

Distinction: a social judgement of taste
Lecture on the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu
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outline of lecture 2

- testing: reading culture, taste and symbols as social distinctions and social markers of class
- understanding the main sociological argument on culture; structural constructivism, power, social change
- reading text fragments...
- what are the problems?

just testing...

- how can we define positions/classes in a field perspective?
- what are the particular characteristics of this field?
- are there particular forms of capital?
- can we define particular positions?
- can we define logics (hierarchy/in-exclusion)
- can we now make hypotheses about taste cultures? class distinctions? habitus?
- social mobility, power?

micro vs. macro

- all agents are part of a structured whole, where positions have to be understood relative to each other.
- all practice are thus determined also by the differences in positions, trajectory, possibilities
- traces of structures in all forms of culture: habits, speech, food, leisure, cultural consumption.

The structural invariants

- three distinct classes and taste cultures
- the aristocracy of culture/legitimate taste
- the petit bourgeois/middle brow taste
- the working class/taste of necessity/popular taste
- the struggle for hegemony/domination/doxa
- relational positions, oppositions, internal/external defining culture... p. 1: /p.99
- There is an economy of cultural goods, but it has a specific logic. Sociology.... cultural goods, tastes are produced...objects ... as works of art.. mode of appropriation that is considered legitimate.
- But one cannot fully understand cultural practices unless "culture"....

method, basic findings p. 13

□..determine how the cultivated dispositions and cultural competence that are revealed in the nature of the cultural goods consumed, and in the way they are consumed, vary according to the category of agents and the area to which they applied, from the most legitimate areas such as painting or music to the most personal ones,...two basic facts:

two basic facts...

- cultural practices vary with educational capital and social origin
- and the weight of social origin as preference-explanation increases as one moves away from the most legitimate areas of culture

p. 33 on television

□The cultural divide.... However, television, which brings certain performances of "high" art into the home... create what are virtually experimental situations, .. One then observes the confusion, sometimes almost a sort of panic mingled with revolt...

p. 113

□..capital is a social relation, i.e. an energy ...produces effects in the field in which it is produced and reproduced...by the specific law in each field.

p. 231/ 236

□A cultural product ... is a constituted taste, a taste which has been raised from the vague semi-existence of half formulated or unformulated experience...is almost always the work of professionals..

□A Sociological test..moving from right to left....

p. 443

□The interest in such "news", which the so called serious papers disdainfully relegate to the back page, is perhaps..... One forgets that the dominant class is defined precisely by the fact that it has a particular interest in affairs of "general interest", because the particular interests of its members are particularly bound up with those affairs.

Problems?

- What are the advantages?
- What are the challenges and problems?
- How different is a different society, today?
- How does media technology development influence the theory?
- How can Bourdieus approach be applied in media research and cultural studies?

Welcome to the class of readers

- Distinction as distinction
- How will you use this knowledge?
- The knowledge effect..
- the difference from common sense
- Bourdieu's position in international academia
- ethics