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Susceptibility To Oppositional Peer Cultures
Karolyn Tyson

in Integration Interrupted: Tracking, Black Students, and Acting White after Brown

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This chapter addresses high-achieving adolescents' vulnerability to peer cultures that are oppositional to the norms and values of schools. These include youth subcultures in which students are ridiculed for achievement-related behaviors in both racialized and non-racialized ways. Whereas the previous chapter considered where and when taunts of acting white for achievement-related behaviors occur, the present chapter investigates why some high-achieving black adolescents succumb to pressure to conform to oppositional aspects of the peer environment at their schools while others are able to resist and reject such pressures. It demonstrates that there are conditions (both internal and external) that help high-achieving adolescents resist, reject, or ignore this type of negative peer pressure. These include, for example, a strong sense of identity (who they are and are not) and clear post-high school goals and aspirations. The chapter also shows that the age at which adolescents develop the characteristics and goals that keep them focused on academic achievement varies.

Explaining Youth Cultures, Improving Academic Achievement
Natasha K. Warikoo

in Balancing Acts: Youth Culture in the Global City

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This chapter provides some reflections on how the peer cultures of students may change, as they grow older; and on the cultural and
structural influences on second-generation academic achievement. Many behaviors in school that are detrimental to academic achievement do not in fact stem from disinterest in academic achievement or a rejection of mainstream institutions and norms, but the quest for peer status. The low achievement among some children of immigrants leads to the requirement of different policies for improving academic achievement. Some key policy recommendations for improving academic achievement among children of immigrants include that schooling should help students’ balancing acts between their peer social worlds and academic achievement via code-switching and decision-making skills, and that schools should engage youth cultures.

Positive Attitudes and (Some) Negative Behaviors
Natasha K. Warikoo

in Balancing Acts: Youth Culture in the Global City
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This chapter explores aspects of peer culture that are thought to conflict with academic achievement: attitudes and beliefs (about racism and discrimination, peer culture attitudes, and perceptions of opportunities) and behavioral scripts with respect to conflict. In terms of attitudes and beliefs, there is little evidence for oppositional peer cultures and no evidence that perceptions of discrimination lead to low aspirations. The few students who express oppositional attitudes cannot account for the overall low achievement rates, where only a minority of students leave qualified to start a university education. In terms of behavior, teens place much importance on defending self-pride and showing toughness when it comes to conflict with peers, which sometimes end in physical fighting. Engaging in peer conflicts serves two purposes: preventing real, physical violence, because in schools, appearing weak led to being bullied; and also, because it brought peer status by demonstrating self-pride and toughness. These conflicts do not signal defiance of school authorities or opposition to school norms, nor do they stem from a lack of interest in academic excellence. Rather, they are described by teens as inevitable and sometimes necessary responses to situations at school. As with consumption, gender is found to matter. For young men, masculinity is tied to toughness, defending self-pride, and being seen as hip. Pressures of masculinity lead boys to place more importance on maintaining self-pride among peers. This connection makes boys even more invested in peer status than their girl counterparts, for whom femininity is less likely to come into conflict with adult school culture.
This chapter discusses classification systems that exist within music and its peer culture-producing fields. It emphasizes the role of power in setting boundaries around categories and defining these categories as legitimate. It considers the application of this model of classification to the sociological study of science and collective memory. Finally, it addresses the future of music, and closes with a consideration of the link between music categories and taste. It argues that our tastes are instruments of power and that there are three important components to this instrument. First, tastes encode the power of your origins. When it comes to taste, the socialization process—specifically, the process of acquiring a “habitus”—plays a central role in shaping our desires, aspirations, and choices. Second, this socialization process teaches us not only what tastes are appropriate to our life circumstances, but also how to make meaning from the consumption process. Third, taste is used to exert and reveal power in subtle ways.

Fitting In or Fabulously Smart?
Shauna Pomerantz and Rebecca Raby

In this chapter, we explore tensions in smart girls’ lives by focusing on how girls and boys negotiate gender and peer culture. While girls are deemed to be the new dominant sex in education and beyond, we offer stories that illustrate the strategies girls used in order to negotiate their smart identities. We explore the challenges of a smart girl identity in relation to popularity, sexual desirability, fitting in, and standing out. We also explore the strategic negotiations of girls in contrast to boys, who used different tactics to manage their academic success.
This book aims to take us beyond our usual perspectives on adolescent sexuality. Medical and public health literatures conceptualize adolescent sexuality primarily in terms of individual risk-taking and the factors that augment or lessen such risks. American developmental psychologists tend to view adolescent sexuality as part of adolescents' separation from their parents and as an aspect of development that is especially perilous given the disjuncture between teenagers' physical and cognitive development. American sociologists have generally bypassed the parent-teenager nexus to focus on relationships and networks among teenagers in romance and peer groups. They have examined how peer cultures and networks and the status hierarchies within them impact adolescent sexuality. Finally, gender scholars have examined how teenage girls' and boys' experiences of sexuality are profoundly shaped by gender inequalities—including the sexual double standard.

If multiple limitations contribute to antisocial behavior, then an adequate treatment program must be correspondingly multi-componential. Adequate social perspective-taking—perspective-taking that is profound or mature; rationalization-busting, adequately informed, and hence discerning; reciprocally ideal and balanced; and socially expansive or inclusive—should be a basic theme pervasive across the components of any effective treatment program. This chapter focuses on a multicomponent treatment program that incorporates a wide variety of social perspective-taking opportunities pertaining to the remediation of moral developmental delay, social cognitive distortions, and social skill deficiencies, namely, the EQUIP program. High-fidelity implementations
of EQUIP can stimulate a positive synergy through EQUIP’s integration of mutual help (motivation, culture) and cognitive behavioral (curriculum) approaches. Chapter 8 concludes with a discussion of adaptations and outcome evaluations, and illustrates social perspective-taking treatments available for severe offenders.

As Long as We Both Shall Love
Karen M. Dunak

When Kate Middleton married Prince William in 2011, watched by hundreds of millions of viewers, the wedding followed a familiar formula: ritual, vows, reception, and a white gown for the bride. Commonly known as a white wedding, the formula is firmly ensconced in popular culture, with movies like Father of the Bride or Bride Wars, shows like Say Yes to the Dress and Bridezillas, and live broadcast royal or reality-TV weddings garnering millions of viewers each year. Despite being condemned by some critics as “cookie-cutter” or conformist, the wedding has in fact progressively allowed for social, cultural, and political challenges to understandings of sex, gender, marriage, and citizenship, thereby providing an ideal site for historical inquiry. This book establishes that the evolution of the American white wedding emerges from our nation's proclivity towards privacy and the individual, as well as the increasingly egalitarian relationships between men and women in the decades following World War II. Blending cultural analysis of film, fiction, advertising, and prescriptive literature with personal views expressed in letters, diaries, essays, and oral histories, the book engages ways in which the modern wedding emblemizes a diverse and consumerist culture and aims to reveal an ongoing debate about the power of peer culture, media, and the marketplace in America. Rather than celebrating wedding traditions as they “used to be” and critiquing contemporary celebrations for their lavish leanings, the book provides a history of the American wedding and its celebrants.

Introduction
Anna R. Beresin

in Recess Battles: Playing, Fighting, and Storytelling

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This chapter presents the children’s world of school yard play using data from approximately 1,500 children from 1991 to 2004. It shows how children integrate images of larger cultural battles within their creative peer culture through the use of spontaneous storytelling. It also highlights the complex culture of playing, and offers suggestions to anyone concerned about the children’s right to play.