most men in Howa cultivated sorghum on a largely subsistence bases, supplementing it with sesame they sold to passing traders or pressed into oil and marketed to meet their limited needs for cash.” (p. 23)

“The Suki Project embraced a nearly 1,600 square kilometer swath of central eaters Sudan between the Blue Nile and the Dinder River. Approximately 7,500 tenants were enlisted in the project to cultivate cotton and groundnuts on ten feddan (4.2 hectare) allotments. Their irrigated cultivation, geared to the export market,
disrupted and largely displaced the dryland cultivation of the staple food crop, sorghum, and sesame produced for the domestic and international markets. The project also disturbed the pastoralism that had characterized the region.” (p. 29)

“The Suki Project meant that almost all of the dryland fields and much of the pasture and wooded land in the vicinity of the village were cleared, graded, and divided for the irrigated cultivation of cotton and groundnuts for the world market. This change all but precluded cultivation of the staple food crop, sorghum, severely reduced wooded areas nearby, and sharply curtailed the grazing land available to the small herds of goats, sheep, and cows held by villagers. Independent cultivators became farm tenants, no longer producing grain for household consumption but cultivating cash crops for international exchange.” (p. 33)

“It appeared that the economic diversification that characterized wealthier household led them to employ their children more intensively than others in the village (p. 65)… Indeed, Talal, who was a regular water seller Howa and the oldest child in his family, had withdrawn from school midyear in part to provide this income for his family and in part to work with his father in the fields and at other tasks.” (p. 14)

“Although I found extremely low rates of school enrollment in Howa (42 percent among boys between sever and twelve; 4 percent among girls of the same age), I also found low rates of absenteeism. Once a family made a commitment to send their child to school, they appeared to respect the restriction that attendance
made on him or her, and did not interfere by demanding that they child work during school times.” (p. 66)


“The study conducted in a multicaste village in Karnataka State, South India. Nestled in the hills and valleys on the slopes of the Western Ghats.” (p. 167)

“The Havik Brahmins are the dominate caste politically, ritually, and economically. They comprise approximately one-fourth of the total village population. Their primary source of income is areca nut (betel nut) cultivation. Although the Haviks of Totagadde are dominant economically, few are wealthy (p. 169)... The numerous changes in Totagadde Havik society since 1964 may be interpreted as an effort to retain power in a society which is changing from ascribed status to achieved status. By endorsing changes that may be inevitable, the Haviks have maintained their position. Encouraging education, taking advantage of economic opportunities, and suggesting intercaste cooperation all serve to keep the Havik dominant and respected in Totagadde.” (Ullrich 1995:177)

“Parents have perceived their own interests to be in encouraging their sons and daughters rather than in opposing them... Members of all castes attend (p. 177) the local school and may travel by bus to town. In 1964, when there was no bus, religious restrictions
required Havik Brahmins to purify themselves ritually after a return from town, but in 1987, Havik Brahmins disregarded the pollution incurred from sitting next to non-Brahmins in a bus.” (p. 177)


“Almost all of the persons contacted in the favela are recent migrants from rural underdeveloped areas of the country (mainly from the northeastern states), born and raised on farms or in very small villages. São Paulo is the biggest and the richest city in the country (located in the Southeast, the most developed region of the country) and, consequently, one of the most attractive poles for rural migrants.” (p. 247)

“Children are put to work very early. It is virtually the rule for children from 12 years old on to do some kind of job to contribute to the family income (one can see children as young as 8 working in exchange for money). Given the proximity to the rich neighborhood and the type of interaction between the rich and the poor population, the children very often find jobs as “junior maids.” They are usually paid very low salaries (something like a third or fourth of the minimum wage), and may even not be paid at all, getting a meal a day or some used pieces of clothing once in a while. They are hired to wash cars, clean the garden, and possibly help the other maids with some small tasks inside the house. This
type of job may be part time, allowing the child to go to school during the day. When not sent to work, children are supposed to do a lot at home, helping the mother with housework and child care or even substituting for her when she has to go to work.” (p. 260)

“The subjects tended to characterize intelligent people as those who are able, basically, to “make things,” to create concrete products with their own hands: build a house, do woodwork, do mechanical work, paint, make objects in straw, ceramics, and so on…Intelligent people are also seen as interested in learning and able to learn easily and quickly; they can learn by themselves, by observing other people, or from an explanation given by someone (p. 263)…Virtually all of the subjects made a clear distinction between intelligence and school acquired abilities: A person may be intelligent without having gone through school. … Schooling was mainly seen as a process that enables people to deal with the demands of modern complex life, through the transmission of the basic literate capacities.” (p. 264)

“People who have had school training are more able to find better jobs (both because they are formally qualified and because they know things such as how to take a test, how to fill out a form, how to use a time clock).…Schooling was said to be more necessary in the city than in the country (p. 264)…Schooling, seen as a process that enables people to deal with the demands of modern complex life, is perceived as conferring status on the people who pass through it. School seems to have a value in itself, independently of the eventual benefits it may give to the students in terms of knowledge acquisition and of formal qualification.” (p. 265)
Moroccan government policy has been to emphasize Arab culture, history and geography to erase ethnic differences among the population and diffuse tension between religious and secular realms. But, the net effect has been to perpetuate the urban elite who send their children to western-oriented French speaking private schools, thus advantaging them in the competition for places in coveted and, ultimately lucrative, university programs like business and engineering.


“Memorizing, especially memorizing the Qur’an, is a “divine gift” that separates Muslim schools from commoners. Education (*ta’lim*) was synonymous with memorization (*hifz*). This strong cultural and social belief in the organic relationship between the Qur’anic text and its memorization facilitated the acceptance of colonial and postcolonial educational policies.” (p. 205)

“Students from rural areas such as southern Morocco end up majoring in geography, religious studies, and Arabic language and literature. These choices limit their access to higher spheres of political power and decision making.” (p. 206)

“Since independence in 1956, the nationalist Istiqlal party, headed by its leader Allal al-Fassi, spearheaded an educational movement of Arabization whose main objective was to manufacture a new national homogeneity based on Arab-Islamic identity (p. 213) …Students find themselves deficient largely in languages when
they reach the university where scientific subjects are taught in French instead of Arabic.” (p. 214)

“Urban private schools implemented a different educational policy where French and other foreign languages are preponderant compared to Arabic. Accordingly, the largely urban: middle [class] and upper [class] families who are dissatisfied with the public educational system, enroll their children in private schools or in the French “missions” to guarantee them good mastery of the French language and better job prospects.” (p. 214)

**Anthropology of Childhood: Page 317 discussion of Moroccans with education, unable to find white-collar jobs…note that in visit to Casablanca in May, 2008, I encountered a massive public demonstration by degree-holding individuals who were unemployed. Note also that the riots throughout Greece in December, 2008 had, as their root cause, the inability of the Greek economy to absorb educated workers.**


“The study of Bonerate children is so fascinating. Here, both parents and children see few possibilities for the future that they cannot handle within their familiar cultural adaptation. This is particularly true of Miang Tuu residents who even by Bonerate islanders are seen as an isolated village community. The village has no school….All possible means for earning a livelihood at Bonerate, as this is understood by the villagers, are represented within the local community.” (Broch 1990:13)
“Greensboro. What is immediately clear is that within both ethnic groups, middle-class children were involved in more lessons, overall, than were working-class children. Moreover, middle-class children from each ethnic group were about twice as likely to engage both in academic lessons and in lessons about the world as were working-class children.” (p. 153)

“It should also come as something of a surprise to those who have been accustomed to thinking of White middle-class children in the United States as having far more didactic lessons than all other children to see that children in Obninsk and Tartu, from both middle- and working-class homes, had the same, or more, academic lessons as did their counterparts in Greensboro and far more total lessons (p. 162). . . Children in Obninsk, Tartu, and Oulu were as likely (or more so, in the latter city) to engage in conversation as were the middle-class White children in Greensboro. . . The research into Finnish and Estonian children’s and adolescents’ propensity to talk has featured recording conversations during mealtimes.” (p. 168)

“The middle-class children in Kisumu engaged in less work than did children in many other groups.” (p. 169)

“Children whose parents at the same age were already hunters or wives now continue to carry their books to school daily, awaiting the time when they can step into the “real” world of adulthood.” (73)

“As mentioned earlier, in the traditional Inuit family young children were given a degree of personal freedom which would probably shock even the most permissive southern parent…Young girls were also given almost unlimited freedom (p. 76)…It is not uncommon for a mother in an isolated settlement to send her child to school and then go to bed herself, having been up all night visiting with friends and relatives. She is often loathe to make sure that her child goes to bed early, because she does not want to impose her will on his or her own decisions.” (p. 77)


“For Navajo, early autonomy and non-interference with their children was desirable, where as adult supervision over children and adolescents was a strong value among the Anglo…Navajo emphasis on both autonomy and consensus, and it entailed egalitarian rather than hierarchical authority relations. Authority
relations were egalitarian among Navajos as opposed to hierarchical among Anglos. This had serious implications for how Navajo parents interacted with their children.” (p. 39)

“Unlike the Anglos, who experience a period of adolescence and dependence, the Navajo, have little or no time “in-between” when the individual was neither a child nor an adult. Social and physical maturity occurred simultaneously. Young Navajo individuals, who were viewed in the school district and the larger Anglo society as immature adolescents or teenagers were seen as adults by their parents.” (p. 39)…“For many Navajo parents this translated into “Non-interference” for their children who chose to leave school. For many Anglo parents and school officials, this translated into “lack of support” or “neglect.”” (p. 40)


“[School counselors and teachers] insist that such statistics do not begin to reflect the problem of chronic truancy and absence among Khmer girls. Khmer parents and community leaders voice similar concerns.” (p. 137)

**Compare to Navajo/Inuit.**

“They expect teachers to use physical punishment…Parents also admit that they have little understanding of the educational system in the United States and say that they can do little to help their children do well in school because of their own lack of English skills.” (p. 139)
“…an important cultural focus on the autonomy of the individual, and by the belief that children come into the world with inherent talents and predispositions and cannot be pushed far from their intended trajectory.” (p. 139)

“Those who come from poor rural backgrounds cannot understand why police and the courts protect a misbehaving child rather than support a parent who is trying to change the child’s ways.” (p. 149)


Madison and Alternatives were not typical of the schools that black students attend. They were both small schools with all-black populations, and Alternatives was a Christian school. These factors undoubtedly made the children’s experiences different from those of other black students, most of whom attend large public schools with at least some children from other racial or ethnic backgrounds.” (p. 1182)

“Most of the children in this sample were from middle-class families, but there were a fair number of children from working-class families, especially at Alternatives. As a group, though, the parents in the sample had higher education, higher family income, and in some cases, high occupational status than the average African American adult …These factors surely played a role in fostering pro-school and pro-achievement attitudes among the
students. It is also likely that these factors influenced teachers’ perceptions and treatment of the students.” (1183)

“I also found evidence, not present here, that parents provided assistance with homework and school projects and generally placed heavy emphasis on school achievement. Many of the parents also had access to resources that could facilitate their children’s school success. For example, some parents were able to hire tutors for their children when necessary or to purchase supplemental educational materials, and some were able to call on family members or friends who were educators for help with specific problems. Many of the parents also appeared comfortable dealing with school personnel and making demands of the school.” (p. 1183)
An Educated Woman


**In Sri Lanka/Culture clash**

“The landlady was very cordial to us, she scolded the servant girls for not doing their work when she found them playing with Simeon. We discovered that they had been instructed not to play with Simeon whether or not they had work. The girls were servants, we were told, and playing would lead to bad habits. Their life was one of work.” (p. 84)

“We indirectly approached the landlady about the fact that the girls did not attend school. The landlady took the attitude that she and her daughter were doing a great social service by taking in the orphans. The children, she stated, did not want to learn reading and adding. Anyway, they were cared for and would always have a home (p. 84)…Simeon decided that the adults were wrong and that children needed to play. He introduced a game of hide-and-seek, began learning Sinhala phrases to whisper to the girls, and began sneaking them pieces of candy…The landlady was informed and soon came running, irate. Had we no control over our son?” (Nichter 1987:85)

“The Chagga more than others suffered from the ill effects of “too much schooling.” Some villagers and teachers asserted that “reading and writing too much” could drive students to the brink of hysteria (p. 497)…According to three Chagga teachers from an all-girls boarding school, girls can suffer the ill effects of schooling if they are not given opportunities to socialize with young men…‘They were absolutely kichaa,’ said another. When asked for an explanation, the third elaborated, ‘The girls were starving for men. They were forced to stay inside the school for so long that they eventually went completely mad.’…Girls must be with boys at this age. Without boys, girls can go crazy.” (p. 502)
Bedtime Stories as Cultural Capital

Rocky and his Mom Reading in the Hammock

“Young people with compromised spoken language skills also commonly have difficulty establishing and maintaining satisfying relationships with peers (Davis and others 1991). Evidence suggests that language skills play an integral role in mediating relationships with others.” (p. 16)


“The young offenders displayed significant difficulties with a diverse range of language tasks, whether they required abstraction, the ability non-literal material or the ability to formulate a story and convey this via spoke discourse. Difficulties on the sentence repetition task reflect impoverished auditory processing and formulation skills (p. 24)…the school failure experienced by high-risk youth may be attributable to inadequate preparation for the transition to literacy in the early years.” (p. 26)
“Dry Cleaner” Parents and “Helicopter” Parents


“More and more parents call campus housing about air conditioning problems in residence halls, provide their supposedly grown children with daily wake-up calls, edit their papers, attend career fairs to promote their kids to potential employers, and even sit in on their job interviews. How is that helping students to develop into responsible, decision-making adults?” (p. B19)

“Survey respondents also noted that parents are increasingly concerned for their children’s safety and that they have simply always taken care of things for their children and see no reason to change that behavior.” (p. B19)


“In Wilton—a middle- to upper-middle-class “historic” suburb of a large Midwestern city that has long been a favored residential spot for the area’s professional class. It has a quaint downtown where the Wilton Inn and various hops and restaurants border the Village Green. It also has well-maintained parts and libraries, two country
clubs, and an expansive public recreation center. At the time of the study, approximately 60 percent of adult residents had a bachelor’s degree or higher (the U.S. average is 24.4 percent). Of its population of approximately 50,000, nearly half of employed adults were in managerial and professional occupations, and just over a third were in technical, sales, and administrative support… (p. 275).

“Permissive parenting styles, intensive involvement with electronic and commodity culture, and extensive experience in “democratic” classrooms with “student-centered” pedagogies, all share the characteristic of deferring to students’ experience and judgement, and thereby according them significant authority. We mention this here because the authority that students in general attributed to themselves was a prominent theme in the study as a whole.” (p. 275)

“Discourses of “excellence” and “success” imbued the community and school…Various kinds of cultural capital were also visibly displayed in the school. The capacious commons area had flags from nations around the world draped from the ceiling. … Throughout the school’s hallways, framed artwork adorned the walls, and classical music emanated quietly from speakers.” (p. 276)

“The committee that guided that founding of WBHS decided early on in its deliberations that “the achievement of each student is important and should be recognized.” It was this philosophy that led the school to develop so many forms of what we have come to
call “technologies of recognition.” In the commons could be seen the WBHS Hall of Fame; framed photos of National Merit Finalists; members of the Socratic Society…” (p. 276)

“The school had another way of recognizing students that bordered on credential fraud: school policy dictated that all students who graduated with a 4.0 GPA or higher were “valedictorians.” The high school class of 2000 had 28 valedictorians, the class of 2001 had 41, the class of 2002 had 42, and the class of 2003 had 47—10 percent of the class…One teacher of both enriched and regular classes said, “Our job is to get these kids into the best college they can possibly get in to.”…Students and parents in WBHS generally evinced a keen awareness of being in competition with others…Parental bragging about children’s accomplishments was commonplace, as was posting AP test results on refrigerators, and discussing the colleges to which children were applying and gaining admission.” (p. 277)

“Students demonstrated fairly sophisticated consumptive identities as early as ninth grade: One had set up a mutual fund from her previous summer’s earnings, and another watched the stock channel regularly to keep up with his investments.” (p. 277)

“One of the striking characteristics of the high-achieving students in the study was the extent to which they saw themselves as ongoing projects. {they evinced] strong beliefs concerning the role of effort in determining life chances, the role of the self in developing confidence, becoming effective self-advocates, and precociously circumscribed aspirations….Throughout the study there were many examples of how students attempted to exert
control over their educational experiences, including routinely questioning their teachers’ authority, critiquing how instruction was delivered, judging the utility of what they were learning, and attempting to personalize relationships with their teachers.” (p. 277)

“Some of us, like think really far ahead. You know, like, if I don’t do this assignment, then my grades are going to go down and my GPA’s going to fall, and then I can’t get into the college I want, or whatever.” …When asked on the survey what they wanted their “future life to be like,” Most students responded with great specificity, both in terms of their expectations, and their strategies for realizing them…Students at WBHS seemed most animated when discussing evaluative criteria or their own accomplishments.” (p. 282)

“Students seemed aware of the value of developing the sorts of people skills desired as cultural capital in the corporate world. A notable feature of the student culture was the degree to which students from different social locations and groups got along, supported, and even socialized one another in school. Students seemed to value being able to move fluidly between groups—proclaiming with pride that they had different kinds of friends…. [their] “adult handling skills” …enabled some students to develop potentially exploitable relationships with other people—including their teachers and counselors.” (p. 284)

“An AP social studies teacher characterized the school culture as a “business culture.” …It would not be an exaggeration to say that
most of these high-achieving students lived hyperscheduled lives.” (p. 285)

“Female students had higher GPA’s than the male students and were more immersed in the school’s competitive routines.” (p. 285)
Against all Odds


Childhood.

“It is a sweltering August night in suburban New Jersey and a group of women stand fanning themselves on the sidewalk of a strip mall. All of them are Indian and their Bengali and Punjabi accents [most of the children were of Indian parentage] punctuate the rhythm of their conversation. Voices rise and fall as the women compare notes on their children—whose babies are already talking, toddlers are already reading, and children are already doing algebra. They wait just outside a door marked “Kumon,” an after-school learning center that their children attend to supplement their schoolwork. One woman’s seven-year-old daughter pushes the door open. She holds a certificate out and excitedly hands it to her mom, interrupting the conversation. The little girl clings to her mom’s thigh, smiling, as her mom reads the certificate aloud, declaring that her daughter has advanced to the next math level. The other women murmur congratulations and the mother walks off with her daughter, proudly carrying the child’s backpack that contains her new, more difficult, homework.”

“Kumon is a highly standardized program… similar to other Asian private institutes that give children after-school instruction to prepare for state examinations. Kumon has been extremely successful and it is now the world’s largest after-school education
program with over 1,300 centers in North America alone…The Kumon method is fairly simple. It is based on the premise that by breaking things into manageable units and drilling those units every day through practice, a child will progress. There are two set curricula, one devoted to mathematics and one devoted to reading, and students can choose to do only one or to do both…Children typically go to their neighborhood center twice a week and spend about 20 minutes per subject matter with an instructor in a group setting. When they enter the center they drop off their homework (daily assignments that take 15-20 minutes to complete)…leaving their parents to stand outside, run errands, or wait in their cars.

Besides sticker rewards, Kumon has developed programs, such as an “Advanced Student Honor Roll” and “The Kumon Cosmic Club,” which reward students for their progress in the program or for reaching a high level relative to their age*…Kumon requires a high level of parental involvement. ASL requires parents to make sure that children complete their homework and then the parents must check the homework in a master book they received when paying tuition…Kumon is providing books and worksheets, but not much instruction….when the child walks into a “lesson” to be evaluated or take a test, it is as much about how the parent has prepared the child to succeed as it is about the child’s own abilities.”

“…none of the ASL parents talked about these prizes in interviews. The lack of attention to these prizes indicates that the parents are not interested in the short-term rewards that their children can gain by participating in ASL. Rather, they simply are
small prizes to please the children and not an end goal, since the ultimate goal is much more esoteric—an elite education.”

“…ASL parents think children need to be learning…skills and…acquiring capital at a young age. A mom explains,

‘He is more attracted to his work now. He knows that he is supposed to work. He’s going to be in first grade now, so I always tell him that you have to work more hard so you can be like a very successful person in your life.’”


“Second generation Punjabi students, together with those who had arrived in Valleyside [CA] as small children, in spite of facing cultural, linguistic, and social differences in school, did quite well academically. Recent immigrants fared far less well. Although most recent arrivals persisted in school through 12th grade, they never broke out of a remedial track.” (p. 282)

“This [Anglo] student was absent 10 days his senior year, 4 less than the typical senior in our Valleysider sample. He also worked close to 40 hours a week in the family business, played two varsity sports, and participated in a (p. 287) variety of social activities both in and out of school. He was far from lazy. His senior year, however, he deliberately took the minimum course load. One of his four classes, senior English, required homework, and this he
was taking because the college of his choice required it. Senior year, he explained, was “kick back time.” (p. 288)

“The ability to get along in society was stressed by teachers as well as parents, many of whom placed social criteria for success ahead of academic ones. In defining a successful high school experience, teachers avoided ascribing success to intelligence or academic achievement. Academic achievement, some said, was based largely on innate ability, and was no necessary predictor of adult success. Valleysider parents agreed. More important, teachers explained, were social skills and a sense of self-worth. For them, the nonsucceeder was not the one with poor academic skills. It was the student who could not “fit in,” who did not “feel part of it,” and who did not value man of the things that other students enjoyed at school.” (p. 289)

**Contrast with Navajo, Inuit.**

“Adolescence, from the Punjabi perspective, is a time when young people need especially strong parental supervision and guidance. Teenagers, parents explained, naturally “question everything,” including their parent’s values, but they lacked the maturity to make wise decisions for themselves.” (p. 290)

“Most parents had little understanding of the American system of education. Few were able to help with homework or course selection. Newer arrivals, moreover, simply had no time to get involved in school matters. Their entire lives were consumed by the myriad problems of adapting to life in America and by the realities of sheer economic survival. Even long-term residents had little knowledge or what their children were actually doing in
school and whether or not they were progressing satisfactorily (p. 292)…Punjabi youngsters realized that if they themselves got out of line their parents might well arrange an early marriage or put them to work in the fruit orchards.” (p. 293)
Examination Hell


“This includes Sunday hours for everyone.” (p. 32)

“Like other observers, I was struck by the easy, relaxed discipline, the quick pace, and the high degree of student participation in these classes. The students seemed to be engaged, active, lively, and anything but downtrodden.” (p. 39)

“Since Japanese neighborhoods are less economically segregated than those in many other countries, there is usually a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds represented in each classroom.” (p. 40)

“The teachers job is teaching, not classroom management (p. 43)…One of the most startling sights for me the first time I saw it was what happens when a student gives an incorrect answer. Other students immediately raise their hands, calling out loudly, “Chigaimasu!”, That’s wrong!” One of those who called out would then be chosen to give another answer…Teachers routinely and emphatically refrain from giving either positive or negative evaluations of students’ answers to questions or other responses to academic material. Those responses are evaluated, but only by other students. (p. 45)…Teachers are not available arbiters of correctness, because they fail to act as judges. Another is that one’s peers are reliable guide to academic correctness. If one’s
peers are capable of being reliable authorities, then one is oneself likely to be reliable…Ellen reported at supper that her teacher had been absent that day. To my routine query about what the substitute teacher had been like, she replied that there was no substitute. I asked somewhat anxiously how they had managed and what had happened, and she replied, “Oh, Kuroda sensei wrote on the board what we were supposed to do, and sometimes a teacher looked in the room.” There were no riots, and they did their work, she said.” (p. 48)

“Juku are private, commercial tutoring schools.” (p. 50)

“They divide children by achievement levels and provide remedial help for those who are falling behind, additional practice for those who are keeping up, and accelerated or enriched programs for the academically advanced…High schools are ranked by the test achievement levels of their entering students, which in turn are directly linked to the university entrance success or the employment success of their graduates.” (p. 50)

“In Japanese classrooms each han includes five to eight children…Both social and academic activities are carried out with han groups as the basic work unit…The foremost goal is to make each group heterogeneous in terms of personalities, abilities, previous friendship patterns, and previous han groupings.” (p. 53)

**Self defeating behavior of freeloding within groups.**

“For us independence is hard to achieve but desirable; for the Japanese integration is hard to achieve but desirable.” (p. 68)
“There is so much to learn and so little time, that vacation is an unwelcome intrusion into a serious business. Teachers feel this way about all children; individual parents feel that because everyone else is working full time, vacation or not their children must work equally hard not to miss out and fall behind the competition.” (p. 98)
Nerds, Jocks, Fluff Chicks, Breakers and Homeboys


“Status and power in a clique were related to stratification, and people who remained more closely tied to the leaders were more popular.” (60)


“A popular video on YouTube shows Kellie Pickler, the adorable platinum blonde from “American Idol,” appearing on the Fox game show “Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?” during celebrity week. Selected from a third grade geography curriculum, the $25,000 question asked: “Budapest is the capital of what European country?” Ms. Pickler threw up both hands and looked at the large blackboard perplexed, “I thought Europe was a country.”” (p. B1)

“Not only are citizens ignorant about essential scientific, civic and cultural knowledge, she said, but they also don’t think it matters…Eggheads, nerds, bookworms, longhairs, pointy heads, highbrows, and know-it-alls have been mocked and dismissed throughout American history.” (p. B9)

“The survey covers a sample of more than 90,000 junior and high school students from 175 schools in 80 communities around the country.” (p. 4)

“Among whites, higher grades yield higher popularity. For Blacks, higher achievement is associated with modestly high popularity until a grade point average of 3.5, when the slope turns negative. A black student with a 4.0 has, on average, 1.5 fewer same-race friends than a white student with a 4.0. Among Hispanics, there is little change in popularity from a grade point average of 1 through 2.5. After 2.5, the gradient turns sharply negative. A Hispanic student with a 4.0 grade point average is the least popular of all Hispanic students, and has 3 fewer friends than a typical white student with a 4.0 grade point average.” (p. 4)

“‘Acting white’ is more salient in public schools and schools in which the percentage of black students is less than twenty, but non-existent among blacks in predominantly black schools or those who attend private schools. Schools with more interracial contact have an ‘acting white’ coefficient twice as large as more segregated…” (p. 5)

Group of 6, 14- and 15-year-old freshmen first- or second-generation Chinese Americans.

“For Lisa, the grade was more important than an evaluation of her work. It was a reflection of who she was. She did not consider herself to be a C student, an “average” person. The thought was unacceptable. The other Chinese American students, likewise, considered earning grades to be a serious, personal matter. There was a strong consensus among the information that they had to be successful in school in order to fulfill their future plans.” (p. 74)

“The Chinese Americans positioned themselves as normal people. Like nerds, the informants wanted to be academically successful, and like popular people, they enjoyed having a network of friends. However, they did not want to achieve so highly or become so popular as to draw attention to themselves.” (p. 78)

“One obvious manifestation of race awareness was the tendency of the Asians and other students to congregate in racially homogeneous groups... A more important factor, however, had to do with the students’ conceptions of biculturalism. These individuals tended to view Chinese and American cultures as distinct domains. Like the Punjabis... they believed they could move back and forth between cultures, maintaining their Chinese identity and dealing with non-Asians as necessary. Doing so required them to follow different social norms, depending on whether they were in all-Asian or heterogeneous peer groups.” (p. 79)

“In questioning the primacy of school knowledge, Matthew and others were beginning to challenge the institution’s authority. This
questioning may have led some of the focal students to emphasize with home boys and their opposition to the institution.” (p. 80)

“As Matthew explained, “It’s not so much what you learn in class as the whole school life—the atmosphere.” In questioning the primacy of school knowledge, he and others were beginning to challenge the institution’s authority. This questioning may have led some of the focal students to empathize with homeboys and their opposition to the institution (p. 80)…Matthew, in particular, was ambivalent about presenting himself in different ways to different people. He recognized the hypocrisy of claiming membership in groups with opposing beliefs. “I mean I don’t get good grades,” he commented, “I (p. 80) started school; I tried not to talk on either side of people. I tried to be myself…Matthew explained, “Most (other Chinese Americans) are following their parents. In a way, they’re more Asian, cultural-wise. They keep closer to their own culture. I’m thinking now that I’m in America, maybe I should change.” (p. 81)


**Paradox: conforming to adult expectations leads to greater agency…so high achievers are invited to participate in extracurricular, honors classes, but “trouble makers” that are anti conformity loose agency, eventually becoming “lowlifes.”**

“Because academic achievement and peer-group membership are interconnected, I refer to high achievers and low achievers as
‘school kids’ and ‘street kids’ respectively.” (p. 630)…Many of the high achieving school kids are found in the academic elite programs such as honors and college preparatory…Scholars Program. This was a rather small and very selective college preparatory program, comprised of about 35 students per-grade…In honors and advanced placement courses in English, social studies, sciences, and mathematics…The scholars were taught by the best teachers in the school and tended to develop close relationships with them. As a result of this physical and social segregation, the scholars comprised a tight-knit group which spent time together in the classroom, in program-related activities and outside of school (p. 631)…For example, the scholars not only exceeded the C-average grade requirement for participation, but they also had access to highly selective extracurricular activities such as the Anchor Club and the Key Clubs.” (p. 632)

“While some students may have sought these opportunities out of their own interest or skill, for most kids, participation was a matter of luck: someone recruited them or they were on the ‘right’ academic track.” (p. 632)

**Hierarchy: ‘scholar,’ basketball team,’ ‘gang,’ ‘lowlife’**

“Participation in extracurricular programs was rare among the low achievers…Many just assumed that they had to have a C average to even try-out, unaware that the school waved that requirement when students showed significant talent…Jerry was recruited to play basketball even though he was failing some classes. When Jerry’s gang membership became obvious from his participation in gang-related fights at school, he was immediately dropped from
the team. Ironically, basketball, by keeping him busy after school, may have been the only thing that could have saved him from diving more deeply into the gang.” (p. 633)

**Who has greater agency? School or street kids?**

“Students would purposely misbehave in class so that the teacher would send them to the social service program office or to the detention room, where they would join their friends. As one street kid said, detention room was not punishment but rather, ‘it was fun. I liked it. Everybody was always in there. You already knew who would always get into trouble. You had to do your work. I felt more comfortable with them. There were two [teachers]. One security guard, then a teacher that would explain the things that you had to do. You would get more done in there than in the actual classes’…Carrying a lower academic load and lacking participation in extracurricular activities gave them more disposable time to hang out in the hallways with other street kids, to start trouble, and to be present when trouble started.” (p. 634)

“At Hernandez High, school kids sought popularity or to be known by others because of their academic, social, or athletic abilities. By contrast, street kids sought respect, a different form of popularity that is based on deference and fear…This is accomplished through dominance over others through verbal or physical intimidation.” (p. 635)

“Life in the hallways of Hernandez High School was difficult to navigate because ‘at Hernandez you can’t talk to people and expect them to be nice. If you look at somebody, they’ll say, “What
you’re looking at?” You can’t look at anybody’ (Marisol).

Intentions could be—and were often—misinterpreted and resulted in verbal or physical harassment. Students had to learn how to respond quickly to threats by stepping up to the challenge or by finding a way out of the challenge. Not to lose face, aggrieved youth who apply the cod of the street must rise to the challenge by reacting quickly and violently. Not to do so will only mark them as weak and invite further victimization…decent’ youth are particularly in danger of being victimized repeatedly because ‘decency or a “nice” attitude if often taken as a sign of weakness, at times inviting others to “roll on” or “try” the person. To be nice is to risk being taken for a sissy, someone who can’t fight, a weakling, someone to be rolled on’…‘street’ youths trying to establish a reputation begin by challenging less threatening opponents (such as ‘decent’ kids) (p. 635)…Kids learn fast that in order to protect themselves they must project an image of ‘street.’ This can be accomplished by adopting the ‘street look’ in their appearance, style and speech.” (p. 636)

**Two examples of peer pressure and cliques working in favor of academic success.**


“Chicanos and Cholos, those who were of second and subsequent generation, did not see a connection between school success and success as adults. Rather, they perceived academic success as
being white or “rich honkie” and thus incompatible with the Chicano or Cholo identity.” (p. 345)

“Social class may have an effect on the relationship between academic success and ethnic identity…Middle-class Mexican Americans in a small town in Texas were not ambivalent about their ethnic identity and school success…instead, they “felt good about being ethnic and were succeeding in school…What set these students apart from other Mexican students was that while they participated in the oppositional culture, they had learned mainstream communicative competencies. (p. 345)

“Black high achievers in a predominately middle-class high school experienced pressure to act middle class, with no distinction being made between “being black” and being a “model student.” They did not seem to equate academic success with “being white” but, rather, with “being middle class,” something they already were or hoped to become. By contrast…black high achievers in a working-class school experienced pressure to conform to peer images of “blackness,” which involved rejection of “whiteness.” Because peer pressure to be “black” was strong, may black high achievers had to pursue academic success the “back way.” That is, they could be “model students” as long as they continued “acting black,” “being bad,” “joining cheating networks,” and distancing themselves from whites. Hemmings’s findings point to the significance of school context and social class in shaping high-achieving involuntary minority approaches to academic success.” (p. 346)
“...a high school in Chicago, which I name Hernández High School. The school had 2,600 students, of which 55 percent were Puerto Rican...Most students came from low-income families (p. 346)...The students did not fare well academically; they did poorly on college entrance examinations and other standardized tests. The school’s graduation rate was very low, about 35 percent (p. 347)...The high achievers were not a homogeneous group but, rather, constituted small peer groups, the most visible being the scholars, the athletes, and the “church boys and girls.”” (p. 348)

“...at Hernández High School. ... The high achievers did not report being accused of being “un-Puerto Rican” or “acting white” for getting good grades. Even those who belonged to the Scholars’ Program were not viewed as less Puerto Rican than students in the general education program. Quite the contrary, many said that the scholars, along with the athletes, occupied the top level of the peer social hierarchy...The high achievers, however, seemed to be particularly “immune” to peer hostility. In particular, the Puerto Rican high achievers established a status in school that somehow “immunized” them from peer hostility. They became what I call “schoolboys and -girls” and were recognized as such by peers.” (Flores-González 1999:349)

See Navajo students (Dehyle 1992) who said that attention and treating them well seemed to be more important.

“The scholars enjoyed high social and academic ranking as well as benefits because of the special attention they received from the staff. Other high achievers, like Ana, who were not in the Scholars’ Program, were sometimes bothered by the attention the scholars
received, which only emphasized the staff’s neglect of students in the general education program.” (p. 351)

**Compare to those who harass teachers for good grades, transfer to schools with lower standards, or drop out of school altogether. Why?**

“Although some studies find no relationship between extracurricular participation and grades,…at Hernández High School sports often translated into good academic standing. While not necessarily academically outstanding, athletes had to maintain good grade academic standing in order to participate in sports (p. 353)…African American high achievers often become “unblack” by downplaying African American culture and reinforcing an identity as “Americans.” By contrast, Puerto Rican high achievers and low achievers at Hernández High School did not seem to encounter conflict between being Puerto Rican and American.” (p. 354)

“Low achievers often shared the high achievers’ views on hard work and motivation as necessary for success. They believed that when people are determined to work hard and succeed, nothing can stop them…Although the low achievers believed in the work ethic, they did not practice it. They generally did just enough to get by in school. Their attendance and grade records show their lack of effort in schoolwork (p. 356)…Many Puerto Rican low achievers shared similar views about “lowlifes,” plus the added fear of becoming “lowlifes” themselves, especially those who had dropped out of school. They were afraid that the dropout identity
would become a self-fulfilling prophecy and they would end up becoming “lowlifes.” (p. 357)

“As Jenny said, “After awhile you get sick if being home, and I was like, ‘Man, what am I gonna do with myself.’ I can’t always be at home.”” Dropouts who returned to school pointed to those who remained out of school as “lowlifes.” Low achiever Diana commented about her boyfriend, “He dropped out his sophomore year. He needs to get a GED [General Equivalency Diploma]. He needs to get a life if you ask me. He’s 20. He just bums around ‘cause there’s nothing else to do when he should just get a job. I always tell him.”” (p. 357)


**Contrast with Ogbu.**

“A few middle group kids are chided, primarily by top group kids, for being too compliant with adult values. Those thought to study all the time and to brag about their grades are called “brains.” Those thought of follow all the rules with which adults structure their social action are called “goody goodies”…These named and unnamed low group kids are known for socially inappropriate action: bragging, acting too shy, or telling and laughing at jokes their peers do not think funny.” (p. 387)
Lowest ranking NOT non-conformist.

“Of the two cool subgroups, jocks are the more positively distinguished. Jocks act as their teachers and administrators think they should in school. … Moreover, on weekends, jocks drop conformity with adult values…In contrast, freaks are considered cool primarily because they party both on the weekend and during the week (p. 389)…However, band fags in general are considered less cool than jocks or freaks, because they have chosen playing a musical instrument over joining an athletic team.” (p. 390)

“‘Brains’ are also evaluated ambivalently by their peers. Though less scorned than weirdos, brains are looked down upon, because they do not either in or out of school, defy adult expectations. Also, brains are considered narrower in interest and actions because they seem to study so much. As one high school girl observed, ‘That’s all there is to them…They have no other, no other facets to their personality. They just have a mind and that’s it.’” (p. 390)

“The main thing you have to do [to be popular] is know all the gossip…” (p. 395)

“To the contrary, high school kids maintain that cliques no longer exist and they dislike using labels.” (p. 399)
Moving Towards a Meritocracy


“One in four kids is dropping out of school, a rate that hasn’t budged for at least five years...The U.S. is stagnating while other industrialized countries are surpassing us.” (A9)


Education experts say results of the 2006 Program for International Student Assessment [PISA]...highlight the need for changes in classrooms and in the federal No Child Left Behind law...U.S. students were further behind in math, trailing counterparts in 23 countries...The PISA results underscore concern in some quarters that too few U.S. students are prepared to become engineers, scientists and physicians and that the nation may lose ground to economic competitors.” (p. A11)


“According to the Department of Education, between 1991 and 2003 the average adult’s skill in reading prose slipped one point on a five-hundred-point scale, and the proportion who were proficient—capable of such tasks as “comparing viewpoints in two editorials”—declined from fifteen percent to thirteen.” (p. 134)
“Twelfth graders seem to be taking after their elders. Their reading scores fell an average of six points between 1992 and 2005, and the share of proficient twelfth-grad readers dropped from forty per cent to thirty-five per cent. The steepest declines were in “reading for literary experience”—the kind that involves “exploring themes, events, characters, settings, and the language of literary works.”” (p. 135)

“In August, scientists at the University of Washington revealed that babies aged between eight and sixteen months know on average six to eight fewer words for every hour of baby DVDs and videos they watch daily. A 2005 study in Northern California found that a television in the bedroom lowered the standardized-test scored of their graders. And the conflict continues throughout a child’s development. In 2001, after analyzing data on more than a million students around the world, the researcher Mica Razel found “little room for doubt” that television worsened performance in reading, science, and math….that fifty-five per cent of students exceed their optimal viewing time by three hours a day, thereby lowering their academic achievement by roughly one grade level.” (p. 138)


“Economic mobility, the chance that children of the poor or middle class will climb up the income ladder, has not changed significantly over the last three decades…The researchers found that Hispanic and black Americans were falling behind whites and Asians in earning college degrees.” (p. A14)

“The study highlights the powerful role that college can have in helping people change their station in life. Someone born into a family in the lowest fifth of earners who graduates from college has a 19 percent change of joining the highest fifth of earners in adulthood and a 63 percent chance of joining the middle class or better. In recent years, 11 percent of children from the poorest families have earned college degrees, compared with 53 percent of children from the top fifth.” (p. A14)

Orellana, Roxana (2008) 12% of schools are ‘dropout factories.’ *The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 30th, (A2)

“‘Dropout Factories,” a high school where no more than 60 percent of the students who start as freshmen make it to their senior year. That dubious distinction applies to more than one in 10 high schools across America.” (p. A2)

“As black students move through elementary and middle school, these studies show, the test-score gaps that separate them from their better-performing white counterparts grow fastest among the most able students and the most slowly for those who start out with below-average academic skills.” (p. 1)


“Children educated under the Soviet system, ‘while usually ahead of American students in knowledge of their subjects, are much less likely to be able to think for themselves and to have their own opinions.’ When asked to give their own opinion, Russian children and adults alike might feel more comfortable quoting a famous author or politician than coming up with their own words. Children are raised to fear authority figures from the very start. In school, children are given themes of what to draw and methods of how to draw. During my fieldwork in Russia, I encountered numerous occasions when children were even scolded for trying to be creative.” (p. 40)
The Other Side of the Coin

Plus ça change...


The concept of ‘raggedness’ was a key one in nineteenth-century British charitable discourse, as it defined not only a physical state but an educational and moral one. Free schools set up for very poor children were grouped together in 1844 into the Ragged Schools Union, and raggedness was often used as visual and verbal shorthand for children who were assisted by charities such as the Church of England Waifs (p. 136) and Strays Society…(p. 137)

Articles with titles like ‘School or Gaol’ (1870) appealed to the self-interest of middle-class ratepayers by presenting state expenditure on education as saving future expenditure on prisons…A smaller group of articles highlighted the power of the school system to transform ragged and wayward individuals into ordered groups, engaged in productive labour…the term ‘waif’ was not neutral, since it characterised the children as homeless and parentless…This was a key aspect of [the] fundraising rhetoric…(p. 138)

One reason for the stress on physical raggedness in the discussion of poor children was its visibility as an index of deprivation. For this reason, raggedness was a prominent feature of the images accompanying charitable appeals. (p. 139)

94% of 3-6 year-olds enrolled in public pre-school or Day-Care. Emphasis of pedagogy is to foster cooperation and social relations, how to get along n a group, collaboration, rather than preparation for academic instruction. Refers to this as “civilizing” the child. When asked how this philosophy squares with the philosophy of granting “agency” to children, her reply was: “Yes, they are given agency but they must learn to use it in the proper way.”


Fra: David Lancy [mailto:david.lancy@usu.edu]
Sendt: ma 24-11-2008 23:24
Til: Eva Gulløv
Emne: AAA

Thank you again Eva for your thoughtful answer to my question re Agency.
That was an interesting session and I was sorry to have to leave early to catch my flight. If I may impose, I have a second question. In the US, it is widely believed that providing universal or near-universal pre-school from age 3 would do much to close the gap between poor, immigrant and/or children of color and the mainstream. Obviously, you have achieved this lofty goal. Has it solved this problem (which I realize is much more recent in Denmark)? From Gilliam’s paper about "wild" and "calm" children, I suspect it has not.

David

Eva Gulløy evaq@dpu.dk

Tuesday, November 25, 2008 3:18 AM

David Lancy <david.lancy@usu.edu>

I have worked quite a lot on exactly the question you raise. The short answer is that universal pre-school attendance does not in itself solve distinctions or make a smooth integration of immigrant children. It is also in Denmark widely believed that universal attendance in pre-school is the way to solve social distinctions, but several ethnographic analyses show that this is not necessarily the case. Rather, it depends on the educational offer, the way teachers regard their task and classify the children and the ways children themselves regard each other. In an environment so loosely structured as Danish pre-schools generally are, it is up to children themselves to choose their playmates and decide how to spend their time. Their social preferences seem to some extent to reflect social and cultural distinctions in the wider society as they often choose to be with those who resembles themselves the most especially in language use and linguistic style, in references and
experiences for example with play rules and possession of or use of toys. However, there are examples of institutions actually working with and overcoming such preferential patterns and in these cases it seems like the institution actually functions as the social equalizer it was intended to be.

I hope you can follow this rather sketchy answer

Best regards,
Eva