

# Childhood essay

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



reports that social class plays a very important role in a child's upbringing because it helps determine the way a child will be raised. In Lareau's (2003) study she came to the conclusion that there were two different patterns of child rearing: concerted cultivation and natural growth. Concerted cultivation is the child rearing method that middle class parents use focusing on not only caring for their child, but developing a personality by enrolling their children in many structured activities and developing language skills (Lareau, 2003).

Natural growth is the child-rearing method that working class and poor parents use to raise their children because there is not a lot of time and money for structured activities and long verbal discussions with the children (Lareau, 2003). Families who practice natural growth child rearing practices need to focus on providing the simpler needs of the child like providing shelter, clothing, food, and water therefore unable to have the structured activities and worry about establishing communication skills. This is important to consider because the way children are raised because this has a social impact.

The children that are being raised today will eventually grow up to be a part of their own society; there are social impacts on the current society because of the methods of child-rearing and the consequences that these child-rearing practices are having on children with the way they interact in society, There are benefits and disadvantages to both childrearing methods reported by Lareau (2010) however there are definitive differences in the child's outcome due to the child's social class and thus the method the child was raised with.

In concerted cultivation children spend a lot of time with adults at structured activities and so they start to communicate with adults as relative equals. The children of concerted cultivation also have longer and more reasoning conversations with their parents which leads them to the sense of entitlement when dealing with institutions (Lareau, 2003). Children raised with concerted cultivation had a larger group of language skills than children raised with natural growth because they communicate longer and more often with adults.

This leads to children raised with concerted cultivation having the ability to manipulate rules and thus deal with institutions easier than those of natural growth, however they also have issues figuring out how to occupy their time because they did not often do "free play" (Lareau, 2003). The children that are raised with natural growth have less communication skills simply because they have less experience talking to adults (Lareau, 2003).

Parents of natural growth have to worry about putting food on the table and taking care of many basic needs so when the children are spoken to it's often in short direct phrases, without any room for questioning or discussing. The children who are raised with natural growth also do not have that much time spent in structured activities with adults as the children of concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2003). The children who are raised with natural growth developed what Lareau (2003) reported as constraint.

Constraint was the disadvantage that natural growth children experience because of their lack of communication skills and the subordination they felt to adults. Children raised with natural growth absorbed their parents' feelings of powerlessness with institutions and learned to distrust authority. These

differences tend to perpetuate themselves when it comes to differences in child rearing because what class a child is raised in impacts his/her life and then when that child grows up and has children of their own the child rearing practice will most likely be used again if the child grows up to live in the same social class.

It is a cycle that continues throughout generations because children usually grow up to be in the same social class they were born into and since the child rearing practices are social class based primarily the children will raise their children as they were raised. After reading Lareau's (2003) case study I had to do some reflection to figure out with method of child-rearing it was that I was raised in. My family has crossed the line from middle class to working class several times through my childhood, but predominately I feel as if I have been raised using concerted cultivation.

My mother and father separated by the time I was seven years old. While at times living with my mother basic necessities were hard to come by because of her poor management of finances, my father always was middle class (I lived with him permanently from age 15 on) and I feel as if I have been raised a middle class child. Since, I was younger I now realize I was active in many structured activities such as: ballet, tap, jazz, girl scouts, youth group at church, choir, bell choir, church plays, cheerleading, cross-country, track, and swim team.

Although I did not always think of the activities I participated in to be particularly hard on my family at the time I now realize with my brother, two sisters, and all of their activities my mother must have found it very hard to transport us all to our different activities. The number of activities I was

involved in during my childhood shows proof of my upbringing being concerted cultivation because one of the characteristics of being raised with concerted cultivation is a lot of structured activities such as the ones I participated in (Lareau, 2003).

Another concept of concerted cultivation which I know I have also be blessed with in my child-rearing is the better communication skills due to long discussions and reasoning with my parents (Lareau, 2003). Both of my parents have always encouraged my sisters, brother, and me to talk openly and voice our opinions. I did not realized it growing up, but now I understand that the lengthy communications I had with my parents enabled me to have a larger vocabulary, good communication skills, and feel comfortable when talking to authority or adults from institutions.

The sense of entitlement I feel due to my middle class upbringing makes sense because of the amount of time I spent in structured activities with adults (Lareau, 2003). The time I spent with adults as a child and the way I spoke to them made them relative equals in my perspective. This is an advantage of having a concerted cultivation middle class upbringing because I do not mistrust authority or feel subordinate to intuitions, on the contrary I feel as if they are to serve me and that I can work with institutions to get both my and the institutions needs met.

It makes sense that my entitlement feelings allow me to perform well in college and to communication effectively with all professors or staff at the college because of the experience I had dealing with institutions when I was younger. Another concept of concerted cultivation that I have experienced in childhood has to do with social connections. Much like Lareau's (2003) case <https://assignbuster.com/childhood-essay/>

study has reported concerted cultivation raised children had weak ties with their extended family.

This is true in my upbringing because while I love and sometimes talk to my extended family I seldom see them or would by any means categorize our relationships as strong kinship ties (Lareau, 2003). This I feel has been an unfortunate result of concerted cultivation because I see how some of my other cousins behave towards each other as they are so close talking everyday and meet several times a week for lunch or dinner.

I feel this is sad because while I would love to have stronger ties with my extended family I realize it is not a part of the way I was brought up because of my middleclass child-rearing. The concept of my social connections often being mostly in homogenous age groups as a child is very accurate (Lareau, 2003). Because of the activities I participated in and the area in which I lived and went to school I predominately have friendships through activities with children much like I was at the time.