



HABITUS, BODY AS BOTH, THE OUTCOME AND STRUCTURING PRINCIPLE

Body, Health and Society

OUTLINE

- revision: discussion
- concepts developed by Pierre Bourdieu
 - habitus
 - capital
 - field
 - relational understanding to society
- Pierre Bourdieu
- Loïc Wacquant
- Application
 - Body as a form of capital (Wacquant)
 - Erotic capital
- Body in Wacquant's (Bourdieu's) work
- habitus Mauss vs. Bourdieu

SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS

- **If there is an intrinsic 'self', you only have the 'self' you display for others. I wonder how this works when you are alone.** How can you be yourself when you are not in a social situation?
- How is the communication mutual?
- Are there **any positive examples of non-compliance** and whether the movement towards greater freedom of self-expression can be considered as progress or as the marginalization of society?
- Main reason behind people's urge for validation from the audience for their actions ?
- Is it about the regulated norms we need to follow in order to be accepted in a society ? Do I need to sit 'properly' in a public sphere because I am not gonna be supported by the audience ? **Is this validation something that is relevant to today's society ?**

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What is habitus, social field, social structure, capital?

What is the relationship among these?

What role does the body have in Bourdieu's theory?

What is the main Bourdieu's focus? (in contrary to symbols in Mary Douglas 's approach)

What is symbolic capital, what role does it have for an individual and how it is created?

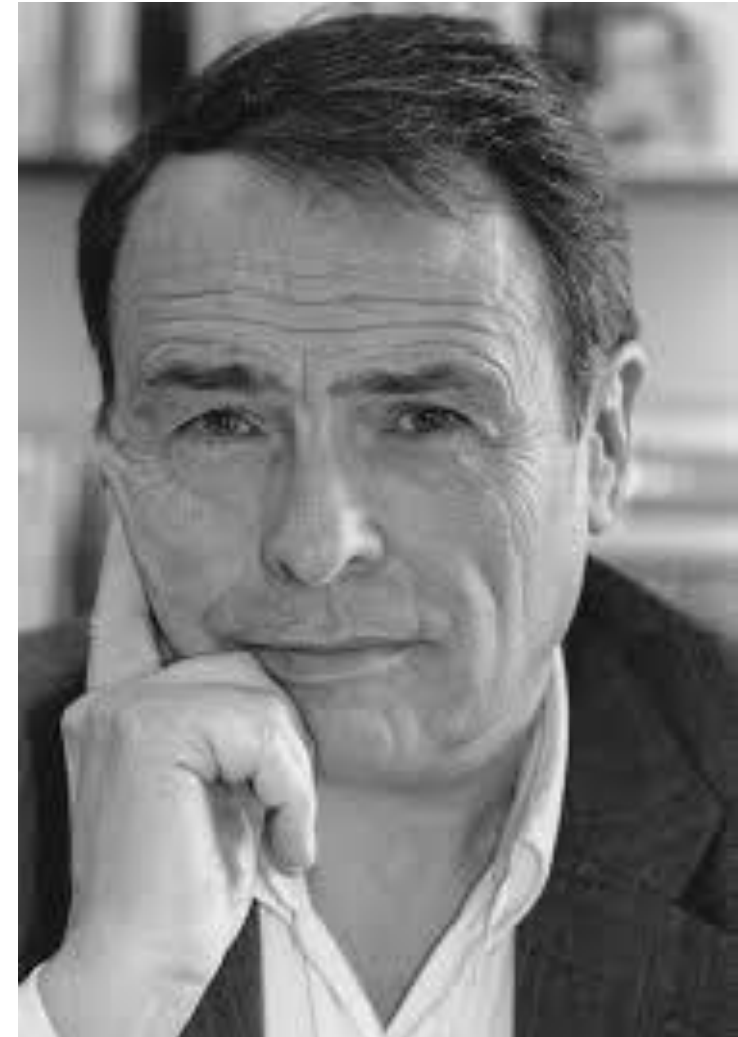
PIERRE BOURDIEU

(1930 – 2002)

- french sociologist, anthropologist, philosopher
- Weber, Marx, Foucault, Lévi-Strauss
- bridging dichotomous thinking in SS
- EHESS (1968)



- work
 - Distinction: Social critique of a judgement of a taste (*La Distinction*, 1979)
 - Masculine domination (*La domination masculine*, 1998)
 - Theory of practice (*Raison pratique*, 1994)

<http://www.antropoweb.cz/cs/zakladni-koncepty-pierra-bourdieu-pole-kapital-habitus>



BOURDIEU'S BASIC CONCEPTS

- habitus
- capital
- social field

-  bridging dichotomic thinking about social behaviour grounded in objectivism x subjectivism
-  the relationship between the individual and the society

LOÏC WACQUANT

[HTTPS://LOICWACQUANT.ORG/](https://loicwacquant.org/)

- *1960
- sociologist, social anthropologist
- follower of Pierre Bourdieu
- professor of Sociology and Research Associate at the Institute for Legal Research, Boalt Law School, University of California at Berkeley
- urban sociology, urban poverty, racial inequality, the body, social theory
 - now: carnal anthropology; mechanisms of racial domination
- **Work**
 - *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (1992), with Pierre Bourdieu, translated in 19 languages
 - *Les Prisons de la misère – Prisons of poverty* (1999), translated in 20 languages; new and expanded English edition
 - *Body and Soul: Ethnographic Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer* (2000/2004), translated in 8 languages



<https://inequality.stanford.edu/about/people/loic-wacquant>

HOW THEY RELATE TO EACH OTHER?

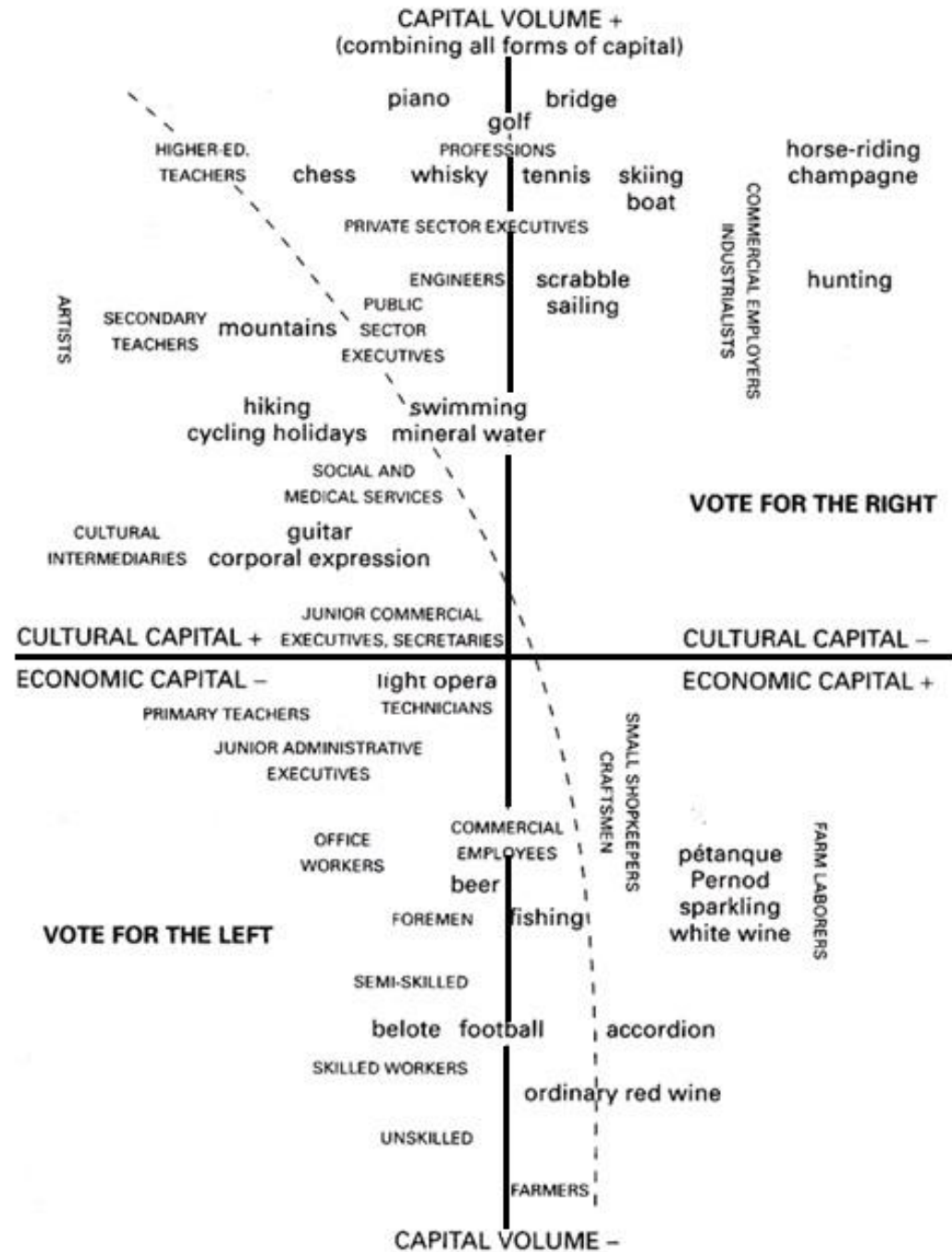
- Interrelations?

HOW DO THEY RELATE? - CONNECTING CONCEPTS

(RŮŽIČKA – VAŠÁT 2011)

Strategy, through which actors and institutions live (and fight)... depend on positions they occupy in the structure of the field – i.e. depend on the distribution of specific symbolic capital... and on dispositions which constitute habitus... Untill the extend they want to maintain or change the current distribution – and therefore the rules of the game... (Bourdieu 1986: 183)

DISTINCTION



BODY CAPITAL



Wacquant 1995: 68-70

- What is bodily capital, how can be his type of capital accessed and accumulated?
- What does it mean that the habitus is incorporated / inscribed in the body?
- What is the social field under study? What are rules of this social field?



BODY IN BOURDIEU WORK

„work of Bourdieu (1977, 1984) shifted an earlier focus on the body as the source of symbolism or means of expression to an awareness of the body as the locus of social practice“ (Csordas 1993)

„for Bourdieu the socially informed body is the "principle generating and unifying all practices," and consciousness is a form of strategic calculation fused with a system of objective potential“ (Csordas 1990)

>>> Socially informed body as a principle generating and unifying all practices

procesualization of bodily incorporation (walking, head posture, mimics)

not just bodily in physical way, but connected with a specific content of consciousness

incorporation of objective social structures

in every culture basic ideological structures have their practical forms

the world of bodily practice = world of already accomplished aims

mimetic repetitive cultural enskilment leads to the adoption of cultural norms

the bodily practices carry traces of the culture within which they are exercised

WACQUANT (BOURIDIEU)
VS.
MAUSS

HABITUS MAUSS VS. BOURDIEU

(CSORDAS)

Mauss in body techniques refer to the **sum total of culturally patterned uses the body in a society**. For Mauss it was a means to organize a miscellaneous domain of culturally patterned behaviour, received only a paragraph of elaboration of habitus as a collection of practices, defining it as a **system of enduring dispositions which is the unconscious, collectively inculcated principle for the generation and structuring of practices and representations (1977:72)**. This definition holds promise because it focuses on the psychologically internalized content of the behavioural environment. For our purposes, it is important that the **habitus does not generate practices unsystematically or at random, because there is a**

„... principle generating and unifying all practices, the system of inseparably cognitive and evaluative structures which organizes the vision of the world in accordance with the objective structures of a determinate state of the social world: this principle is nothing other than the socially informed body, with its tastes and distastes, its compulsions and repulsions, with, in a word, all its senses, that is to say, not only the traditional five senses-which never escape the structuring action of social determinisms-but also the sense of necessity and the sense of duty, the sense of direction and the sense of reality, the sense of balance and the sense of beauty, common sense and the sense of the sacred, tactical sense and the sense of responsibility, business sense and the sense of propriety, the sense of humor and the sense of absurdity, moral sense and the sense of practicality, and so on. [1977:124, emphasis in original]

Bourdieu maintains this roundedness in the body even in discussion of the "sense of taste" as the cultural operator in his social analysis of aesthetics, insisting that it is "inseparable from taste in the sense of the capacity to discern the flavours of foods which implies a preference for some of them" (1984:99).

NEXT CLASS

- **Body as a form of a capital**
- **Compulsory reading:** Wacquant, L. (1995). 'Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labour Among Professional Boxers', in *Body and Society*, 1 (1), Pp. 65 – 93
- **Recommended reading:** Wacquant, L. (1998): Pierre Bourdieu. In R. Stones, ed., *Key sociological thinkers*. London, Macmillan Press. Pp. 220-225
- **Guiding questions:**
 - What is: habitus; capital; field in the ethnography of professional boxing field case?
 - Think about how is the social structure incorporated in the form of habitus? What is the structure here?
 - How are these related?

Discussion questions:

- What is the relationship between the individual (body) and society?
- How is Wacquant's (Bourdieu's) approach different from the approach of Douglas and Mauss and Goffman?
 - - Symbolic body/social body; body techniques; normative of social situation...
- Can you think about more examples of this theory application?
 - - In relation to gender, beauty, illness, eating, health, sexual behaviour, death