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THE RISE OF THE ECLECTIC CULTURAL CONSUMER IN DENMARK, 1964–2004

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Existing research on cultural stratification and consumption patterns rarely presents a cross-time comparative perspective and rarely goes back before the 1980s. This article employs a unique series of surveys on cultural participation collected in Denmark over the period 1964–2004 to map the historical development of three distinct cultural consumption groups (eclectic, moderate, limited) also identified in previous research. We report two major findings. First, the eclectic (or "omnivorous") cultural consumption group existed as far back as the 1960s and has since the 1980s comprised about 10 percent of the Danish population. Second, the major stratification variables—income, education, and social class—are strong predictors of cultural eclecticism in Denmark, and the predictive power of these stratification variables appears not to have declined in any substantive way over the past 40 years.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, students of cultural stratification have had great interest in the development of diversity in cultural tastes and cultural participation among upper status individuals in industrialized countries. Research has documented openness to cultural diversity in various countries and in different cultural domains, while putting much emphasis on exploring its socioeconomic correlates. This phenomenon received various conceptual and operational definitions and was variously described as omnivorousness (Peterson and Simkus 1992), cultural dissonance (Lahire 2004), or cultural eclecticism (Ollivier 2008). Studies of diversity in cultural consumption differ in the extent to which they apply a strict definition of cultural variety. Some studies find it suffice to measure breadth of tastes or practices, essentially capturing the volume of consumption (e.g., López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a). Others emphasize measurement of crossing of significant symbolic boundaries between highbrow and lowbrow genres (e.g., Peterson and Kern 1996; Van Eijck and Lievens 2008). Notwithstanding the different operationalizations, the common thread running through these works is the assertion that members of the elite tend to embrace mass cultural genres, or that individuals with highbrow cultural preferences do not avoid popular culture, or that individuals located high on the social hierarchy are characterized by a relatively wide breadth of tastes.

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In this article, we address one issue that did not feature in studies of openness to cultural diversity—long-term trends in the development of the phenomenon. While the main finding of this literature is that cultural eclecticism has risen among the elite since the 1980s in the United States and in many European countries, no research has considered the possibility that it could have a substantially longer history. To address this issue, we present analyses of a series of data sets from Denmark that span 40 years, offering a unique opportunity to ask whether cultural eclecticism has long been a feature of cultural consumption patterns within this national context. Answering this question will enable us to shed light on ongoing debates regarding the appropriate depiction of cultural consumption patterns as univorous or omnivorous, and the appropriate metaphor for the association between social position and cultural resources: homology (Bourdieu 1984) or heterology (García-Álvarez, Katz-Gerro, and López-Sintas 2007).

Addressing both of these issues, we present evidence on the contours of cultural consumption in Denmark based on a variety of empirical indicators over a period of 40 years. Using cross-sectional data collected at six points in time during the period 1964–2004, we track the development of different groups of cultural consumption practices. We then characterize these groups, describe their relative sizes in the different survey years, and analyze their socio-demographic makeup.

In the context of the literature that interprets assorted cultural consumption as a form of distinction, exclusion, and hierarchization, we pay special attention to the "omnivorous-like" eclectic group that emerges in the analysis, and we track its development between 1964 and 2004. We also investigate the extent to which cultural consumption may serve as an exclusionary tool, as expressed in the degree to which the eclectic group is associated over time with income, education, and social class.

In addition to offering unique data, Denmark also presents an interesting case for studying cross-time change in cultural consumption practices. Unlike the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, all of which have been studied extensively and which are large and socially and ethnically diverse countries, Denmark is a small and socially and culturally homogenous country which has experienced little migration over the period under study. Furthermore, during the same period, Denmark has expanded its comprehensive welfare state, has actively pursued policies to promote social and cultural integration, and has implemented laws to reduce work time and increase leisure time. Consequently, the developments in cultural consumption practices we observe in the empirical analyses are arguably more easily interpretable and may be attributable to fewer structural changes than would have been the case in a bigger and more diverse national context.

Theoretical Background

Analyses of the distribution of cultural consumption and its association with dimensions of stratification have been of prime interest to sociologists of culture, as well as to scholars of other fields within the discipline. Several major works have inspired sociological thinking about the role that cultural preferences and practices play in the manufacturing of power, privilege, resources, and hierarchies (Weber [1922] 1968; Sorokin

[1957] 1970; Bourdieu 1984; Veblen [1899] 1994; Levine 1998). A vast literature has developed that examines the mechanisms that generate cultural capital, cultural exclusion, and cultural reproduction, as well as their consequences. The literature on cultural stratification has been preoccupied with two broad themes. The first considers the most appropriate way to measure and interpret cultural consumption, primarily debating the ways cultural consumption consolidates into cultural capital that affects life outcomes and different forms of attainment (e.g., in the education system and the labor market). A relatively recent derivative of this literature revolves around the notion of omnivorous cultural consumption, a concept that will be explained in the next section. The second theme within research on cultural stratification is concerned with identifying the main correlates of different patterns of cultural consumption, focusing on socioeconomic and demographic correlates and establishing the dimensions of cultural stratification. The following two sections will elaborate on these themes.

The Eclectic Cultural Consumer

In a series of articles that have attracted a great deal of attention and given rise to a spate of international research, Peterson and others (Peterson and Simkus 1992; Peterson and Kern 1996) argued that members of the upper class in the United States, who had formerly been defined as *cultural snobs* in terms of their preference for a limited range of highbrow cultural tastes (Levine 1998), were turning into *cultural omnivores*. This concept referred to an upper class that experiences and appreciates a variety of cultural tastes, be they highbrow, middlebrow, or lowbrow. Peterson's work identified a transition from a snobbish to an omnivorous taste among high-status individuals in the United States in the 1980s, and even more so in the 1990s. High-status individuals are members of specific occupational groupings including professional occupations, higher managers, and senior sales workers (Peterson and Simkus 1992:160). Peterson and Simkus reported that in 1982, individuals in the higher cultural professions were likely to express a taste for the fine arts and participate in fine arts activities. They also possessed other attributes that had been indicated by Bourdieu, such as higher education, a substantial income, and city residence. A replication using data from 1992 (Peterson and Kern 1996) once more found omnivorousness, which was now more prevalent among high-status individuals in 1992 than it had been in 1982. This increase was given a twofold explanation. First, high-status individuals were generally becoming more omnivorous. Second, younger, more omnivorous age cohorts of high-status individuals were replacing older cohorts, who were more likely to have a snobbish orientation. Several years later, Peterson (2005) reported that the size of the omnivore group in the United States in 2002 had fallen to its 1982 levels after a significant increase in 1992.

Following Peterson's work, scholars have demonstrated the applicability of different variations of cultural omnivorousness in diverse cultural domains in different countries (e.g., Bryson 1997; Van Rees, Vermunt, and Verboord 1999; Warde, Martens, and Olsen 1999; Holbrook, Weiss, and Habich 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Emmison 2003; Fisher and Preece 2003; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a,b). While most research has studied omnivorousness using data from the 1990s or the early 2000s, there

is little research going further back in time. This is an important qualification since, as Lahire (2008) argues, we are not entirely sure that the omnivorous aesthetic is *more* eclectic than before and that it is an entirely *new* phenomenon. Lahire (2004:166–74) argues that the findings of surveys from the 1960s in France suggest that *homo pluralis* already existed at the time, but that the public atmosphere was not conducive to his becoming socially visible.

Cultural omnivorousness was measured in myriad ways, ranging from counting the number of activities or genres liked to indicating combinations of preferences that are symbolically located in different positions in the cultural hierarchy. Consequently, scholarship on the omnivore thesis has been both advanced and challenged by several scholars while offering different modifications such as cultural dissonance (Lahire 2004) or cultural voraciousness or cultural eclecticism (Ollivier 2008). The trajectory of research on diverse cultural consumption has been discussed and challenged on several occasions (e.g., Peterson 2005; Ollivier, Van Eijck, and Warde 2008). Two of the general conclusions that emerged in this literature are relevant to the present article: first, the need to study the development of the diversity of cultural consumption over time; and second, a recommendation to go beyond the typical emphasis on musical tastes.

Correlates of Consumption Patterns

Research into the social bases of the snobbish cultural consumer has demonstrated a strong correlation between social class position and patterns of cultural consumption and lifestyle (Gans 1974; Weber 1974; Bourdieu 1984). While acknowledging the importance of this relationship, several studies in recent years have also argued that the complexity of the connections between class location and cultural tastes should be further probed (e.g., Han 2003). Specifically, research on the eclectic consumer generally finds that younger age, higher education, higher income, and higher occupational status are strongly associated with diverse cultural preferences (e.g., Warde et al. 1999; Van Eijck 2001; Holbrook et al. 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Emmison 2003).[1]

Research Questions

In this article we document changes over time in patterns of cultural participation in Denmark. We pay special attention to a pattern we call eclectic consumption, which denotes engagement with a wide range of cultural activities. We present two main sets of research questions that focus on the long-term span of our data and the national context we study. First, to what extent was the eclectic group present in Denmark at the beginning of the period studied, and how did it develop over the period 1964–2004? Second, what are the socio-demographic characteristics of eclectic consumers? Can we think of them as a distinct status group? Has this distinctiveness strengthened or weakened over time, and which contextual developments in Denmark might explain the changes in cultural consumption patterns we observe? These research questions aim at providing new longitudinal evidence on the degree to which cultural eclectics represent a distinct or fading social status group. Since there is no research that theorizes the historical

beginning of a noticeable and distinct eclectic cultural profile, we cannot formulate hypotheses, and so our research is exploratory in this respect.

Data

The Danish National Centre for Social Research has been collecting data on cultural consumption and participation for the Danish Ministry of Culture since the mid-1960s. Cross-sectional surveys with representative samples of the adult population (16 and older) were carried out in 1964, 1975, 1987, 1993, 1998, and 2004, thereby providing information on trends in cultural consumption and participation over a 40-year period. Response rates and sample sizes in the different surveys are as follows: 1964: 80 percent, N = 4,397; 1975: 74 percent, N = 3,723; 1987: 73 percent, N = 3,606; 1993: 73 percent, N = 1,843; 1998: 68 percent, N = 1,566; and 2004: 65 percent, N = 1,830.

Variables

Dependent Variables

Previous research on cultural capital and cultural resources has employed measures of taste (particularly in musical genres: Peterson and Simkus 1992; Peterson and Kern 1996; Bryson 1997; Emmison 2003) or behavior (particularly leisure activities: López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Holbrook et al. 2002). In this article, we employ measures of cultural participation that we consider to measure actual social action (Holt 1997). Six indicators of cultural participation are available in all six surveys that show the frequency of the following activities: going to the cinema, a classical concert, the opera, the theater, an art museum/gallery, and newspaper reading. These indicators offer a representation of different fine arts (e.g., opera) and commercial art (cinema, newspaper) and their subdivisions into visual arts (art museum/gallery, cinema), auditory arts (classical music concert), and performance arts (opera, theater play). The indicators also cover traditional "highbrow" activities in Denmark such as attending the opera and classical concerts, "middlebrow" activities such as going to an art museum/gallery and the theater, and more popular activities such as going to the cinema and reading a newspaper (for a detailed analysis that finds a similar division of cultural consumption practices in Denmark, see Prieur, Rosenlund, and Skjott-Larsen 2008). We consider reading a newspaper a measure of cultural behavior following previous research that used it as a measure of cultural capital (Chan and Goldthorpe 2006; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro 2007) and described reading as part of cultured consumption (Zavisca 2005; Griswold 2008). Newspaper reading is a low-cost readily available form of reading. While our indicators cover several important types of both highbrow and lowbrow cultural activities, it is important to point out that these measures are inherently limited with respect to fully capturing cultural eclecticism. To fully gauge eclecticism we would ideally use more detailed information, for example, on film genres, types of TV programs, types of newspapers, and so on. While such information is available in some of the later surveys (from the 1990s onward), it is not possible to include this type of information in our analysis of the full period. In other words, we face a trade-off between the length of the time horizon we can analyze and the number of cultural

participation indicators we can include. Since there are only very few longitudinal studies on cultural eclecticism at present, and because our data offer a uniquely long time horizon, we decided that our analysis would have the biggest impact on existing research by maximizing the time window we analyze. However, we remain aware of the inherent limitations of our empirical indicators throughout the analysis.

The wording of questions for all indicators is identical in the 1987–2004 surveys but differs slightly from that used in the 1964 and 1975 surveys. In the 1964 and 1975 surveys, respondents were asked if they had attended the different types of cultural activities (classical concert, opera, theater, and art museum/gallery) "in the last season." From 1987 onward, respondents were asked how often they had attended the different cultural activities "within the last year." To ensure reasonable comparability across survey years, we constructed dummy variables for the indicators equal to 1 if respondents had gone either "in the last season" (1964 and 1975) or "in the last year" (1987–2004), and 0 otherwise. The indicators of cinema-going and newspaper reading were largely identical in all survey years. Consequently, we constructed two dummy variables to indicate if respondents had gone to the cinema in the last year and if respondents reported reading at least one newspaper daily. The marginal distribution of the six indicators of cultural participation is shown in Table 1.

Independent Variables

We include a range of socioeconomic and demographic variables in the analyses. The socioeconomic variables include family income, education, and social class position. *Family income* is measured as total gross family income in Danish kroner (DKK). We use standardized measures of family income to harmonize different ordinal scales across the surveys. *Education* is measured by years of completed schooling. *Social class* is measured by the Erikson–Goldthorpe–Portocarero (EGP, see Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992) class scheme, which, based on occupation, divides respondents into five class categories: managers (and professionals), routine nonmanual workers, self-employed workers, skilled workers, and unskilled workers.[2] Since only respondents who are active in the labor market were asked about their occupational position, we created a sixth category called "other/missing" that pertains to respondents with no information on occupational position (e.g., the retired, students, or homemakers). We also include a variable measuring respondent's normal *working hours* per week. Information on work hours was not available in the 2004 survey.

Life stage variables include marital status and children at home. *Marital status* is a dummy variable coded 1 for married/cohabitating and 0 otherwise. *Children at home* are coded 1 if the respondent has children living at home and 0 otherwise (it was not possible to create a more detailed measure of family size because number of children and children's age were only recorded in some of the surveys).

The demographic variables include *sex* (coded 1 for women) and *age* measured in years divided by 10 (for ease of interpretation in the empirical analyses). Finally, we also constructed dummy variables for missing values on family income, education, and work hours.

TABLE 1. Means and Standard Deviations for the Analysis Variables

	1964	1975	1987	1993	1998	2004
Cultural participation indicators						
Cinema	0.56 (0.50)	0.70 (0.46)	0.57 (0.49)	0.51 (0.50)	0.59 (0.49)	0.67 (0.47)
Classical concert	0.03 (0.18)	0.06 (0.24)	0.13 (0.34)	0.15 (0.36)	0.16 (0.37)	0.14 (0.34)
Opera	0.24 (0.43)	0.02 (0.13)	0.07 (0.26)	0.09 (0.28)	0.08 (0.26)	0.06 (0.24)
Theater play	0.16 (0.37)	0.16 (0.36)	0.32 (0.47)	0.23 (0.42)	0.24 (0.43)	0.21 (0.41)
Art museum/gallery	0.16 (0.37)	0.22 (0.42)	0.39 (0.49)	0.44 (0.50)	0.32 (0.47)	0.26 (0.44)
Reads newspaper	0.92 (0.27)	0.80 (0.40)	0.74 (0.44)	0.75 (0.43)	0.69 (0.46)	0.55 (0.50)
Years of schooling	7.08 (1.78)	9.66 (2.56)	10.70 (2.68)	11.13 (2.47)	11.81 (2.52)	12.49 (2.71)
Missing data on years of schooling	0.04 (0.19)	0.04 (0.20)	0.05 (0.23)	0.02 (0.15)	0.07 (0.25)	0.26 (0.44)
Family income (standardized)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)
Missing data on family income	0.08 (0.27)	0.16 (0.37)	0.19 (0.39)	0.26 (0.44)	0.25 (0.43)	0.15 (0.36)
Social class						
Manager	0.05 (0.22)	0.09 (0.28)	0.12 (0.33)	0.11 (0.32)	0.14 (0.35)	—
Routine nonmanual	0.10 (0.31)	0.17 (0.32)	0.23 (0.42)	0.23 (0.42)	0.25 (0.43)	0.33 (0.47)
Self-employed	0.13 (0.33)	0.11 (0.32)	0.10 (0.30)	0.08 (0.27)	0.07 (0.25)	0.07 (0.26)
Skilled worker	0.10 (0.30)	0.07 (0.25)	0.07 (0.25)	0.06 (0.23)	0.09 (0.28)	0.13 (0.34)
Unskilled worker	0.16 (0.37)	0.14 (0.35)	0.13 (0.34)	0.12 (0.32)	0.12 (0.33)	0.08 (0.28)
Other/missing	0.46 (0.50)	0.42 (0.49)	0.35 (0.48)	0.40 (0.49)	0.33 (0.47)	0.39 (0.49)
Hours of work per week	47.06 (11.20)	40.27 (11.92)	38.59 (10.40)	39.01 (10.26)	38.67 (9.92)	—
Missing data on hours of work	0.48 (0.50)	0.44 (0.50)	0.39 (0.49)	0.41 (0.49)	0.32 (0.47)	—
Marital status (= married/cohabiting)	0.68 (0.46)	0.65 (0.48)	0.55 (0.50)	0.69 (0.46)	0.76 (0.43)	0.71 (0.46)
Children living at home (= yes)	0.26 (0.44)	0.39 (0.49)	0.41 (0.49)	0.43 (0.50)	0.57 (0.50)	0.58 (0.49)
Sex (= female)	0.53 (0.50)	0.50 (0.50)	0.50 (0.50)	0.48 (0.50)	0.50 (0.50)	0.51 (0.50)
Age/10	4.44 (1.76)	4.46 (1.83)	4.16 (1.59)	4.32 (1.74)	4.30 (1.50)	4.53 (1.38)
Total N	4,397	3,723	3,606	1,843	1,566	1,830

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 presents means and standard deviations for the dependent and independent variables included in the analyses. Looking at changes in cultural participation over time, we see that cinema-going is a very popular activity in Denmark, second only to newspaper reading. A stable 50 percent or more of the samples reported going to the cinema in the different survey years. Going to classical music concerts has become a more popular activity over time, with percentage of attendance doubling between 1964 and 1975 and between 1975 and 1987. Going to an opera production is the least frequent activity on our list. In 1975 it is as low as 2 percent, only reaching 9 percent in 1993. A peculiarity with opera attendance is the high percentage of respondents who frequented the opera in 1964. We are not certain how to explain this outlier, and nor do we have any secondary data sources against which we can check this proportion. We are able to report that this is not a coding error. However, as we discuss below, there is empirical evidence that opera attendance is particularly nonelitist in 1964, in the sense that all the latent groups of cultural consumers have a nonzero probability of going to the opera in 1964, whereas in the later surveys, opera attendance is concentrated in the eclectic group only. Consequently, there is evidence that opera-going was simply more widespread across different social groups in 1964 than in subsequent years. Attendance at the theater is stable at 16 percent between 1964 and 1975 but increases significantly to 32 percent in 1987. Attendance drops to 23 percent in 1993 and remains stable in the subsequent two surveys. Attendance at an art museum/gallery is also volatile. The lowest rate of attendance was 16 percent in 1964, and the first significant increase (to 39 percent) occurred in 1987. A subsequent increase in 1993 to 44 percent was followed by a decrease to 32 percent in 1998 and to 26 percent in 2004. Finally, while newspaper reading is the most popular activity, it shows a trend of decreasing rates starting from 92 percent in 1964 and ending at 55 percent in 2004 (probably because more people are reading newspapers on the Internet). Overall, the level of participation appears to be quite high.

There is a wide variation in respondents' patterns of engagement from one activity to another. The present study is limited by the relatively small number of empirical indicators of cultural participation that are comparable across the 1964–2004 period. Two of these activities are commonly considered highbrow: attending classical concerts and the opera; another two are commonly considered lowbrow: going to the cinema and newspaper reading; and the final two are commonly considered "middlebrow": attending an art museum/gallery and going to the theater (see Prieur et al. 2008). The "middlebrow" activities are activities that appeal to a wide segment of the Danish middle classes, and art museums and theaters are typically available in most medium-sized provincial cities in which sizable proportions of the Danish middle class live. By contrast, opera and venues for other highbrow activities are typically only found in the larger cities, thereby limiting their supply. There are relatively few art cinemas in Denmark, especially outside the larger cities, suggesting that most cinema-going can be regarded as non-highbrow. The indicators available in our data sets are limited in capturing precise differences

between highbrow, middlebrow, and lowbrow culture. For example, in most countries, cinema and newspaper reading are internally stratified into high and low types, but this distinction is not available in our data. Nevertheless, the six indicators used here capture diverse types of cultural participation that are located in different places in the cultural hierarchy and that receive different degrees of popularity as evidenced by the frequency of attendance. In addition, as we show below, the identification of latent groups of cultural consumers is fairly consistent over time.

Methodological Approach

Latent Class Analysis

The aim of the empirical analysis is to identify groups of cultural consumers and to analyze how the relative size and socioeconomic correlates of these groups change over the 1964–2004 period. In particular, we are interested in identifying and tracking changes in the hypothesized group of cultural eclectics. We use Latent Class Analysis (LCA) and Latent Class Regression (LCR) in the empirical analysis. Both approaches have been used in previous studies on cultural consumption (e.g., Van Rees et al. 1999; Alderson, Junisbai, and Heacock 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a,b). LCA is a statistical method that uses respondents' dichotomous answers on the six indicators of cultural participation to identify latent groups with similar response profiles, that is, similar participation patterns (Heinen 1996). The LCA method then captures qualitatively rather than quantitatively different response patterns. LCR extends LCA with a regression model in which explanatory variables are allowed to affect the probability of belonging to each of the different latent classes (Agresti 2002). LCR enables us to analyze, first, the extent to which membership in the latent groups of cultural consumers depends on the socioeconomic and demographic variables and, second, the extent to which stratification patterns have changed over the period 1964–2004. The LCR model is parameterized as a multinomial logit model and can be thought of as a multinomial logit model in which the dependent variable (latent class membership) is indirectly observed.

Analyses

The analyses section is divided into three subsections. In the first subsection, we discuss the number of latent classes that are required to account for the total patterns of association in the cultural participation indicators in each of the six survey years. In the second subsection, we offer a substantive interpretation of the different latent groups of cultural consumers. In the third subsection, we pool the data from all survey years and analyze how the socioeconomic and demographic variables stratify the different latent groups and how stratification patterns have changed over the period 1964–2004.

How Many Latent Cultural Classes?

Table 2 shows fit statistics for LCA models with 2–5 latent classes. The table reports the value of the minus 2 log-likelihood (–2LL), the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). With all three fit statistics, smaller values indicate better model fit.

TABLE 2. Model Fit for Different Latent Class Models

	1964	1975	1987	1993	1998	2004
2 Latent classes						
–2 LL	21,406	16,904	17,454	10,932	9,324	9,612
BIC	21,515	17,011	17,559	11,031	9,421	9,711
AIC	21,432	16,930	17,480	10,959	9,351	9,639
3 Latent classes						
–2 LL	21,266	16,804	17,338	10,866	9,278	9,552
BIC	21,434	16,968	17,499	11,017	9,426	9,702
AIC	21,306	16,844	17,378	10,906	9,319	9,592
4 Latent classes						
–2 LL	21,240	16,780	17,298	10,830	9,250	9,514
BIC	21,468	17,003	17,516	11,034	9,449	9,717
AIC	21,295	16,835	17,352	10,885	9,304	9,568
5 Latent classes						
–2 LL	21,228	16,762	17,270	10,822	9,236	9,506
BIC	21,513	17,042	17,545	11,077	9,487	9,761
AIC	21,296	16,831	17,339	10,890	9,305	9,574

–2LL, minus 2 log-likelihood; BIC, Bayesian Information Criterion; AIC, Akaike Information Criterion.

There is some heterogeneity across the different survey years regarding the optimal number of latent classes. Generally, three-class models always outperform two-class models in terms of model fit. However, the AIC and BIC provide contradictory evidence as to whether four classes are preferable to three classes. In all survey years, the BIC becomes negative when moving from three to four classes, thereby suggesting that we have overfitted the data. By contrast, the AIC indicates that LCA models with four classes have a modestly better fit to the data than models with three classes. Consequently, the statistical evidence supports both three- and four-class models. Upon closer inspection, the difference between the two solutions is that in the three-class model, the "middle" cultural consumption group which we label "moderate" below is split into two different subgroups. These two subgroups differ in the extent to which they consume middlebrow and, to some extent, highbrow culture. At the same time, the two more extreme consumption groups, which below we label "eclectic" and "limited," are clearly identified in all survey years irrespective of whether we use three or four latent classes. Since we are mainly interested in the eclectic cultural consumption group, and because we prefer a more parsimonious model, we believe there is little to gain from preferring the more complex four-class models to three-class models.[3] However, in the 1964 and 1998 surveys, there are substantial differences in the estimated proportion of the sample which belongs to the eclectic class depending on whether we use models with three or four latent classes. As a consequence, below we report estimated sizes of the eclectic consumption class from both three- and four-class LCA models.

TABLE 3. Conditional Response Probabilities for Three-Class Latent Class Analysis Models

	1964			1975		
Year	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited
Cinema	0.75	1.00	0.38	0.79	0.92	0.64
Classical concert	0.19	0.02	0.00	0.37	0.23	0.01
Opera	0.77	0.10	0.15	0.82	0.00	0.00
Theater play	0.52	0.29	0.04	1.00	0.45	0.06
Art museum/gallery	0.59	0.15	0.06	0.62	0.71	0.09
Reads newspaper	0.97	0.83	0.94	0.85	0.89	0.78
Estimated class size	16	19	65	2	20	78
	1987			1993		
Year	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited
Cinema	0.81	0.74	0.38	0.81	0.76	0.34
Classical concert	0.76	0.13	0.01	0.77	0.24	0.03
Opera	0.56	0.05	0.00	0.81	0.06	0.02
Theater play	0.86	0.46	0.08	0.74	0.46	0.05
Art museum/gallery	0.94	0.59	0.08	0.96	0.80	0.17
Reads newspaper	0.94	0.85	0.79	0.86	0.84	0.69
Estimated class size	10	42	48	7	34	59
	1998			2004		
Year	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited	Eclectic	Moderate	Limited
Cinema	0.81	0.76	0.46	0.83	0.92	0.55
Classical concert	0.66	0.00	0.06	0.69	0.15	0.05
Opera	0.34	0.04	0.00	0.60	0.01	0.00
Theater play	0.55	0.68	0.00	0.71	0.44	0.04
Art museum/gallery	0.80	0.42	0.13	0.81	0.49	0.10
Reads newspaper	0.82	0.72	0.64	0.76	0.63	0.50
Estimated class size	19	20	61	10	25	65

Three Types of Cultural Consumers

The profiles of the three-class LCA models are presented in Table 3, including estimated conditional probabilities of participating in each of the six activities that serve as indicators of cultural participation and the relative sizes of the latent classes under this model in each survey year. We have labeled the three latent classes (1) the eclectic class, (2) the moderate class, and (3) the limited class.

The first class, the cultural eclectics, is characterized by a relatively high probability of attending all six cultural activities. In particular, what distinguishes the eclectic group from the other two groups throughout 1964–2004 is that, in addition to the four activities that can be considered non-highbrow, eclectics are much more likely to attend the two highbrow cultural activities: opera and classical concerts. Although the eclectic group is different from Peterson and Kern's (1996) original operationalization, it

remains quite close to the theoretical meaning of openness to cultural diversity in signifying an openness to appreciating different activities and crossing boundaries in the cultural hierarchy (see also Bryson 1997; Van Rees et al. 1999; Warde et al. 1999; Holbrook et al. 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Emmison 2003; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a,b).

The second group, the moderate class, is characterized by a nonzero probability of going to the cinema, the theater, art museums/galleries, and reading a newspaper. Thus, compared to the eclectics, the moderates do not participate nearly as much in highbrow cultural activities (opera, classical concerts) but are likely to attend middlebrow activities such as going to a play or an art museum or gallery. As noted above, if we estimate LCA models with four latent classes, the moderate class is divided into two subgroups. These two groups are substantively similar but differ somewhat with regard to the degree to which they consume highbrow and middlebrow activities. Consequently, in terms of participation patterns, the two subgroups might be regarded as "upper" moderate and "lower" moderate consumers.

The third group, the limited class, is characterized by engaging only in the "lowbrow" cinema-going activity and the popular newspaper reading activity. Members of this group have a low probability of engaging in the middlebrow activities of going to the theater and art museums/galleries and the highbrow activities of going to the opera and classical concerts. Consequently, the limited class is the least active cultural group in our analysis.

The general pattern of consumption groups that emerges is one that distinguishes between categories that have been reported in previous research in other countries and research using different methodologies. First, we have a group of individuals that engages in one or two activities from the analyzed list. This category resonates with reports on paucivores, univores, or inactives (Alderson et al. 2007; Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a,b). Second, we have a "middle" group that engages in a variety of activities that do not typically include highbrow activities, that is, "semi-omnivores." These consumers have also sometimes been labeled temperate (García-Álvarez et al. 2007). Third, we have a group that engages in a variety of activities, including highbrow activities. These cultural consumers resemble the cultural omnivores identified in previous research. Together, our results indicate that overall cultural consumption patterns in Denmark are quite similar to those found in other countries. Finally, another interesting observation in comparison with other studies is that in none of the survey years did we find a latent class that is exclusively highbrow.

Trends over Time

Figure 1 plots the sizes of the latent groups over the period 1964–2004. The cultural eclectic class is of particular interest in our analysis. As described above, because the estimated size of the eclectic class differs in the 1964 and 1998 surveys depending on whether we use three or four latent classes, we plot the sizes of the eclectic class using both three- and four-class models. Our results from LCA models which use three classes show that in 1964, the eclectic class comprises 16 percent of all respondents; in 1975, 2

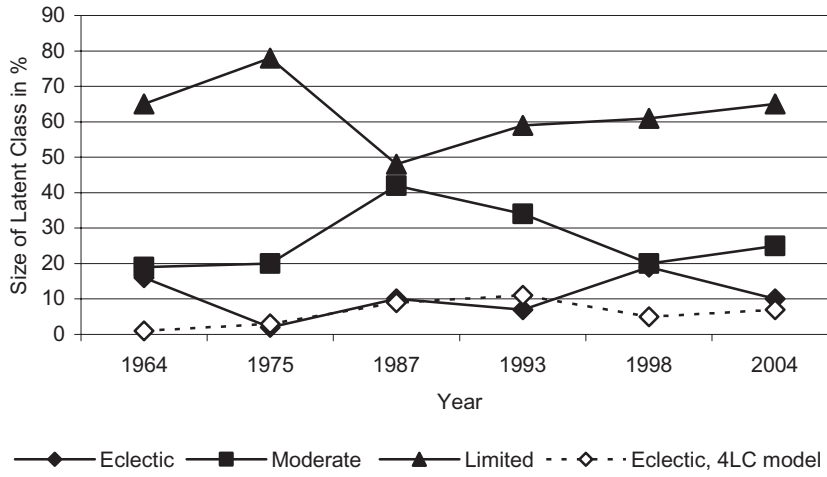

FIGURE 1. Estimated Sizes of Latent Cultural Consumption Classes, 1964–2004.

percent; in 1987, 10 percent; in 1993, 7 percent; in 1998, 19 percent; and in 2004, 10 percent. In the models which use four classes, the estimated sizes of the eclectic class are almost identical to the three-class models in all years except 1964 and 1998 in which the estimated share of cultural eclectics is much lower (1 percent in 1964 and 5 percent in 1998). We provide a possible explanation of the different shares of eclectics in 1964 and 1998 shortly. First, we wish to point out our main cross-time finding, which is that irrespective of whether we use the three- or four-class LCA models, it appears that cultural eclecticism has existed in Denmark throughout the period 1964–2004. Consequently, although the absolute size of the cultural eclectic group is low relative to the other cultural consumer groups, our results suggest that cultural eclecticism is not a recent phenomenon in Denmark (e.g., Peterson and Rossman 2006). Rather, it appears that cultural eclecticism has a much longer history. Furthermore, results for cross-time trends, and especially those based on the four-class models, might be interpreted to suggest that the share of the population which belongs to the cultural eclectic group increased during the early observation period (1964 and 1975) and stabilized at around 10 percent of the population from the late 1980s onward. This result supports previous research from the United States, which also reports a gradual increase in cultural eclecticism over time (e.g., Peterson 2005; Peterson and Rossman 2006).

The relatively high number of cultural eclectics in the three-class models in 1964 and 1998 appear anomalous in this interpretation. However, a closer inspection of the three- and four-class models in 1964 and 1998 suggest that in these years, the four-class model is better able to distinguish "true" eclectics (i.e., respondents with a high probability of attending *all* six cultural activities) from "semi-omnivorous" moderates (i.e., moderate respondents with relatively high probabilities of attending most but not all activities). In the three-class models in 1964 and 1998 some of these "semi-omnivorous" moderates are most likely lumped together with the "true" eclectics, meaning that the eclectic group

appears artificially large in these years. For example, in the three-class model for 1998 (see Table 3) the rather large eclectic group is characterized by lower conditional probabilities of attending the opera and theater plays than eclectics in 1993 and 2004; that is, the eclectic group is less distinct in 1998 than in 1993 and 2004. The same situation applies in 1964. Our findings naturally raise the issue of how stable the different cultural consumption groups are over time. Given the very long time span we cover, there is a risk that the substantive content of some of our empirical indicators has changed over time (e.g., newspapers in the 1960s and 2000s are very different in terms of content and target audiences). Thus, cultural eclectics in the 1960s and 1970s might be qualitatively different from cultural eclectics in the 1990s. However, while this risk exists and we must interpret our empirical results cautiously, the results are nonetheless quite stable across different model specifications and in different survey years, thereby suggesting that the three cultural consumption groups are in fact discernible in the different survey years.

Figure 1 also shows that the share of moderate cultural consumers in the Danish population remained stable at around 20 percent of the adult population in 1964 and 1975, then increased significantly in 1987 and gradually returned to about 20 percent during the 1990s. (Substantive results do not change much if, by using LCA models with four classes, we allow for two rather than one class of moderate consumers.) Furthermore, the share of limited cultural consumers increased from 1964 to 1975, declined in 1987, and gradually increased throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Overall, our cross-time results suggest that while cultural eclecticism has existed in Denmark at least since the 1960s, then the main development in cultural consumption patterns over the past four decades concerns the changing balance between inactive and moderate cultural consumers. Here, we find irregular trends in the 1960s and 1970s but consistent evidence that limited cultural consumption has been on the increase since the late 1980s at the expense of moderate cultural consumption.

Multivariate Analysis

We are further interested in analyzing the correlates of membership of the different latent classes in order to depict profiles of cultural consumers in each latent group. In addition, we wish to analyze whether the different cultural consumption groups, and especially the eclectic cultural consumption group, have become more or less exclusive over time in terms of its constituents' socioeconomic characteristics. Our analytic strategy is to fit LCR models using the individual socioeconomic and demographic characteristics as explanatory variables. Furthermore, to provide formal statistical tests of whether the relationship between each of the socioeconomic variables such as family income, education, and social class position and cultural consumption practices has changed over the period 1964–2004, we pool the data from all survey waves and test for interaction effects between the survey year indicators (using 1964 as the reference category) and the socioeconomic variables.

Table 4 presents results from a baseline LCR analysis with three latent classes. In this model, we use the limited cultural consumption group as the reference category, and the table shows the estimated log-odds of belonging to the eclectic and moderate groups

TABLE 4. Results from Latent Class Regressions

	Eclectic	Moderate
1964[a]	—	—
1975	−0.801 (0.185)***	1.936 (0.220)***
1987	−0.765 (0.169)***	−0.182 (0.230)
1993	−0.853 (0.166)***	−0.549 (0.235)*
1998	−1.213 (0.185)***	0.390 (0.265)
2004	−1.073 (0.266)***	2.333 (0.435)***
Family income	0.593 (0.053)***	0.306 (0.061)***
Years of schooling	0.506 (0.019)***	0.138 (0.024)***
Social class		
Manager	2.225 (0.211)***	0.713 (0.208)**
Routine nonmanual	1.560 (0.185)***	0.546 (0.140)***
Self-employed	1.304 (0.198)***	−0.184 (0.180)
Skilled worker	0.172 (0.244)	0.327 (0.161)*
Unskilled worker[a]	—	—
Hours work	−0.011 (0.005)*	0.006 (0.005)
Marital status	−1.069 (0.096)***	−0.639 (0.124)***
Children	−1.047 (0.091)***	−0.271 (0.108)*
Sex (= female)	0.506 (0.080)***	0.098 (0.097)
Age/10	−0.279 (0.044)***	−1.352 (0.086)***
Constant	−3.704 (0.391)***	3.524 (0.366)***
Model log-likelihood	−40,762	

Notes: Log-odds estimates with standard errors in parenthesis. Reference class is "limited." Models estimated on pooled data set. Models also control for missing data on years of schooling, family income, social class, and hours of work.

N = 16,315.

[a]Reference group.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

relative to the limited group. We later introduce interaction effects to test for cross-time changes in the relationship between the socioeconomic variables and cultural consumption practices.

Table 4 shows that all three major socioeconomic variables—family income, education, and social class—differentiate between the three groups of cultural consumers. First, we find highly significant positive effects of family income on the probability of belonging to the eclectic and moderate consumption groups relative to the limited group. This result indicates that cultural eclectics and moderates tend to have higher family income than respondents who exhibit limited cultural participation. To illustrate this income effect, in Figure 2 we use our LCR estimates to calculate the predicted probability of belonging to each of the three cultural consumer groups for respondents with family incomes ranging from 2 standard deviations below mean family income to 2 standard deviations above mean family income. When calculating predicted

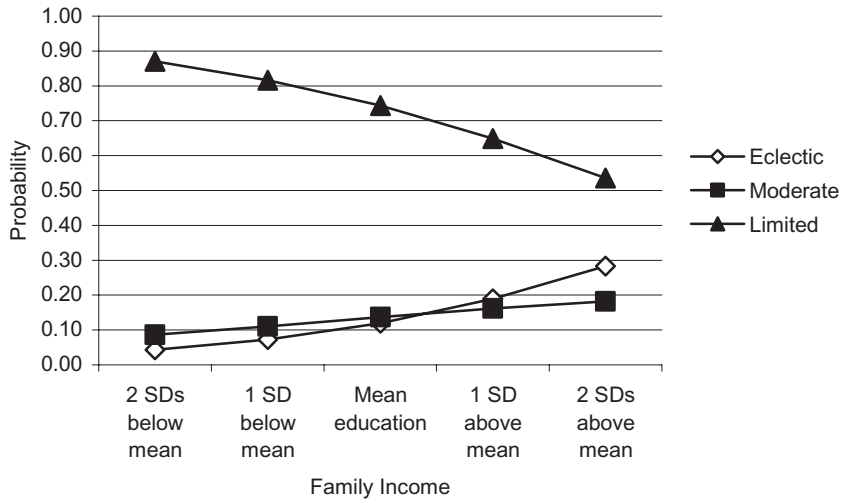

FIGURE 2. Effect of Family Income on Cultural Consumption Patterns, 1993.

probabilities, we fix the other socioeconomic and demographic characteristics at the following values to approximate an "average" respondent: woman of mean age (41 years of age), mean level of education, routine nonmanual social class with mean working hours, married with children, and survey year is 1993. Figure 2 clearly shows that the probability of being an eclectic cultural consumer increases with rising family income while the probability of being a limited consumer decreases quite substantially.[4] By contrast, the probability of belonging to the moderate group is only weakly related to respondents' family income. We also test for interaction effects between family income and survey year and find that the effect of family income differs statistically significantly in the different survey years (a likelihood-ratio test (LRT) with chi-square = 70 and 20 degrees of freedom is significant at $p < .001$). However, while the interaction effects are statistically significant, the substantive differences in the effect of family income on cultural consumption in the different survey years is not very different from the overall effect illustrated in Figure 2 (results not shown but available from the authors upon request). Consequently, our results suggest that the income gradient in cultural consumption practices has not changed much over the past 40 years.

Table 4 also reports that level of education is statistically significantly related to cultural consumption patterns and furthermore that those with high levels of education are more likely to exhibit eclectic cultural consumption patterns compared to those with low levels of education. Figure 3 illustrates this effect using the same fixed socioeconomic and demographic characteristics as those in Figure 2 (but now fixing family income at its mean and allowing for respondents' level of education to vary). Again, we not only find that cultural eclecticism is strongly related to level of education, but also that the probability of being a moderate cultural consumer is largely independent of respondents' education. A test for interaction effects between education and survey year

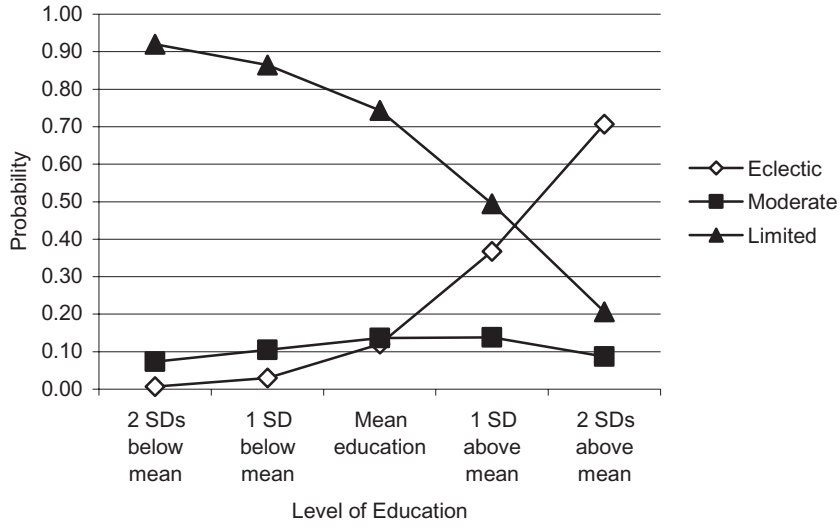

FIGURE 3. Effect of Education on Cultural Consumption Patterns, 1993.

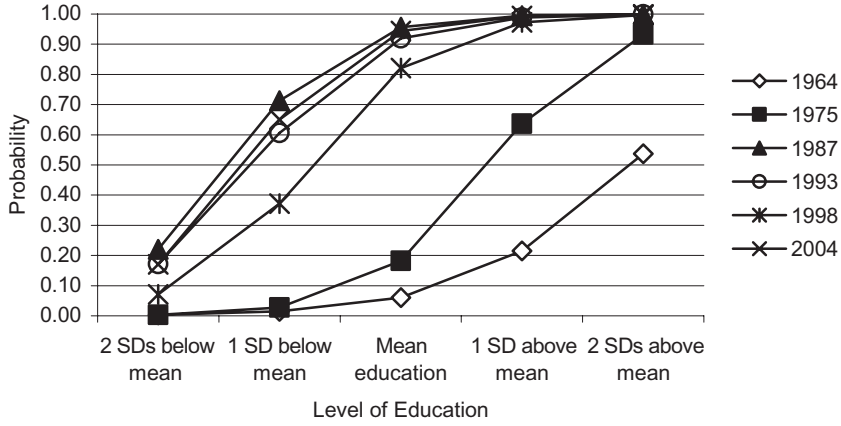

FIGURE 4. Predicted Probability of Belonging to Eclectic Consumption Class, by Education and Year.

is highly significant (LRT with chi-square = 220 and 20 degrees of freedom is significant at $p < .001$), thereby suggesting that the effect of education on cultural consumption patterns is different in the different survey years. In Figure 4 we illustrate the different educational gradients in cultural eclecticism in the different survey years. Interestingly, the figure shows that in the 1964 and 1975 surveys, there is a clear educational gradient all the way from 2 standard deviations below mean education to 2 standard deviations above mean education. Consequently, in the early surveys, the educational gradient exists across the entire distribution of educational attainment. By contrast,

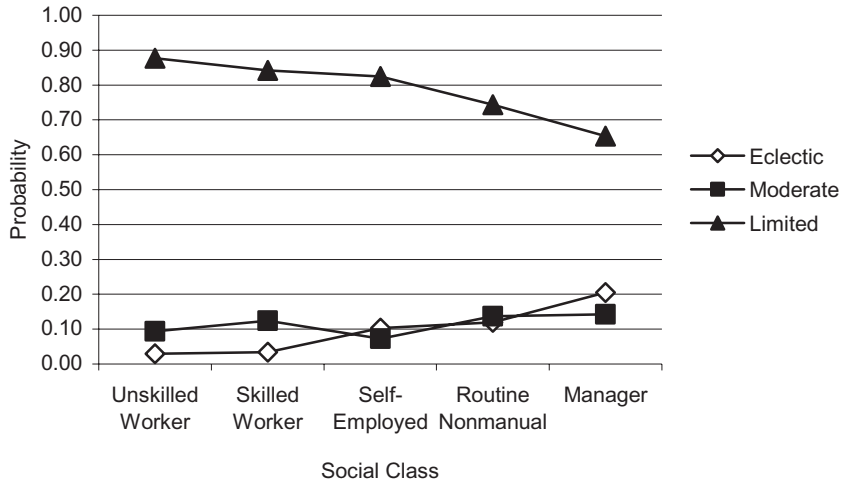

FIGURE 5. Effect of Social Class on Cultural Consumption Patterns, 1993.

from 1987 onward, the educational gradient in cultural eclecticism is strong from 2 standard deviations below mean education and up to mean education but is much weaker from mean education and up. Consequently, in the later survey years, there are large differences by education in the probability of being an eclectic consumer among the poorly educated but not among the highly educated.[5] In substantive terms, this result suggests that the educational gradient in cultural eclecticism has decreased over time, albeit in a nonlinear way.

Finally, Table 4 reports that, as expected, respondents in higher social class positions are more likely than respondents in lower social class positions to be eclectic and moderate cultural consumers. In Figure 5, we illustrate the social class effect on cultural consumption patterns using the same fixed characteristics as those in the previous figures (but now fixing family income and education at their mean values and allowing for social class position to vary). Our interpretation of the figure is that the social class gradient in cultural consumptions patterns is less outspoken than the income and educational gradient, most likely because the class effects are net of family income and education effects. We also tested for interaction effects between social class and survey year and, again, we found that the interactions were highly significant (LRT with chi-square = 174 and 48 degrees of freedom is significant at $p < .001$). However, as was the case with the family income gradient, the addition of interaction effects does not change much the general picture presented in Figure 5.

To summarize our main results, we find that cultural consumption practices in Denmark are highly stratified based on income, education, and social class position. Throughout the 40-year period under observation, cultural eclectics consistently have higher family income, more education, and populate higher social class positions than other types of cultural consumers. This finding accords with previous research, although our observational period is much longer. We also find empirical evidence that the

socioeconomic gradient in cultural consumption has remained strong over time. Consequently, there is little evidence that income and social class differences in cultural participation have declined over time. We do, however, find that the educational gradient in eclectic cultural consumption has become somewhat less strong. Nevertheless, taking into account the growth of the welfare state, increases in income redistribution and the proliferation of public subsidization of culture which happened during the period we study, it is remarkable that socioeconomic gradients in cultural participation have not declined more in Denmark than we observe. We offer an interpretation of why this might be the case in the discussion section.

In addition to these results, the effects of the control variables in our LCR model mostly replicate results from previous research. Here, we find that, compared to limited consumers, eclectic cultural consumers tend to work fewer hours per week, are less likely to be married and have children living at home, and are also more like to be women and to be younger. Likewise, compared to limited consumers, moderate cultural consumers tend not to be married and have children living at home and tend also to be younger (e.g., Warde et al. 1999; Holbrook et al. 2002; López-Sintas and García-Álvarez 2002; Emmison 2003).

Several limitations in the present analysis should be mentioned. First, because of limitations in the number of cultural consumption indicators that are available in all survey years, we are not able to provide a detailed analysis of the different cultural consumption groups. Consequently, our analysis is limited by a rather crude measurement of the different cultural consumption groups. Fortunately, even with our limited range of cultural consumption indicators, we find qualitatively similar cultural consumption groups as those which have been reported in previous research. Second, the long time perspective we cover in the analysis means that the substantive content of some of our cultural indicators may have changed over time. For example, the types of films shown in cinemas and the format of newspapers have changed from 1964 to 2004. Arguably, these trends may also influence our results. However, stability of concepts and empirical indicators is a concern in all longitudinal research.

DISCUSSION

Our main findings can be summarized as follows. First, we have found that a group of eclectic cultural consumers existed already in the 1960s in Denmark and that, after an increase in numbers in the 1970s, the group of eclectic cultural consumers has since the 1980s comprised around 10 percent of the adult population. Second, we have demonstrated a high overall level of social stratification in the degree of cultural eclecticism. Third, we have found that social stratification in cultural eclecticism has remained remarkably strong over the past 40 years.

The first research question we addressed in this article concerns the trend in cultural consumption patterns that is characterized by an early expansion of cultural eclecticism. Although our results in some survey years depend on whether we allow for three or four latent classes of cultural consumers, the findings suggest that eclectic cultural

consumption existed already in the 1960s (although at this time making up only a very small proportion of the population) and, after what appears to be a modest increase during the 1970s, it reached around 10 percent of the Danish population in the 1980s and has remained at that level ever since. This may indicate that the adoption of eclectic tastes and cultural participation habits did not occur through a dramatic change in the zeitgeist of modern, industrialized societies. Rather, at least in Denmark, it was a slow and gradual process that had already begun in the decade in which Bourdieu was collecting data for the analyses reported in *Distinction*, which emphasized the exclusionary character of elite consumption. This raises the question of whether Bourdieu's claim for homology was based on data that were peculiar to respondents from Paris and its suburbs and that cannot be easily applied in other contexts. There probably were cultural eclectics or dissonants in France in the 1960s, as argued by Lahire (2004) and Ollivier (2008), as well as in 19th-century United States (Lehuu 2000). Our finding for Denmark that eclectic cultural consumption has increased somewhat over time corresponds with findings from research on the United States (Peterson 2005). However, Peterson (2005) also found that levels of cultural omnivorousness decreased in 2002 compared to 1992, which suggests that the United States might be going into a "post-omnivorous" period. By contrast, our results for Denmark indicate that the proportion of the population which exhibits eclectic cultural consumption has remained largely unchanged since the late 1980s. Maybe the stable social and cultural environment in Denmark, coupled with low levels of migration, explain this steady development.

The second research question addressed here concerns the association of cultural participation patterns with dimensions of social stratification. We observe significant socioeconomic gradients in cultural consumption patterns by income, education, and social class. Furthermore, and addressing our third research question, with the exception of a decreasing educational gradient in eclectic cultural consumption, we observe only a limited degree of attenuation of the socioeconomic effects over the 40-year period under study. The relative stability of the socioeconomic gradient in cultural consumption practices is perplexing in the Danish context, which has witnessed several developments during the period we study. The comprehensive welfare state has expanded significantly since the 1960s, which resulted in a decrease in income inequality and an expansion of the educational system. Coupled with a process of income redistribution and increasing wealth, these changes should have lead to lower socioeconomic gradients.[6] In addition, in Denmark, the model of social citizenship includes both social and cultural integration (Fridberg 2003). As a consequence, cultural markets are subsidized by the state in order to promote equality in cultural and well as in social status. These subsidies mean that cultural offerings such as opera or classical concerts have become more accessible to low-income groups, which in turn would be expected to lead to a decrease in the socioeconomic gradient in cultural eclecticism. Our analysis suggests this has not been the case. There is scarce evidence with which to compare our results. In their analysis of omnivorousness in the United States, López-Sintas and Katz-Gerro (2005) find that the effect of education on omnivorousness is fairly similar in 1982, 1992, and 2002. By contrast, the effect of income does not show any consistent pattern

over time. Assuming that education is a proxy for socioeconomic resources in general, this result is somewhat similar to ours. Other longitudinal studies do not test for changes over time in the socioeconomic gradients in cultural consumption patterns (Van Eijck and van Rees 2000; García-Álvarez et al. 2007).

In attempting to understand why the association between socioeconomic variables and cultural consumption has not attenuated in response to social and cultural policy, we posit that these policies can affect inequalities in cultural consumption in two opposite ways. The common argument in the literature is that a strong welfare state helps *weaken* expressions of cultural consumption that are based solely on economic condition. The welfare state can be a decisive equalizing force (Warde 1994; Castells 1996), for example, in decomposing class divisions (Clark, Lipset, and Rempel 1993) and in lessening the degree of overlap between social position and lifestyles. Moreover, cultural policy can shape the legitimacy of different types of culture through the allocation of financial and educational resources, thereby affecting not only availability and accessibility but also the visibility and legitimacy of different cultural genres and domains. However, there is also an alternative view, arguing that the welfare state may create a *stronger* link between social position and cultural consumption, when members of the elite who find it increasingly hard to distinguish themselves according to material consumption may respond by distinguishing themselves through the cultural sphere (Sobel 1983; Featherstone 1991; Katz-Gerro 2002). State activities aimed at decreasing economic and educational inequality may result in a stronger linkage between social position and cultural behavior. Possibly, our finding for Denmark that socioeconomic gradients in cultural consumption do not diminish over time is evidence in support of this expectation. Furthermore, cultural behavior should not only be interpreted in the context of inequality and distinction but also in the context of the cultural toolbox that serves individuals in contemporary globalized postindustrial society. In this society, eclectic tastes are almost a necessity for individuals who maintain diverse social networks; eclectic knowledge of culture can be used in interactions with individuals from different backgrounds, to bridge various culturally diverse niches, and to facilitate management of various social settings (Erickson 1996; Warde, Wright, and Gayo-Cal 2007).

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NOTES

[1]Lahire (2004, 2008) has argued that every social class is involved in dissonant cultural profiles to a certain degree, implying that omnivorousness is not exclusive to the elite.

[2]In the 2004 survey, it was not possible to identify managers and this class category was dropped. Judging by the distribution of the class variable, it seems that this category is captured in 2004 by the routine nonmanual category. Since we are interested in the general pattern of the class effect and not in the specific differences between categories, we do not suspect that this exception is of much significance.

[3]In the LCR models presented below, models with four classes are much more complex to estimate than models with three latent classes. It is also for this reason we prefer models with three latent classes.

[4]When interpreting Figure 2 and later figures, it should be kept in mind that the effect of the socioeconomic variables is portrayed on the *x*-axis (i.e., in the different income "slopes" for each cultural consumption group) and not on the *y*-axis (i.e., the absolute size of each group). We could easily change the predicted absolute group size by setting other fixed socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (which would not change the income "slopes").

[5]When we plot the probability of belonging to the limited cultural consumption group by survey year (i.e., similar to Figure 4 but with instead plotting the limited class, not shown), we find the same pattern but, not surprisingly, now reversed.

[6]In Denmark total public social expenditure as percentage of GDP, a rough measure of the size of the welfare state, increased from around 10 percent of GDP in 1960 to around 32 percent in 2005. There are no consistent time series data for historical developments in measures of income dispersion such as the GINI index of income inequality. In 2005 the GINI coefficient for Denmark was 24 and was among the lowest in the world (by comparison, in 2007, the GINI coefficient for the United States was 45).

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