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Social status and cultural consumption

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The research project on which this volume reports was conceived with two main aims in mind. The first and most immediate aim was to extend our knowledge of the social stratification of cultural consumption, and to do so in a cross-national perspective. In this regard, we obviously looked to build on previous research in this area, which has in fact been steadily growing in volume over recent decades. At the same time, though, it appeared to us that in certain respects this research was subject to limitations, especially in its treatment of social stratification, both conceptually and, in turn, operationally. As a result, the large potential that such research offers for increasing our more general understanding of the form of stratification of present-day societies was not being fully realised. The second aim of our project was therefore to bring research on the social stratification of cultural consumption into a somewhat closer relationship with mainstream stratification research, and in the hope that a better appreciation might thus be gained, on the one hand, of how social inequalities in cultural consumption actually arise and are sustained and, on the other hand, of what these inequalities reveal about the larger structures of social advantage and disadvantage of which they form part.¹

In this introductory chapter, we first of all outline a number of arguments concerning the social stratification of cultural consumption that have emerged from previous research and theory, and seek to provide some evaluation of their present standing. We also pose, in each case, a number of questions that arise and call for further investigation. In the second section of the chapter, we turn to our criticisms of the treatment of social stratification in previous work, and introduce the alternative and, we believe, more conceptually and empirically adequate approach

¹ Most participants in the project have a background in social stratification research and a shared history of participation in the activities of the International Sociological Association Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification and Mobility.

that we wish to follow, and that turns on the Weberian distinction between *class* and *status*. This section thus indicates the motivation for the development of the status scales that are described in detail in Chapter 2. In the third section, we then take up a number of other methodological issues that relate to the kinds of data that have been typically exploited and the analytical techniques that have been typically applied in the course of the project, and also to our comparative ambitions and strategies. And finally, in the fourth section, we briefly introduce each of the national contributions that make up Chapters 3 to 8, and point out features of particular interest. Our assessment of the main empirical findings of the project and of their theoretical implications, as viewed in comparative perspective, we reserve for the concluding chapter of the volume.

1.1 Previous research and theoretical argument

Research by sociologists into the social stratification of cultural consumption has been in large part prompted by wide-ranging debates on cultural change that have been recurrent in Western societies in the course of the twentieth century. Central to these debates are concerns over the apparent divergence of ‘highbrow’ and ‘lowbrow’ culture, the growing importance of the mass media, and the rise of commercialised, ‘mass’ culture.² Sociologists have sought to intervene in two main ways. They have engaged in research to increase the body of empirical evidence on the nature and extent of differences in cultural tastes and consumption across social strata; and they have tried to provide some theoretical explanation and understanding of the inter-relations that can thus be shown to exist between cultural and social hierarchies.

² Contributions to these debates – from widely differing socio-political standpoints – that had evident influence on sociologists include F. R. Leavis (1930), Q. Leavis (1932), Benjamin (1936), Horkheimer and Adorno (1972), Eliot (1948) and MacDonald (1957). It may be added here that in their work in the area in question sociologists have in the main followed authors such as the above in understanding ‘culture’ not in the wider anthropological sense of the term but rather in the narrower sense of, to quote a recent formulation by Gans (1999, p. 5), ‘the practices, goods and ideas classified broadly under the arts (including literature, music, architecture and design etc., and the products of all other print media, electronic media, etc.) whether used for education and aesthetic and spiritual enlightenment or for entertainment and diversion’. We accept a similar understanding in this collection.

For example, in a relatively early but still often cited study, Herbert Gans (1974) presents a range of research findings in support of the view that ‘highbrow’, ‘lowbrow’ and also versions of ‘middlebrow’ cultural taste and consumption do in fact rather systematically map onto the ‘socio-economic’ stratification of American society. Culture, that is to say, has to be seen as stratified rather than ‘massified’. And, correspondingly, Gans rejects more critical, ‘elitist’, accounts that would represent all other than highbrow culture as mass culture, and as the product simply of commercial greed and public ignorance. In his view, a number of ‘taste cultures’ have to be recognised, each of which embodies differing aesthetic values and standards that can be understood as having, so to speak, functional equivalence as responses to the differing wants and resources, material and symbolic, of individuals in socially more or less advantaged positions. Thus, in this perspective, all taste cultures are to be regarded as being, at least potentially, of equal worth and validity: that is, as being equally appropriate to the social contexts within which they are formed and expressed.

Gans’s work can then be taken as providing one of the leading examples of what we would label as ‘homology’ arguments: that is, arguments to the effect that a close correspondence exists between social and cultural stratification, and one that is created and maintained by certain identifiable processes. Homology arguments, in one version or another, could in fact be regarded as representing the orthodoxy in the field for some twenty years or more after Gans wrote. And it may be noted that in a second, updated edition of his book, Gans (1999) reasserts its central theses with only rather minor modifications.

However, during the period in question, a new, far more ambitious and generally more influential form of the homology argument was elaborated in the work of Pierre Bourdieu (see esp. Bourdieu, 1984). For Bourdieu, the correspondence that prevails between social and cultural stratification is yet more strongly determined than that envisaged by Gans and has also a much larger significance. Social classes display different patterns of cultural taste and consumption – and also of distaste and aversion – as part of their characteristic lifestyles, along with closely related patterns of material consumption as, for example, in food and dress. The internal consistency or ‘semantic unity’ of these lifestyles, and likewise their sharp demarcation across classes, is the product and expression of the *habitus* of individual class members: that is, of the socially constituted ‘system of dispositions’ that

they acquire in early life, that exerts a quite pervasive influence on their perceptions and practices, and that reflects the possibilities and exigencies that are created by particular ‘class conditions’.³

Further, though, in Bourdieu’s analysis, far more is here involved than cultural differentiation alone. The cultural field, he insists, no less than the economic field, is one in which class competition and conflict are always present. The ‘dominant classes’ of modern societies use their superior ‘cultural capital’, no less than their superior economic capital, in order to maintain their position of dominance. Differentiation inevitably serves as a means of underwriting hierarchy. More specifically, members of dominant classes seek to demonstrate and confirm the superiority of their own lifestyle over those of other classes by arrogating to it cultural forms that they can represent as ‘canonical’, ‘legitimate’ or otherwise ‘distinguished’ – while maintaining ‘aesthetic distance’ from other forms deemed to be inferior. Through such ‘symbolic violence’, as exerted, in particular, within the educational system but also more generally in public life, cultural capital can in fact be converted into economic capital, and cultural reproduction thus serves as a crucial component in social reproduction more generally.

Largely under the influence of Bourdieu, sociological thinking about the relationship of social and cultural stratification did then tend to be dominated by notions of homology at least up to the 1990s. At this time, though, Bourdieu’s work began to attract a greater amount of sceptical commentary, especially American, and this can now be seen as opening the way for the more radical criticism and the alternative theoretical approaches that subsequently emerged.

One focus of scepticism was on the extent to which Bourdieu’s analyses could be generalised from the French – or even perhaps from the Parisian – case.⁴ Thus, several authors (e.g. Lamont and Lareau, 1988; Lamont, 1992; Halle, 1993; Erickson, 1996) observed that, at least in North America, members of higher social strata were not obviously distinguished by their refined aesthetic tastes and their levels

³ The use of the term ‘homology’ to refer to this form of correspondence between social and cultural stratification would appear in fact to originate with Bourdieu (see e.g. Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 175–177).

⁴ The surveys that provided most of the empirical material used by Bourdieu (1984) dated from the 1960s and were not based on samples of any well-defined population. Parisians were in fact heavily over-represented as compared to ‘provincials’ (as also were members of higher as compared to lower social strata).

of participation in high cultural activities; and that the nature and extent of their cultural consumption was often not regarded, either by themselves or by others, as playing any great part in the maintenance of their social superiority.

Further, though, there were doubts as to whether *in general* the pursuit of cultural exclusiveness could be regarded as a characteristic feature of the lifestyles of dominant classes. In the course of earlier debates on mass culture, researchers such as Wilensky (1964) had already produced evidence to show that participation in such culture – via TV, newspapers, magazines etc. – was in fact quite extensive across *all* strata of American society; and also that while the small minority who did effectively ‘insulate’ themselves from mass – or popular – culture tended to be of high status, they in no way constituted a dominant elite. They were, rather, a marginalised group, ‘generally estranged from the major power centres in the United States’ (Wilensky, 1964, p. 194; and for Great Britain, cf. Abrams, 1958). Thus, in the 1990s attention was drawn back to this work and at the same time to that of commentators such as Shils (1972) and Bell (1976), who, pre-Bourdieu, had been more concerned to stress the diversity than the uniformity of lifestyles and cultural orientations among higher social strata and, more generally, the lack – and perhaps the growing lack – of correspondence in modern societies between social and cultural hierarchies.

In this context, new approaches to the understanding of the interrelation of cultural consumption and social stratification were thus encouraged, and homology arguments became challenged by rival arguments of at least two main kinds.

The first of these we would label as ‘individualisation’ arguments. Such arguments have a rather close affinity with more general claims of the decay or even ‘death’ of social class that became common in the later twentieth century. Authors such as Beck (1992) or Giddens (1991) maintain that the societies of ‘high’ or ‘late’ modernity are characterised by an accelerating process of the ‘individualisation of social inequality’. In many respects, these authors would accept that structures of inequality display a remarkable stability over time. None the less, they believe, class – and status – have declining influences on social action and, above all, on the formation of lifestyles and of the patterns of consumption, material and cultural, through which they are expressed. In these respects, class no longer provides an adequate

'context of orientation' and status-based social milieux 'lose their lustre' (Beck, 1992, pp. 88–89). Rather, rising standards of living, greater geographical and social mobility and exogamy, and a growing awareness of alternative social bases of identity – for example, gender, ethnicity or sexuality – all help to free individuals from class constraints and status preoccupations and allow them to develop their own lifestyles as a matter of personal choice and so as to give expression 'to a particular narrative of self-identity'. Indeed, not only do individuals increasingly choose their own lifestyles but they are increasingly *forced* to do so. They have no choice but to choose, and, moreover, since lifestyles are now followed 'reflexively', they are always open to revision and change 'in the light of the mobile nature of self-identity' (Giddens, 1991, pp. 80–81).

What is then implied is that any homology between social and cultural hierarchies that may have existed in the past – in more 'traditional' forms of society – is now in dissolution. No expectation can be maintained that different patterns of cultural consumption will stand in some systematic relationship to structures of social inequality. The processes that once created and sustained such a relationship – processes of socialisation into distinctive class beliefs, values and practices – have lost their force. In Warde's apt phrase (1997, p. 8), the emphasis shifts dramatically 'from *habitus* to freedom'. Indeed, in more extreme individualisation arguments, such as those advanced by Bauman (1988, 2002), consumption at large becomes celebrated as 'the focus and playground for individual freedom'. And further, in striking contrast to the position taken up by Bourdieu, consumption, in its symbolic aspects especially, is seen not as a field in which social hierarchy is asserted and reproduced but, rather, as one in which a greater proportion of the population than ever before can now engage in 'self-assertion' and without facing 'the danger of imminent and conclusive defeat'. New 'patterns of success' open up for the achievement of symbolic distinction through consumer rivalry and 'taste contests' that can be pursued 'not just in ideologically induced fantasies but in practical life, by the *majority* in capitalist societies' (Bauman, 1988, pp. 58–61).⁵

⁵ Rather remarkably, in his several references to Bourdieu, Bauman appears not to appreciate how radically their views diverge.

However, while individualisation arguments thus call homology arguments directly into question, their influence on sociologists with research interests in the field of cultural consumption would appear, so far at least, to be rather limited. Two reasons for this can be suggested. First, individualisation arguments are concerned with consumption in general, and although clearly intended to apply to its cultural no less than to its material aspects, the former have not received any special attention. Second, individualisation arguments cannot themselves claim any strong research basis. Their leading proponents are 'social theorists', writing in a largely data-free mode. Thus, while individualisation arguments have been discussed a good deal in both sociological and wider intellectual circles, they could scarcely be regarded as empirically compelling.

From this point of view, then, the second main challenge that has been raised to homology arguments is of a quite contrasting kind. This comes in the form of arguments that are specifically concerned with cultural consumption *and* that are grounded in by now quite extensive social research – that is, what we label as 'omnivore–univore' arguments. As already noted, the work of Wilensky and others in the 1960s revealed that members of higher social strata did not in the main have any aversion to popular culture and were indeed fairly regular consumers of it – together, perhaps, with various kinds of high culture. In the 1990s new research, notably by Richard Peterson and his associates (see esp. Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996) led to what were in effect developments of insights that this earlier work provided but that had been largely neglected while homology arguments remained to the fore.

These developments, in the form of omnivore–univore arguments, derive, like individualisation arguments, from the idea that a close mapping of cultural onto social hierarchies no longer exists. But rather than claiming that cultural consumption is now free of *any* systematic relationship with social stratification, proponents of omnivore–univore arguments see a new relationship as having emerged. In present-day societies, they would maintain, members of higher social strata, apart perhaps from a very small minority, do not shun popular or lowbrow culture but, as Wilensky observed, they regularly participate in it; and indeed, if anything, do so yet more actively than members of lower strata. However, a significant difference remains in the consumption

of high or more ‘distinguished’ cultural forms. Such consumption is in fact largely confined to higher social strata – even if being less typical than homology arguments would suggest – while in lower strata consumption tends not to extend beyond more popular forms. In other words, the cultural consumption of individuals in more advantaged social positions differs from that of individuals in less advantaged positions in being both greater *and* wider in its range. It comprises not only more highbrow culture but more middlebrow and lowbrow culture *as well*. The crucial contrast that is created is not then that of ‘snob versus slob’ but rather that of cultural omnivore versus cultural univore (Peterson, 1992, p. 252).

Since being first advanced, omnivore–univore arguments have in fact aroused wide interest. A good deal of further research, following on from that of Peterson, has been stimulated in a range of modern societies, and with results that have been broadly, if not always entirely, supportive (see e.g. Bryson, 1996, 1997; van Eijck, 2001; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2002, 2004; Coulangeon, 2003; López-Sintas and Katz-Gerro, 2005; van Eijck and Knulst, 2005; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005, 2007d,e). However, various questions have emerged concerning how exactly omnivore–univore arguments are to be understood and, in particular, concerning the meaning and significance that might best be attached to the idea of cultural omnivorousness and to research findings that document its prevalence among higher social strata.

It has, for example, been observed (see e.g. Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007; Coulangeon and Lemel, 2007) that two different understandings of cultural omnivorousness are possible. It could be taken to refer either to a general cultural ‘voraciousness’, in the sense of a large appetite for *all* forms of cultural consumption, or, more specifically, to a tendency towards ‘taste eclecticism’ that finds expression in patterns of cultural consumption that cut across established categories of ‘high’ and ‘low’. In fact, in his early work Peterson himself is quite explicit on this issue: omnivorousness does *not* – or not necessarily – imply a tendency to like everything in a quite indiscriminating way. Rather, what it signifies is simply ‘an *openness* to appreciating everything’, from which particular tastes and consumption may or may not develop, and is thus primarily to be contrasted with cultural tastes and consumption that are ‘based on rigid rules of exclusion’ (Peterson and Kern, 1996, p. 904; cf also Peterson, 2005).

Following from this interpretation of omnivorousness, however, it has further been asked whether, insofar as cultural omnivores do display such openness and a consequent disregard for supposed hierarchies of taste, their presence is not largely consistent with individualisation arguments. Omnivore cultural consumption, it has been suggested, may be concerned more with individual self-realisation than with setting down social markers and creating social distinction (see e.g. Wynne and O'Connor, 1998). But it may be noted that Peterson is here again quite unambiguous, at least in the original statement of his position. While omnivorousness should be understood as antithetical to cultural exclusiveness and 'aesthetic distancing', it 'does not imply an indifference to distinctions', and indeed the rise of the cultural omnivore 'may suggest the formulation of new rules governing symbolic boundaries' (Peterson and Kern, 1996, p. 904). In other words, omnivores may be seen as embracing a new aesthetic which, even if more inclusive, democratic and relativist than that which earlier prevailed, can still serve to express cultural *and* social superiority, and especially when set against the far more restricted cultural tastes and consumption of univores (cf. López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2002). Furthermore, omnivores may still show discrimination either in the uses that they make of mass or popular culture – for example, through ironic or otherwise condescending uses; or in still rejecting *some* of its particular forms – 'anything but heavy metal' (Bryson, 1996).⁶

Omnivore–univore arguments can then be seen as posing a challenge to homology and to individualisation arguments alike. On the one hand, the idea of a simple matching of social and cultural hierarchies is called into question, as in turn are Bourdieusian claims that cultural taste and consumption closely reflect 'class conditions', via

⁶ What has, however, to be recognised is that further uncertainty has more recently been created in regard to omnivore–univore arguments as a result of an elaboration suggested by Peterson himself. In recognition of the fact that a very small minority may still be found within higher social strata who do reject popular culture, Peterson (2005) now suggests that this minority should be categorised as 'highbrow univores' in contrast with the more typical 'highbrow omnivores'; and that, correspondingly, 'lowbrow univores' and 'lowbrow omnivores' should also be distinguished. We are ourselves very doubtful about the value of this move. There would seem to be a danger of losing the crucial connotation of omnivorousness as entailing cultural consumption that is relatively wide-ranging in *its extension across*, rather than merely in *its expression within*, generally recognised taste levels.

the mediation of distinctive and exigent forms of *habitus*, and that cultural exclusiveness represents the main form of ‘symbolic violence’ through which cultural reproduction promotes social reproduction. On the other hand, while over-socialised conceptions of the actor are thus rejected, so too are ideas of cultural consumption as now essentially reflecting no more than the highly personalised choices and self-identity projects that individuals pursue, and in a way that is free of constraints imposed by, and of motivations grounded in, the positions that they hold within structures of social inequality.

It is, then, against the background of the research and theory outlined above that the papers brought together in this volume have been written. A range of questions remain open and are, directly or indirectly, addressed. Have ideas of a homology between social and cultural hierarchies and of cultural exclusiveness serving social reproduction now to be generally abandoned – or may there be some particular societal contexts in which they still apply? Have individualisation arguments been too much neglected, or at least should not more recognition be given to the possibility that in modern societies the relationship between social and cultural stratification has become relatively weak, whatever form it may take? Conversely, even if this relationship, whatever its strength, is now better treated in terms of an omnivore–univore rather than an elite–mass distinction, in which of their possible interpretations do omnivore–univore arguments find most empirical support? And, in any event, may not patterns of cultural consumption and types of consumer be found, at least in particular cultural domains or under particular national conditions, that are not readily characterised in omnivore–univore terms?

We turn next to the approaches and strategies that will be followed in taking up these and related issues, and in regard, first of all, to social stratification.

1.2 The treatment of social stratification: class and status

As we have already remarked, we would see the main weakness of earlier research into the social stratification of cultural consumption as resulting from inadequacies in the way in which stratification has been conceptualised and, in turn, treated in empirical analyses. The source of these inadequacies, we would argue, is a failure to maintain the

distinction, classically proposed by Max Weber (1968, vol. 2; pp. 926–939 esp.), between *class* and *status* as two qualitatively different forms of social stratification, the empirical connection between which may vary widely by time and place. In all the papers in the present volume the class/status distinction is explicitly recognised and, as will be seen, plays an important part in the data analyses, and in the interpretations of these analyses, that are presented.

For Weber, and for us, a class structure is one formed by social relations in economic life. Elaborating on Weber, we treat class positions as being ones defined by relations in labour markets and production units and, most immediately, by employment relations. Thus, employers are differentiated from self-employed workers or employees; and salaried employees are in turn differentiated from wage-workers by reference to characteristic features of their employment contracts (cf. Goldthorpe, 2007a, ch. 5). We would not regard classes, understood in this way, as necessarily or even typically forming ‘real’ sociocultural groupings. In Weber’s own words, “*Klassen*” *sind keine Gemeinschaften*’. Rather, classes are seen as collectivities that exist insofar as ‘a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life-chances’ (Weber, 1968, vol. 2, p. 927).⁷

Again following Weber, we would regard a status order as a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality and inferiority among individuals that reflects not their personal qualities but rather the ‘social honour’ attaching to certain of their positional or perhaps purely ascribed attributes (e.g. ‘birth’ or ethnicity).⁸ The social hierarchy thus created is expressed in

⁷ It may be noted that our understanding of class is thus clearly different from that of authors, such as Pakulski and Waters (1996) or Kingston (2000) who have claimed ‘the death of class’, and whose arguments, we believe, also suffer from a failure to distinguish between class and status. In turn, our position differs too from that of Grusky and his associates (see esp. Grusky, 2005; Grusky and Sørensen, 1998; Grusky and Weeden, 2001; Weeden and Grusky, 2005), who, in response to authors such as the above, seek to restore the idea of classes as real sociocultural entities by ‘ratcheting down’ class analysis to the level of occupations (in this regard, see further Goldthorpe, 2007a, ch. 6). While we ourselves take occupation – along with employment status – as a proxy for class position and again, as will be seen in Chapter 2, as a prime characteristic to which status attaches, we are here concerned, in seeking to make our Weberian approach operational, with quite specific and different aspects of occupations.

⁸ Our understanding of status thus differs from that found in some current literature, in particular in more microsociological analysis (e.g. Jasso, 2001),

differential association, and especially in its more intimate forms of what Weber refers to as ‘commensality’ and ‘connubium’ – who eats with whom, who sleeps with whom; and further in lifestyles that are seen as appropriate to different status levels. Status affiliations are thus more likely than class affiliations to be ‘real’ in the sense of ones that are recognised by and meaningful to the social actors involved. None the less, in what Weber refers to as modern ‘democratic’ societies, status orders may be better thought of as comprising relatively loose networks of social relations, or, in his phrase, ‘status circles’, rather than sharply demarcated status groups.

The distinction made between class and status is then clear, and, as we will aim to show, it is one that in the analysis of the stratification of cultural consumption takes on a particular relevance and value. First, though, it is of some contextual interest to note how the failure to exploit this distinction in previous work has come about – in fact, in two quite different ways.

On the one hand, and most notably in the American case, this failure reflects a loss of Weberian refinement, already apparent in the 1950s and 1960s, as leading figures in the field of social stratification sought in effect to reinterpret class in terms of status – perhaps on account of anti-Marxist sentiment. Thus, definitions of social classes are offered on such lines as ‘strata of society composed of individuals who accept each other as status equals’ (Lipset and Bendix, 1959, p. 275) or ‘aggregate[s] of persons, within a society, possessing approximately the same status’ (Shils, 1975).⁹ It is therefore scarcely surprising to find that American authors earlier referred to, such as Gans and Peterson, in advancing homology and omnivore–univore arguments respectively, tend to use the terms ‘class’ and ‘status’ as more or less synonymous

where it is in fact on personal qualities and their perceived ‘worth’ that status chiefly depends. We see value in the distinction suggested long ago by Davis (1949, ch. 4) between status (or ‘prestige’) and esteem. The former refers to a structure of inequality, while the latter reflects the *conduct* of an individual in a particular position or as the representative of a family, ethnic group etc. In popular English literature in the nineteenth century stock characters were the wicked squire (high on status but low on esteem) with designs on the humble but virtuous serving girl (low on status but high on esteem).

⁹ The suggestion of anti-Marxist sentiment would seem to have some warrant here in that both Bendix and Shils were noted Weber scholars and their attempted reduction of class to status – for which they offer no explanation – is otherwise very puzzling.

or to merge them in the idea of 'socioeconomic' status. And while various other stratification 'factors', such as income or education, may then also be taken into consideration, the supposed relationship of these to class and status is left unclear. Thus, either an essentially one-dimensional or, at best, a conceptually quite underdeveloped approach to social stratification is pursued, and one that, we believe, carries serious limitations. While such an approach may readily allow for cultural consumption to be shown to be stratified, in some degree and on some pattern or other, it can provide few insights of relevance to the further task of determining the – possibly quite diverse – social processes or mechanisms through which this stratification is actually generated.

On the other hand, and chiefly in the European case, the distinction between class and status has been elided as a result of efforts not to reduce class to status but rather to reduce status to class – a consequence, in part and at least initially, of the revival of academic Marxism in the 1970s. Status may well be referred to, and in work in the sociology of consumption especially; but status appears then to be treated as little more than an epiphenomenal correlate of class – as, say, in the individualisation arguments of Beck, Giddens or Bauman. Furthermore, with Bourdieu one finds a case made out for treating status in terms of class that is of a quite explicit and elaborated kind.

On Bourdieu's own account, his major work starts out from 'an endeavour to rethink Max Weber's opposition' between class and status (1984, p. xii), and indeed to transcend it. Bourdieu would accept that status is expressed by differential association and above all by style of life. But he then rejects Weber's view of the class positions of individuals or groups as being analytically and empirically separable from their status positions. Rather, status has to be seen as the symbolic aspect of the class structure. And instead of class and status being linked, as Weber puts it, 'in the most varied ways' (1968, p. 932), Bourdieu insists on their necessarily close correspondence – a correspondence which is in fact essential to his homology argument in regard to social and cultural hierarchies. As earlier noted, Bourdieu would see different 'class conditions' as reflected in different forms of *habitus* which in turn create unity within, and differentiation among, lifestyles. And it is then in the cultural field thus constituted that status competition and conflict occur – not as something separate from, and possibly even subversive of, class competition and conflict (cf. Weber, 1968, p. 930) but as their symbolic rather than material expression,

and through which cultural reproduction becomes in fact integral to social reproduction. As Weininger (2005, p. 95) has aptly observed, it is when this latter point is understood that ‘the full significance of Bourdieu’s attempt to yoke together “class” and “status” becomes apparent’.¹⁰

If, then, in much American work the class/status distinction is lost as a result of what might be seen as conceptual degrading, in the case of Bourdieu, and of others influenced by his work, it is as a result of theoretical *fiat*. But, we would argue, the ultimate outcome is essentially the same, at all events so far as analyses of the social stratification of cultural consumption are concerned. What, for one reason or another, is precluded is any consideration of the idea that class and status, as qualitatively different forms of stratification, may influence cultural consumption in differing degree and in differing ways. Or, in other words, without a clear conceptual distinction between class and status, it is simply impossible to consider hypotheses about their respective effects on cultural consumption.

In our own work, as represented in the papers in this volume, we seek to avoid this limitation. We start out from the Weberian distinction between class and status, and from this we are able to move on directly to an initial theoretical expectation in regard to cultural consumption. That is, the expectation that the stratification of such consumption *will be primarily on the basis of status rather than of class* – and that these two forms of stratification will not, typically, be so closely related to each other as to make it impossible to test whether or not this expectation is borne out.¹¹ Class position, we would recognise, will tend, through its economic implications, to condition consumption in

¹⁰ The one way in which Bourdieu might be thought to allow for the possibility of some discrepancy between class and status – of the kind to which Weber frequently refers – is where, within what he deems to be the same class, he notes that differences in their command over cultural as compared to economic capital may lead to some ‘class fractions’ having lifestyles of greater ‘distinction’ than others. In particular, within the ‘dominant class’, academics and ‘artistic producers’ appear to be recognised as in this sense having superior status to industrial and commercial employers, with professionals falling somewhere in-between. However, while, if this interpretation is accepted, it would seem to represent a more substantial concession to Weber’s ‘opposition’ than Bourdieu is ready to acknowledge, it still remains unclear why such differences in status should be seen as only occurring *within* classes – i.e. as relating only to class fractions – rather than, perhaps, cutting across classes.

¹¹ It is important to note that no claim is here implied that status is *in general* dominant over class in determining the stratification of life-chances or life-choices. Our own position is, rather, that the relative importance of class

general. But since consumption is a major aspect of lifestyle, and in its cultural forms may be thought to take on a particular significance in creating status markers and boundaries, cultural consumption will be more closely associated with status than with class, and in particular insofar as claims to status, as Weber suggests, are often set against the ‘pretensions’ of mere economic advantage (1968, p. 932). Or, to elaborate somewhat, we would expect that while the social stratification of cultural consumption will to some extent reflect the constraints and opportunities associated with class position, it will be more powerfully shaped by individual motivations *that are grounded in specifically status concerns* – whether these are directed towards status enhancement or exclusion or simply towards confirmation of membership in social networks or circles that are seen as expressing a valued lifestyle.

At the same time, we recognise income and education as other potentially important stratifying forces in regard to cultural consumption that are related to, yet distinct from, class and status. Thus, income may be taken as a good indicator of more immediately available economic resources, and education of cultural resources – although also, perhaps, of individual psychological attributes, such as ‘information processing capacity’ (cf. Moles, 1971; Berlyne, 1974) that can independently exert an influence on cultural consumption. In our empirical analyses, therefore, separate measures of income and education are in general included, in addition to those of class and status.

By starting from this theoretical position, and by pursuing analyses of the kind that it prompts, our hope then is that we will be able to examine the arguments and still outstanding questions that were reviewed in the previous section in a more illuminating way than hitherto. We now move on to consider a number of more specific methodological issues that arise in our work, under the three headings of data, analysis and comparative strategy.

1.3 Further methodological issues

1.3.1 Data

The arguments that are addressed in this collection are ones that relate to the societal level. They are arguments about the degree, pattern

and status will differ over different areas of social life, and in a theoretically intelligible manner. For empirical evidence supportive of this position, see Chan and Goldthorpe (2007a).

and determinants of the social stratification of cultural consumption in the context of national societies. Consequently, in order to evaluate these arguments empirically, data are needed that likewise relate to this level: i.e. data that are adequate to describing the cultural consumption of individuals representative of national populations, and data that allow these individuals to be located within the different forms of stratification with which we are concerned. Primarily, then, contributors draw on data that are derived from relatively large-scale sample surveys of national populations.¹² However, on account chiefly of the heavy cost of such surveys, in only one of our national cases, that of Netherlands, was it possible for surveys to be designed and carried out by academic sociologists. In all other cases, what is involved is the secondary analysis of survey data collected by governmental or quasi-governmental agencies in connection with their own interests in cultural participation.

With research thus reliant on data not directly tailored to the sociological purposes in hand, problems almost inevitably arise and call for some attention. In the present case, the data on cultural consumption that are most generally available for analysis come from questions put to survey respondents about whether or not, within a given time period, they had engaged in some particular kind of cultural activity: for example, 'Have you in the last twelve months visited an art gallery?', 'Have you in the last twelve months been to the theatre?', 'Have you in the last four weeks listened to classical music, jazz, pop or rock music?', and so on. Such data could be thought to have, and indeed do have, limitations in various ways. However, in some cases at least, these limitations turn out to be less serious for our specific concerns than might at first appear.

To begin with, data resulting from the kinds of question indicated are obviously data that refer to actual cultural consumption rather than to cultural tastes. But, from our point of view, this is scarcely a difficulty at all. The arguments previously reviewed are all ones that, in the end, involve claims about cultural consumption – as a form of social action – rather than about taste per se; and there would, moreover, now appear

¹² In fact, most contributors concentrate their attention on prime-age populations, in say, the age-range 20–64, on the grounds that the patterns of cultural consumption of younger – for example, teenage – and older groups are likely to be sufficiently distinctive to warrant separate treatment. The Chilean sample is also limited to the population of urban areas.

to be a growing awareness in the relevant literature of the dangers of seeking to infer consumption simply from verbal expressions of taste.¹³ Several of the national surveys on which contributors to this collection draw do in fact include questions on tastes; but data from these questions are used, if at all, only as a supplement to data on consumption.

Further, though, data of the kind that we typically use might be regarded as unduly crude in at least two respects. First, the indications given of the actual extent of cultural consumption could easily be misleading so far as particular individuals are concerned. For example, no distinction may be made between persons who went to, say, an art gallery just once in the last twelve months and those who made many such visits; or again between persons who did not participate in some cultural activity over a given period because of special circumstances, such as, say, illness, and those for whom non-participation would be normal. However, it is important to recognise that individual level 'error' in this form need not prevent the data we have from providing a generally reliable picture of patterns of cultural consumption, and of types of consumer, at the aggregate level of national populations – nor then from creating a basis on which the social stratification of such patterns and types can be reliably investigated.

Second, the data on which we draw tend to be rather crude in a further way that could be of greater concern: that is, in the often rather undifferentiated terms in which cultural genres are specified. For example, we may know that an individual goes to the cinema but not whether he or she favours art films or Hollywood blockbusters; or that an individual listens regularly to pop or rock music or to classical music, but not to which of their many varieties. The amount

¹³ Such questionable inference in fact recurs in the work of Bourdieu (1984). Items included in the surveys he undertook refer to cultural tastes to a far greater extent than to what he terms 'cultural practices'; but in his analyses and commentary Bourdieu seems regularly to take the former as indicative of the latter. An illustration of how misleading this may be emerges from a recent paper by Silva (2006) who reports that people expressing a taste for Renaissance art or for Impressionism were far more likely to act on their preferences by visiting art galleries than were those expressing a taste for landscapes, still-lives or portraits. Of course, for some purposes, a focus on tastes rather than on actual consumption may be appropriate, but the rationale for such a focus should then be spelled out. For further discussion of this issue, see the exchange of views between Peterson (2007) and Wuggenig (2007) and Chan and Goldthorpe (2007b).

of detail that we can bring into our analyses of cultural consumption is therefore restricted. However, while care has always to be exercised in drawing conclusions from such data, the actual limits that are placed on our ability to address the arguments and issues with which we are primarily concerned are less damaging than might be thought. What is typically at stake is whether or not individuals engage in forms of cultural consumption at, in fact, rather broadly defined levels. Do patterns of highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow cultural consumption map closely onto some structure of social inequality? Or have such patterns dissolved, and likewise their linkages with social stratification? Or is it rather the case that different cultural patterns and structural linkages have now to be recognised? Significant contributions can then be made to answering such questions even if the data available are not adequate to tracing the finer detail of the cultural consumption in which individuals are involved: that is to say, by working in a primarily hypothesis-testing mode (see further Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007b).¹⁴

Finally, though, we would acknowledge that there is one respect in which survey data from any source are unlikely to be satisfactory: that is, in seeking to determine the various uses that individuals may make of particular forms of cultural consumption or, more generally, the subjective meaning that such consumption carries for them. And, as we have already noted, some insight into these matters could be of importance as, say, in evaluating the omnivore–univore argument. Does listening to pop or rock music have the same significance for omnivores, who also listen to jazz, classical music, opera etc., as it does for univores, for whom pop or rock represent their only forms of musical consumption? In regard to questions of this nature, we can only point to the need for analyses of the kind that we report in this collection to be supplemented by – while creating the framework for – more intensive qualitative studies, and especially, we would suggest, sustained ethnographies.¹⁵

¹⁴ We have elsewhere (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007d, n. 17 esp.) investigated how far an analysis based on quite highly differentiated categories of popular musical consumption would qualify one based on cruder categories so far as an evaluation of the homology, individualisation and omnivore–univore arguments is concerned. The results are in fact reassuring. And what would merit further attention is the indication that emerges from this exercise that cultural consumption may have a ‘fractal’ structure: i.e. similar patterns of differentiation may occur at differing levels of detail.

¹⁵ In this respect, we would regard the work of Halle (1993), in the case of the visual arts, as being exemplary; and cf. also Painter (2002).

1.3.2 Analysis

As we have noted, the data on cultural consumption that are drawn on in the contributions to this collection come in most cases from official surveys; and, in these cases, the data have then usually been to some extent analysed by the agencies that initially promoted the research, and the results reported in publications of one kind or another. The question thus arises of how the analyses to be found in the chapters that follow, in being addressed to the particular sociological arguments and issues that we have reviewed, differ from those previously carried out. Differences, and ones of major significance, are indeed to be found in two main respects. And as well as contributors' secondary analyses being in these ways distinguished from the primary analyses that were undertaken, they also, we believe, mark some advance on much earlier academic work in the field.

First of all, and as we have already suggested, it is important, given the nature of our sociological concerns, to move beyond consideration of different kinds of cultural consumption in a more or less piecemeal fashion. We need to explore the extent and nature of the patterning of such consumption and, in turn, to try to identify types of consumer, whether within particular cultural domains or across domains. This would seem an essential preliminary to treating questions of stratification. To this end, therefore, all contributors engage initially in some form of typology construction.

These efforts vary a good deal in their actual form, depending on the structure of the data available and on authors' treatment of their data in previous work. In some cases, patterns of consumption and types of consumer are directly derived from basic data on individual cultural consumption by means of latent class analysis or analogous techniques; in others, typologies of consumers are arrived at more indirectly. However, in all cases the aim is essentially the same: that is, to investigate empirically how far and in what ways it is possible to associate individual respondents to the national sample surveys that are utilised with patterns of cultural consumption of relatively well-defined kinds.

Second, in turning to questions of stratification, it is essential to our sociological purposes to go beyond bivariate analyses, relating one form of cultural consumption to one aspect of stratification, and also beyond other more complex but still primarily exploratory

methods – such as multiple correspondence analysis – to multivariate analyses that are undertaken within a regression context.¹⁶ As earlier emphasised, we wish in our work to treat social stratification in a more differentiated fashion than has usually been attempted and, in particular, to maintain the Weberian distinction between class and status. Thus, in investigating the stratification of different types of cultural consumer, taken as the dependent variable in usually multinomial logistic regression models, contributors to this volume apply separate measures of class and status¹⁷ and also of income and education – but with the latter being included in, as it were, their own right rather than as simply elements of some synthetic ‘socio-economic status’ scale. In this way, then, the aim is to identify the independent, or net, effects of these several explanatory variables and, by estimating probabilities under regression models, to make some assessment of their relative importance.

Furthermore, in following this approach, valuable indications are often gained of the range and nature of the social processes or mechanisms that underlie the statistical dependencies that are demonstrated. Thus, to illustrate, if – as in fact frequently occurs – educational attainment is found to exert an important influence on cultural consumption, *independently* of class and status, this could then be taken to point to some fairly specific linkage between education and such consumption: for example, to a linkage via cultural resources that are not all that closely associated with class or status or via individual differences in ‘information processing capacity’ of the kind that were earlier referred to.

In regard to this analytical strategy, we may add, the data-sets that are chiefly utilised have major advantages. As well as providing details of respondents’ occupation and employment status of the kind needed to implement our measures of class and status (see further Chapter 2) and good information on respondents’ personal and/or household incomes and educational qualifications, they also cover a wide range of

¹⁶ We do not accept the argument (see e.g. Wuggenig, 2007) that in the evaluation of homology arguments, or at all events of that of Bourdieu, correspondence analysis must be accorded some privileged role while regression methods are inappropriate (see further Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007b).

¹⁷ The one exception is in the case of the Netherlands where, in contrast with the five other national cases covered, the relationship between class and status proved to be so close that measures of both could not be included in the same analysis because of collinearity problems (see further below, p. 181).

their socio-demographic characteristics. In analyses where the prime focus of interest is on the social stratification of cultural consumption, these characteristics – gender, age, marital status, family composition, area of residence etc. – can then be introduced as important control variables.

Moreover, in some, though unfortunately not all, cases, information is available that allows us to establish the social status of respondents' parents or spouses. And, as will be seen, the effect of the status of such 'significant others' on individuals' own patterns of cultural consumption does often prove to be of importance, and even perhaps to outweigh that of their own status (see also Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007c). Thus, the part played in the stratification of cultural consumption by processes of status mobility or exogamy is highlighted, and this is again an area of research in which more intensive, micro-level studies would seem to have a large potential.

1.3.3 *Comparative strategy*

In social stratification research, a tradition has developed of cross-national comparative work in which increasingly high standards have been achieved in the standardisation of key variables and in turn of various analytical procedures (see e.g. Shavit and Blossfeld, 1993; Shavit and Müller, 1998; Arum and Müller, 2004; Breen, 2005; Shavit *et al.*, 2007). We aim to follow in this tradition as far as possible. However, we are not in fact able to do so to the extent that we would ideally wish, chiefly on account of the fact that the social stratification of cultural consumption is still a relatively underdeveloped field of research, at all events in comparison with, say, those of educational inequalities or social mobility.

As already indicated, the stratification variables that are used in the national contributions to this collection are indeed standardised to a large degree, and the same holds true for socio-demographic variables. But in the case of the dependent variable, that is, cultural consumption itself, no such claim can be made. Although the survey questions that are drawn on tend to have a similar form – i.e. to ask about whether or not a particular cultural activity was engaged in over a given time period – the activities to which such questions relate differ quite widely, in both their range and detail, from one national case to another. Thus, whether the concern is with consumption across several cultural

domains or only within a single domain, it is not possible to use the same set of survey items from case to case in order to provide the empirical basis for establishing patterns of cultural consumption and types of consumer.¹⁸

What this means, therefore, is that cross-national comparisons directly at the level of data analysis cannot be provided in any systematic way, and authors of the national chapters do not in fact attempt such comparisons. Rather, a more indirect comparative strategy is pursued on the following lines. Authors of national chapters are left free to exploit the particular data-sets available to them in whatever ways they would believe most effective in addressing the range of arguments concerning the social stratification of cultural consumption that we have earlier reviewed, while all treat stratification in the differentiated way that has been indicated and in which the distinction between class and status is crucial. In other words, cross-national comparability in the papers here brought together is sought through contributors focusing their attention on a shared set of substantive concerns from a shared conceptual position. It will then fall to the editor of the collection to consider in the final chapter how far this strategy has been successful and to assess the results achieved. How far have our theoretical expectations regarding the relative importance of class and status been borne out? In the light of the class–status distinction, do the national chapters point to similar conclusions regarding the validity or otherwise of what we have labelled as the homology, the individualisation and the omnivore–univore arguments? In so far as commonalities are revealed, can their sources be identified? Or, in so far as conclusions appear not to be in accord from one national case to another, can this lack of agreement be traced back beyond merely differences in available data

¹⁸ There are questions on cultural consumption in the Eurobarometer survey series that are uniform for all countries or ‘candidate countries’ of the European Union. But we have deliberately chosen not to use Eurobarometer data for methodological reasons. Chief among these is that the demographic data in the Eurobarometer surveys are relatively thin. Consequently, it would not support the analyses that we wish to carry out. In particular, there is no detailed occupational information which we need in order to implement our social status scale. Also, the education variable in the Eurobarometer surveys is limited to a single measure of when the respondents completed their full-time education. This is a rather crude and unsatisfactory measure, as it elides many important differences in educational qualifications. Finally, and rather obviously, the Eurobarometer surveys do not cover Chile or the US, which are two very interesting and important cases for us indeed.

to real differences in societal contexts, whether of a systematic or a nationally specific kind?

In connection with such issues, one final methodological point has to be made. In the tradition of comparative stratification research to which we have referred, a cross-national perspective has typically gone together with a longitudinal perspective. The question is raised of whether any cross-national differences revealed in the particular aspects of stratification under examination are tending to narrow or to widen over time – or, that is, the question of societal convergence or divergence. Here again we must acknowledge that how far we can follow in this tradition is limited. National surveys that include questions on cultural consumption, of the kind on which contributors to this collection rely, are in most countries still a fairly new development, and in most cases no accumulation of data that would permit repeated cross-sectional analyses over a significant period are available. Thus, studies of the stratification of cultural consumption over time remain rather rare (though see Peterson and Kern, 1996; van Eijck and Knulst, 2005) and we are not ourselves able to take matters forward in this respect – apart from some amount of informed speculation. However, it seems highly probable that in the years ahead the possibilities for the study of change in cultural consumption and in its social stratification, both within and across national societies, will substantially increase, and we would then hope that the present work will at all events be able to serve as a useful baseline.

1.4 The national chapters

The six nations covered in this comparative study can be taken only as an ‘accidental sample’, and any generalisations made from them must on this account be highly provisional. However, we believe that in various respects the accidents of choice have been happy ones. This we seek to bring out in briefly introducing each national study. In addition to indicating the particular concerns of the authors, we also note features of the case that are likely to be of strategic interest within a comparative perspective.

The first two national studies, those relating to the USA and to France, are alike in that both deal with cultural consumption in one particular domain, that of music. As the authors in both cases stress, music has played a crucial role in debates on the stratification of

cultural consumption. For Bourdieu (1984, p. 18), it is in music that one finds the homology between cultural and social hierarchies most clearly expressed – ‘nothing more infallibly classifies’ than taste in music. However, music also provides the context in which omnivore–univore arguments were first developed (Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Simkus, 1992) and in which they have since been most extensively applied. There is, therefore, some appeal in starting this collection with two studies of musical consumption that are concerned with the evaluation of omnivore–univore and of Bourdieusian homology arguments and that come from the two countries that provide their ‘home ground’.

For the USA, Alderson, Heacock and Junisbai take up the question of whether their findings from earlier work (Alderson *et al.*, 2007) on cross-domain cultural consumption – that such consumption is stratified on the basis of status rather than class and on broadly omnivore–univore lines – are replicated when the focus is specifically on music. They discover that while status still emerges as a major stratifying force, together with education and, to a lesser extent, income, the types of musical consumer that emerge from their analyses cannot be adequately captured by a simple omnivore–univore divide. While there is no evidence of a high status and culturally exclusive musical elite, and musical omnivores are clearly in evidence, they would appear to be complemented by musical ‘paucivores’ – individuals with a middling level and range of musical consumption – rather than by univores of any kind. And further, even when data on actual consumption are supplemented by data on tastes, it would seem necessary to recognise a surprisingly large number of individuals, with relatively low status and educational attainment, who are more or less inactive, or at very least unenthusiastic, so far as music is concerned.

In the French case, the data used by Coulangeon and Lemel differ from those available to Alderson *et al.* in that they relate to listening to music only (regardless of whether or not attendance at a live event was involved) but at the same time cover a wider range of genres. However, the findings of the two studies are in many respects similar. In France as in the USA, musical consumption is chiefly stratified by status, rather than by class, and also by education and income, and with higher strata displaying an omnivorous rather than an exclusive style of consumption. But again, too, omnivore–univore as well as homology arguments are called into question. Like Alderson *et al.*, Coulangeon and Lemel

discover a substantial group of effective non-listeners, or musical inactives, which, even if not as large as that revealed for the USA, is likewise disproportionately made up of low status, poorly educated and low-income individuals. And although they are able to identify (lowbrow) musical univores, they too find further typological refinement necessary: that is, in separating highbrow from middlebrow omnivores, on lines that seem in fact rather close to those drawn between omnivores and paucivores in the American case. While rejecting the Bourdieusian idea of a close correspondence between social and cultural hierarchies, maintained through the exigencies of *habitus*, Coulangeon and Lemel would still wish to give full recognition to the pursuit of ‘distinction’ in cultural taste and consumption. In other words, in so far as it is now omnivorousness – or ‘taste eclecticism’ – that chiefly characterises high status groups, they would ally themselves with those who see this new aesthetic (cf. p. 9 above) as itself serving to symbolise and express social superiority.

The four remaining national chapters differ from those for the USA and France in that they are concerned with cross-domain cultural consumption: all in fact in some way cover music, theatre and the visual arts and in most cases cinema and dance are also included. The first of these studies to be presented is that of Chile. As Torche describes, Chile is characterised by a high degree of economic and social inequality but is at the same time highly homogenous in terms of ethnicity and religion. In being concerned with cultural consumption in a developing society, Torche notes at the outset that levels of such consumption in Chile do not appear to be generally lower than in economically more advanced societies included in the comparative project. However, the results of her analyses of participation in a relatively wide range of public cultural activities are in several respects distinctive. While she finds that a majority of the Chilean population (even in urban areas) has to be regarded as in effect inactive, in most marked contrast to a small minority of omnivores, she also identifies two other types of cultural consumer that do not have obvious counterparts elsewhere: that is, ‘movie-lovers’ and ‘live-performance aficionados’. Further, although the stratification of these types does in general occur on the basis of status, rather than class, and of education and income, with inactives being concentrated in lower strata, the effects of these variables are in some cases quite differentiated. Thus, it is higher status and education that chiefly distinguish omnivores, but higher

education and, especially, income that chiefly distinguish movie-lovers. And status does not set apart live-performance aficionados – who could perhaps be regarded as adherents of persisting forms of folk-culture – from other types of consumer. Overall, then, Torche's analysis of the Chilean case brings out the importance of recognising wider variation both in the nature of cultural hierarchies and in their linkages to social stratification than would be apparent if attention were confined to more advanced societies.

The next chapter is of special interest in dealing with a national society, Hungary, that has recently undergone fundamental changes – and ones that have had a major impact on cultural consumption. Bukodi begins by noting that following the regime change from communism, and the withdrawal of previously extensive state subsidies to the arts, an apparently general decline in levels of cultural consumption has occurred. Consistently with this, she finds that around half of her sample of the Hungarian population have to be regarded as culturally inactive, at least in the sense of being non-attenders at cinemas, theatres, classical concerts, pop, rock or jazz events, operas, or museums and galleries. Among those who are culturally active, Bukodi then distinguishes omnivores, univores and, of special interest, cultural 'exclusives' who confine their consumption entirely to highbrow genres. However, while inactives are relatively disadvantaged in terms of status, education and income alike, it is again the case that the stratification of actual consumers is less straightforward. In this regard, it is individuals' education and income rather than status that matter, and it emerges *inter alia* that although exclusives may be a cultural elite, they are not a social elite, tending in fact to have lower education and incomes than omnivores. But further, while individuals' own status is not a significant influence on type of consumer, father's status is: those culturally active have higher parental status than inactives and, further, omnivores have higher parental status than exclusives. Given that omnivores tend also to be younger than exclusives, Bukodi concludes that it is omnivorousness that represents the style of cultural consumption most typical of the more advantaged strata that are now emerging in post-communist Hungarian society.

Turning to the Dutch chapter, Kraaykamp, van Eijck and Ultee point out that although few would consider the Netherlands as a 'class society', participation in 'highbrow' cultural activities, in the form of visiting museums, attending theatres or classical concerts, is in fact just

as socially stratified in the Netherlands as elsewhere. At the same time, though, consumption of popular culture, at least insofar as going to pop concerts is concerned, would appear *not* to be stratified by education, income, class or status. In other words, individuals in socially more advantaged positions have no greater aversion to ‘lowbrow’ culture than individuals in less advantaged positions. This set of results, as Kraaykamp *et al.* point out, is more in line with the omnivore–univore argument than with the homology argument. Two further results of the Dutch chapter are notable. First, class and status in the Netherlands turn out to be very highly correlated. In fact, there would be a multicollinearity problem if both class and status are entered as predictors in a regression model. Thus, Kraaykamp *et al.* have no choice but to model the effects of class and status separately. As it turns out, the effect of class and that of status are broadly comparable in terms of variance explained or substantive magnitude. Second, Kraaykamp *et al.* show that the educational attainment and social status (or class) of a person’s partner have independent effects on his or her cultural consumption.

In the last national chapter of this collection, we consider cross-domain cultural participation in England. On account of time and other resource constraints, it is perhaps unsurprising that cross-domain omnivorousness is rather uncommon: only one in ten respondents in our English sample are omnivores in multiple domains. However, we are able to show that social stratification of cross-domain cultural consumption follows largely the same pattern as that of cultural consumption *within* individual domain (cf. Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005, 2007d,e). That is to say, once again it is education, income and social status, but *not* social class, which differentiate levels of cross-domain cultural consumption.

In this chapter, we have set out the theoretical arguments and still outstanding questions that are to be addressed in our research project. And we have explained the analytical framework and comparative strategy that structure our empirical analyses. But before we proceed to review the evidences that are reported in the national chapters, we shall have to take a short detour to report in Chapter 2 the construction of a key explanatory variable of our approach, namely the social status scale, and discuss some of its properties.