Dear Sonia, Alicia and All,

First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Sonia Livingstone and Dr. Alicia Blum-Ross for agreeing to present a chapter of their forthcoming book to the list. I am delighted to be acting as discussant.

I also would like to thank them for taking the time to explain the structure of the book and its overall epistemological and methodological framework. I can't wait to read it.

I deeply enjoyed reading the chapter, I found the empirical data exciting and fascinating and was curious to see how you made sense of it theoretically. As I was reading your work, I kept thinking that this must have been an incredibly difficult chapter to write. The issue of social class and inequality in relation to families and digital media is not only theoretically complex because we find ourselves engaging with key questions about the meaning of social class, inequality and social mobility; it is also complex because when we approach it empirically and we consider the lived experience of families, we are confronted with an incredible messiness. Too many different, interconnected and very personal narratives come into play, which include intergenerational meaning-making, perceptions of everyday struggles and of course imaginaries of the future. Your chapter beautifully brings together all these different dimensions, and it was a real pleasure to read.

As it can be expected, I have few comments and questions that I would like to share with you and the list, which hopefully can plant the seeds for an exciting discussion.

* Qualitative Interviews/ The Position of the Researchers /

As far as I understood it, and correct me if I am wrong, the chapter is based on 73 in-depth interviews with different families across London. Although based on interviews, the chapter has a strong ethnographic feeling to it. When I was reading it, I could picture the doors, the living rooms, I could see the parents talking to you. What I felt was missing, was a more in-depth self-reflexive description about your positioning as researchers.I am aware that self-reflexive practices are usually attributed to ethnographic methods and that – especially in media and communication studies - we rarely find them amongst those scholars who carry out qualitative interviews. However, I really think the chapter would gain from a more thorough description about your role as researchers. Specifically, I would be particularly interested in finding out a bit more about

1) Your relationship with the families. Was it a one-off contact or did you have more prolonged relationships with some participants?

2) The role your own understandings and experiences of social class and mobility played in your research. There is a particular section, where I think the reader would gain from a better insight into your own positioning. "/As a single mother earning less than £15,000 a year working as an in- home care assistant we had assumed that Leila had wanted to be interviewed in part for the honorarium on offer, and yet she seemed taken aback at the voucher, then asking whether she could use it to buy a bicycle for her daughters/." (p.5) It seems to me that your assumptions have been challenged by the encounter with your participants, and it would be great to see a bit more of this.

3) Your methodological choices. Can you tell us a bit more about the choice of the media tour? It sounds like a great idea. Can you also maybe elaborate on the choice of 'paying an honorarium'? Was the honorarium for all participants?

* Social Class/Digital Divide/ Social Mobility

Your chapter raises a lot of issues in terms of the challenges we face when we want to engage with the concept of class at both theoretical and empirical levels. Drawing on Bourdieu, you mention the issue of cultural capital, and you show that low income/highly-educated parents do not fit into rigid classifications of class. You also challenge, at least in part, Lareau's discussion on intensive parenting and the difference between working and middle class families. However, I have some questions for you in this regard:

 * How did you approach the issue of class with the families you worked with? Did you talk about it? How did they define themselves in terms of class?

* Overall, in your chapter, you seem to have chosen to focus on the empirical data and do not dwell on theoretical definitions. I personally think this works beautifully. However, at times I was really curious to find out more about specific concepts. In particular, I am curious to understand why when you talked about social inequality you chose not to engage with the concept of digital divide.

I can't wait to read the other parts of the book where you tackle the idea of future. In this chapter, however, it seemed to me that most of your participants discussed the use of digital media with reference to the future in terms of social mobility. Digital media enable education = future employability. In the chapter, however, I find that you only briefly engage with the notion of social mobility, when you mention statistics. IAre there any other sections in the book where you explore imaginaries of digital futures by looking at the concept of social mobility?

I have many more questions and thoughts, but I will leave it here and I am looking forward to the open discussion.

Thank you again so much for the paper

All best
Veronica

UCU Strike/ Closing Note: I would like to thank Philipp for stepping in and opening the E-Seminar as a gesture of solidarity given the fact that – as a member of UCU – I am supporting the strike to protect our pensions. If you would like to know more about the strike action you can find all the full details here (https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/9242/UCU-announces-14-strike-dates-at-61-universities-in-pensions-row). I would like to specify, that I am writing the comments on Mar the 2nd and I am not breaching the terms of the strike.