

Black cultural capital, status positioning, and schooling conflicts for low-income African American youth.

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# "Black" Cultural Capital, Status Positioning, and Schooling Conflicts for Low-Income African American Youth

Prudence L. Carter

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## Abstract

Previous literature has failed to empirically demonstrate the conceptual distinction that social scientists make between "dominant" and "non-dominant" cultural capital. This article provides evidence of the coexistence of these two forms of capital within the social and academic lives of poor ethnic minority students. Using in-depth interviews with 44 low-income African American youth, I illustrate how these students negotiate their perceptions of the differential values placed by educators on these two forms of capital. Often, scholars research the effects of (dominant) cultural capital in social reproduction across various social classes, but not the influence of (non-dominant) cultural capital on status relations within socially marginalized communities. By taking into account the interplay between these two forms of capital in the lives of low-income minority students, researchers might develop a more complete and nuanced understanding of how culture ultimately affects the prospects of mobility for lower status social groups.

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