Devine

Class Practices

This important new book is a comparative study of social mobility based on qualitative interviews with middle-class parents in America and Britain. It addresses the key issue in stratification research, namely, the stability of class relations and middle-class reproduction. Drawing on interviewee accounts of how parents mobilised economic, cultural and social resources to help them into professional careers, it then considers how the interviewees, as parents, seek to increase their children's chances of educational success and occupational advancement. Middle-class parents may try to secure their children's social position but it is not an easy or straightforward affair. With the decline of the quality of state education and increased job insecurity in the labour market since the 1970s and 1980s, the reproduction of advantage is more difficult than in the affluent decades of the 1950s and 1960s. The implications for public policy, especially public investment in higher education, are considered.

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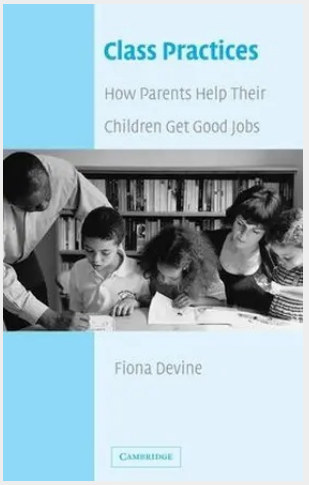

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