

Are Networks Great Equalizers?

Social Norms, Networks & Capital Conversion in Elementary Schools

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CSF Conference on Social Norms, Change and Comparison

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May 2, 2025

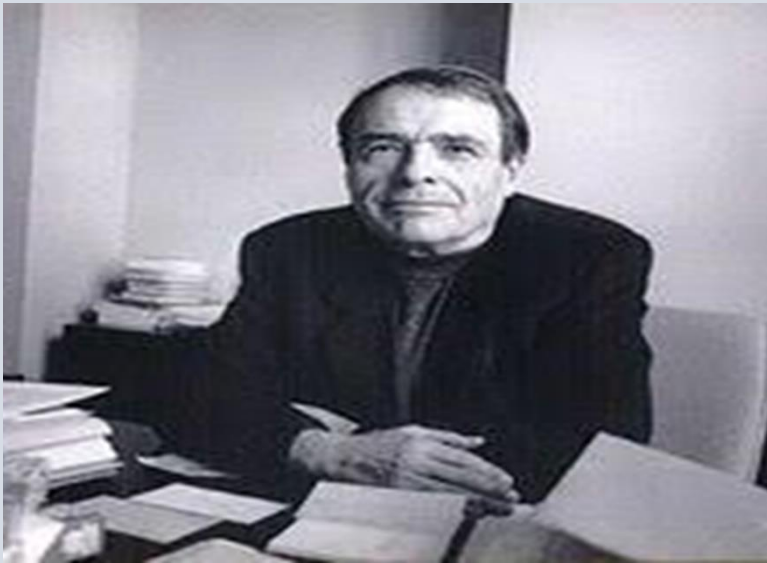


Our Paper

- Sociology of Education: schooling central to stratification
- Theme: social norms ‘carried’ through networks
- “Cultural Capital”: practices that shape competition in fields (e.g., achievement in education)
- “Social Capital” = networks that effectively diffuse valued resources, can convert into cultural capital
- Do parent networks predict adoption of effective practices?
- Do networks help reproduce or equalize practices by SES?

Theory: 2 Faces of Cultural Capital

Exposure to High Status Culture



Aesthetics generate familiarity with curricula,
sense of ease, teachers interpret as ability

Aligning Family Practices to School Rewards



Intense school competitions compel families to
adapt practices

Concerted Cultivation versus Natural Growth

Table 2. Summary of Differences in Childrearing Approaches

Dimension Observed	Childrearing Approach	
	Concerted Cultivation	Accomplishment of Natural Growth
Key elements of each approach	Parent actively fosters and assesses child's talents, opinions, and skills	Parent cares for child and allows child to grow
Organization of daily life	Multiple child leisure activities are orchestrated by adults	Child "hangs out" particularly with kin
Language use	Reasoning/directives Child contestation of adult statements Extended negotiations between parents and child	Directives Rare for child to question or challenge adults General acceptance by child of directives
Social connections	Weak extended family ties Child often in homogenous age groupings	Strong extended family ties Child often in heterogeneous age groupings
Interventions in institutions	Criticisms and interventions on behalf of child Training of child to intervene on his or her own behalf	Dependence on institutions Sense of powerlessness and frustration Conflict between childrearing practices at home and at school
Consequences	Emerging sense of entitlement on the part of the child	Emerging sense of constraint on the part of the child

Context: Intensive Parenting as Cultural Capital

Trends:

- **Rising Inequality:** families vary increasingly discretionary time, income, shapes school-related activities
- **Equalizing “Trickling Down”:**
 - Lower SES families increasingly adopting once-novel parent logics

Intensive Parenting & Concerted Cultivation



Converting Social Capital to Cultural Capital

Home Involvement

(read to children, homework help)

- Boosts achievement
- Mixed relations to SES
- Spread as “simple contagion”

Concerted Cultivation

(school events, extra-curricula, high status activities)

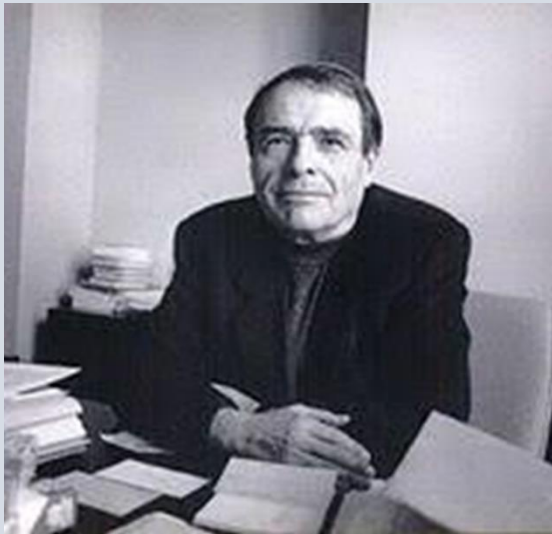
- Boosts achievement
- Positive relation to SES
- Spread as bundled “complex contagion”

Converting Capital

- **Parent networks** don't directly impact achievement, but indirectly facilitate other resources via 2 mechanisms:
- *Diffuse knowledge* (e.g., schooling options, governance, extra-curricula, tutoring, studying tips)
- *Social Comparison*:
 - Establish / enforce behavioral norms re competitive childrearing practices

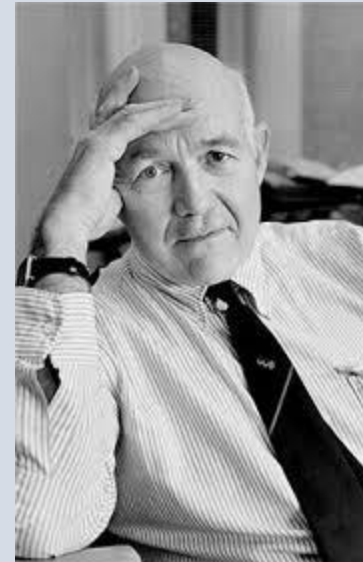
Two Faces of Social Capital

Access to Resources in Competitions



Low SES parents have smaller school-based networks

Bonds that Generate Collective Goods



Networks can boost uptake of practices among lower SES families

Research Questions

- (1) Do high SES parents have larger networks, net of individual & school-level factors?
- (2) Does network size predict parenting practices – both “simple” (home activities) & “complex” (concerted cultivation)?
- (3) Do networks and SES *interact* to shape parenting practices? Do larger networks spread practices among lower SES families?

Data & Measures

- US NCES “Early Childhood Longitudinal Study” (ECLS-K 2010/11)
- Large, nationally representative, longitudinal survey from kindergarten to grades 1-3
- Analytic sample: n=8,289 students
- ***Dependent variables***: scales of home activities & concerted cultivation
- ***Independent variable***: Network size: # of parents in same school with whom parent speaks with frequently
- ***Observed confounders***: race, child characteristics, family type, other demographics

Dependent Variables

Home Involvement Activities

Composite variable (factor analysis); In a typical week, how often do parents do the following things with child? (4 = everyday, 1 = not at all). 1) Tell stories to child; 2) Help child to do arts and crafts; 3) Practice reading, writing or working with numbers; 4) Read books to child; 5) Help child with homework?

Concerted Cultivation Activities

Composite variable (factor analysis), including parental school involvement, extracurricular activities, and outside-home cultural activities.

Parental school involvement

IRT measure; Since the beginning of this school year, have parents participated the following activities at school? (1 = yes, 0 = no). 1) Attended an open house or a back-to-school night; 2) Attended a meeting of a PTA, PTO, or Parent-Teacher Organization; 3) Gone to a regularly-scheduled parent-teacher conference with child's teacher or meeting with child's teacher; 4) Attended a school or class event, such as a play, sports event, or science fair. 5) Served as a volunteer in child's classroom or elsewhere in the school.

Extracurricular activities

Number of extracurricular activities; Outside of school hours, has child ever participated in the following activities? (1 = yes, 0 = no). 1) Organized athletic activities, like basketball, soccer, baseball, or gymnastics; 2) Organized clubs or recreational programs, like scouts; 3) Music lessons, for example, piano, instrumental music, or singing lessons; 4) Art classes or lessons, for example, painting, drawing, or sculpture; 5) Organized performing arts programs, such as children's choirs, dance programs, or theater performances.

Outside-home cultural activities

IRT measure; In the past month, have parents done the following things with child? (1 = yes, 0 = no). 1) Visited a library or bookstore; 2) Gone to a play, concert, or other live show; 3) Visited an art gallery, museum, or historical site; 4) Visited a zoo, aquarium, or petting farm; 5) Attended an athletic or sporting event in which child was not a player.

Table 2. Regression Models Predicting Intergenerational Closure (Network Size)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Parental SES	.163	(.011) ***	.105	(.014) ***	.030	(.016) ***
Female			.012	(.021)	-.005	(.022)
Black			-.264	(.042) ***	-.171	(.055) **
Hispanic			.000	(.033)	-.044	(.040)
Asian			-.111	(.046) *	-.247	(.056) ***
Other race			-.029	(.047)	-.043	(.051)
Child's age (months)			-.008	(.011)	.002	(.012)
Home language (Non-English)			.065	(.038)	.031	(.043)
Child with disability			-.029	(.034)	-.002	(.035)
Enrolled in specialized program			-.162	(.048) ***	-.107	(.052) *
Attended pre-school			.109	(.024) ***	.101	(.026) ***
Parental age			.084	(.012) ***	.033	(.013) *
Two other parents family			-.119	(.046) *	-.072	(.050)
Single parent family			-.093	(.031) **	-.101	(.033) **
Other family types			-.373	(.087) ***	-.240	(.094) *
Number of siblings			-.017	(.011)	-.006	(.012)
Parental expectations			.022	(.011)	.017	(.012)
Parental evaluation			.070	(.011) ***	.071	(.012) ***
School change			-.117	(.030) ***	-.088	(.042) *
Constant	-.011	(.013)	-.001	(.028)	.020	(.030)
School fixed effects	No		No		Yes	

Note : N = 8,289. Standard errors are in parentheses. White and two biological parents family are the reference groups.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 3. Regression Models Predicting Third Grade Home Activities

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Intergenerational closure (network size)	.097	(.011) ***	.096	(.011) ***	.102	(.013) ***	.060	(.012) ***
Parental SES			-.053	(.014) ***	-.046	(.017) **	-.065	(.015) ***
Female			.045	(.022) *	.049	(.023) *	.022	(.022)
Black			.028	(.045)	.010	(.058)	.019	(.054)
Hispanic			-.033	(.034)	-.065	(.042)	-.001	(.039)
Asian			-.061	(.048)	-.112	(.059)	-.074	(.054)
Other race			.018	(.048)	.022	(.054)	.032	(.050)
Child's age (months)			-.041	(.011) ***	-.044	(.013) ***	-.027	(.012) *
Home language (Non-English)			-.213	(.039) ***	-.223	(.045) ***	-.126	(.042) **
Child with disability			.151	(.034) ***	.132	(.037) ***	.101	(.035) **
Enrolled in specialized program			.109	(.050) *	.138	(.055) *	.092	(.051)
Attended pre-school			-.047	(.025)	-.048	(.027)	-.032	(.025)
Parental age			-.019	(.013)	-.015	(.014)	-.006	(.013)
Two other parents family			.020	(.048)	.017	(.052)	.001	(.049)
Single parent family			.047	(.032)	.067	(.035)	.069	(.033) *
Other family types			.199	(.089) *	.231	(.099) *	.148	(.092)
Number of siblings			-.050	(.011) ***	-.049	(.012) ***	-.038	(.011) **
Parental expectations			.042	(.012) ***	.047	(.013) ***	.010	(.012)
Parental evaluation			.135	(.011) ***	.136	(.012) ***	.047	(.012) ***
School change			-.017	(.033)	-.001	(.044)	.013	(.041)
First grade home activities							.388	(.012) ***
Constant	.005	(.014)	.022	(.029)	.025	(.031)	-.001	(.029)
School fixed effects	No		No		Yes		Yes	

Note : N = 8,289. Standard errors are in parentheses. White and two biological parents family are the reference groups.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 4. Regression Models Predicting Third Grade Concerted Cultivation

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Intergenerational closure (network size)	.237	(.010) ***	.189	(.010) ***	.169	(.011) ***	.076	(.010) ***
Parental SES			.294	(.012) ***	.243	(.014) ***	.123	(.012) ***
Female			.123	(.018) ***	.118	(.020) ***	.061	(.017) ***
Black			.006	(.039)	-.065	(.049)	-.053	(.043)
Hispanic			-.118	(.030) ***	-.100	(.036) **	-.053	(.031)
Asian			-.067	(.041)	-.082	(.050)	-.007	(.043)
Other race			-.011	(.041)	-.036	(.045)	-.023	(.039)
Child's age (months)			-.011	(.010)	-.010	(.011)	-.015	(.009)
Home language (Non-English)			-.176	(.033) ***	-.157	(.038) ***	-.024	(.033)
Child with disability			.038	(.029)	.041	(.031)	.038	(.027)
Enrolled in specialized program			-.133	(.042) **	-.132	(.046) **	-.091	(.040) *
Attended pre-school			.119	(.021) ***	.111	(.023) ***	.042	(.020) *
Parental age			.037	(.011) ***	.019	(.012)	-.005	(.010)
Two other parents family			-.164	(.041) ***	-.168	(.044) ***	-.056	(.038)
Single parent family			-.099	(.027) ***	-.099	(.030) **	-.008	(.026)
Other family types			-.167	(.076) *	-.113	(.083)	.013	(.072)
Number of siblings			-.019	(.009) *	-.015	(.010)	-.004	(.009)
Parental expectations			.028	(.010) **	.035	(.011) **	.018	(.009)
Parental evaluation			.091	(.010) ***	.098	(.010) ***	.045	(.009) ***
School change			-.032	(.028)	-.007	(.037)	-.017	(.032)
First grade concerted cultivation							.509	(.011) ***
Constant	-.035	(.017) *	-.044	(.026)	-.040	(.027)	-.028	(.023)
School fixed effects	No		No		Yes		Yes	

Note : N = 8,289. Standard errors are in parentheses. White and two biological parents family are the reference groups.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 5. Regression Models Estimating Effect Heterogeneity of Intergenerational Closure (Network Size) by Parental SES

	Home Activities		Concerted Cultivation	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Intergenerational closure (network size)	.058	(.012) ***	.080	(.010) ***
Parental SES	-.065	(.015) ***	.124	(.012) ***
Intergenerational closure × Parental SES	.006	(.011)	-.017	(.009) *
Constant	-.002	(.029)	-.025	(.023)
School fixed effects	Yes		Yes	

Note: $N = 8,289$. Standard errors are in parentheses. All models include full controls reported in Model 4 of Tables 3 and 4.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

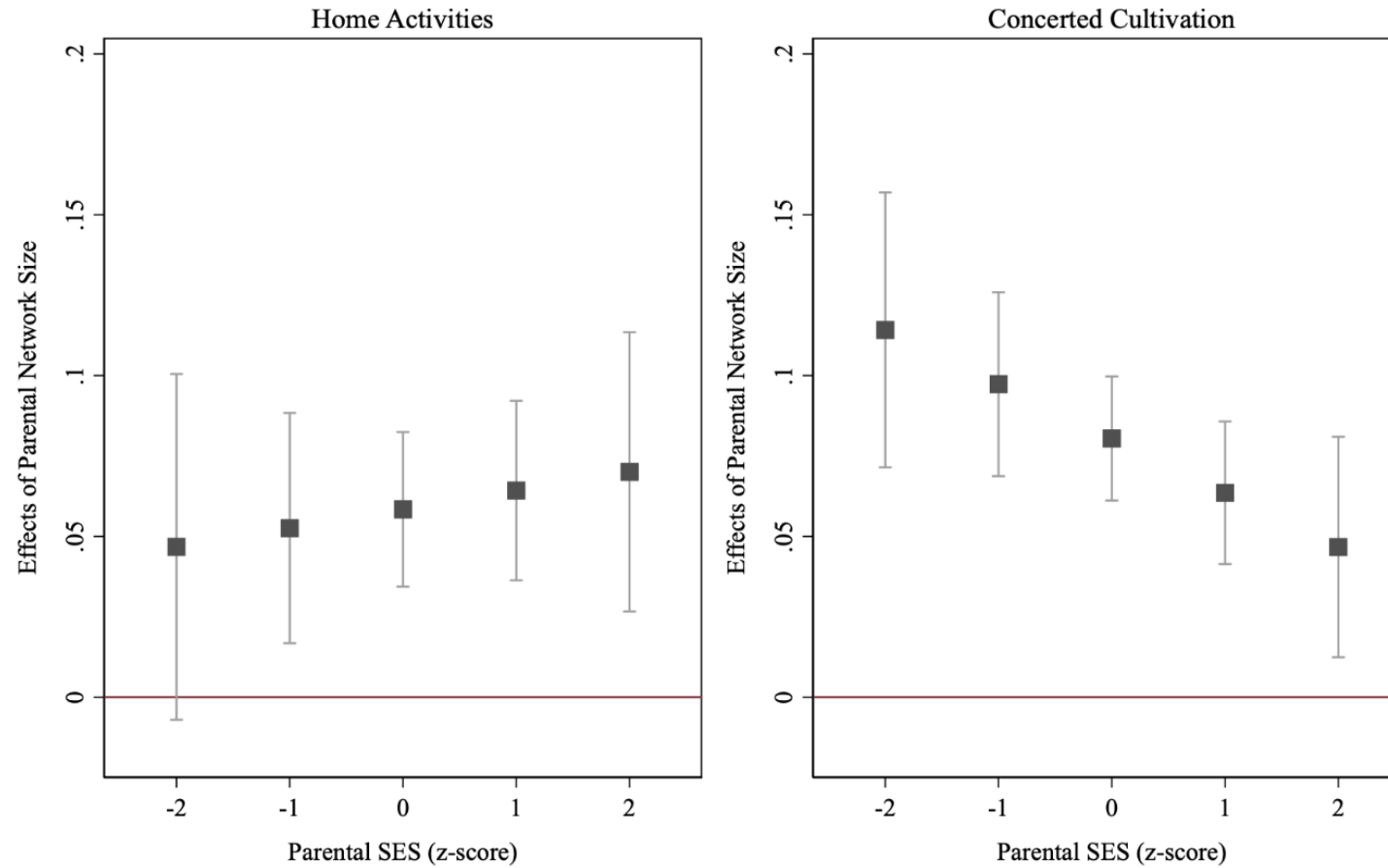


Figure 1. Heterogeneous Effects of Parental Networks by Parental SES

Note: Conditional marginal effects of parental networks with a 95% confidence interval are calculated based on results from Table 5.

Summary of Findings:

- Parent network size significantly & positively associated with practices (home activities & concerted cultivation)
- SES has mixed associations with practices: positive for concerted cultivation, negative for home activities
- *Stronger* associations between networks & concerted cultivation among lower SES families

Interpretations & Policy Implications

- **Capital Conversion:** larger networks (social capital) spread practices that boost achievement (cultural capital)
- **Equalizing:** networks bolster practices, especially among lower SES parents

Implications:

- Use schools to advertise practices
- Nurture school-based networks among lower SES parents, in lower SES schools

Any Questions?

- Thank You!