

# Criminology : journal article review assignment



## Cultural Socialization in Black Middle Families by Patricia Ann Banks

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The article is titled, “ Cultural Socialization in Black Middle-Class Families” authored by Patricia Ann Banks and published in Cultural Sociology on 14 December 2011. The paper seeks to have a better understanding of cultural capital within black middle-class families with a further highlight on the relevance of Pierre Bourdieu’s research on cultural capital for a minority middle-class group. The author is investigating the approach taken by middle-class black parents to promote their children’s socialization in fine arts. The social theory being investigated in the paper is the development of cultural capital in children of black middle-class families through various ways through which their parents intervene in their socialization on art. The social theory that emerged in the study is that of cultural capital theory through understanding that cultural capital transmission occurs at the family unit, home.

The author uses research by Dimmaggio (1982), Dimmaggio and Mohr (1985), and Dimmaggio and Useem (1978), to conceptualize and give a measurement of cultural capital as appreciation and understanding of art. These researches also offer an explanation that cultural capital is the ability to decode and understand fine art and the advantages that accrue including bonding of group members in social and work contexts. The article also points to the fact that previous research by Annette Lareau’s point to the participation of parents in the development of their children’s interests and talents and she contrasts this with instances where parental intervention on children’s development is absent but she fails to analyze systematically how parental intervention works in the arts. From this previous research, we can

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identify middle-level parents participate actively in developing and we learn that transmission of cultural capital occurs at the family level.

The main variables in the study are concerted efforts of parents in development of their children's connection with visual art, exposure to arts organizations as a concerted effort and exposure of the children to art collection. The major hypothesis of the study is to find out how black middle-class parents develop the socialization of their children to visual art. The specific research question, therefore, is finding out the strategies employed by black middle-class in the development of their children's socialization with visual art.

The specific group selected in the study was black middle-class parents living in New York and Atlanta, Georgia owing to their high population in these areas and a sample of 68 parents selected from this group for data collection. Snowball sampling was used to identify the participants for the study as a means of ensuring diversity. The data collection methods employed were in-depth interviews focusing on visual art consumption by middle-class blacks, participant observation of art at events and in-depth interviews of professionals. Interviews took place at the participant's homesteads, they took between 90, and 120 minutes, and were recorded for later transcription, and analyzed using a qualitative data analysis program (Banks, 2011). The data was collected by the author himself as she administered the interviews to parents and professionals. Work tables are not presented in the results of the study and the level of significance is not mentioned owing to the use of qualitative data analysis.

The conclusions drawn by the study include that black middle-age parent's take a dynamic part in socializing children in visual arts; involve their

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children in art collection and involvement with art organizations. These measures aim at fostering their children's skills, tastes, and knowledge on art. An extrapolation of the finding is made to include music, literature, and dance as other art forms that parents take concerted effort to nurture and develop their children's tastes and skills pointing to Lareau's research findings (Banks, 2011). The study also concluded that Bourdieu's assertion of socialization in high culture in middle-class families applies to black middle-class families. The hypothesis is supported by the findings of the study as parents take concerted effort on art development of their children through exposition to visual art, art collection involvement, and involvement with art organizations.

#### Reference

Banks, P. A. (14 December 2011). Cultural Socialization in Black Middle-Class Families. *Cultural Sociology*. 2012 61: 6.