

**DISCUSSION AGENDA**  
**SOCIOLOGY 929 SESSION 9**  
**Bourdieu's Class Analysis**  
**October 31, 2006**

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I have adopted a slightly different strategy for organizing the agenda this week: I picked from each interrogation one question, usually quoting almost verbatim from the interrogation, and then grouped these under some general rubrics. Each person will briefly introduce their question as we move down the list. *IF I failed to pick out your main issue, then you can change the question when it is your turn.*

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**HABITUS**

1. **Rudolfo:** Does Bourdieu achieve his objective of developing a class analysis that takes into account both the objective and the subjective dimension of social classes?
2. **Fabian:** How should we really understand link between 'position in a social space' and 'habitus'? How is the habitus formed? Is it an object of struggle?
3. **Assaf:** [Habitus] also suggests determinism. Under this notion, one can find no possibility for agency. I wonder if anything could motivate anyone to try to alter one's habitus except for a more secure future/present.
4. **Adrienne:** What does all this [taste and its relation to habitus] mean in relation to class?
5. **Charity:** Where can we identify the grounds upon which inter-class/habitus solidarity for social change may be generated? How can disconnections (or contradictions) between one's condition of existence and their habitus be explained (furthermore, how can those disconnections be thwarted or reinforced)?

**CULTURAL CAPITAL, SYMBOLIC CAPITAL**

6. **You-Geon:** in his scheme, can the category of occupations be really the most appropriate and efficient indicator of estimating the variations of both cultural capitals and economic capitals without the help of other indicators such as education, income, or other direct indicators of measuring those variations in the empirical or statistical research?
7. **Rahul:** Is there a way to put relations back in cultural capital? Either we have to come up with a more directly relational notion of cultural capital or give up treating economic and cultural capital as similar mutually fungible quantities.
8. **Joe:** But how does one add cultural capital and economic capital? In other words, is there a standardized value that would enable one to distinguish quantitatively the total volume of one individual or group in relation to another?
9. **Jorge:** What is the actual power of symbolic power?

**CLASSES AND SOCIAL SPACE**

10. **Adam:** What is so interesting is that despite marked changes in the underlying economic processes, the overall structure of relations within the space tends to remain relatively stable.
11. **Sarbani:** How do we understand class – as neighbouring positions or as a set of agents?
12. **Elizabeth:** What predictions are made by Bourdieu's theory outside of consumption patterns?
13. **Hsing-Mei:** Bourdieu thinks the concept of social classification of people originates in (or correspond to) the social relations involved in the structure of social space.....Is this the only way that we can understand the concept of symbolic classification of people?
14. **Ann:** IF class no longer has primacy, would Bourdieu agree that groups organized around sex, age or ethnicity could be as effectively mobilized as groups organized around their economic and cultural conditions after all?

**A FEW OTHER QUESTIONS**

15. Is there a place for the notion of exploitation in Bourdieu's definition of class? Is there a relationship between his definition of *lifestyles* and Weber's notion of life chances? (Rudolfo)
16. Yet, how does Bourdieu explain the trickle-up phenomenon, for example when hip hop culture becomes fashionable or when a gritty urban neighborhood becomes popular for those with higher economic and cultural capital? In these examples, the upper classes may still be legitimating the culture but what causes them to identify themselves with the groups so beneath them in economic and cultural capital (depending on whose cultural capital) initially? (Ann)
17. How much is Bourdieu actually disagreeing with the other theorists we've looked at, and how much is he just interested in different questions (especially from Marx)? (Elizabeth)