

Voracious Cultural Consumption

The intertwining of gender and social status

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ABSTRACT. This article contributes to the study of stratification in consumption activities by focusing on the association between ‘voracious’ leisure, gender and social status. Cultural voraciousness is a measure of the pace and pattern of leisure activities designed to complement the concept of cultural omnivorousness. We show that men are more voracious than women but that the pattern of the relationship with social status is not significantly different: individuals with higher levels of human, economic and cultural capital are more voracious than others regardless of gender. However, we find support for a reinforcement effect of gender and social status, which creates the greatest differential in voraciousness between men with the highest social status and women with the lowest, lending support to the idea that voracious cultural consumption acts as a marker of social boundaries and a sign of social exclusion. **KEY WORDS** • cultural omnivorousness • gender and leisure • leisure time

Introducing Voracious Consumption

The concept of voracious cultural consumption is based on the *extent of participation* in various out-of-home leisure activities, and relates both to the range of those activities (reflecting the diversity of an individual’s cultural repertoire) and the frequency of participation in them (characterizing the turnover rate, or ‘pace’). It is designed to complement the concept of cultural omnivorousness (as defined by Peterson and Kern, 1996), which distinguishes between highbrow

and lowbrow tastes in assessing the range of consumers' tastes. Cultural voraciousness does not distinguish between highbrow and lowbrow cultural tastes, but rather reflects a *quantitative* dimension of leisure consumption. What makes voraciousness interesting from a theoretical perspective, and distinguishes it from omnivorousness, is that it can be related to theories of the changing pace of life and leisure in late modernity, furthering our understanding of the interaction between social status, cultural participation and time availability.

Although voraciousness has already proven to be an important discriminator in social analysis (see Anttila et al, 2009; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007), its relationship to gender has never been investigated. In this article we examine the association between voraciousness and gender, and between voraciousness, gender and social status in combination. We have already shown that voraciousness shares many associations with other socio-economic and demographic variables found in the analysis of omnivorousness, in particular family stage and social status (Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007). Both omnivorousness and voraciousness are associated with high social status. For example, it has been found that voraciousness, like omnivorousness, is associated with being better educated, being located in an upper-class position, and having a higher income (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Warde et al., 1999; Van Eijck, 2001; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez, 2002). In particular, the voracious consumer has high social status in terms of human capital, economic capital, and cultural capital. Moreover, voraciousness, like omnivorousness, is also particularly characteristic of adults living alone or younger couples without children. In other words, it seems that omnivorousness and voraciousness represent two related dimensions of the consumption of leisure and tastes in contemporary western societies.

The new dimension of voraciousness contributes to research on cultural consumption in three respects. First, by employing data on cultural participation in leisure rather than cultural preferences in music, we are able to draw attention to a dimension of omnivorousness that has not previously received much expression in studies that have focused on gender. Measuring voraciousness in terms of participation in and pace of leisure activities allows for a more sensitive depiction of gender differences. Specifically, because participation in leisure is more likely than tastes to be influenced by time constraints and the gendered division of labor, voraciousness is related in a different way to gender than omnivorousness.

Second, by providing a closer look at the (voracious) extent of consumption in addition to the (omnivorous) contents of consumption, we put the theoretical emphasis on *how actively* individuals consume rather than on *what* they consume (Bell, 1979; Campbell, 1987; Slater, 1997). Third, through an investigation of the relationship between social status, time and participation in cultural activities, our focus on voraciousness provides a link to the literature on leisure pressure and gender, and identifies the need to take time into account when

describing cultural stratification. Research on both omnivorousness (Warde et al., 1999; Lopez-Sintas and Katz-Gerro, 2005; Garcia-Álvarez et al., 2007) and voraciousness (Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007) has found that individuals with high levels of human, economic and cultural capital participate in the greatest number of different cultural activities. Our argument in Sullivan and Katz-Gerro (2007) is that voraciousness, like omnivorousness, is a form of status marking that combines the performance of multiple out-of-home leisure activities with the status accruing to 'busyness' (Gershuny, 2005) or 'harried-ness' (Linder, 1970). In this article we attempt to link the conceptual innovation of voraciousness with an emphasis on the role that gender plays in cultural stratification.¹

Gender and Cultural Consumption

Similarly to studies of the stratification of cultural participation and cultural preferences, research on cultural omnivorousness has seldom put gender differences in the spotlight. The secondary role attributed to gender in research on cultural stratification may be partly due to Bourdieu's influential work and its focus on class differences in lifestyles and consumption (DiMaggio and Mukhtar, 2004). However, another difficulty is that studies in cultural consumption that *have* paid attention to gender differences provide empirically and theoretically equivocal findings. First, while some research argues that men and women differ in their leisure activities and cultural tastes (Shaw, 1985; Bryson, 1996; Netz, 1996; Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Katz-Gerro, 2002; Kaufman and Gabler, 2004), other studies claim to show that gender differences in those realms are insignificant (Shelton, 1992; Robinson and Godbey, 1999; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Prieto-Rodríguez and Fernández-Blanco, 2000; Wilska, 2002).

Second, although women have been shown on average to have slightly more leisure time than men across a range of European and North American countries (Gershuny, 2000; Sullivan and Gershuny, 2000), this time is likely to be more constrained than that of men by, for example: women's traditional responsibility for children (which frequently means combining home leisure activities with child care; see Stockdale et al., 1996; Sullivan, 1997); their overall lesser command of material resources (Green et al., 1990; Altergott and McCreedy, 1993); and women's lack of legitimacy in pursuing their own leisure interests. Therefore, leisure has contradictory aspects in women's and men's lives and can have different outcomes for the structural relations between men and women in society as well as for individual women (Shaw, 1985; Firat, 1991; Phipps et al., 2001). Women play a crucial role in family consumption, as they are usually responsible for the domestic sphere, both as the family's purchasing agent (Heinze, 1990) and as leaders of domestic labour (Lee, 1993). Some of this gender dichotomization is currently breaking down, but much of it remains

resilient to change (Costa, 1994). Since women are still mainly regarded as secondary earners, their marginal place in the family's 'social security system' leaves their free time mostly for nurturing the family and taking care of the home, meaning that they spend much of their leisure time indoors. Indeed, good mothering and home-keeping are associated with an ethic of care that is one of the main barriers to women's access to leisure (Blair and Lichter, 1991). This means that women's disposable time seeps away into the caring functions they perform for other family members (Hochschild, 1989; Pasers, 1994), and that women's free time is more likely than men's to be combined with other activities (Sullivan, 1997; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000). Gender differences in consumption may also be explained by the social expectation that women should be in charge of 'status work' in the family, which gives them control over cultural and material consumption in the household (Collins, 1988, 1992). They are more involved than men in the realm of symbolic status emulation and status presentation, such as expressing their status through the aesthetics and appearance of the household.

Third, although gender often appears as a significant predictor of cultural participation and cultural preferences, this has not been thoroughly theorized or explained (though see Tepper, 2000). Theoretical explanations are particularly elusive here because of the apparent contradiction between women's propensity to have more highbrow cultural capital than men (Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Katz-Gerro, 2002; Lizardo, 2006), but at the same time to be more constrained in their cultural participation (Jackson, 1988; Jackson and Henderson, 1994). The solution to this seeming contradiction surely lies in the relationship between gender, cultural capital and social status. It is this relationship that constitutes the core of the current paper.

Gender, Social Status and Cultural Stratification

Available research on variation in cultural practices pertains mainly to class as a measure of social status. In this article we investigate both the separate and combined effects of gender and various measures of social status – human, economic, and cultural capital – on voracious cultural consumption.

There are several reasons for emphasizing the interaction of gender with social status in terms of the characteristics of the omnivorous or voracious consumer. First, several studies have shown that gender is an important yet neglected feature in the Bourdieuvian analysis of the stratification of cultural capital (McCall, 1992; Erikson, 1996; Wright, 1997; Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Lovell, 2000; Van Eijck, 2001; Kane, 2003; DiMaggio, 2004; Katz-Gerro and Sullivan, 2004). For example, Erickson's (1996) influential work argues that Bourdieu does not allow for a theory of distinction that is linked to gender or other bases

of identity. Likewise, Kane (2003) argues that women may use traditional high culture to draw symbolic boundaries between themselves and men, and that the strictest interpretation of Bourdieu's theory of taste – that high culture is the dominant culture – in fact seems to apply especially well to gender.

Second, the literature on the variety of constraints that apply to women but not to men in the realm of leisure suggests that the omnivore thesis and its relationship to social status might work differently for men and women (Shaw, 1994). One important constraint pertains to the use of time. A fast pace of life is a feature of modern and postmodern societies (Toffler, 1970; Shaw, 1998). Rosa (2003) uses the term 'social acceleration' to describe a cardinal change in temporal patterns whereby the acceleration of the pace of life becomes the overriding principle for individuals in late modernity. Within accelerated society, speed becomes an imperative, making time compression and the intensification of processes necessary. In addition, since time-pressuredness is particularly associated with higher status groups (Robinson and Godbey, 1999), there is a growing suggestion in the literature on time pressure that 'busyness' itself has come to be regarded as an indicator of distinction (a 'badge of honor' according to Gershuny, 2005). On the other hand, findings in the literature link economic development with time congestion and reduced opportunities for leisure among certain groups (Gershuny, 2000), in particular employed women with children (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004; Bianchi et al., 2006). Women are disadvantaged vis-à-vis men in relation to active, intensive, individual leisure time (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003), and suffer more from the contamination of free time by non-leisure activities and the fragmentation of free time (Sullivan, 1997; Bittman, 2002). This gap between men and women's experience of free time is exacerbated by marriage and children (Nomaguchi and Bianchi, 2004). In addition, managing time is harder for women than for men because women are subject to the simultaneous but contradictory expectations to be both time conscious and time-less. As a result, they tend to regard a fast pace of life less positively than men (Shaw, 1998). These constraints are more evident among women in lower-class locations who do not have the income to hire the domestic assistance on which higher-class women rely (Warren, 2003).

Third, constraints related to time availability and material resources (such as educational attainment, income, social class, occupational prestige, and other dimensions by which women are often disadvantaged) affect women's access to society's 'legitimate' cultural capital, be it highbrow or omnivorous (Bourdieu, 1984). The subsequent effect on competence and engagement in the legitimate culture (which signals a person's social position, is influential in upward mobility, and is embedded in social networks) serves to disadvantage lower-class women even more, insofar as such engagement is recognized by gatekeepers in the labor force, in the marriage market, and in other social arenas (DiMaggio 1982, 2004; Erickson, 1996; De Graaf et al., 2000).

The current article adds cultural participation to a long list of social processes that are examined in the context of the interaction between social status and gender (Collins, 1988; Clement and Myles, 1994; Skeggs, 1997; Wright, 2001). Wright (1997) coined the word *clender* to designate the interaction between class and gender, emphasizing that it can generate effects that are supplemental to the independent effects of class and gender. In this, Wright joins others who argue that the nature of the relations between class and gender calls for a complex analysis that is missing in the literature (Hall, 1992), and that analyses of class and class formation that overlook the gendered structure of class relations are both incomplete and incorrect (Clement and Myles, 1994). This point of view posits class as a cluster of practices and relations that are also gendered. Since class involves active social behavior that is located in specific times and places, such as cultural consumption, this behavior produces forms of inequality that combine class and gender (Acker, 2005).

Research Questions

While it is relatively common in the literature to see calls for class- and gender-based analyses of work time (e.g. Warren, 2003), the constraints on women's cultural participation, and that of lower-class women in particular, have not been a major feature of research on cultural capital in general or of the omnivorousness debate in particular.

As we have described, one aspect of the research on cultural participation to date has been its relative lack of connection with the literature that identifies leisure as an area in which women experience disadvantages in comparison to men. A recurrent finding in the recent literature on cultural participation with respect to gender is that it is mainly men, in particular high-status men, who are more likely to exhibit tendencies to omnivorousness (Van Eijck, 2001; Sonnett, 2004) while women, in particular high-status women, tend to be more associated with highbrow cultural activities (DiMaggio, 1982; Bihagen and Katz-Gerro, 2000; Tepper, 2000; Van Eijck, 2001; Katz-Gerro, 2002; Wilska, 2002; Kaufman and Gabler, 2004). Thus, cluster analyses of omnivorousness, such as Van Eijck's (2001), distinguish between a highbrow cluster of tastes/activities (in which women score higher) and an omnivore cluster (in which men score higher). DiMaggio and Mukhtar (2004) also show that in the USA women's rates of high arts attendance grew more (or declined less) than men's between 1982 and 2002. This finding is consistent with the argument that it is women who are responsible for 'cultural maintenance' within the social setting of the family (Collins, 1992). However, the literature on gender constraints on leisure participation also consistently reports that women have less available leisure time and do less intensive, more fragmented, leisure activities. The answer to

this seeming contradiction is likely to be found in the interaction effect of gender with social status. Women from higher social statuses participate in greater amounts of highbrow cultural activities; women with lower social status are more constrained in their leisure. The lack of attention to the significance of the gender/social status interaction in the literature on cultural participation has therefore presented a major problem of interpretation.

In our analyses of voraciousness, we try to be more sensitive to the literature concerning the constraints on women's leisure participation, and to take account of the intertwining between gender and measures of social status. Specifically, we are interested in the possible constraints on cultural participation experienced by women with lower levels of human, economic, and cultural capital.

In coining the term 'clender', Wright (2001) referred to five possible ways of conceptualizing the inter-connections between gender and class, the fifth of which ('gender as a causal interaction with class') sees the causal processes of class and gender not as independent from one another but as interwoven. We were therefore interested to know whether, in relation to voraciousness, we could establish: (a) an independent effect of human, economic, and cultural capital when controlling for gender; (b) an independent effect of gender when controlling for human, economic, and cultural capital; and (c) an interactive effect of gender and human, economic, and cultural capital.

Data and Variables

The data

The data we use to investigate these questions are taken from the first wave of 'Home OnLine';² a representative British national panel study of adult individuals in households undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Council Institute for Social and Economic Research.³ The first wave of the panel, which we used for the analyses in this article, was conducted in 1998. The sample was multi-staged, with a random selection of households from selected geographically clustered areas with a representation of different social strata close to that of the national population. Two methods were used to collect the data. First, face-to-face interviews were conducted with all adult members of the household. In addition, interviewed respondents were provided with a week-long diary in which to record what they were doing each day of that week every fifteen minutes of that day.⁴ Because it combines a questionnaire and a week-long diary component, this data set is still used by researchers interested in analyzing leisure activities and the use of time more generally.

Sample size and response rates

The original sample comprised 1000 households, containing 2034 adult individuals. Of these 1093 both adults responded to the interview and completed the diary, while 668 responded to the interview only, giving a total response rate of 87 percent. In order to arrive at a sample of adults, we selected from this data those respondents aged between 16 and 65 who were identified in the interview as either the head of household or the partner of the head of household. We selected ages up to 65 since one of our main measures of capital was a classification of occupational status (see below). Moreover, for the elderly and very elderly the relationship with leisure activities has a very different pattern from that of working-age adults. In total our sample consisted of 1317 individuals and couples in households.⁵

The variables

Most studies of activity participation in the area of leisure have been based on questionnaire data, although diary-based time-use measures are becoming increasingly popular (e.g. Garhammer, 1998; Robinson and Godbey, 1999). One of the advantages of the Home OnLine data is that it enables a comparison of questionnaire- and diary-based measures. The measure of voraciousness that we use in this article is derived from a question in the Home OnLine interview schedule regarding the frequency with which various leisure activities are undertaken. It is based on a combination of five out-of-home leisure activities that are participated in 'once a week or more', yielding a variable with a range of 0 (none) to 5 (all). The five activities are: going to the cinema/concert/theatre or other live performance; eating/drinking out in a restaurant, café or pub; playing sport/keeping fit/walking; watching live sport; and attending leisure activity groups. Voraciousness is therefore a measure both of the *variety* (since it involves counting how many of the five different activities are participated in) and of the *frequency* (since to be counted the activity has to be done at least weekly) of participation in different out-of-home leisure activities. Out-of-home leisure activities were chosen because they express active consumer behaviors that are less likely than in-home leisure to be contaminated by the combination of leisure with other, work-related, activities. For example, the combination of home leisure with child-care activities is a common multi-taking combination for women caring for children at home, generally involving listening to the radio, watching TV or reading simultaneously with child-care (Gershuny et al., 1989; Sullivan, 1997; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000).

The measure based on the time-use diary information, which was designed to be compared to the questionnaire measure,⁶ simply counted the number of *different* out-of-home leisure activities engaged in over the entire diary week. The out-of-home leisure activities for the diary measure were defined (according to

the diary categories) as: going to concerts/theatre/cinema/clubs/sporting events; eating out/drinking (pubs and restaurants); sports participation/keeping fit; and walks/outings, yielding a range from 0 (none) to 4 (all). A comparison of the diary and the questionnaire measures showed similar means and distributions (see Sullivan, 2007; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007 for further details) indicating that, from this data, the diary and questionnaire responses show a good fit for the weekly frequency with which people participate in particular activities. The advantage of the questionnaire measure is that, as is usually found, a larger number of respondents answer the survey questions than complete their diaries.

A comparison by gender revealed that, while according to both the diary and questionnaire measures, men participate in more activities per week than women (1.61 compared to 1.56 for the diary measure, and 1.36 compared to 1.19 for the questionnaire measure)⁷, this difference is only statistically significant for the questionnaire measure – probably due to higher sample numbers. In order to establish if this difference could be attributed to gender differences in specific activities, we show the distribution of each of the leisure activities of the questionnaire measure according to gender (shown in Table 1). In all but one activity (going to cinema/concerts/theatre), the distributions for women and men are statistically significantly different. Men participate with greater frequency in playing sports/keeping fit and walking, in watching live sport, and in eating and drinking out, while women are more likely to participate in leisure activity groups.

However, in the diary measure, although the differences in gender participation in the various activities are all in the same direction as for the questionnaire measure, only the gender difference in eating out/drinking in pubs and restaurants reaches statistical significance (not shown). Since overall the diary and questionnaire distributions on the voraciousness measure were similar (see above), it is likely that these differences in statistical significance between the diary and questionnaire measures are due to differences in sample numbers (due to a lower response rate on the diary item of the survey). It cannot be ruled out, though, that they are due to the slightly different combinations of the activities in the two measures (enforced by the somewhat different coding procedures for the diary as against the questionnaire).⁸

Our main independent variables were gender and various measures of capital. Human capital was represented by highest educational qualification; economic capital by the social status of the individual's occupational category; and cultural capital by the type of daily newspaper read. These three variables are among the most common determinants of cultural consumption in Bourdieuvian theory and the empirical literature (Bourdieu, 1984; Katz-Gerro, 2004; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). Education is regarded as representing cognitive competence, economic capital represents financial ability, and cultural capital represents cultural disposition. While the three are typically closely related and positively cor-

TABLE 1
Frequency of participation in out-of-home leisure activities by gender

Activity	Questionnaire measure		Statistical significance* of gender difference
	Women (% for each activity)	Men (% for each activity)	
Cinema/concerts/theatre:			Not significant
At least once a week	2	3	
At least once a month	18	19	
Several times a year	42	41	
Once a year or less	21	17	
Never/almost never	17	21	
Leisure group participation:			$p = .020$
Most days	1	1	
At least once a week	14	10	
At least once a month	3	2	
Several times a year	4	2	
Once a year or less	4	3	
Never/almost never	74	83	
Eating/drinking out:			$p = .001$
Most days	2	7	
At least once a week	28	35	
At least once a month	35	28	
Several times a year	26	24	
Once a year or less	4	3	
Never/almost never	5	4	
Watching live sport:			$p = .000$
Most days	1	1	
At least once a week	4	11	
At least once a month	2	10	
Several times a year	5	16	
Once a year or less	9	11	
Never/almost never	79	51	
Doing sports/walking/fitness:			$p = .023$
Most days	38	35	
At least once a week	28	34	
At least once a month	8	10	
Several times a year	5	6	
Once a year or less	3	2	
Never/almost never	18	13	
N = 100% for each activity ⁺⁺	619	499	

* Chi-square test.

⁺⁺ The analyses are based on a sample of 1317 respondents as specified in the section on data. However, the Ns shown in this and subsequent tables sum to less than this as a result of the sample weighting which corrects for both an original over-sampling of households with a personal computer and for patterns of non-response.

related, each one influences consumption patterns in a different way (Van Eijck and Bargeman, 2004). In our use of educational qualification as an indicator of human capital, we follow Becker's (1993) classic study of the link between investment in an individual's education and life outcomes. Becker argued that human capital is a way of defining and categorizing people's skills, as a stock of assets, and that education is the most important investment in it. Individuals invest in their education to gain as much in the labor market as they can, since they are rewarded in the form of higher wages.⁹ Together with education, individuals' position in the job market has been shown to be a major determinant of leisure participation, and so we use the socio-economic status of the respondent's job¹⁰ as a measure of economic capital. We included the type of daily newspaper read as an independent variable, because we expected to see a correlation between it as a measure of cultural capital and the extent of leisure participation. Reading is considered part of cultured consumption and is important for the pursuit of status (Zavisca, 2005), and newspaper reading is a low-cost, readily available form of reading. Since for most people in Britain reading a newspaper is a daily activity, and since the choice of newspaper is quite one-dimensional in terms of cultural hierarchy, we considered it a reasonably unequivocal indicator of cultural capital (see also Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007). A family stage variable based on a 'life-cycle' set of categories combining age with number of children was also used as a control variable in the multivariate analyses.

Results

The first step in the investigation of the relationship between voraciousness, gender and social status is to establish that there are indeed effects on voraciousness of social status independent of gender, and of gender independent of social status. In initial analyses of variance models including only gender and our measures of human, economic and cultural capital, all factors are shown to be highly statistically significant (Table 2). There is an effect of gender independent of social status, and an effect of social status independent of gender.

The fact that there is a highly statistically significant difference in voraciousness by gender, even when controlling for our measures of social status ($p < .005$ for each model), lends weight to the next step of the analysis, which is to split the sample into men and women and to check levels of voraciousness by social status separately for each gender. Table 3 shows means (for women and men separately) for the number of different out-of-home leisure activities participated in 'once a week or more' according to our three measures of social status (highest educational qualification; social status of the individual's occupational category; and type of daily newspaper read). It is clear that there is a consistent positive relationship between the means of voraciousness and the various

TABLE 2
Levels of statistical significance from analysis of variance models showing the effect on voraciousness of gender and three measures of social status⁺

Model 1	<i>p</i> =	Model 2	<i>p</i> =	Model 3	<i>p</i> =
Gender	.002	Gender	.004	Gender	.003
Highest educational qualification	.000	Social status of job	.006	Type of newspaper read	.000

⁺ As measured by educational qualifications, social status of job and type of newspaper read.

measures of social status for both genders. Voraciousness increases with levels of human, economic and cultural capital. Although in one instance out of six the one-way analysis of variance between voraciousness and the measures of social status does not reach statistical significance (social status of job for men, $p = .402$), and in another it is statistically significant only at the $p < .10$ level (type of newspaper read for women, $p = .083$), nevertheless the pattern of the means is both uniformly consistent and in the expected (positive) direction, if we take into account what we know about omnivorousness (regarding the position of men with high social status) and constraints on women's leisure participation (regarding the position of women with low social status). Men in the higher categories of human, economic and cultural capital do the greatest number of out-of-home leisure activities, and women in the lower categories do the least.

Included in Table 3 are the groups of women and men who were not classified on the 'social status of occupational category' variable in the data. We wanted to include non-employed groups in the analysis, with the expectation that there would be a difference between women and men in this respect. This indeed turned out to be the case, since the mean value of voraciousness for the non-classified group of women is the lowest of all, while for men this group lies mid-way in the distribution of means for men. The reason for this is likely to lie in the different composition of the groups of non-classified women and men. About 20 percent of men were not in employment. The majority of these are more or less evenly split between the unemployed, the retired, and the long-term sick/disabled. However, of those women who were not in employment (about 40% of all women), the largest group was looking after the family/home full-time (38%), with 25 percent retired and about 12 percent unemployed or long-term sick/disabled. It appears that these women are among the most disadvantaged groups of all in terms of their leisure participation.

Because they constitute such a substantial percentage of all women, and because the non-employed group as a whole is comprised of several disparate

TABLE 3
Means of voraciousness by gender and social status* and levels of statistical significance from univariate analyses of variance models

	Man (N ⁺⁺)	Woman (N ⁺⁺)
Highest educational qualification	$p = .000$	$p = .002$
Degree, nursing qualification	1.61 (95)	1.32 (123)
A-level, higher vocational	1.49 (82)	1.37 (92)
GCSE, lower vocational	1.38 (167)	1.19 (214)
None	1.10 (155)	1.02 (191)
	Man (N ⁺⁺)	Woman (N ⁺⁺)
Social status of job	$p = .402$	$p = .002$
Professional/managerial	1.44 (151)	1.40 (137)
Intermediate	1.45 (33)	1.32 (94)
Small employer/low supervisor	1.33 (114)	1.10 (44)
Semi-routine/routine	1.21 (85)	1.14 (112)
Not classified	1.36 (116)	1.06 (233)
	Man (N ⁺⁺)	Woman (N ⁺⁺)
Type of newspaper read	$p = .007$	$p = .083$
Quality	1.64 (79)	1.45 (54)
Medium	1.35 (113)	1.22 (151)
Tabloid	1.20 (134)	1.11 (139)
None	1.36 (173)	1.16 (276)

* As measured by educational qualifications, social status of job and type of newspaper read.

categories, we present (in Table 4) mean levels of voraciousness by gender for the four main categories making up the non-employed (those keeping house, the retired, the long-term sick/disabled and the unemployed). Regarding differences between groups of the non-employed, it is interesting to note that women who are long-term sick or disabled and those who are unemployed are the least voracious of all, presumably reflecting their meagre financial resources. The retired comprise the most voracious group of non-employed women. Since the official retirement age of the respondents was 60, these women are likely to be receiving a pension (state and occupational pensions). They are not, however, as voracious in their leisure behavior as women in employment, and are only as voracious in their leisure behavior as the *least* voracious group of non-employed men (unemployed men). For non-employed men, the most voracious group is the long-term sick/disabled, who, due to the gendered structure of employment, are more likely than their female counterparts to be in receipt of occupational disability pensions. Their level of voraciousness exceeds even that of employed

TABLE 4
Means of voraciousness by employment status

	Men	(N)	Women	(N)
Non-employed:				
Unemployed	1.15	(27)	0.98	(30)
Sick/disabled	1.47	(33)	0.62	(27)
Retired	1.23	(29)	1.16	(62)
Keeping house ⁺	—	(3)	1.07	(103)
Employed	1.36	(396)	1.25	(375)
Overall	1.36	(499)	1.19	(619)

⁺ Includes being on maternity leave for women.

men, in stark contrast with the situation for long-term sick/disabled women, who are the least voracious of all the non-employed groups. Although these findings are indicative, and suggest an interesting direction for future research, sample numbers are, however, not large enough for further analysis.

So far we have established that not only is there a highly statistically significant difference in the overall average of voraciousness between men and women (with men being more voracious than women), but also that there is also a relationship between our measures of social status which is both consistent and in the expected direction, with women in the lowest categories of human, economic and cultural capital being the least voracious. But do these effects remain when we control for other variables? Differences in leisure participation may, in particular, be affected by family structure and income. We introduce and discuss the effects of family stage as a control variable in the analyses shown in Table 5. With regard to income, in a previous article we have shown that the addition of individual monthly income (for those in employment only) to an analysis showing the relationship between voraciousness and our measures of social status did not change the direction of the relationship, nor render it statistically non-significant (Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007). In other words, voracious cultural participation still appeared to be positively related to human, economic and cultural capital, even when holding income constant. Adding income to the analysis in the current study, which focuses on gender differences, is more problematic, since nearly 40 percent of the women in the survey are not in employment (see above). It is not clear to what extent a household income variable would adequately represent the income of these women, since it is known that household income is unequally divided, in particular when it comes to non-employed women's discretionary spending (such as spending on leisure activities) (Kenney, 2006). Nevertheless, splitting the analysis of the relationship of voraciousness with our measures of social status by gender and entering the individual income variable

first in a hierarchical analysis of variance (for those in employment only) reveals the interesting finding that income is only statistically significant in the explanation of voraciousness for employed women, but not for employed men. This raises the intriguing possibility that part of the use that employed women make of their income from full or part-time employment is to contribute to their own leisure participation.¹¹ In relation to our measures of social status, two out of the three measures¹² for employed women nevertheless remained statistically significant at at least the $p < .10$ level, despite the statistical significance of the income variable in the hierarchical analysis.¹³

Table 3 showed that there are consistent effects in the relationship between voraciousness, social status and gender. If we postulate a scale in which men with the highest levels of human, economic and cultural capital are at the top and women from the lowest levels at the bottom, then the cumulative effect is clear – we would expect those at the top of the scale (men with the highest levels) to be on average the most voracious, and those at the bottom of the scale (women with the lowest levels) the least. Following the logic of Wright's (1997) discussion of 'clender', we therefore created new variables that combine gender with the categories of our social status measures in order to enable a more nuanced look at the differences in voraciousness between the different *combined* categories of status and gender.

To these variables we added the variable 'family stage',¹⁴ and we entered these variables into multivariate analyses of variance models in which the dependent variable was voraciousness, the independent variables were the various combined gender-status variables (as three separate models), and the control variable was family stage.¹⁵ Table 5 shows the results of these analyses.

First, we note that the combined gender-status variables are all highly statistically significant in the analyses, even when controlling for family stage: social status of job with gender at the $p < .005$ level, and the other two combinations (highest qualification with gender and type of paper read with gender) at the $p < .001$ level. In addition, the betas for the combined status-gender variables are at least as large as those for the family stage variable, which is known from previous research to have a strong relationship with leisure participation. The first column of the body of Table 5 shows the adjusted means of voraciousness (i.e. the means when holding the effects of other variables in the analysis constant) according to: (a) the categories of the combined gender-status variable; and (b) the categories of family stage. The pattern of the adjusted means is as expected from Table 3: those from the highest categories of the combined gender-status variables (i.e. men with higher levels of human, economic and cultural capital) are the most voracious, and those from the lowest categories (i.e. women with the lowest levels) are the least (see below for a more detailed description of the means for each combined gender-status variable). The effect of family stage on voraciousness is also, as expected, highly statistically significant. Its adjusted

TABLE 5

Analyses of variance showing the relationship between voraciousness and various measures of combined gender-status variables, controlling for family stage

Model 1. Voraciousness by
combined gender-status variable
controlling for family stage:

Highest qualification x Gender*** (beta = .192) Family stage*** (beta = .152)	Adjusted mean	(N)	Statistical significance of difference from reference category + Highest qualification x Gender
Men			
Degree, nursing qualification	1.58	(95)	.000
A-level, higher tech.	1.48	(82)	.000
GCSE, lower tech.	1.39	(167)	.000
None	1.10	(155)	.336
Women			
Degree, nursing qualification	1.30	(123)	.002
A-level, higher tech.	1.36	(92)	.001
GCSE, lower tech.	1.23	(213)	.013
None	1.01	(190)	(reference)
Family stage			
Living alone, aged < 36	1.59	(92)	
Living with spouse, aged <36, no dependent children in the house	1.44	(115)	
Living with spouse, aged > 36, no dependent children in the house	1.26	(247)	
Living with spouse, dependent children aged <12 in the house	1.10	(231)	
Living with spouse, dependent children aged 12 + in the house	1.22	(286)	
Other	1.27	(148)	

continues

TABLE 5 (cont.)

Model 2. Voraciousness by combined gender-status variable controlling for family stage:			
Social status of job x Gender** (beta= .152) Family stage*** (beta = .149)	Adjusted mean	(N)	Statistical significance of difference from reference category + Social status of job x Gender
Men			
Professional/managerial	1.44	(151)	.000
Intermediate	1.45	(33)	.023
Small employer/low supervisor	1.33	(114)	.007
Semi-routine/routine	1.21	(85)	.245
Not classified	1.36	(116)	.002
Women			
Professional/managerial	1.41	(136)	.002
Intermediate	1.32	(94)	.007
Small employer/low supervisor	1.09	(44)	.758
Semi-routine/routine	1.14	(112)	.412
Not classified	1.06	(233)	reference
Model 3. Voraciousness by combined gender-status variable controlling for family stage:			
Type of paper read x Gender*** (beta= .161) Family stage*** (beta = .165)	Adjusted mean	(N)	Statistical significance of difference from reference category + Type of paper read x Gender
Men			
Quality	1.64	(79)	.000
Medium	1.37	(113)	.042
Tabloid	1.20	(34)	.626
None	1.32	(173)	.021
Women			
Quality	1.46	(53)	.039
Medium	1.25	(151)	.373
Tabloid	1.13	(139)	(reference)
None	1.16	(276)	.624

** Variable is statistically significant in model at $P < .01$.

*** Variable is statistically significant in model at $P < .001$.

+ Contrast test from combined interaction variable reference category (lowest level).

means show that, when controlling for the various measures of combined gender-status variables, adults living alone participate in the greatest number of different out-of-home leisure activities (see Model 1 of Table 5).¹⁶ Among those in couples, those aged under 36 without children are the most voracious, and those with children aged under 12 in the household are the least. These results accord both with findings on leisure participation more generally and also with the findings from the omnivorousness literature, in which it is younger people without families who in general display the widest range of cultural tastes.

The second column of the body of Table 5 shows levels of statistical significance for the contrast tests,¹⁷ which compare the adjusted mean of voraciousness for the lowest level of the combined gender-status variables (i.e. women from the lowest categories of human, economic and cultural capital) and all the other categories, since our theoretical interest is in demonstrating the disadvantage of such women in respect of leisure participation. These levels of statistical significance reflect the relative differences between the categories of the gender-status variables, when controlling for family stage. As stated previously, the general pattern of the adjusted means shows that those from the highest categories of the gender-status variable (i.e. men with the highest levels of human, economic and cultural capital) are the most voracious, while those from the lower categories (i.e. women with low levels of human, economic and cultural capital) are the least. If we examine the relationship of each gender-status variable in turn to voraciousness, with reference both to its adjusted means and to the contrast tests, we note the following findings.

With respect to the combined gender-status variable based on educational qualifications, there is a more or less consistent decreasing pattern evident in the adjusted means across the categories of the variable, with the means for women with higher levels of education (A-level equivalent and above) more or less equal to those of men with GCSE-level or equivalent qualifications.¹⁸ However, those women from the reference category (no educational qualifications) are no different in their level of voraciousness from men with no educational qualifications. They are, though, statistically significantly different from all the other categories of this gender-status variable, in particular from both women and men with the highest educational qualifications.

With respect to the combined gender-status variable based on the social status of job, the same basic pattern in adjusted means is evident, albeit with some variations. The lowest mean is found among non-employed ('not classified') women, who are not statistically significantly different in voraciousness from the category with the lowest mean for men (those in semi-routine and routine occupations), or from other women in the lower levels of the job hierarchy, that is, those in semi-routine/routine occupations, and female low-level supervisors/small employers. These three groups (non-employed women, women in semi-routine/routine occupations, and female low-level supervisors/small employers)

have the lowest means of voraciousness for this variable. Non-employed women are, however, statistically significantly less voracious than non-employed ('not classified') men (at $p = .002$). This is likely to be due to the different compositions of the non-employed groups of women and men: the largest percentage of non-employed women is looking after the family/home, while most of the men in this category are either unemployed or retired.

With respect to the combined gender-status variable based on type of newspaper read, the same basic pattern is once more evident in the adjusted means, with men who read quality newspapers having the highest mean for voraciousness and women who read tabloid newspapers having the lowest. The group of women who read tabloid newspapers are statistically significantly different from women who read quality newspapers ($p = .039$), and from all the categories of men with the exception of those men who also read tabloid newspapers. As with the combined social status of job with gender variable, they are not statistically significantly different from women who read medium-quality papers, or from women who do not read newspapers at all.

In general, when comparing women with men, we find that we do not see any real differences between the lowest categories of gender-status variables for women and the lowest categories for men (although, given the consistency and the conformity to hypothesized expectations of the level and direction of the adjusted means, both within and between the genders, we might hypothesize that some of the statistically non-significant differences shown might become statistically significant given higher sample numbers). While these findings may cast doubt both on the idea that women with the lowest levels of human, economic and cultural capital are disadvantaged in their leisure participation in relation to men at the same level, and that, conversely, men with the highest levels of capital have an advantage over *all* other categories, what cannot be questioned is the existence of a clear overall axis of disadvantage by gender and social status *in combination*, such that men with higher levels of human, economic, and cultural capital participate on average in a statistically significantly greater number of different out-of-home leisure activities than women from the lower categories, who participate in the lowest number of all.

Discussion and Conclusion

In a previous study we introduced the concept of voraciousness. There, we suggested that cultural omnivorousness has a fragmented character, which may be manifested both in a variety of cultural tastes *and* in different levels of voraciousness of cultural participation, and we discussed the relationship between voraciousness, social status and social boundaries (Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007). However, the relationship between gender and voraciousness has not so

far been addressed. This is an obvious test for the concept of voraciousness since it measures leisure participation in terms of the actual patterning of activities and may therefore be more sensitive to the social differences and constraints generated by gender than are measures based on cultural tastes (as in most measures of omnivorousness). In this article, we have emphasized two main questions regarding the connection between gender, leisure, social status and voraciousness. One is whether constraints on women's leisure find expression in the voraciousness of their patterns of cultural participation. The other is whether gender in combination with various measures of social status acts to shape patterns of voracious cultural participation. In other words, we are concerned here with putting voraciousness into the context of gender relations, and with the way in which gender interacts with other axes of social status.

We used out-of-home leisure activities to measure voraciousness, because they are less likely to be conflated with work-related activities than are in-home leisure activities, especially for women. In addition, they express active consumer behaviors that in general require both time and money, and are consequently likely to have a strong relationship with both socio-economic and time constraints (see also section on 'The variables'). Time scarcity and congestion, which are features of contemporary western societies, are felt most keenly by particular groups (Shaw, 1998; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). Women are disadvantaged relative to men in terms of active, intensive, individual leisure time (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003), and in the contamination of free time by non-leisure activities and the fragmentation of free time (e.g. Sullivan, 1997; Shaw, 1998; Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Bittman, 2002; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003; Southerton, 2003; Katz-Gerro and Sullivan, 2004). These disadvantages are likely to be experienced more severely by lower-class women who do not have the same access to resources and cannot afford to pay for domestic help.

In the analyses shown here we can see significant differences in voraciousness between men and women on the overall level (men are more voracious than women), and significant differences according to levels of human, economic, and cultural capital (in general, the higher the level of capital, the higher the level of voraciousness). Yet, while there are clear effects in multivariate analysis of both gender and measures of social status on voracious leisure participation, the *pattern* of voraciousness for men and women was not statistically significantly different. Men and women with high levels of capital participate in more out-of-home activities, while men and women with low levels of capital participate in fewer out-of-home activities. However, by creating a combined gender and social status variable we were better able to illustrate the axis of disadvantage that results from gender and social status *in combination* (shown in Table 5). The combination of gender and social status creates the greatest difference in levels of voraciousness between the advantaged and the disadvantaged groups of *both* original variables (that is, between men with higher levels of capital and women

with the lowest levels). In terms of voraciousness, women are on average disadvantaged, but women with the least capital are the most disadvantaged of all. In keeping with our supposition about the significance of the combined effects of gender and social status on different dimensions of cultural consumption, it seems that voraciousness is related more strongly to the discussion of constraints on women's leisure (especially constraints on the leisure of women with low social status), while the literature on omnivorousness and cultural consumption in general focuses more on the participation in highbrow cultural activities of higher-status women, and on their role in cultural maintenance.

Thus, when comparing the characteristics of voracious consumers with findings from the literature on omnivorousness, the main differences between them appear when we look at the dimension of gender. While in this article we have shown that men with high levels of capital are the most voracious and women with the lowest levels the least, findings regarding omnivorousness from the literature present a rather different picture, in which it is mainly high-status men who show tendencies to omnivorousness, while high-status women tend to be associated more with highbrow cultural activities. This pattern has made a significant contribution to the idea that it is primarily women who are responsible for activities in the realm of symbolic status emulation and status presentation. At the same time, though, it may have served to distance studies of omnivorousness from the literature on gender inequalities in leisure participation, and in particular from the recognition that the combined effects of gender and social status on women with the lowest levels of human, economic, and cultural capital result in disadvantages in both the quantity and quality of their leisure. Our findings offer an indication that voraciousness and social status resources work differently for men and women because they experience time differently, especially in combination with contextual constraints such as family stage.

In terms of the experience of leisure (i.e. the pleasure and satisfaction that leisure activities may bring), it is not perhaps obvious that voracious leisure participation is necessarily the behavior most likely to bring gratification. Indeed, it could be argued that commitment to a single leisure activity might bring more satisfaction from limited leisure time. However, in terms of the role that leisure patterns increasingly play in signalling one's social standing, not being voracious may play a significant part in impeding lower-class women's abilities to translate cultural capital into economic capital (see also Erickson, 1996; Lizardo, 2006).

In a recent study of cultural consumption that addresses cross-cutting classifications of class and gender, cross-national evidence is found for gender and class differences in combination (Katz-Gerro, 2006). The findings show that in some countries there is lower participation in highbrow cultural activities among lower-class women; in others, that there is greater participation in highbrow cultural activities among upper-class women. In other words, the relationship

between class, gender and cultural consumption needs further refinement and qualification. The findings we have presented here in relation to voraciousness – an indicator both of the breadth and the variety of out-of-home leisure activities participated in – and the advantages experienced by men with the highest levels of social status and the disadvantages experienced by women with the lowest levels, lend additional support to this argument.

Further research should consider the intricacies of the similarities and differences between omnivorousness and voraciousness and their socio-economic and contextual correlates. The extent to which omnivorousness correlates with voraciousness in leisure participation is a question that could be further explored with suitable data. For our purposes, however, this correlation was not really the issue. We have previously described voraciousness as a *complementary* dimension to omnivorousness in the analysis of cultural consumption since the latter concept (at least in its original formulation) puts the theoretical emphasis on the diversity of cultural tastes, while the former emphasizes the frequency and range of participation in leisure activities. However, for the purposes of this article, whether voraciousness is regarded as simply a different aspect of omnivorous behavior or not, the fact is that a clear axis of disadvantage in leisure participation can be demonstrated by gender and social status in combination. These findings confirm voraciousness as an important socio-economic discriminatory variable in analysis and point to the importance of including cultural or lifestyle variables in research on socio-economic differentiation. The inclusion of gender as a major component in the picture reveals interesting distinctions in leisure activity participation that highlight the importance of the gender dimension in the study of cultural consumption.

Notes

1. For a general discussion of the link between voraciousness and processes of cultural distinction see Sullivan and Katz-Gerro (2007).
2. The funding for the original data collection was provided by British Telecommunications plc.
3. Further details may be found on the website of the UK National Data Archive at <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=4607>.
4. The activities recorded in the diary were based on the categories used in the *Multinational Time Use Study* (MTUS). For further details of the MTUS see the website of the Centre for Time Use Studies at the University of Oxford at <http://www.timeuse.org/>.
5. In addition we derived a randomly selected sample of one adult individual per household, and all analyses were performed for both these samples. The results for the individual sample were identical in pattern to those for the sample of individual and couple households. Therefore, given the larger size of the latter, we present only results from it in this article.

6. Taking into account differences in coding between the diary and questionnaire instruments.
7. Estimates are higher for the diary data since, on average, the diary week will also contain one quarter of the activities done 'at least once a month' (from the questionnaire data), as well as the activities done 'at least once a week'.
8. The category 'walks and outings', for example, does not correspond neatly to any of the questionnaire activities.
9. Within the Bourdieuvian framework, cultural capital differs from education, and the latter is not an operational definition of the former. Rather, in Bourdieu's cultural capital thesis, students from privileged socio-economic backgrounds tend to acquire a background in high culture that translates into academic achievement and attainment (Moss, 2005).
10. Based on the UK National Statistics Socio-economic Classification. In order to maintain cell sizes for this variable, the original seven-category variable is amalgamated into four categories: professional/managerial (combining high- and low-level managers), intermediate (representing the service occupations, including technical and clerical occupations), small employer/low-level supervisors, and semi-routine and routine occupations. To this classification we added as a separate group those who are not classified according to occupation (i.e. the non-employed, including the unemployed, the retired and those keeping a home).
11. The range and standard error of income is higher for men, so this cannot account for the gender difference in statistical significance.
12. Those for social status of job and type of newspaper read.
13. Sample sizes are of course considerably reduced in these analyses by the selection of those in employment only and the separation of the analyses for men and women.
14. The family stage variable comprised the following categories: living alone; aged under 36, living in a couple with no children in the house; aged over 36, living in a couple with no children in the house; living in a couple with children aged under 12 in the house; living in a couple with children aged 12 or over in the house; other.
15. Income was not included here as a control variable because we wanted to include the non-employed groups in the analyses – a consideration which is particularly relevant for women since 40 percent of the sample of women fall into this category.
16. Adjusted means from the other models are effectively identical and have not been shown.
17. A priori contrast tests.
18. Students in England study General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) over two years, from the age of 15, and take GCSE exams at the end of this period. These are the final years of their compulsory high school education. A-levels are typically studied between the ages of 16 and 18. They were at the time of the survey the most popular route into UK higher education institutions.

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