

# Cultural artefact is the influence sociology essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Bourdieu's theory is in continuous subject of interest, which is characterised by the cultural reproduction or cultural capital. Especially, it is evaluated that his forms of capital has brought a fundamental shift through bridging Marxist's distinction of class with Weber's cultural status to his theory. Bourdieu has distinguished that within the competitive society, the forms of capital are classified as implements according to various activities. Hence important concept introduced by Bourdieu is that of 'capital', which he encompasses beyond the notion of material assets to capital that may be social, cultural or symbolic (Bourdieu 1986: cited in Navarro 2006: 16). These forms of capital are equally significant, and can be accumulated and transferred from one arena to another (Navarro 2006: 17). Cultural capital – and the means by which it is created or transferred from other forms of capital – plays a central role in societal power relations, as this 'provides the means for a non-economic form of domination and hierarchy, as classes distinguish themselves through taste' (Gaventa 2003: 6). The shift from material to cultural and symbolic forms of capital is largely what hides the causes of inequality.

For Bourdieu tastes are socially constructed and that the objects of consumer choice reflect a symbolic hierarchy that is determined and maintained by the socially dominant in order to reinforce their distance or differentiate themselves from other classes of society. Thus, taste becomes 'social ammunition' that defines and retrains cultural objects; legitimate from the illegitimate hence, in the lights of taste formation of fashion, this would be high fashion from the mass fashion (Bourdieu, 1995).

This essay focuses on to explain Bourdieu's theory of consumer taste and formation where fashion is applied strategically. Finkelstein notes that "fashion is an organisation of knowledge based on restricted access to goods and services" (Finkelstein, 1998: 80), and that the ability to recognize the fashionable reflects an actor's cultural capital. This is illustrated perfectly in the work of Joanne Entwistle and Agnès Rocamora, 'The Field of Fashion Materialized: A Study of London Fashion Week' which has aided me greatly in exemplifying Bourdieu's key concepts of the field, capital and habitus in amplifying our consumer preferences in fashion. In this essay, I will attempt to clearly define the concept of field, habitus and capital and how these concept are used to understand the social phenomena particular to fashion.

This led us in the direction of Bourdieu's field theory, which allowed us to capture the role and socio-temporal orchestration of the event. In this article we argue that LFW operates as an embodiment of the wider field of fashion: it is an instance of the field of fashion materialized or reified, 'that is to say physi- cally realized or objectified' (Bourdieu, 1993b: 161). Thus, in bringing together the field participants into one spatially and temporally bounded event, LFW renders visible, through its orchestration, wider field characteristics, such as field boundaries, positions, position taking, and habitus. This rendering of the field is key to understanding LFW as a critical moment in the life of the field as a whole. Despite its ostensible aim to simply showcase next season's fashion- able clothing, we suggest that LFW's main function is to produce, reproduce and legitimate the field of fashion and the positions of those players within it.

Our article reconciles two moments of Bourdieu's academic biography: that informed by his ethnographic work at the beginning of his career and, later, his focus on field theory (see Robbins, 2000: 1; Swartz, 1997: 118 on the stages in Bourdieu's work). While Bourdieu is concerned to pay attention to both structure and practice, his field theory errs too much in the direction of a structuralist analysis that neglects to fully document the ways in which fields are reproduced through the enactments of agents in daily practice and localized settings (Crossley, 2004). As Boyne (1993: 248) argues, field is a 'macro-structural concept'. Our article aims not only to demonstrate the appropriateness of Bourdieu's field theory, but also to extend it to analysis at the level of embodied practice.

Habitus is an internalized embodiment of external social structures that we acquire over the course of a lifetime. Then habitus is the structure through which we produce our thoughts and action. Which in turn, creates our external social world and it is structured by the social world. Thus, habitus can be thought of as the collective individuated, through the biological individual. And because habitus can be similar within groups of people, it can be similar within groups of people, hence seen as a collective phenomenon.

The social world is made up by all kind of fields. A field is a structured system of social positions occupied by agents or structures and the nature of social positions determinates the situation for them. It is a network of historical and current relations between objective positions that are anchored in forms of capital. The relative importance of the form of capital depends from the field.

Capital is used to make the position of the agent clear in its field. The agents are able by using the capital well to exercise more power and influence in a certain field. There is an interaction between habitus and field, and capital is the intermediate element. The 3 elements are attached to each other.

Hence, The actions of people are constituted by and constitute their dispositions (habitus), the capital they possess and the fields within which they operate.

Agents who have a stake in the operation of the field take the objective positions within the fields. For instance....

The positions of the agents in the field are determined by the amount and weight of the capitals they have. Field are simultaneously spaces of conflict and competition as agents compete to gain a monopoly in the species of capital that most effective in the particular field. For instance agents in the field of fashion, may use social and economic capital to gain a monopoly on the.....

Bourdiu him self conceptualizes field as being more like magnetic fields. These varieties of field each have its own internal logic and regulatory principles govern the ' game' on the field.

The most important field though is the field of power. The hierarchy of the power relationship within the political field serves to structure all the other fields. Society than is assemble of relatively autonomous sphere of play that cannot be collapsed under any overall social logic, like capitalism, modernity or postmodernity. The very shape and division of it becomes a central stake to the agents. Altering the distribution and relative weight of the different

forms of capital within a field become ten a mount to modifying structure of the field. Therefore fields have historical dynamism about them to have merely ability that avoids the determinism of the classical structuralism.

understanding In terms of Bourdieu, where fashion can be understood as a code that allows for social distinction and activates forces of differentiation in terms of taste, social identity, and cultural capital. In this sense,

According to Leary(1995), everyday inside the variety of social norm we are conscious of others and how we act around them, therefore forming someone's impressions effects the relationship with them. Due to this reason, we constantly endeavor to show in the direction of what one wants consciously or unconsciously throughout everyday life. Furthermore, fashion plays a very important role in managing self-impressions and expressions. This study will endure the existing theoretical argument based on the hierarchical quality, and consider the cultural capital relationship between the use of sociocultural characteristic and fashion strategy, based on the knowledge of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's Forms of Capital.

Bourdieu argues that aesthetic dispositions and consumer preferences ("taste") have deep roots in a class-based hierarchy that is imposed on society by the culturally dominant. Understanding of this phenomenon can be amplified through examining Bourdieu key concepts of the field, capital and habitus.

This can be explained in Bourdieu's analysis of the field, which has provided invaluable insights into the macro- structural make-up and structuring logic of fields (Bourdieu and Delsaut, 1975).

<https://assignbuster.com/cultural-artefact-is-the-influence-sociology-essay/>

illustrated

However, while field is an construct of defining differentiated positions and position-takings within a particular social arena, it should also be thought of as an embedded reality, an idea too often obscured in the French thinker's highly systemized analyses. The central aim of this article is to develop a more empirically grounded sense of field that pays attention to the way it is constituted and practised through embodied action. Interrogating the way in which one key event in the fashion calendar, London Fashion Week (LFW), operates within the British field of fashion, we argue that field theory is invaluable for understanding key micro-processes and institutions within fields.

In order to clarify the enjeux, i. e. what is at stake, in intellectual production, Bourdieu(1984) provides an analysis of the field of haute couture, which he considers structurally equivalent to the field of cultural production in general. Because of the ' structural homology' that Bourdieu (1994: 132) says exists between the different fields of luxury goods such as poetry to high fashion, he argues that when ever he is talking about haut couture, he could just as well be talking about high culture.

Economic capital is the command over economic resources such as cash or asset. Cultural capital consists of any knowledge experience or connection that one have through the life course that enables on to succeed more so than someone with a different set of knowledge experiences or connections. Cultural capital allows one to be familiar with and at ease using the institutionalized and valued cultural forms. Social capital these are resources

based on group membership relationship and network of influence and support. According to Bourdieu, the agents occupying positions in the concept of field use these capital resources.

Field is a network of historical and current relations between objective positions that are anchored in forms of capital. Agents who have a stake in the operation of the field take the objective positions within the fields. For instance....

The positions of the agents in the field are determined by the amount and weight of the capitals they have. Field are simultaneously spaces of conflict and competition as agents compete to gain a monopoly in the species of capital that most effective in the particular field. For instance agents in the field of fashion, may use social and economic capital to gain a monopoly on the.....

Bourdiu him self conceptualizes field as being more like magnetic fields. These varieties of field each have its own internal logic and regulatory principles govern the ' game' on the field.

The most important field though is the field of power. The hierarchy of the power relationship within the political field serves to structure all the other fields. Society than is assemble of relatively autonomous sphere of play that cannot be collapsed under any overall social logic, like capitalism, modernity or postmodernity. The very shape and division of it becomes a central stake to the agents. Altering the distribution and relative weight of the different forms of capital within a field become ten a mount to modifying structure of



the field. Therefore fields have historical dynamism about them to have merely ability that avoids the determinism of the classical structuralism.

## Habitus

The habitus is a mental

First it is an internalized embodiment of external social structures that we acquire over the course of a lifetime. Second the habitus is the structure through which we produce our thoughts and action. Which in turn, creates our external social world and it is structured by the social world. Thus habitus can be thought of as the collective individuated through the biological individual. And because habitus can be similar within groups of people, it can be similar within groups of people, hence seen as a collective phenomena.

For Bourdieu, the fashion field can be characterized by the struggle between dominating and dominated actors, and new entrants. The struggle for domination functions as the motor of the field.

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu approaches power within the context of a comprehensive 'theory of society' which - like that of Foucault - we can't possibly do justice to here, or easily express in the form of applied methods (Navarro 2006). And although his subject was mainly Algerian and French society, we have found Bourdieu's approach useful in analysing power in development and social change processes (see the articles by Navarro, Moncrieffe, Eyben and Taylor and Boser in Eyben, Harris et. al. 2006; Navarro offers a particularly solid introduction to Bourdieu's method).

While Foucault sees power as 'ubiquitous' and beyond agency or structure, Bourdieu sees power as culturally and symbolically created, and constantly re-legitimised through an interplay of agency and structure. The main way this happens is through what he calls 'habitus' or socialised norms or tendencies that guide behaviour and thinking. Habitus is 'the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them' (Wacquant 2005: 316, cited in Navarro 2006: 16).

Habitus is created through a social, rather than individual process leading to patterns that are enduring and transferrable from one context to another, but that also shift in relation to specific contexts and over time. Habitus 'is not fixed or permanent, and can be changed under unexpected situations or over a long historical period' (Navarro 2006: 16):

Habitus is neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are both shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very perceptions of these (Bourdieu 1984: 170). In this sense habitus is created and reproduced unconsciously, 'without any deliberate pursuit of coherence... without any conscious concentration' (ibid: 170).

A second important concept introduced by Bourdieu is that of 'capital', which he extends beyond the notion of material assets to capital that may be social, cultural or symbolic (Bourdieu 1986: cited in Navarro 2006: 16). These

forms of capital may be equally important, and can be accumulated and transferred from one arena to another (Navarro 2006: 17). Cultural capital – and the means by which it is created or transferred from other forms of capital – plays a central role in societal power relations, as this ‘ provides the means for a non-economic form of domination and hierarchy, as classes distinguish themselves through taste’ (Gaventa 2003: 6). The shift from material to cultural and symbolic forms of capital is to a large extent what hides the causes of inequality.

These ideas are elaborated at length in Bourdieu’s classic study of French society, *Distinction* (1986), in which he shows how the ‘ social order is progressively inscribed in people’s minds’ through ‘ cultural products’ including systems of education, language, judgements, values, methods of classification and activities of everyday life (1986: 471). These all lead to an unconscious acceptance of social differences and hierarchies, to ‘ a sense of one’s place’ and to behaviours of self-exclusion (ibid: 141).

A third concept that is important in Bourdieu’s theory is the idea of ‘ fields’, which are the various social and institutional arenas in which people express and reproduce their dispositions, and where they compete for the distribution of different kinds of capital (Gaventa 2003: 6). A field is a network, structure or set of relationships which may be intellectual, religious, educational, cultural, etc. (Navarro 2006: 18). People often experience power differently depending which field they are in at a given moment (Gaventa 2003: 6), so context and environment are key influences on habitus:

' Bourdieu (1980) accounts for the tensions and contradictions that arise when people encounter and are challenged by different contexts. His theory can be used to explain how people can resist power and domination in one [field] and express complicity in another' (Moncrieffe 2006: 37)

Fields help explain the differential power, for example, that women experience in public or private, as Moncrieffe shows in her interview with a Ugandan woman MP who has public authority but is submissive to her husband when at home (2006: 37). This has been widely observed by feminist activists and researchers, and is another way of saying that women and men are socialised to behave differently in ' public, private and intimate' arenas of power (Veneklasen and Miller 2002). See gender perspectives on power and a New Weave of Power chapter 3 Power and Empowerment.