THE IMPORTANCE OF BOURDIEU

Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde

Pierre Bourdieu was probably the most eminent sociologist of the final quarter of the twentieth century in the world. He was also probably the most controversial. He had long aroused fierce passions within French sociological circles. There he had become increasingly well known from the 1960s and his eminent position in the French sociological field was marked by his election to the most prestigious of professorships in sociology at the *Collège de France* in 1981.[1] The personalised tensions and oppositions that typically fracture the intellectual field in France, which result in clan-like solidarities, stoke the fires of hostility and controversy. No account of his impact in France would be adequate without some understanding of the personalised bases of intellectual alignments and allegiances, with Alain Touraine and Raymond Boudon providing Bourdieu's main competitors and antagonists (Robbins, 2000; Grenfell, 2004; Fuller, 2006). As a prominent figure in the French intellectual field he personally inspired mixed emotional reactions, with some very negative judgments expressed by his adversaries, as for example captured in a recent biography by Marie-Anne Lescourret (2008) which accuses him of being arrogant and dismissive. His undoubted self-confidence irritated fellow sociologists unsympathetic to his work. Bernard Lahire (1999: 11), a sociologist who engaged closely and critically with Bourdieu's work, took the view that Bourdieu '…like many other researchers in social sciences refuses to

recognize his adversaries and remains deaf to all refutation.' Natalie Heinich (2002: 45),

a former student of Bourdieu, described the situation as one where 'the real enemies are

not those with whom one debates but those with whom we no longer speak'. As

Bourdieu's *Homo Academicus* (1988) makes clear, the French academic world is a

competitive one where strategic manoeuvring for reputation and rewards is the norm

with the ensuing rivalry within the field sometimes becoming bitter and acrimonious.

However, while Bourdieu divided the French sociological community on personal and

intellectual grounds, he had limited impact internationally until the 1990s, when

arguably he came to be acknowledged as the world's most eminent sociological theorist.

Before then, outside France, aside from widespread acclaim for *Distinction* (1984

[1979]) and a niche in the sociology of education, he was not very highly regarded in

the international social scientific community. Critics variously pronounced his already

extensive works obscure, inconsistent, limited and derivative (e.g. Jenkins, 1992). More

recently, Bourdieu has appealed very widely across the social sciences and humanities,

inspiring work in anthropology, sociology, geography, literature, feminist studies and

cultural studies. It is worth reflecting on what changed on the international scene.

Most obviously, there was the publication of some new substantial works. Alongside

the battles for territory, resources and reputation came an outpouring of substantive

studies of the highest quality including *The Rules of Art* (1996b [1992]), *Homo

Academicus* (1988 [1984]) and *The State Nobility* (1996a [1989]). That these were

accompanied by an extensive programme of translation into English was by no means

coincidental. Bourdieu benefited from the good offices of Polity Press which rapidly

(and more or less comprehensively) published not only his theoretical books but also his empirical studies of French institutions in English. At the same time he also produced some more accessible and popular essays and interviews, of varied provenance by date, in collections like *Practical Reason* (1998b [1994]), *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *In Other Words* (1990b). Now entering the final phase of his career, from about 1990 onwards, he devoted a good deal more attention to public affairs, being well recognised as a public intellectual opposed particularly to the excesses of neo-liberal economic management. This did not stop him from producing major sociological works, and one, *The Weight of the World*, which examined contemporary sources of distress, misery and disappointment as captured in personal biographies, became a popular bestseller.

More exposure for his major sociological works was accompanied by a rapid growth of increasingly positive secondary commentary which all helped bring him widespread acclaim. Among these was a book of essays edited by Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma and Moishe Postone (1993) which explored Bourdieu's work in cultural anthropology, linguistics, media studies, ethnomethodology, philosophy and feminism, centred on explorations about the notion of 'reflexivity', 'systems of classification' and the relations between practical knowledge and universal structures. David Swartz (1997) produced a very sophisticated, clear and balanced account of his sociological work particularly as it related to power and culture. This served to systematize Bourdieu's position and to present sympathetically his approach to a series of longstanding major sociological dilemmas. Richard Shusterman's edited collection (1999) assessed Bourdieu's philosophical theories revealing dimensions of his thought relevant for

philosophy of today. It suggests that limits to his theory may be overcome in alliance with discussions in social sciences. Bridget Fowler (2000) compiled a collection of essays centred on debates in the humanities to consider Bourdieu's theory of practice through his work as an ethnographer and cultural theorist, philosopher and sociologist assessing theoretically his theories as working tools.

Meanwhile scholars from many places beyond the borders of France were making attempts to apply his concepts - often not very authentically - to their own empirical problems. Jeffrey Sallaz and Jane Zavisca (2007), in a crisp analysis of the impact of Bourdieu on American sociology, indicate the increasing diffusion of his work over the last 25 years, with accelerating application of his concepts in new empirical research. Calling it, after Imre Lakatos (1978), a progressive research programme, they identify many works, and some key and highly regarded studies, which indicate inventive modes of appropriation of which Bourdieu would probably have approved (for he said theories were to be used, not debated) as key concepts are applied to problems of political, economic and cultural sociology. They show a leap in the citation of works by Bourdieu in the leading American sociological journals during the 1990s. Something similar happens in the UK, where Halsey (2004: 173) reports Bourdieu as the second most cited author in the three major British sociological journals in 2000, having not been in the top ten in 1990. Probably data for other European countries would indicate the same.

Bourdieu's growing impact within sociology may have arisen from something of a change of strategy on his part. Unusually for a very successful and prominent sociologist, he eschewed purely theoretical work and made his contribution to the

building up of concepts and methods through empirical studies of modern French society. In his sociological phase he had insisted on theory and theoretical concepts being subordinate to substantive sociological analysis. Derek Robbins (2000) makes the case well. Robbins sees Bourdieu's work as an outgrowth of his trajectory within the French academy, a matter of dispositions changing as a result of competition and struggle in the intellectual field. Bourdieu's career had three separate stages, as cultural anthropologist, scientific sociologist and public intellectual, each exhibiting different preoccupations, intellectual developments being a matter of pragmatic and strategic response to changes in position with concepts devised for immediate application rather than formalisation. However, towards the end of the 1980s Bourdieu seemed to begin to present his work as a systematic corpus. Perhaps encouraged by Loïc Wacquant, the four most prominent key concepts that frame all his work - habitus, capitals, field and practice -, concepts which had been used often in diverse ways, were consciously brought together, giving shape to and making more accessible a conceptual and theoretical core. *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) was a major step in systematising concepts previously employed in a more *ad hoc* manner. *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* nevertheless still proclaimed that '"Theories" are research programs that call not for "theoretical debate" but for a practical utilization that either refutes or generalizes them…' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 77). The utility, validity and applicability of these four key concepts have been one of the most controversial aspects of debates about Bourdieu's work, and unsurprisingly some of the chapters in this collection engage closely with them.

Perhaps more important though in the elevation of Bourdieu's reputation was the changing external environment of the social sciences. The promotion of interdisciplinarity and internationalization had significant implications.

For a good deal of his career Bourdieu devoted himself specifically to promoting sociology, defending its intellectual autonomy and the distinctiveness of its methods (Robbins, 2006: 6-9). His concern with the craft of sociology, and with the central issues of sociological debate never left him. *Pascalian Meditations* (Bourdieu, 2000 [1997]) is one fine example of his late re-working of older debates central to the discipline. Nevertheless, with a general turn to inter-disciplinarity, Bourdieu's work became of increasing interest to a wide range of scholars. In the field of consumption, for example, his work, particularly *Distinction*, uniquely provided common ground across anthropology, geography, marketing, media studies and sociology (see Miller, 1995). His extensive empirical research in the fields of art, literature and photography, also positioned him well in relation to 'the cultural turn'. So despite having only a short-lived interest in cultural studies and having no time for postmodern thought, his substantive contributions to the analysis of cultural production drew his work into the field of the fine arts, and indeed also into some of the more popular arts (e.g. Brown and Szeman, 2000). Emergence from the sociological ghetto was as good for his reputation as his increased exposure as a public intellectual (see Swartz, this volume).

At the same time, sociology itself was in the process of becoming more broadly internationalised. During the twentieth century it was possible to analyse sociology in terms of largely exclusive national traditions of thought. The reduction of language

barriers as English increased its dominance in social scientific communication, the challenge to the view that 'society', understood as coterminous with the nation-state, should be the primary object of sociology, and greater international academic association and cooperation (not to mention, globalization, migration and tourism) dismantled an older sociological parochialism. Besides translation of all his major works into English, trans-Atlantic mobility brought young scholars to study at the *Centre de Sociologie Européenne* (including contributors in this volume: Rick Fantasia, Michael Grenfell and Michèle Lamont). They, and others like them, in turn spread Bourdieu's influence, particularly in the sociology of culture in the United States (see Bennett et al., 2009; Lamont this volume; Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007).

Of course, none of these factors would have been of the remotest importance without the existence of a corpus of work of the highest intellectual quality and relevance. The range of Bourdieu's work, as the essays in this book testify, was prodigious. He wrote about most of the substantive domains of sociological focus - from schooling to art, stratification to housing, masculinity to elite formation. He made significant contributions also to the philosophy of method, social and sociological theory, methodology and empirical analysis. The future will no doubt hold substantial intellectual biographies seeking to evaluate the originality and coherence of his work. But for now we seek, in a more modest way, to determine what is the legacy for sociology, and for cultural analysis in particular. How are social scientists currently making use of Bourdieu? Which elements of his work are proving fruitful and how might they contribute to the shaping of cultural analysis, and what parts are being dismissed?

We are far from the first to address these questions. Since his death in 2002 several volumes have been devoted to evaluating Bourdieu's contribution including a number of high profile engagements. David Swartz and Vera Zolberg's (2004) collection of essays, drawn in large part from a special edition of *Theory & Society* published a year earlier, offers many insights into Bourdieu's work on religion, economic models, educational research, French literature and politics. The volume offers a deeper understanding of the work of Bourdieu, mainly sympathetic and focussing on theoretical and conceptual matters. A special edition of *Cultural Studies* (2003) reviewed his impact on cultural studies in America especially, with a focus on the use of his key concepts and on the role of intellectuals. Another significant contribution is the volume edited by Lisa Adkins and Beverly Skeggs (2004) exploring the ways in which Bourdieu's social theory opens up rich possibilities for engagement by contemporary feminism. Contributions focus on Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic violence and habitus to creatively focus on discussions about gender, the body, affect, sexuality, as well as class and social change. Robbins (2006:1) when introducing a special edition of the journal *Theory, Culture & Society* (*TCS)* noted the publication of several other volumes in the manner of *Festschriften* honouring the man and his works and appealed for more creative uses of Bourdieu's legacy. The *TCS* collection explored the origins of Bourdieu's thought across different disciplines particularly in relation to philosophy and science studies. Meanwhile, however, many journal articles were published taking inspiration from and applying Bourdieu's concepts. Whether it is necessary to take on all of Bourdieu's concepts in order to fruitfully apply his insights is disputed (see for example Swartz (2008) reflection on the programme of research on organizations

espoused by Mustafa Emirbayer and Victoria Johnson (2008)). Manifestly concepts of capital, habitus and field have had inspired applications from scholars who are not faithful subscribers to the Bourdieusian schema (see Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007 for some instances; also Crossley, 2001; Ferguson, 2004; Lawler, 2008; Lizardo, 2005; Savage et al., 2005).

The contributions in this book are informed by the preceding discussions on the application, implications and limitations of Bourdieu's work to social theory and cultural analyses. We seek to add to this body of literature by bringing together some distinguished sociologists whose work has been influenced in one way or another by Bourdieu. The essays in this book come from a symposium held in 2006 to review some of the implications of an empirical study of cultural taste, knowledge and participation in the UK which was nearing completion. *Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion* (CCSE) engaged closely with Bourdieu's theoretical and methodological perspectives on the understanding of culture and social divisions in contemporary society while asking similar questions to those of *Distinction*.[2] The analysis of the empirical material, perhaps typically and instructively for such ventures, indicated that while Bourdieu can be a source of great inspiration it is not possible to simply adopt his concepts or straightforwardly endorse his substantive findings (see Bennett et al., 2009). Because of the origins of this book in relation to the CCSE project, reference to Bourdieu's work on culture, and to the central notion of cultural capital, is a strong, though this is not an exclusive, focus of the ensuing chapters.

The book presents different approaches to cultural analysis using the work of Bourdieu as an anchor point. Culture, cultural change and methodological engagements to capture the relations of the cultural within other spheres, are given prominence in the essays. While concerned with Bourdieusian approaches to cultural analysis, 'culture' is here understood as a theoretical category that serves to deal with questions of how cultural differences are patterned and bounded in space and time. For the contributing authors culture is understood to entail a wide range of life involvements. They span culture as a category of social life in which learned behaviour is implicated, as an institutional sphere, or field, where meaning-making is produced, as practice, both in the sense of performativity and repertoire for action, and as a partially coherent landscape with shifting but bounded procedures and schemes applied to social life. Engagement with Bourdieu's work implies that, while using a notion of culture to get at meaningful human action, a particular conception of the relationality of the social is addressed, including cultural repertoires involving banal activities but also going beyond the description of everyday conduct of ordinary people involving a topological approach.

Contested relations to a legacy

Bourdieu remains a highly controversial figure. The contributions to this book take one of four different positions. First, some offer a defence of his legacy and expanded claims for his authority, a position taken broadly speaking, by Michael Grenfell, Rick Fantasia and David Swartz. It is clearly possible to work with his concepts and organizing principles and conduct vibrant, powerful and persuasive pieces of social analysis. A second response might be described as a partial appropriation, where some

parts of the theoretical or methodological corpus is accepted and then applied, along with other concepts or approaches, to offer empirically based explanations. The chapters by Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde, and by Diane Reay are instances of this kind of engagement. Arguably Bourdieu, at least in his earlier work, would approve of this strategy, insofar as he suggested that concepts and theories were not to be objectified, but used to illuminate and explain particular puzzles in sociological analysis. Thus the same concepts might not always be appropriate, new ones need to be formed, or new insights may be drawn from elsewhere, in the face of an explanatory puzzle. A third position, illustrated by Andrew Sayer and Tony Bennett, arises from extensive engagement with Bourdieu's work. Such a position offers admiration, if sometime grudging, for the inspiration that Bourdieu has brought to sociological analysis, and also for his productivity, range and flexibility. Bourdieu is recognised as a major contributor to social science in the second half of the twentieth century, but there are significant parts of his work that are unacceptable, and that it would be best to abandon the framework and many of the assumptions that underpin it. This coming to terms, most clear in Sayer, may recognise and share some of Bourdieu's distinctive solutions to the problems of sociology, but without wanting to use those, or integrate them, in future analysis. Finally there is repudiation. Illustrated by the chapters of Antoine Hennion and Michèle Lamont, it is maintained that the positions that Bourdieu took were never satisfactory, and it is contended, outrightly by Hennion and in a more nuanced way by Lamont, that there would be little point in working with the concepts or the associated problematic. Better, then, to forget than to mine for nuggets that might contribute to future analysis.

Defending the legacy

Michael Grenfell insists that while there is much that Bourdieu did not do, there is much profit to be had from thinking 'with' Bourdieu and through his methods to consider the implications of adopting his approach. He outlines the developments of Bourdieu's concepts and their employment, taking issue with what he calls 'misuses' (misinterpretations and misapplications) by academics in varied appropriations of his work. Grenfell notes a number of misplaced critical strategies including the making of 'false accusations', claiming that there is nothing special in Bourdieu's approach by reducing it too much, claiming what he says has always been known anyway, further embroidering his original concepts to suit one's purposes, and using his work as an orthodoxy simply to be replicated. While these misuses do not apply singularly to Bourdieu, they are found frequently among his reviewers. These strategies unfairly accounts for his contribution in particular as it regards his (1) structured approach and (2) the possibilities of moving on from his work.

The structured approach is relevant for the three stages of methodology Grenfell outlines from Bourdieu's practice. Firstly, the construction of the research object is always started afresh, making the normal conspicuous by reconceptualising it in relational terms. Secondly, an account of the field is constructed via an examination of the relation of the field with other fields, its 'mapping' of the volume and configurations of various forms of capital and the analysis of the habitus of the agents in the field. These levels are never discrete but always mixed up, the homologies between field,

capitals and habitus being central to the understanding of the approach. Thirdly, a reflection about the social conditions of thinking derived from the position of the researcher in social space is particularly important for the ongoing practice of research. If one were to follow this Bourdieusian approach one would necessarily always move beyond Bourdieu since his method is offered as interpretation of social processes in flux.

The Bourdieusian approach is very closely followed by Rick Fantasia who concentrates on the exploration of the field, a concept which became increasingly important to Bourdieu over his career. Through an account of the transformation of French gastronomy, Fantasia demonstrates how the concept of field can be creatively and constructively deployed in contemporary institutional analysis, in ways similar to Bourdieu's explorations of the literary and the art fields. He shows that *haute cuisine* becomes consecrated through the activities of professional chefs, aided and abetted by cultural intermediaries, from early in the nineteenth century. The literary and philosophical apparatus associated with gastronomy gives the field a degree of autonomy, making it appear to be, and actually to be, governed by aesthetic rather than economic impulses. It is this which conferred a special relationship between food and French self-identity, becoming early a basis for the celebration of French national cuisine.

Fantasia argues that the relationship to industrial culinary organization from the 1970s - a shift occurring much later in France than in the US or the UK - brought about a change in the relationship between gastronomy and the operations of the economic

field. While popular representations still place industrial production - especially fast food - as totally at odds with the worlds of *haute cuisine* and *Michelin* starred restaurants, an increasingly seductive accommodation is occurring. Big industrial corporations have purchased sometimes the restaurants, but more importantly the symbolic capital of consecrated celebrity chefs - particularly those who have three *Michelin* stars - for their own business empires or products. The most successful chefs have exploited these business opportunities (shifting from *chef de cuisine* to *chef d'entreprise*, as Fantasia neatly describes it) as they endorse products, open shops, as well as opening new much less fancy restaurants, and sometimes chains of restaurants. Their success depends upon their reputations for the quality of their cooking in their flagship restaurants. However, this clearly may have dangerous consequences, as the dalliance with the logic of the economic field may easily undermine the sanctity of the artisanal and artistic justifications upon which *haute cuisine* and its restaurants were established. The distance between the logic of McDonald's and the magic of *Haute Cuisine* in France is not as great as is often imagined.

Moving into the field of power and politics, David Swartz neatly dissects the different aspects these have, and their meanings that can be found in Bourdieu's work. He contrasts the relatively unproblematic, but not much exploited, potential for a sociology of politics to be derived from Bourdieu's work, with a much less stable and persuasive version of how sociology might be used politically. During his career Bourdieu shifted his position on the latter issue without entirely satisfactorily reaching a final resolution. Swartz indicates the shifts, the virtues of different positions and their incumbent problems. An uncompromising insistence to the end on the need to defend scientific

autonomy and independence accompanied a conviction that science should be articulated with political activism. The tension was never satisfactorily resolved and grew more problematic over time.

Having tried out many different solutions, Bourdieu came to consider that the new political circumstances of the later part of his life - of neo-liberalism and growing media power - changed the appropriate role for the sociologist. Swartz notes that Bourdieu's view of the intellectual role moved close to Foucault's idea of the 'specific intellectual', one who intervenes on issues of her specialized knowledge which permits her to speak with authority and disturb the ways people think. Latterly Bourdieu advocated 'scholarship with commitment' (2002a: 465-9 in Swartz this volume), a condition where the roles of scholar and political activist are less sharply distinguished.

Partial appropriation

Building on Bourdieu's analysis of stratification Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde examine the implications of the distinction between objective and subjective class location with reflections about issues of class dis-identification and identity of class, on the basis of an empirical study employing quantitative and qualitative methods. The discussion is particularly relevant in the context of contemporary debates in the UK about the salience of class.

Recent research notes that while class is widely understood as a feature of social inequality, class identities do not appear to be meaningful to individuals. In the context

of globalization and individualization processes researchers have identified decline in class consciousness and awareness. Emotional frames of a more individualized kind have been noted at the same time that class hierarchies are found to inform everyday life in new ways. Joining the debate on 'dis-identification', the authors consider the limits of class identity and the ways in which powers of classification are expressed in the 'talk' of research participants.

The findings indicate lack of direct class identification, with references to class pertaining to the external world rather than to personal experience. Both the deployment and the avoidance of idioms of class reveal an awareness of the power of classifying. Ambivalence towards class is thus actively produced and dis-identification often hides awareness of distinctive privileges.

Also working with frameworks of class stratification Diane Reay defends the usefulness of the concept of habitus and makes a neat empirical demonstration of the way in which it can be used, in relation to the concept of field, to understand class experiences of education. She argues that disjunctions between field and habitus may well be positive and generative, as well as causing difficulties in some instances. It often depends upon what resources the individual has. She identifies and analyses a telling class-based asymmetry in situations where habitus and position in the field are not aligned, indicating that it is harder for the working-class child to overcome the problems of joining a middle-class field - e.g. the university education one - than *vice versa*.

Working-class children do often overcome their lack of cultural resources, adopting a flexible and open orientation towards the demands of an inherently middle-class educational system for which they are previously unprepared. The implication of the argument and the evidence is that it is much harder for working-class children to take advantage of a disjuncture between habitus of origin and a non-congenial field setting. Such a situation is likely to be anxiety provoking and also, presumably, that they are more likely to fail as a result. This is shown by the tendency of exclusion of working-class children from the arena of higher education. However, this exclusion is not absolute and it is manifestly overcome (sometimes with some difficulty) by a segment of the working class. Reay contrasts this situation with that of middle-class children when they are inserted into an unfamiliar field –like the working-class comprehensive school. They may find their circumstances difficult, and actually learn very little about working-class culture and its virtues. Yet, they may learn something positive - an added capital resource for them - about ethnic diversity, remaining largely confident about themselves and the middle-class culture from which they hail and to which they will return.

The differences she identifies in the sense making of choices of students from different social classes indicates that if habitus is helpful for understanding the ingrained assumptions of the middle-class it is less helpful in understanding the processes experienced by working-class applicants to university. For the working class the pre-reflexive has to become reflexive and their 'natural' predispositions need converting into new dispositions. The dis-alignment between habitus and field has certain costs.

Nevertheless, Reay disputes Bourdieu's view about the burdens of a 'divided habitus' and its creation of instabilities and neuroses.

Critical revisions

Andrew Sayer's essay cogently and persuasively identifies elements of a theory of action or conduct which draws upon and acknowledges virtues in Bourdieu's theory of habitus while at the same time identifying some of its shortcomings. Some elements raised in Reay's essay are here probed through a different focus. Sayer identifies several weaknesses in Bourdieu's account including insufficient attention to the ethical dimension of conduct, neglect of the role of emotions in the process of reasoning, and disregard for connections between conduct and an ever-present moral concern with the well-being of self and others. None of these extensions or objections is at odds with the basic concept of the habitus, with its emphasis on learned dispositions and the capacity to act in ways that short-circuit or eliminate reflection. The consequence, arguably, is a much more positive view of human action, according lay ethical reasoning the authenticity that it deserves. At the same time, the tendencies of many sociologists besides Bourdieu, to imagine that only they reflect and understand the causes of action, which others (lay persons) act automatically, in line with convention, or on the basis of self-interest, is problematised.

Sayer argues that Bourdieu does not allow for distinterested action and therefore does not grapple with the issue of the importance of how to live. He reduces social life to the pursuit of power and advantage even though he recognizes the deeply evaluative

character of social actions: the value of people, practices and objects. Bourdieu's

individuals, notes Sayer, pursue only external goods. Moreover, internal goods obey

logics that are not entirely social, but Bourdieu makes no concessions to biological or

psychological factors which also inform the habitus. Interestingly, while his academic

theorizing does not include comments on human well being, his political writings do. In

this regard Swartz's claim for attention to Bourdieu's political sociology (chapter 4)

would perhaps provide a finer understanding of Bourdieu's insights into unjust social

processes, with the identification of what is 'wrong' and what is 'right'.

Concerned with how culture operates as a mechanism for the exercise of power, Tony

Bennett contrasts Bourdieu with Foucault. He seeks to identify how their approaches

can complement each other but suggests that Foucault's governmentality approach to the

relations between culture and the social exposes shortcomings in Bourdieu's concepts of

field, cultural capital and the habitus.

Bennett claims that Bourdieu fails to meet the challenges that Foucault's assumptions

pose for his concepts of field and habitus. Regularities and irregularities in the field of

discourse, and the discontinuities in historical analysis, cannot be treated as relational

struggles for profits or cumulative historicity, respectively. *Contra* Bourdieu's account

of the unified construction of the habitus, Foucault's formulation of the technologies of

the self and the technologies of power produces pluralized spaces and practices of self-

formation, which result in a self with divisions and cracks produced by the varied

techniques of subjectification through which different authorities work and order the

self. Bourdieu's attribution of universal validity to the roles of the economy and the

social in affecting the cultural is further challenged by Foucault's principle of historically specific `transactional realities' produced by specific governmental practices. The ordering of 'transactional realities', historically informed and produced through governmental practices, reveals gender and ethnicity to be elements in governing, not `add-ons' to the primacy of class relations.

While Foucault and Bourdieu appear closer in their perspectives concerning the roles of cultural knowledge in distinctive forms of power, Bennett remarks that the unity of action derived from a pre-given structure based on class relations implicit in Bourdieu's logic of the `space of possibles', does not resonate with Foucault's account of the dispersal of discursive options that informs his account of the field of strategic possibilities'. The position taking of actors in social space that informs Bourdieu's 'space of possibles' rests, contrary to Bourdieu's own account, on a quite different logic. On the basis of his comparison Bennett suggests that cultural capital theory can itself be viewed as a specific form of cultural governmentality that is only too evidently marked by its associations with post-war French cultural and education policies.

Repudiation

Antoine Hennion's contribution is a revision and translation of an earlier article (published in 1985) which reviewed the publication and reception of *Distinction* in France. It continues to have resonance because the nature of Bourdieu's scientific practice continues to arouse controversy today. If Grenfell seeks to establish a sympathetic account of Bourdieu's intellectual practice and analytic strategy, and

Swartz depicts its progress through several stages, Hennion seeks to demonstrate that it should be seen instead as a rather complex illusion. When Bourdieu shows pictures of people in their houses, their furniture, clothes and bodily hexis, is he merely appealing to the existing knowledge of his readers? Would not they otherwise fail to find this evidence of Bourdieu's theory, and thus acclaim his theoretical and interpretive achievement? Wherein lies the sleight of hand which is associated with his strategy of pretending that people do not know - they misrecognise - what they patently already do know. Hennion's is a somewhat characteristically Gallic polemic - ironic, intriguing, elliptical, teasing. He seems to suggest that since the public can only be constructed from a series of practical activities which are inevitably the province of intermediaries, the process of that construction is something that should be made transparent. The rhetorical component of Bourdieu's works is evident in his setting up the social world as a stage upon which, behind a drawn curtain, order and structure are established, subsequently to be revealed to applause by an audience enthralled by the clever exposure by the sociologist/director of the plot after the curtain rises. Drawing a parallel between the producer or manager of an aspiring young pop star, he illustrates the parallel involved in Bourdieu acting as intermediary in the revelation of the order of the world as universal knowledge to a section of society whose understanding is nothing but partial. The promise or hope that the public (or an authentic popular public) can be reached out to is denied by the very techniques which intercede in the quest to engage it.

Hennion's reading and critique of Bourdieu's work sets out his own espousal of a theory of knowledge of 'theoretical theatricality' to argue, against Bourdieu, that

science is not pure and that it is stage managed. He suggests that it is essential to find the intermediary in the process of knowing people - or the popular - in culture.

The ways in which Bourdieu's work has generated new questions is particularly evident in Michèle Lamont's account. As the 'outsider within', over a number of years Lamont applied Bourdieu's work in the different and more diverse national context of the United States. We asked her to reflect on her academic journey. She remarks upon the early impact of Bourdieu's engagement with micro-level social relationships and roles in daily interactions as not separated from the symbolic violence of material world or aesthetics. Lamont's national comparative perspective led her to emphasize the fit between context and cultural object. Resonating with some of Sayer's concerns she asks in which conditions value is created.

Lamont's critical stance towards Bourdieu has produced new thinking in two main areas. Firstly, examining classification systems comparatively and *in situ*, she questioned the applicability of *Distinction* to the US. Was command of high culture central for high status everywhere? Empirically her work has addressed differences between cultural centre and cultural periphery, the permeability of group boundaries, the relationship between social and symbolic boundaries, that differentiation does not translate into exclusion, and that available cultural repertoires and macro-structures shape the habitus as well as orientations to culture. Secondly, moving further from Bourdieu, she investigated the role of moral values in boundary production, with ethno-racial boundaries a principal concern. She offered an innovative analysis of the production of boundaries in taste and the creation of differences and worth using cross-

national comparisons to expose competing criteria of evaluation. Latterly, applied to the academic field, she elaborates on the social and emotional aspects associated with judgement in processes of rule formation.

The sheer range of responses to Bourdieu's work represented in the essays in this book makes clear the difficulty associated with delivering a decisive evaluation of his legacy. Appealing arguments are made for a comprehensive embrace of his framework, for its use as a source of inspiration to be worked against, and for its abandonment. Partly because intellectual relationships with Bourdieu are so varied and contested, we invited Frédéric Lebaron and Fiona Devine to reflect on the essays in this volume in order to provide additional insights into his overall contribution. Their wise observations precede a short epilogue which summarises some of the factors likely to affect Bourdieu's influence on the subsequent development of sociological approaches to cultural analysis.

Notes

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[1] The Collège de France is not a university but functions as the crowning of university careers.

[2] The project was funded from March 2003 to February 2006 by the ESRC (Award no R000239801). Many papers were published from this project and a book: see Bennett *et al*. (2009) and chapter 5 in this book. The project's web site is: (http://www.open.ac.uk/ socialsciences/cultural-capital-and-social-exclusion/project-summary.php?).