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Social stratification and cultural consumption: The visual arts in England

Tak Wing Chan [a,*], John H. Goldthorpe [b]

[a] *Department of Sociology, University of Oxford, United Kingdom*
[b] *Nuffield College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom*

Abstract

In this paper, we use recent survey data on the visual arts in order to test three arguments concerning the relationship between social stratification and cultural consumption: i.e. what we label as the 'homology', the 'individualisation' and the 'omnivore–univore' arguments. Through latent class analysis, we identify three types of consumer in the visual arts—'omnivores', 'paucivores' and non-consumers or 'inactives'. We then examine the social character of these types through a regression analysis that includes a range of demographic and stratification variables. As would be expected from a Weberian standpoint, the types are more strongly differentiated by status than by class—or income. Education is still more important than status, although how far it should be interpreted as a stratification variable can be questioned. Our findings reinforce those we have previously reported on cultural consumption in the domains of music and of theatre, dance and cinema in indicating that the homology and individualisation arguments lack empirical support. Further, though, the omnivore–univore argument seems less applicable in the visual arts than in other domains. Univores are not apparent and it is inactives that represent the numerically most important type. Moreover, it is in the distinction between inactives, on the one hand, and omnivores and paucivores together, on the other, that social stratification is most obviously expressed.

1. Introduction

In the current sociological literature that treats the relationship between social stratification and cultural taste and consumption, it is possible to identify three main—and rival—lines of argument, each, though, with its variant forms. For convenience, we will refer to (i) the homology argument; (ii) the individualisation argument; and (iii) the omnivore–univore argument. In this paper, we begin by briefly outlining these three positions. We then proceed to an evaluation of them on the basis of recent survey data relating to cultural consumption in the domain of the visual arts.

* Corresponding author.

1.1. The homology argument

In its simplest form this argument claims no more than that social stratification and cultural stratification map closely on to each other. Individuals in higher social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'high' or 'elite' culture, and individuals in lower social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'popular' or 'mass' culture—with, usually, various intermediate situations also being recognised. A recent restatement of the argument on these lines is provided by Gans (1999). However, more elaborate versions of the homology argument exist, and notably that developed by Bourdieu.

On Bourdieu's own account, his major work, *Distinction* (1984, p. xii), starts out from 'an endeavour to rethink Max Weber's opposition between class and *Stand*'. Bourdieu agrees with Weber that the status order, while taking relational form in a hierarchy of intimate association ('connubium' and 'commensality'), finds its fullest expression in '*a specific style of life*' (Weber, 1968, pp. 259–260). However, he rejects Weber's view that class can be treated as analytically and empirically separable from status in that the class structure is to be seen as determined purely by social relations arising in economic life—i.e. relations within labour markets and production units.

Bourdieu then develops an argument that, as best we are able to understand it, runs on the following lines (cf. Jenkins, 2002, chapters 4–6; Weininger, 2005).[1] Class and status are not to be understood as qualitatively different forms of social stratification that can be linked, as Weber puts it, 'in the most varied ways' (1968, p. 259). Rather, status is to be regarded as the symbolic aspect or dimension of the class structure, which is not itself reducible to economic relations alone. Thus, it is not possible for Bourdieu to accept that the relationship between class and status—and hence lifestyle—is, at least to some degree, a contingent one. A necessary correspondence, or homology, has to be recognised. This homology is crucially mediated by the *habitus* of different classes: that is, by the socially constituted 'system of dispositions' that members of a class come to acquire, primarily in their early lives, as a result of the specific 'class conditions' under which they live. The class *habitus* produces a 'semantic' unity in practices across all domains of consumption, cultural consumption included. And thus, within and integral to the class structure there are created the internally coherent but sharply contrasting, and indeed often opposing, lifestyles that are expressed by the status order (see, e.g. Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 126–130, 169–177 esp.). In turn, then, rivalry and competition within this order are not to be seen as separate from class divisions and conflict, let alone as serving, perhaps, to inhibit class-based action (cf. Weber, 1968, pp. 267–268). To the contrary, the status order is the field of symbolic struggle between classes, in which those involved seek to 'classify' themselves and others as same or different, included or excluded, and in which members of the dominant class use 'symbolic violence' in order to confirm the superiority of their own lifestyle by arrogating to it those cultural forms that are generally recognised as 'canonical', 'legitimate' or 'distinguished', and by disparaging others. *Cultural* reproduction, achieved through symbolic violence is in fact seen as being crucial to *social* reproduction (Jenkins, 2002, p. 147), and it is in this regard, as

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[1] Like other commentators on Bourdieu, we often find great difficulty in establishing just what it is that he wishes to maintain. In part, this is the result of the obscurity of his prose (whether read in the original French or in English translation) but in part too, we believe, because of recurrent ambiguity, equivocation if not contradiction in his arguments. When empirically grounded criticism is made of views attributed to Bourdieu it is then all too easy for his defenders to claim that Bourdieu is being misunderstood and that the criticisms are not relevant. To try to minimise opportunity for such 'immunisation stratagems', we have in our own interpretations of Bourdieu sought as far as possible to follow those of generally sympathetic expositors.

Weininger (2005, p. 95) has observed, that 'the full significance of Bourdieu's attempt to yoke together "class" and "status" becomes apparent'.[2]

1.2. The individualisation argument

The individualisation argument may be regarded, if not as a more or less direct contradiction of the homology argument, then at all events as an attempt to restrict the validity of that argument to the past. What essentially is held is that, in the economically advanced societies of the present day, differences in cultural taste and consumption and indeed in lifestyles generally are losing their grounding in social stratification, however this may be understood, and are becoming more a matter of individual 'self-realisation'.

In weaker versions of the argument the suggestion is that other structural bases, such as age, gender, ethnicity or sexuality, are now at least as important as class or status in conditioning lifestyles, and that individuals are in this way given a much greater range of choice as regards the collectivities, real or imagined, with which they will subjectively align themselves and, in turn, greater possibilities for forming—or recreating—their own identities (e.g. Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). However, in stronger versions, often developed under postmodernist influences, lifestyles are seen as now lacking any kind of structural grounding or indeed inherent unity. Individuals are increasingly able to form their own lifestyles independently of their social locations and, primarily through their patterns of consumption and demonstrations of taste, to 'construct' their own selves more or less at will (e.g. Bauman, 1988, chapter 3 esp., Bauman, 2002, chapter 6 esp.). Here, then, the contrast with Bourdieu's position is striking. The emphasis shifts dramatically, as Warde (1997, p. 8) has put it, 'from *habitus* to freedom'. Instead of being permanently marked by their initial class socialisation and restricted to a limited set of predefined lifestyles, individuals not only can but *have* to choose—to 'pick-and-mix'—from the vast array of possibilities that the highly commercialised 'consumer societies' of today make available to them: lifestyle becomes a 'life project'.

1.3. The omnivore–univore argument

The first point to note about this argument is that it relates more specifically to cultural consumption than to lifestyles in general. In its substance, it can perhaps be traced back to the findings of empirical research as early as that of Wilensky (1964) who reported that in the US highly educated persons had rarely any strong aversion to 'mass' culture and indeed often enjoyed it at least in some forms. However, in its present-day terms the argument originates with Peterson and Simkus (1992). The broad hypothesis that is advanced is that in modern societies the homology argument is outmoded, not because cultural consumption has lost all grounding in social stratification, but because a new relationship is emerging. Rather than cultural stratification mapping straightforwardly onto social stratification, the cultural consumption of individuals in higher social strata differs from that of individuals in lower strata chiefly in that it is greater *and much wider in its range*—comprising not only more 'high-brow' culture but in fact more

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[2] The one way in which, so far as we can see, Bourdieu might allow for the possibility of a discrepancy between status and class—of the kind to which Weber frequently refers—is where, within what he deems to be the same class, Bourdieu acknowledges that differences in the relative importance of cultural as opposed to economic capital lead to some 'class fractions' having lifestyles of greater 'distinction' than others. For example, within the dominant class academics and 'artistic producers' appear in this sense to be recognised as having superior status to industrial and commercial employers, with professionals falling somewhere in-between. However, if this interpretation of Bourdieu is accepted, it would then represent a much more substantial concession to the Weberian position than Bourdieu seems ready to acknowledge.

'middle-brow' and more 'low-brow' culture as well. Thus, the crucial contrast is not that of 'snob versus slob' but that of cultural omnivore versus cultural univore.

More recently, various possible refinements, elaborations or modifications of the omnivore–univore argument have been under discussion. For example, it has been asked whether omnivores are to be seen as pursuing self-realisation rather than status enhancement or in fact as simply seeking to establish a new basis for 'distinction' (compare Wynne and O'Connor, 1998 with López-Sinta and García-Álvarez, 2002); or again, whether they should be regarded as expressing a sophisticated 'taste eclecticism' or as being merely 'culturally voracious' (cf. Peterson, 2005). Furthermore, Peterson (2005) himself has been led to suggest a distinction between 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow' omnivores which—to us at least—would seem to compromise his initial insight. However, no consensus appears as yet to have emerged on the issues raised and, for our present purposes, we focus our attention on the omnivore–univore argument in essentially its original form.

1.4. Previous research

We have sought to make some advance on earlier work in the field of the social stratification of cultural consumption in two main respects. First, we have recognised that insofar as the focus of interest *is on* cultural consumption, then this must be studied as directly as possible, and that it should not be assumed that patterns of consumption can be reliably inferred from data that amount to no more than individuals' expressions of their cultural tastes and preferences. Reliance on the latter may give an exaggerated or otherwise distorted idea of actual consumption (cf. van Rees et al., 1999; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2002). Thus, as regards the visual arts, Silva (2006, Table 3) has shown how the probability of attending galleries varies widely among those with differing tastes in art: for example, among persons with a strong preference for Renaissance art or for Impressionism, less than a fifth report never visiting galleries but this proportion rises to over three-fifths among those expressing a strong preference for landscapes, still lifes or portraits.[3]

Second, as regards social stratification, we have urged the need for a more considered approach to its conceptualisation and measurement. In much earlier work, variables such as occupation, education or income have been taken as more or less *ad hoc* indicators of stratification; or, alternatively, synthetic scales of 'socio-economic status' have been applied, but again with no very clear rationale. We would ourselves wish to reassert—*contra* Bourdieu—the importance of the Weberian distinction between class and status (see further Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007b) as qualitatively different forms of stratification, and with then the theoretical expectation that differences in cultural consumption, understood as an aspect of lifestyle, will be more strongly associated with status than with class.[4] In our research we have throughout used separate measures of class and status—and further of education and income—so that by means of appropriate

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[3] It seems often to be overlooked that Bourdieu's work (1984) relies far more on respondents' expressions of their taste than on their reports of their actual 'cultural practices'—although Bourdieu regularly elides the distinction. We are of course aware that such reports may themselves not give an accurate account of consumption—for example, exaggeration may again be a problem—but insofar as checks against attendance figures at cultural events can be made, there is no indication, so far as we are aware, of any gross misrepresentation. We would also accept that good grounds may exist for studying tastes *per se*; but it then needs to be spelled out in any particular case just what these grounds are taken to be.

[4] In contrast, there are other aspects of both life-choices and life-chances where we would expect—and again are in fact able to show (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007b)—that class is a more important stratifying force than status: for example, political orientations and partisanship, at least on the left–right axis, and individuals' economic security, earnings stability and earnings prospects over the life course.

multivariate analyses, some assessment can be made of their relative importance in regard to cultural consumption.

More specifically, we have so far considered the validity of the three arguments outlined above in the light of data on cultural consumption in the domains of music (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007a) and of theatre, dance and cinema (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005).

As regards the homology argument, our analyses are generally negative in their implications. They produce no evidence of a 'dominant class' or social elite whose members typically consume high culture while at the same time displaying 'aesthetic distance' from mass, or popular, culture. Rather, we find that many individuals within more advantaged social strata—amounting at least to substantial minorities—are not in fact frequent consumers of high culture, and further that those who are show no marked tendency to reject more popular forms. As regards the individualisation argument, our results are similarly negative. We show that quite well-defined patterns of cultural consumption do in fact persist; and, in turn, we can identify a limited number of types of cultural consumer who then prove to be socially differentiated in fairly systematic ways.

However, as regards the omnivore–univore argument, we have been able to take a more positive position. We do indeed find an omnivorous type of cultural consumer, with relatively high levels of consumption of *both* high *and* popular cultural forms; and at the same time a univorous type with consumption apparently limited to only more popular genres. And we further find that omnivores do tend to be socially advantaged over univores. Consistently with our Weberian expectations, the probability of being an omnivore rather than a univore increases with social status (while class effects are generally non-significant) and also with level of educational attainment. However, our results also point to various ways in which the omnivore–univore argument may require qualification. First, although omnivores are disproportionately drawn from more advantaged social strata, this is not necessarily to say that they are the prevailing—or even majority—type *within* these strata. Second, in particular domains different types of omnivore may need to be distinguished. For example, in the case of music, we find consumers who, although omnivorous in their listening through various media, have only a low frequency of attendance at live musical events ('omnivore–listeners' as opposed to 'true omnivores'). And third, the possibility arises that in some instances it may be necessary to recognise other types of consumer apart from simply omnivores and univores. For example, in the case of theatre, dance and cinema, the individuals we identify as univores are those whose consumption is largely limited to cinema and who, therefore, under a narrower definition of this domain, one restricting it to live performances, would have to be counted as virtual *non*-consumers—i.e. as individuals who are more or less culturally inactive.

In the present paper, we extend our inquiries into a third cultural domain, that of the visual arts, which, in the light of the foregoing, may be of particular interest in that it is one that, so far, has figured rather little in examination of the omnivore–univore argument. We should say at the outset that we can here consider cultural consumption in the visual arts only in so far as it occurs in specific institutional settings—museums, galleries, festivals, etc.—rather than in the home or in public spaces. We recognise that, on this account, the analyses we present may be regarded as incomplete. As several authors have shown (e.g. Laumann and House, 1970; Halle, 1993; Painter, 2002), much of value can be learnt about the social stratification of taste and consumption in the visual arts from the detailed examination of the design features and décor of individuals' homes, of the pictures and other artefacts that they contain, and of the significance that occupants attach to these aspects of their domestic environment. However, it remains the case that, except perhaps for a very small minority—with large homes and larger bank balances— extensive and varied consumption of the visual arts cannot be achieved on a purely domestic basis (nor yet through the availability of public art) and does indeed necessitate visits to

appropriate institutions and events.[5] In short, it is data on the latter that must be central to any consideration of cultural consumption so far as the visual arts are concerned.

2. Data

As in our previous papers, we draw on data from the Arts in England Survey carried out in 2001 by the Social Survey Division of the UK Office for National Statistics on behalf of Arts Council England. This survey is well suited to our purposes in that it focuses on obtaining factual information on the nature and extent of individuals' participation in cultural events and activities—or, that is, on their actual cultural consumption—rather than on eliciting expressions of their cultural taste. Face-to-face interviews were carried out with a stratified probability sample of individuals aged over 16 and living in private households in England. Interviews were completed with 6042 respondents, giving a response rate of 64% (for details, see Skelton et al., 2002).

As regards cultural consumption in the domain of the visual arts, we concentrate on the responses obtained to five questions. These asked whether in the last 12 months respondents had visited (1) a museum or art gallery, (2) an exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture, (3) a craft exhibition (excluding 'craft markets') or had attended (4) any event including video or electronic art or (5) a cultural festival.[6]

These questions are not as detailed as we would ideally have wished. In particular, the linking of museums and art galleries in the first question is unfortunate in that some museums—for example, natural history, industrial or local or regional museums—while no doubt displaying many objects of visual interest may not contain much in the way of 'works of art' as usually understood. In what follows we seek to keep the limitations of our data in mind in the interpretation of our results and in drawing conclusions from them.

The Arts in England Survey is also well suited to our purposes in that it contains information on a wide range of respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. Respondents are coded to the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) which is in effect a new instantiation of the Goldthorpe class schema (Rose and Pevalin, 2003; Rose et al., 2005; Office for National Statistics, 2005); and from the detailed occupational codings that are available respondents can also be allocated to the 31 categories of the social status scale that we have ourselves developed (Chan and Goldthorpe, 2004). In addition, information is available on what could be regarded as two other stratification variables, income and educational qualifications (the latter being coded to the six official National Vocational Qualifications levels); and also on a range of attributes that are chiefly of interest to us as control variables, including sex, age, marital status, family composition and region of residence (see Table 6 below). In what follows we restrict our coverage to respondents aged 20–64 ($N = 4249$) since preliminary analyses pointed clearly to the desirability of treating separately issues of the cultural

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[5] Domestic consumption may of course also occur through high quality reproductions, art books and—increasingly, perhaps—through the downloading of images available electronically. However, our expectation would be that, rather than serving as a substitute for visits to museums, galleries, festivals, etc. such consumption will be highly correlated with the frequency of such visits (cf. Halle, 1993; Painter, 2002). As regards the consumption of public art and also of 'street' art in the form of advertisements, graffiti, etc. we are unaware of any findings on its extent or social patterning.

[6] We include attendance at cultural festivals as an indicator of visual arts consumption because although such festivals typically cover a range of domains, the visual arts (including crafts) tend to figure prominently. Thus, for example, in a survey of 349 festivals, Rolfe (1992, p. 16) reports that 42% had visual arts formally included in their programme, and it would seems likely that at an informal level the visual arts would be more widely involved. However, we have repeated our analyses without this indicator, and the results we obtain remain on essentially the same lines as those reported. Details are available on request.

Table 1
Percentage of respondents who have visited various visual arts events or establishments in the past 12 months

Event involving video or electronic art	7.7
Cultural festival	11.0
Craft exhibition	18.5
Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture	21.0
Museum or art gallery	38.7

consumption of both younger and older age-groups. After deleting cases with missing values on variables of key interest to us, the analytical sample size becomes 3819.

3. Results

We begin by showing in Table 1 the proportions of respondents to the Arts in England Survey who had engaged in each of the five activities that we identified above. Overall, it may be said, the level of participation does not appear especially high. In particular, it may be noted that the two kinds of event that were apparently included as ones likely to be of more popular appeal—cultural festivals and, especially, craft exhibitions—show only relatively low levels of attendance, clearly below those found for attendance at art exhibitions or at museums and galleries.

3.1. Latent class analysis

In order to move on from data in the form of Table 1 to try to establish patterns of consumption within the visual arts, and in turn of types of consumer, we turn to latent class analysis. The binary responses to the five questions represented in Table 1 can be taken as our indicators of consumption in this domain, and can be understood as forming a five-way contingency table, with 32 (i.e. 2^5) cells, within which some degree of association among responses is likely to exist. Latent class analysis, which is in effect the categorical counterpart of factor analysis for continuous variables, aims to capture this association by identifying a small number of discrete latent classes—or categories—such that, conditional on membership of these classes, responses will be statistically independent of each other; or, in other words, membership of the latent classes can be taken as accounting for the observed association.[7]

As can be seen from Table 2, the results of our latent class modelling are fairly straightforward. A model postulating just three latent classes fits the data adequately.[8] In Table 3 we then show the estimated relative size of the latent classes under this model and the estimated probabilities, conditional on latent class membership, of participation in each of the five activities that serve as our indicators.

From the results here reported, we can already draw some implications for the arguments that we noted at the outset. First, the fact that, as shown in Table 2, we obtain a relatively simple latent

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[7] For an introduction to latent class analysis, see McCutcheon (1987), and for more advanced applications, Hagenaars and McCutcheon (2002). Briefly, if there are three observed categorical variables A, B, C with I, J and K categories, respectively, a latent class model with T classes can be expressed as follows:

$$\pi_{ijk}^{ABC} = \sum_{t=1}^{T} \pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{A|X} \pi_{jt}^{B|X} \pi_{kt}^{C|X},$$

where π_t^X is the probability that a person belongs to latent class t, $\pi_{it}^{A|X}$ is the probability that this person is found at level i of A given membership in latent class t, and so on.

[8] Table 2 also shows that the model postulating four latent classes reduces the G^2 of model 3 by 8.56 for 6 degrees of freedom, which is not a statistically significant improvement ($p = .20$). BIC also favours model 3 over model 4.

Table 2
Latent class measurement models fitted to data on cultural consumption in the visual arts

# classes	G^2	d.f.	p	BIC
1	1826.45	26	0.000	1612.01
2	121.45	20	0.000	−43.50
3	21.52	14	0.089	−93.95
4	12.96	8	0.113	−53.02

class solution must in itself tell against the individualisation argument. That is to say, consumption in the visual arts—just as in music and in theatre, dance and cinema—does not display a bewildering degree of individual diversity, of a kind that would in fact defy latent class analysis, but falls rather into a limited number of rather strong patterns (leaving aside, for the moment, the question of the social correlates of this patterning).

Second, when we turn to the substantive findings of Table 3, difficulties clearly emerge for the homology argument also. To begin with, it can be seen that, again as in the cases of music and of theatre, dance and cinema, no latent class is apparent that could readily be equated with a dominant social class or elite that sharply discriminates in its cultural consumption as between high and more popular forms. Furthermore, the largest latent class distinguished—latent class 1 with a relative size of 59%—can scarcely be regarded as representing a category of mass consumers. Rather, membership of this latent class is associated with having only a very low probability of taking part in *any* of the activities that we cover. It is important here to note that our inability to differentiate attendance at museums from attendance at art galleries, to which we earlier drew attention, in no way affects this finding: we can infer that members of latent class 1 have a very low probability of attending natural history museums, industrial museums, etc. as well as 'art' museums. In other words, this latent class is that of individuals who are essentially 'inactives', at least insofar as the consumption of the visual arts in broadly defined institutional contexts is concerned, and might thus be compared to the category of non-consumers that, as we previously found, would show up if live theatre and dance were to be considered as a domain separate from that of cinema.

Third, our findings do not consort so well with the omnivore–univore argument as those we have previously reported. We do, to be sure, identify a latent class—i.e. latent class 3—which, though estimated at only 7% of our population, can clearly be regarded as that of omnivores in the visual arts, with its members tending to consume at relatively high levels in all the respects that we consider and showing no signs of 'aesthetic distancing', as, for example, from craft exhibitions. However, the nature of latent class 1 then causes problems, just as for the homology argument. It would seem difficult to treat the inactives of this class as univores, to be set in contrast with our visual arts omnivores, in the same way as we can, for example, set 'pop-and-rock' univores against

Table 3
Estimated relative sizes of latent classes and conditional probabilities of different forms of visual arts consumption under a three-class model

	1	2	3
Relative size (%)	58.6	34.4	7.0
Event involving video or electronic art	0.092	0.252	0.632
Cultural festival	0.040	0.120	0.644
Craft exhibition	0.035	0.067	0.478
Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture	0.004	0.416	0.922
Museum or art gallery	0.071	0.809	0.966

omnivores in the domain of music. This would only be possible if it could be shown that those individuals assigned to latent class 1 are to some significant extent consumers of popular forms of visual art *outside* of the contexts of museums, galleries, exhibitions, etc. whether, say, in their homes or in public places. And while we are unable to address this possibility ourselves, we are not aware of any evidence from other research that could be taken as lending support to it.[9]

Furthermore, the remaining latent class of our analysis—i.e. latent class 2—which has a relative size of 34% creates rather obvious problems for any supposed omnivore–univore dichotomy. Its members differ from the omnivores of latent class 3 in having generally lower levels of participation across the several activities that we consider—and in being virtual non-attenders at craft exhibitions and cultural festivals. But at the same time they are clearly more than just univores. As well as having a fairly high probability of visiting museums and galleries, they also visit, even if at a lower rate than omnivores, other exhibitions of art, photography or sculpture and exhibitions that include video or electronic art. Instead, then, of being either omnivores or univores, members of latent class 2 might be described as 'paucivores' in the visual arts: that is to say, they consume not all or just one form of what is on offer but, rather, modest amounts within a somewhat limited range of possibilities.[10]

However, to take further the issues raised above, we need to consider the social correlates of membership in the latent classes that we have distinguished: that is, we need to introduce covariates of interest into our analysis. To this end, we first calculate, on the basis of the latent class model that we accept, the conditional probability of respondents belonging to each of our three latent classes, given the responses they made on the five indicators of consumption in the visual arts. We then assign all respondents with a particular response pattern to that latent class to which they have the highest, or modal, conditional probability of belonging.[11] Some degree of error is here likely to arise, so that the relative sizes of the latent classes after individuals have been thus modally assigned to them may differ from the relative sizes originally estimated. However, in the present case it turns out that the extent of this misclassification is quite small at 12%. The relative size of latent class 1, which we label as that of inactives (I), changes only from 59 to 58%, that of latent class 2, the paucivores (P), increases from 34 to 37% while that of latent class 3, the omnivores (O), falls from 7 to 5%.[12]

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[9] As regards the home, most people do of course have objects on walls and surfaces that could be taken as constituting 'images' of some kind. However, the question then arises of whether such images are thought of as 'art'. In the light of his research carried out in Britain, Painter (2002, pp. 220–221) concludes that in working class homes at least this is usually not the case, and further that 'Where the uses of images exclude art, other meanings are prioritized. Images and objects often stand first for people, events and relationships'. For example, the significance of photographs may be primarily as mementos of relatives, family occasions or holidays; or that of 'decorative' objects, primarily as gifts from family or friends.

[10] We thank our colleague Paolo Crivelli for suggesting the term 'paucivore' to us.

[11] Thus, suppose there are three observed categorical variables A, B and C, the conditional probability that someone belongs to latent class t given that this person is at level i of A, level j of B and level k of C is given by the following expression:

$$\pi_{tijk}^{X|ABC} = \frac{\pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{A|X} \pi_{jt}^{B|X} \pi_{kt}^{C|X}}{\sum_{t=1}^T \pi_t^X \pi_{it}^{A|X} \pi_{jt}^{B|X} \pi_{kt}^{C|X}}.$$

[12] The percentage of cases misclassified is calculated as: $100 \times \sum_j \left[(1 - \hat{\pi}_j) \cdot \frac{n_j}{N} \right]$, where n_j is the number of respondents giving response pattern j, $\hat{\pi}_j$ is the estimated modal latent class probability given response pattern j, and N is the total sample size. For further applications, and discussion, of the method of modal assignment, see Hogan et al. (1993) and, specifically in the field of cultural consumption, van Rees et al. (1999). An alternative approach to introducing covariates is to combine a latent class model directly with a regression model (see, e.g. Yamaguchi, 2000; Bandeen-Roche et al., 1997; Dayton and Macready, 1988; Formann, 1992).

Table 4
Distribution of types of consumer in the visual arts within social classes

Social class	I	P	O	N
1. Higher managerial and professional occupations	35.0	57.4	7.6	488
2. Lower managerial and professional occupations	42.5	47.9	9.6	1023
3. Intermediate occupations	61.5	35.9	2.6	574
4. Small employers and own-account workers	61.8	33.5	4.7	275
5. Lower supervisory and technical occupations	70.8	27.6	1.7	359
6. Semi-routine occupations	74.8	24.0	1.1	620
7. Routine occupations	77.9	21.3	0.8	480
Overall	58.2	37.1	4.7	3819

On this basis, we are able to move on from thinking about patterns of consumption in the visual arts to thinking more specifically about types of consumer; and in turn we can investigate the relationship between these types of consumer and a range of other variables, whether through simple bivariate or more powerful multivariate methods.

3.2. Bivariate analyses

Before undertaking multivariate analyses, it is of some interest to examine how the three types of consumer in the visual arts that we have identified are distributed by class and status. In Table 4 we give results by class which, as earlier noted, we operationalise through NS-SEC. With both inactives and paucivores clear class gradients show up. In the former case there is a steady increase from 35% in class 1 to 78% in class 7, and in the latter a corresponding decrease from 57% to 21%. At the same time, though, it should be noted that inactives represent a clear majority—over 60%—in all classes except those of the professional and managerial salariat, classes 1 and 2, and that even in these classes inactives form a far from negligible minority. With omnivores, the class gradient is less strong and consistent, and it is in fact only in the difference between classes 1 and 2 and the rest that any confidence could be placed.

Turning next to the results by status, which we operationalise through our own scale, we present these in two versions: in tabular form in Table 5 and then in graphical form in the panels of Fig. 1 in which we also show non-parametric regression lines (Cleveland, 1979). With inactives and paucivores, clear gradients are again found, the proportion of the former rather steadily falling with status while the proportion of latter rises. In some lower status groups, inactives amount to around 80% or more of all respondents included, although it should also be noted that in all but two of the higher status groups—i.e. Higher professionals and Teachers and other professionals in education—inactives still amount to over 30%. In the case of omnivores a rising gradient with status is also apparent, even if less steep than for paucivores and with a wider spread of points around the regression line. Among higher status groups, Teachers and other professionals in education have an unusually high proportion of omnivores at 19%, while Associate professionals in business—who include commercial artists, graphic and other designers, and photographers—have 12%.[13]

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[13] Other investigators (see, e.g. DiMaggio and Useem, 1978; Bourdieu, 1984) have also remarked on the tendency for teachers to have unusually high levels of cultural consumption and especially perhaps in the visual arts. This might be put down, at least in part, to their visiting museums, galleries, etc. in the course of their work—and the same could be argued in the case commercial artists, designers, etc. However, as regards our own findings, it should be noted that in the Arts in England Survey respondents were explicitly asked not to count such visits when undertaken in connection with their employment.

Table 5
Distribution of types of consumer in the visual arts within status categories

Status categories		Status score	I	P	O	n
HP	Higher professionals	0.5643	28.1	63.3	8.6	128
APB	Associate professionals in business	0.5337	33.9	53.8	12.3	171
SM	Specialist managers	0.5107	36.3	55.5	8.2	182
TPE	Teachers and other professionals in education	0.5017	23.4	57.5	19.2	167
GMA	General managers and administrators	0.4114	43.4	50.0	6.6	76
API	Associate professionals in industry	0.3116	54.5	42.7	2.7	110
SET	Scientists, engineers and technologists	0.3115	41.9	52.2	5.9	136
FRC	Filing and record clerks	0.2559	53.6	41.1	5.4	56
OMO	Managers and officials, nec	0.2355	66.7	33.3	0.0	9
AOA	Administrative officers and assistants	0.2274	48.0	44.9	7.1	98
NCC	Numerical clerks and cashiers	0.2238	65.1	32.5	2.4	169
APH	Associate professionals in health and welfare	0.2228	42.1	51.3	6.6	152
SEC	Secretaries and receptionists	0.1539	53.5	43.3	3.2	157
OCW	Other clerical workers	0.1443	64.2	28.4	7.4	95
BSR	Buyers and sales representatives	0.1193	41.4	50.0	8.6	58
CCW	Childcare workers	0.1097	55.1	41.6	3.4	89
MPS	Managers and proprietors in services	−0.0453	54.1	37.1	8.8	170
PDM	Plant, depot and site managers	−0.0625	45.3	47.7	7.0	86
SW	Sales workers	−0.1151	68.7	29.8	1.5	262
HW	Health workers	−0.2121	72.0	25.0	3.0	164
PSW	Personal service workers	−0.2261	64.1	34.8	1.1	92
PSP	Protective service personnel	−0.2288	63.3	35.4	1.3	79
RWS	Routine workers in services	−0.2974	83.7	16.3	0.0	208
CW	Catering workers	−0.3261	72.1	23.5	4.4	68
SDC	Store and despatch clerks	−0.3353	76.0	24.0	0.0	25
SMO	Skilled and related manual workers nec	−0.4072	70.3	29.0	0.7	138
TO	Transport operatives	−0.4114	77.1	22.0	0.9	109
SMC	Skilled and related manual workers in construction and maintenance	−0.5014	77.6	22.4	0.0	116
SMM	Skilled and related manual workers in metal trades	−0.5121	69.4	28.9	1.6	121
PMO	Plant and machine operatives	−0.5589	83.6	16.4	0.0	207
GL	General labourers	−0.5979	73.6	24.8	1.7	121
Overall			58.2	37.1	4.7	3819

Note: For examples of occupations within each category and other details, see Chan and Goldthorpe (2004, Table 2).

There is then some indication here that the types of consumer that we have distinguished in the visual arts are differentiated by both class and status. But, as earlier noted, it is our theoretical expectation that in so far as, and in whatever way, cultural consumption is socially stratified, it will, as an aspect of lifestyle, prove to be more strongly associated with status than with class. To test this hypothesis and, further, to address the arguments that we outlined at the start, multivariate analyses are obviously required.

3.3. Multivariate analyses

Descriptive statistics of the covariates that we include in our multivariate analyses are given in Table 6. As can be seen, these covariates are of two main kinds. First, there are broadly demographic variables that we introduce primarily as controls: i.e. for our present purposes, we wish to abstract from any effects that variables of this kind may have. Second, there are variables relating to social stratification on which our attention focuses: i.e.
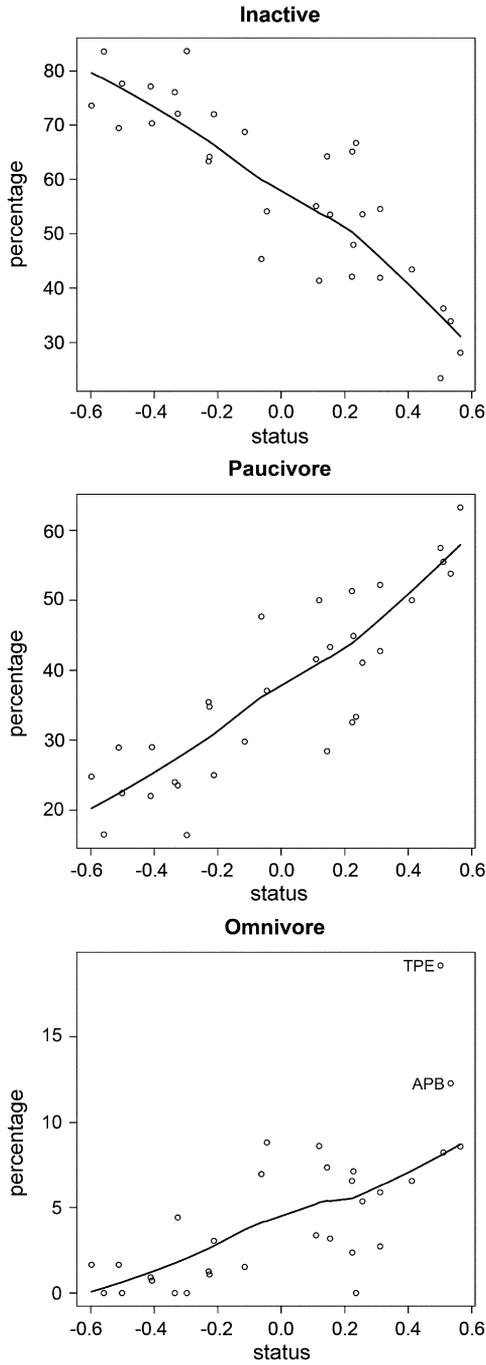
Inactive

Paucivore

Omnivore

Fig. 1. Type of consumer in the visual arts by social status.

Table 6
Descriptive statistics of covariates

	N	%
Female[a]	2110	55.3
Single (reference category)	700	18.3
Married or cohabiting	2473	64.8
Separated, divorced or widowed	646	16.9
Children 0–4[b]	651	17.1
Children 5–10[b]	779	20.4
Children 11–15[b]	623	16.3
London (reference category)	493	12.9
The North	1141	29.9
Midlands and East Anglia	1150	30.1
South East	617	16.2
South West	418	11.0
No qualifications (reference category)	865	22.7
CSE, etc.	508	13.3
O-levels	889	23.3
A-levels	518	13.6
Post-secondary qualifications	347	9.1
Degree	692	18.1
Class 1—higher managerial and professional occupations (ref. cat.)	488	12.8
Class 2—lower managerial and professional occupations	1023	26.8
Class 3—intermediate occupations	574	15.0
Class 4—small employers and own-account workers	275	7.2
Class 5—lower supervisory and technical occupations	359	9.4
Class 6—semi-routine occupations	620	16.2
Class 7—routine occupations	480	12.6

	Mean	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
Age	42.1	11.8	20	64
Annual income[c]	15573	10863	260	37700
Status	−0.001	0.365	−0.598	0.564

[a] Male is reference category.
[b] Not having children in the respective age ranges are the reference categories.
[c] The income variable in the Arts Council data set is originally coded in terms of 32 income brackets of variable width. In our analysis, we have assigned respondents to the midpoint of the income bracket to which they belong.

these are the 'explanatory' variables of main interest to us in regard to the probability of individuals conforming to one or other of the three types of cultural consumer in the visual arts that we have identified. Here, in addition to the measures of class and status to which we have already referred, we include measures of individuals' income and educational qualifications that, as earlier noted, are available from the data set of the Arts in England Survey.

We fit multinomial logit models with individuals' assignment to the three latent classes of inactives, paucivores and omnivores as the dependent variable. In Table 7 we show in the first two columns effects on the chances of being a paucivore and an omnivore in relation to the reference category of inactive, and then, in the third column, effects on the chances of being an omnivore in relation to the reference category of paucivore.

Table 7
Multinomial logit model: type of consumer in the visual arts as the dependent variable

	P vs. I		O vs. I		O vs. P	
	β	S.E.	β	S.E.	β	S.E.
Female	0.079	0.090	0.223	0.192	0.144	0.188
Married	0.037	0.111	−0.200	0.239	−0.237	0.234
Separated	−0.050	0.138	0.180	0.295	0.230	0.290
Age	0.022[**]	0.004	0.026[**]	0.009	0.003	0.009
Child (0–4)	−0.235[*]	0.111	−0.639[*]	0.285	−0.404	0.283
Child (5–10)	0.161	0.100	0.260	0.232	0.099	0.229
Child (11–15)	−0.078	0.106	0.039	0.252	0.117	0.250
The North	−0.366[**]	0.124	−0.089	0.253	0.277	0.245
Midlands	−0.390[**]	0.123	−0.880[**]	0.279	−0.490	0.272
South East	−0.483[**]	0.138	−0.150	0.270	0.334	0.262
South West	−0.297	0.152	−0.174	0.321	0.123	0.313
Income	0.010[*]	0.005	0.006	0.009	−0.004	0.009
CSE/others	0.525[**]	0.138	1.220[*]	0.499	0.694	0.506
O-levels	0.631[**]	0.123	1.072[*]	0.462	0.441	0.467
A-levels	1.068[**]	0.142	1.849[**]	0.471	0.782	0.475
Sub-degree	1.194[**]	0.157	2.219[**]	0.469	1.025[*]	0.470
Degree	1.652[**]	0.153	3.260[**]	0.450	1.608[**]	0.450
Class 2	0.040	0.133	0.613[*]	0.241	0.573[*]	0.229
Class 3	−0.225	0.164	−0.396	0.376	−0.171	0.370
Class 4	−0.059	0.205	0.699	0.411	0.759	0.402
Class 5	−0.089	0.217	0.073	0.554	0.162	0.551
Class 6	−0.253	0.198	−0.480	0.514	−0.227	0.511
Class 7	−0.227	0.224	−0.325	0.646	−0.098	0.645
Status	0.684[**]	0.180	1.229[**]	0.402	0.544	0.397
Constant	−1.923[**]	0.293	−5.461[**]	0.688	−3.538[**]	0.678

[*] $p < 0.05$.
[**] $p < 0.01$.

As regards the first two contrasts, it can be seen that the effects of a number demographic variables are of significance. The chances of being a paucivore or an omnivore increase with age (as also, we know, do the chances of being a musical omnivore); but they decrease for parents with young children (as also do the chances of being a theatre, dance and cinema omnivore). In addition, regional effects show up more generally than in other cultural domains, and especially in that, in comparison with Londoners, those living in the North, Midlands or South East are less likely to be paucivores than inactives. But, on the other hand, there is no gender effect in the visual arts, unlike in the case of theatre, cinema and dance where women are significantly more likely to be omnivores than are men (see further Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005).

Turning then to our main concern with the nature and extent of the social stratification of consumption in the visual arts, we may note one finding from Table 7 of immediate interest. Consistently with our theoretical expectations—and with our results in other cultural domains—this stratification is more apparent on the basis of status than of class. Status exerts a significant—positive—effect on the chances of being either a paucivore or an omnivore rather than an inactive, whereas the effects of class are not significant. Again in line with our previous results, education is also important. Level of qualifications has significant positive, and in fact close to monotonic, effects on the chances of being a paucivore or omnivore.

However, income turns out to have a (just) significant effect only in the paucivore–inactive contrast and not in the omnivore–inactive contrast.[14]

As regards the third, omnivore–paucivore, contrast on which we report in Table 7, none of the demographic variables has a significant effect; and further the effects of the stratification variables also appear more limited. In particular, it may be noted that, despite what was seen in the third panel of Fig. 1, the chances of being an omnivore rather than a paucivore do not now, in a multivariate context, significantly increase with status; and there is again no income effect. So far as class is concerned, just one significant effect is found. The lower-level professionals and managers of class 2 would appear *more* likely to be omnivores than their higher-level counterparts in class 1—a finding that can perhaps be related to the degree of concentration in class 2 of teachers and also of the associate professionals who in the third panel of Fig. 1 show up as having especially strong omnivorous tendencies.

Only in the case of educational qualifications do we obtain a somewhat more systematic result. Graduates and others with tertiary level qualifications—though not those with lower-level qualifications—are significantly more likely than those with no qualifications to be omnivores rather than paucivores. In this regard, though, an issue arises that we have already discussed in our previous papers: namely, that of whether, when status, class and income are included in the analysis, level of education is in fact best seen as reflecting some further aspect of social stratification or, rather, as picking up psychological effects, such as those of individuals' information processing capacity which have been identified by proponents of 'empirical aesthetics' as a major influence on level of cultural consumption (Berlyne, 1974; Moles, 1971; cf. Ganzeboom, 1982).[15]

At all events, we may safely say that it is in the division between omnivores and paucivores, on the one hand, and inactives, on the other, that the social stratification of cultural consumption in the visual arts is most apparent. In comparison, omnivores are only rather weakly and somewhat inconsistently differentiated from paucivores in terms of the stratification variables that we consider.

Finally in this section we examine some predicted probabilities of membership in the three latent classes of inactives, paucivores and omnivores as may be estimated under our multinomial logit model. In this way we can gain an idea of the relative strengths of different effects—in particular of those of status and education that most often show up as significant. For this purpose, we need to consider a hypothetical person defined in terms of other relevant variables. We take the case of a 40-year-old childless woman living in London and with an income of £25,000 p.a. (as of 2001). In Fig. 2 we then show the predicted probabilities under our model of such a person being inactive or a paucivore or an omnivore at varying levels of status and education.

From the first panel of the figure, it is apparent that the probability of our hypothetical woman being inactive is very strongly influenced by the educational level that we attribute to her— falling by around 40 percentage points as between 'no qualifications' and 'degree' (or equivalent). At the same time, the probability of her being inactive also declines with her status,

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[14] Income was earlier found to have little effect in regard to the different types of musical consumer that we identified but had a clear, positive effect on the chances of being an omnivore in the case of theatre, dance and cinema rather than a cinema-only univore.

[15] The argument here is that the higher individuals' information processing capacity, the greater must be the information content of the cultural forms they consume if they are to derive satisfaction from them. Thus, the association between 'high' culture and educational attainment is due to the facts (a) that 'high' culture has, on average, a higher level of information content than 'low' culture and (b) that education is closely associated with, and is thus a good proxy for, the information processing capacity of individuals.
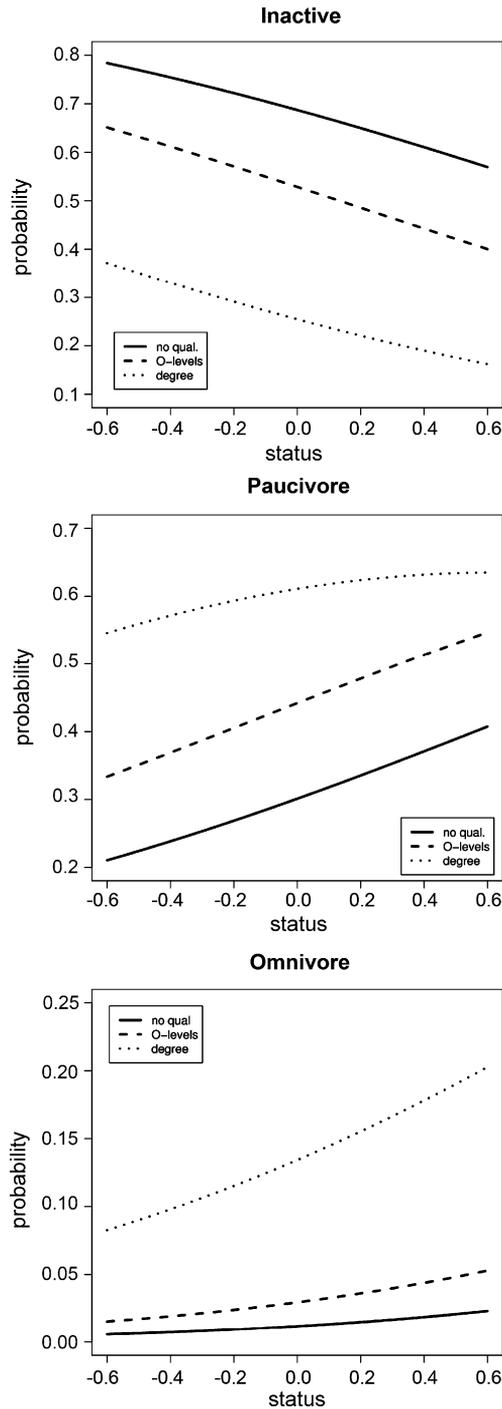
Inactive

Paucivore

Omnivore

Fig. 2. Predicted probabilities of type of consumer in the visual arts by education and social status. *Note*: Other covariates fixed as follows: 40-year-old female Londoner, with income of £25,000 and no children.

in a more or less linear fashion and at roughly the same rate for each of the three educational levels considered, with the difference over the whole status range amounting to some 20–25 percentage points. From the second panel, it can then be seen that the obverse of this situation holds—other than in one respect—as regards the probability of our hypothetical woman being a paucivore: that is to say, roughly corresponding increases occur in this probability with both educational level and status. However, the status effect for graduates is clearly less pronounced than for those with lower-level qualifications, the difference over the whole status range being in the former case less than 10 percentage points. Finally, from the third panel it emerges that, consistently with the results reported in Table 7, the probability of our hypothetical woman being an omnivore is not greatly affected by her status nor by her having O-level rather than no qualifications, but that this probability does increase if she has a degree. Further though, it is indicated that this increase tends to be greater, the higher her status—despite the fact that, as earlier noted, the coefficient for status in Table 7 itself fails to reach significance for the omnivore–paucivore contrast.[16]

In sum, in the visual arts, as in the two other cultural domains that we have previously studied, the social stratification of consumption is primarily expressed through status and education—in so far as the latter is to be treated as reflecting stratification. However, while in theatre, dance and cinema the effects of status and education on patterns of consumption are of roughly similar magnitude and in music those of education only slightly greater, in the visual arts educational level is clearly the more important factor—and not only in the contrasts between paucivores or omnivores, on the one hand, and inactives, on the other, but further in that between paucivores and omnivores themselves.

4. Discussion and conclusions

Having carried out similar analyses in the domain of the visual arts to those on which we have previously reported in music and in theatre, dance and cinema, what further can we now say about the three arguments on the social stratification of cultural consumption that we outlined at the start?

As regards the individualisation argument, we have already observed that this is immediately called into question by the results of our latent class analysis: that is, by the fact that cultural consumption in the visual arts, rather than displaying wide and essentially unstructured individual diversity, is in fact quite simply yet strongly patterned—to a similar extent in fact, if not always on the same lines, as is consumption in the other domains we have examined. It is entirely possible—indeed, we would think, very probable—that *among* the omnivores and paucivores identified by our latent class analysis a good deal of individual variation in taste is displayed. But while then, with appropriate data, more refined typologies of cultural consumption in the visual arts might well be constructed, there is little reason to suppose that these would compromise the basic typology that we have established: that is, by cross-cutting, rather than being nested within, its categories. Furthermore, we can now add that this typology does have a demonstrable social basis. In the visual arts, as in the other domains, patterns of consumption are stratified, and primarily according to status and education. The individuals we label as inactives, or non-consumers, are significantly more likely to be of lower status and to have lower-level educational qualifications than either paucivores or omnivores. While we would not wish to overstate the strength of these relationships, their presence is

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[16] The interaction effects suggested between educational level and status in the second and third panels of Fig. 2 might be found surprising in that no interaction effects are included in our multinomial logit model. However, while the model is linear in the logit, it is not linear in probability.

sufficient to show that even in supposedly 'postmodern' societies, cultural consumption is still far from being a pure expression of individual taste and choice.

The homology argument also appeared to be undermined by our latent class analysis. A highly discriminating elite of consumers is no more apparent in the visual arts than in music or theatre, dance and cinema. But neither in the visual arts can we readily identify mass consumers. Rather, our largest latent class is that of virtual non-consumers, at least in institutional contexts. And further to this, we can now say the following.

First, even if we were to regard our omnivores in the visual arts as some kind of cultural elite, they still could not be regarded as also forming a *social* elite—as the homology argument would require. As we have seen, while omnivores are more likely to be graduates than are paucivores, they are not significantly different from the latter in their social status; and in terms of social class they would in fact appear rather more likely to be found in the *lower* than in the upper levels of the salariat. Second, even if our inactives were taken to represent those who are 'socially excluded' so far as the visual arts are concerned, it would still be in no way possible to see them as forming a mass of the uniformly disprivileged. As noted, inactives make up quite substantial minorities even within higher status groups and more advantaged classes; and in turn, then, the latent class of inactives is highly heterogeneous in its social composition. For example, over a quarter of all inactives come from classes 1 and 2.[17]

The results of our analyses based on attendance at museums and galleries, etc. would therefore lead us to underwrite the critique of the homology argument advanced by Halle (1993, pp. 7–9) on the basis of his studies of 'art in the home', i.e. that this argument seriously exaggerates the extent to which, in contemporary societies at least, members of higher social strata, however understood, do consume 'high' culture, and at the same time the importance of such consumption for entry into, and social acceptance within, such strata.

Finally, in the case of the omnivore–univore argument, which received a good deal of support from our earlier work, major difficulties are again raised by the nature of the latent classes of consumer that we discovered in the visual arts. Omnivores here too show up; but by far the largest latent classes that we identify, together covering over 90% of the population considered, are those of inactives and of paucivores—the latter being so named in that their pattern of consumption cannot be readily seen as either omnivorous or univorous.

Moreover, in the light of our multivariate analyses, we have then to say that it is in the contrast between inactives, on the one hand, and paucivores *and* omnivores, on the other, that the social stratification of cultural consumption is most obviously expressed, in particular in terms of education and status. In contrast, omnivores cannot be regarded as in any general sense socially advantaged relative to paucivores. The fact that omnivores, even though on average better educated than paucivores are, if anything, less well placed economically[18] would indeed lend

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[17] These findings also point to the inadequacy of the concept of 'social exclusion' as applied in much discussion of social differences in cultural consumption and of related policy issues in present-day Britain, and especially under New Labour influence (for an excellent review, see Selwood, 2002; Levitas, 2004). In general, just who are to be counted as the 'socially excluded', and by what criteria, remain issues that have received no satisfactory answer (Goldthorpe, 2007 chapter 5); but it is in any event clear that, as regards cultural consumption, those individuals who are non-consumers or univores in any domain are far too numerous and socially diverse to be usefully brought together under this description.

[18] Although Table 7 shows that income has no significant effect on the chance of being an omnivore rather than a paucivore, we base this judgement on our finding that being in class 2 rather than class 1 does increase this chance. Membership of the NS-SEC classes has been shown to be a good predictor of economic security, stability and prospects (Goldthorpe and McKnight, 2006), and might in turn be taken as a useful proxy for 'permanent' income. And it may be recalled that even with class in the analysis, a positive effect for income is found on the chance of being a paucivore rather than an inactive but not on that of being an omnivore rather than an inactive.

support to an idea suggested by several previous authors (e.g. DiMaggio and Useem, 1978, pp. 196–199; Halle, 1993, pp. 196–199): namely, that distinctive cultural consumption, and perhaps in the visual arts especially, is a means of establishing and maintaining status that is favoured by occupational groupings *within* generally more advantaged classes whose balance of cultural and economic resources is better suited to such a strategy than to one based upon conspicuous material consumption.[19] In addition, it might well be rewarding to pursue further the hypothesis advanced by DiMaggio (1996; cf. Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007b), with some degree of empirical support, that individuals who are regular visitors to art museums and galleries are differentiated not only by their higher status and education but further by their socio-political orientations—in being, for example, generally more liberal and tolerant than others with similar socio-demographic characteristics.[20]

In sum, while in the cultural domains we have previously studied, it could be said that the division between omnivores and univores marks an illuminating advance on that between elite and mass, in the case of the visual arts the omnivore–univore argument itself appears not a little problematic in the light of the types of consumer that we have distinguished and of what we have learnt about their social stratification.

The advantages are therefore readily apparent of testing arguments concerning cultural consumption and its social bases across a variety of domains—as the Arts in England Survey enables us to do. However, in following this strategy, we cannot then avoid further questions as to why analyses in different domains should yield different results. And, in the present case, the obvious issue that arises is that of why the omnivore–univore argument should prove less applicable to cultural consumption in the visual arts than elsewhere. Without claiming to have a complete answer to this question, we can make two points of relevance that are in fact foreshadowed in what we have already written.

The first point is that in the visual arts there would not appear to be popular genres that are at all closely comparable to those of pop-and-rock in music or to those that are found in cinema.[21] Or, at all events, there would not appear to be such genres that have either an extensive institutional basis or wide dissemination through the media. It is of interest that in the rather rare instances in which modern painters have found anything approximating mass appeal—and sales—they would seem to have done so with little help from art museums and galleries, whether shunning them in favour of other means of exhibiting their work or being

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[19] Some parallel might be thought to exist here with Bourdieu's argument (1984, chapter 3 esp., see note above) that within the 'dominant class' there exist 'class fractions' differentiated primarily by the inverse relationship between their economic and cultural capital—with, at one extreme, commercial and industrial employers and, at the other, teachers and artistic producers. However, our position differs in that we do not find it helpful to regard teachers as part of a 'dominant class' and, in particular (cf. Halle, 1993, p. 196), we do not see how their attempts to use their cultural capital (or, as we would prefer to say, cultural resources) in order to enhance their status are likely, even if successful, to lead in turn to significant economic or political power. Underlying this difference is, of course, our rejection of Bourdieu's attempt to overcome Weber's distinction between class and status and in effect to 'yoke together' (Weininger, 2005) these two—in our view, qualitatively quite different—forms of stratification.

[20] Of course, difficult issues of the direction of causal influence and of possible 'selection effects' do here arise, as DiMaggio is well aware.

[21] 'Pop art' does not, of course, represent such a popular genre. Although reflecting—in part—a reaction against critiques of mass culture and the assumption that an appreciation of 'high' art goes together with social superiority, pop art had itself no popular—for example, folk—roots. It was, rather, the product of *avant garde*, technically sophisticated, professional artists (Hamilton, Oldenberg, Lichtenstein, Warhol, etc.), whose stance towards the products of mass society and culture *as subject matter* remained that of 'the inflexibly ironic spectator' (Hughes, 1991, p. 344) and whose hopes for mass sales, in so far as they existed, were never realised.

shunned by them.[22] As we have earlier noted, questions on attendance at craft exhibitions and at cultural festivals were apparently included in the Arts in England Survey to try as far as possible to capture participation in events that might occur outside of more established settings. Yet, as Table 3 reveals, it is attendance at such events that turns out to be most exclusively confined to the small minority of visual arts omnivores.[23] Thus, within lower social strata, in place, as it were, of the strong representation of 'pop-and-rock' or 'cinema-only' univores that we find in music and in theatre, dance and cinema, respectively, in the visual arts we have widespread non-consumption or inactivity. As we have recognised, it is possible that this view might need to be modified if analyses of cultural consumption in the visual arts of the kind we have here presented could be complemented by studies made in domestic and public settings. But, on grounds that we have indicated, we would not ourselves expect any very radical revision to be called for.

The second point that we would make is then that even within higher social strata, the extent of consumption of the visual arts is easily exaggerated. The visual arts have in fact often been taken as a paradigm case for the homology argument (see, e.g. Gans, 1999, p. 8; Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 272–273; Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991), and museums and galleries have thus been seen as expressing and reinforcing existing social hierarchies and dominant ideologies through their distinctive 'orderings' and 'rituals' (Duncan, 1995; O'Neill, 1992; Fleming, 2002). However, the empirical evidence would clearly indicate that if museums and galleries are to be regarded as in this way 'exclusive', then substantial numbers of those within *higher* as well as lower social strata must be counted among the excluded, or at all events the self-excluded. As we have seen, the inactives—or, that is, virtual non-consumers of the visual arts in institutional contexts—amount to a third or upwards of all individuals found in NS-SEC classes 1 and 2 and in most of the higher groups within our status scale. Moreover, while it is true that those individuals who do have the highest levels of consumption of the visual arts, that is, our omnivores, are very largely drawn from higher social strata, they still constitute only a small minority even within these strata—although still without forming any kind of social elite.

Thus, in the visual arts the main pattern of consumption, as distinct from non-consumption, that can be identified, and that is followed by a majority of those in higher social strata and by decreasing minorities in lower strata, is that of the individuals we have labelled as paucivores: i.e. a seemingly rather unadventurous pattern that involves a fairly high probability of visiting museums and galleries but a much more modest level of visits to more specialised exhibitions and events. In this regard again, we would note, our findings are largely consistent with those reported by Halle on the basis of his ethnographic research into art in the homes of American families of differing class backgrounds. Halle stresses that even among professionals and executives living in Manhattan, only a minority revealed a taste for 'high' and especially *avant garde* art; and he concludes—in evident critique of Bourdieu—that 'In the realm of artistic choices, the most

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[22] For example, in Britain, Vladimir Tretchikoff, who enjoyed mass sales of cheap prints of his works in the 1960s and 1970s ('Chinese Girl', 'Weeping Rose', etc.) exhibited in department stores rather than in galleries; and today Jack Vettriano, whose work is almost entirely excluded from public galleries, has licensing and distribution arrangements that have resulted in sales of over three million prints, posters and postcards based on his work ('The Singing Butler', 'Billy Boys', etc.).

[23] Some caution may, however, be needed in generalising here from the English case. In England, following major debates in the inter-war years, the distinction between the 'fine arts' and the 'applied arts' became institutionalised, at least for purposes of public sponsorship and support, with the creation of the Arts Council (1945–6) with a remit clearly separated from that of the Council of Industrial Design (1944). Saler (1999, chapter 8 esp.) provides a detailed and insightful account of this development. It is possible that in other national societies interest in crafts, folk art, poster and other commercial art, design, etc. has received more official encouragement and is more extensive than in England.

apparent differences are not between what can be called a dominant class and a dominated class, but between one section of the dominant class and everyone else' and, further, that there is little reason to believe that 'the section of the dominant class which is most involved in high culture has a greater hold on political and economic power' than do other sections (Halle, 1993, p. 196).

Finally, as regards directions for future research, we would believe that a logical continuation of the study of cultural consumption across different domains, on the lines that we have so far attempted, would be to move on to analyses of such consumption in its totality—and of the nature of its social stratification at this level. In this way, new perspectives on the different theoretical positions that we have examined, and on the omnivore–univore argument in particular, might be gained. It is important to note that whether or not this argument is illuminating in regard to individuals' total cultural consumption is in some degree independent of its validity in particular domains. Thus, even if the omnivore–univore division appears inapplicable in certain cases, such as that we have considered in the present paper, it could still be found to have relevance when an overview of cultural consumption is taken; or, conversely, even if the division shows up across several different domains, it might still not apply overall—since, for example, a 'universal' omnivorousness could be difficult to sustain, even for members of higher social strata, on account of financial or of time constraints. These are issues that we shall in fact take up in forthcoming work.

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Tak Wing Chan is a University Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Oxford, where he is also a fellow and tutor of New College. His research interests are social stratification and mobility, and the life course, especially family formation and dissolution.

John H. Goldthorpe is an Emeritus Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford and a Fellow of the British Academy. His main area of research is social stratification. His two current research projects are concerned with problems of education-based meritocracy and with social status and cultural consumption. He is also interested in the closer integration of sociological research and theory. The second, two-volume, edition of his book, *On Sociology*, is published by Stanford University Press.