

M MAKE A GIFT of Cultural [Re]-Production?:

An Ethnographic Explication of the Soccer
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Soccer Fields of Cultural [Re]-Production?: An Ethnographic Explication of the "Soccer Mom"



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Abstract

ABSTRACT Title of dissertation: SOCCER FIELDS OF CULTURAL [RE]- PRODUCTION?: AN

ETHNOGRAPHIC EXPLICATION OF THE "SOCCER MOM" Lisa Swanson, Doctor of Philosophy, 2003 Dissertation directed by: Professor David Andrews Department of Kinesiology As noted by Zwick and Andrews, the "suburban soccer field represents a transparent window into the workings and experiences of power and privilege within contemporary America" (1999, p. 222). The purpose of this study was to examine the cultural practices of "soccer moms" as a segment of America's privileged, suburban, upper-middle class. According to Vavrus (2000), current depictions and understandings of "soccer moms" simplify maternal experience and homogenize women; therefore, a more complete picture of this phenomenon needed to be produced. A multifaceted ethnographic approach was employed in order to generate a substantial body of empirical data. Data collection procedures included fieldwork, participant observation, survey, and both structured and unstructured interviews. The results of this research shed light on the complexities of the "soccer mom" role by problematizing the taken for granted assumptions about upper-middle class women. In analyzing specific class practices, the researcher relied on Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theories related to the interplay between "habitus" and several forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social) within various cultural fields. The researcher provides an analysis of the ways in which the subjects reproduce their class status in and through the cultural experiences of their children. Ultimately, the results of this research contribute to an understanding of "how systems of domination co-construct one another, and how we are 'enlisted', materially and ideologically in their continued operation" (Frankenberg, 1994, p. 75).

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