Engaged Theory

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Engaged theory

Engaged theory is a methodological framework for understanding social complexity. It provides a framework that moves from detailed empirical analysis about things, people and processes in the world to abstract theory about the constitution and social framing of those things, people and processes. One lineage of engaged theory is called the 'constitutive abstraction' approach associated with the journal Arena Journal[1]. Engaged theory is one approach within the broader tradition of critical theory. A second lineage of engaged theory has been developed by researchers who began their association through the Global Cities Institute, scholars such as Manfred Steger, Paul James and Damian Grenfell, drawing upon a range of writers from Pierre Bourdieu to Benedict Anderson and Charles Taylor.

All social theories are dependent upon a process of abstraction. However, they do not characteristically theorize their own basis for establishing their standpoint. For example, Grounded theory, a very different approach, suggests that empirical data collection is a neutral process that gives rise to theoretical claims out of that data. By contrast, engaged theory is reflexive in a number of ways. Firstly, it recognises that even something as basic as collecting data already entails making theoretical presuppositions. Secondly, it names the levels of analysis from which theoretical claims are made. Engaged theory works across four levels of theoretical abstraction.[2] Thirdly, it makes a clear distinction between theory and method, suggesting that a social theory is an argument about a social phenomenon, while an analytical method or set of methods is defined a means of substantiating that theory. Engaged theory in these terms works as a 'Grand method', but not a 'Grand theory'. It provides an integrated set of methodological tools for developing different theories of things and processes in the world.

Levels of analysis

The four levels of analysis moves from the most concrete form of analysis - empirical generalization - to more abstract levels of analysis. Each subsequent level of analysis is more abstract than the previous one moving across the following themes: 1. doing, 2. acting, 3. relating, 4. being.

This leads to the 'levels' approach as set out below:

1. Empirical analysis (ways of doing)

The method begins by emphasizing the importance of a first-order abstraction, here called empirical analysis. It entails drawing out and generalizing from on-the-ground detailed descriptions of history and place. This first level either involves generating empirical description based on observation, experience, recording or experiment—in other words, abstracting evidence from that which exists or occurs in the world—or it involves drawing upon the empirical research of others. The first level of analytical abstraction is an ordering of 'things in the world', in a way that does not depend upon any kind of further analysis being applied to those 'things'.

For example, the Circles of Sustainability approach is a form of engaged theory distinguishing (at the level of empirical generalization) between different domains of social life. Although that approach is also analytically defended through more abstract theory, the claim that economics, ecology, politics and culture can be distinguished as central domains of social practice has to be defensible at an empirical level and, at the same time, be useful in analysing situations on the ground. The success or otherwise of the method can be assessed by examining how it is used. One example of use of the method was a project on Papua New Guinea called Sustainable Communities, Sustainable Development[3][4].
2. Conjunctural analysis (ways of acting)

This second level of analysis, conjunctural analysis, involves identifying and more importantly examining the intersection (the conjunctures) of various patterns of action (practice and meaning). Here the method draws upon established sociological, anthropological and political categories of analysis such as production, exchange, communication, organization and inquiry.

3. Integrational analysis (ways of relating)

This third level of entry into discussing the complexity of social relations examines the intersecting modes of social integration and differentiation. These different modes of integration are expressed here in terms of different ways of relating to and distinguishing oneself from others—from the face-to-face to the disembodied. Here we see a break with the dominant emphases of classical social theory and a movement towards a post-classical sensibility. In relation to the nation-state, for example, we can ask how it is possible to explain a phenomenon that, at least in its modern variant, subjectively explains itself by reference to face-to-face metaphors of blood and place—ties of genealogy, kinship and ethnicity—when the objective 'reality' of all nation-states is that they are disembodied communities of abstracted strangers who will never meet. This accords with Benedict Anderson's conception of 'imagined communities', but recognizes the contradictory formation of that kind of community.[5]

4. Categorical analysis (ways of being)

This level of enquiry is based upon an exploration of the ontological categories (categories of being such as time and space). If the previous level of analysis emphasizes the different modes through which people live their commonalities with or differences from others, those same themes are examined through more abstract analytical lenses of different grounding forms of life: respectively, embodiment, spatiality, temporality, performativity and epistemology. At this level, generalizations can be made about the dominant modes of categorization in a social formation or in its fields of practice and discourse. It is only at this level that it makes sense to generalize across modes of being and to talk of ontological formations, societies as formed in the uneven dominance of formations of tribalism, traditionalism, modernism or postmodernism.[6]

References

Arena (Australian publishing co-operative)

Arena is an independent Australian radical and critical publishing group. It has been publishing continuously since 1963. Currently, its principal publications are the political and cultural Arena Magazine (6 times per year), and the twice-yearly theoretical publication Arena Journal. Their concerns initially found expression in the practical and theoretical quarterly, Arena, which ran from 1963 to 1992 and was then transformed into the two different publications that continue today.

Though the quarterly Arena commenced as a New Left magazine with a commitment to extending Marxist approaches by developing an account of intellectual practices, its subsequent debates and theoretical work, and engagements with critical theory, media theory, post-structuralism and postmodernism, have led it to develop an approach known as the 'constitutive abstraction' approach. This is connected to an associated lineage of engaged theory. All of these are underpinned by a preoccupation with the questions of social abstraction, including the abstraction of intellectual practices. They include a special emphasis on the cultural and social contradictions of globalised hi-tech society, which the Arena editors took to be misrepresented within prevailing media theory and post-structuralism.

Many of the themes the Arena group has explored over the decades relate to those raised by writers like Slavoj Žižek, Zygmunt Bauman and Richard Sennett, and, to some degree, writers associated with the Frankfurt School. However, Arena's critique also suggests that many of these authors stop short of a full critique of the ungrounding of contemporary social life by current global/technological/media processes.

History

The quarterly journal Arena was founded in Melbourne, Australia in 1963, at a time of crisis for the Old Left and the emergence of the New Left. Some members of the editorial board, who at that time still hoped for a theoretical and ethical renewal within far Left in Australia, were members of the Party.[citation needed] As that prospect waned Arena continued as an independent critical political publication.

Although the publication covered a wide variety of topics, one was of key practical and theoretical importance: the transformation of post-World War II industrial society by the mobilisation of knowledge production as a core productive activity, the nature of intellectual practice, and the consequent creation of new class and cultural divisions whose social character made necessary a thorough revision of the classical Marxist theory of class and base and superstructure accounts of the social whole.[2]

A key to this theoretical trend was extended commentary on the transformation of the modern university, the instrumentalisation of education, and the revolt against this that formed the core of many of the social upheavals of the 1960s and beyond, as was a focus on colonialism in the Asia-Pacific region, including relations between Australia and its then colony Papua New Guinea, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The 1970s: critique of social democracy and the development of a post-Marxist framework

By the mid-1970s – as the radical Left faltered and social democracy became increasingly instrumentalised - Arena contributors were focusing on the degree to which social life could be seen not through a base/superstructure/ideology model, but as nested levels of material abstraction, from the least abstract – face-to-face daily life – to the most abstract, such as global commodity and image/media circulation. A focus on material abstraction had its origins in a redirection of the implications of both the critique of technology by figures like Jacques Ellul and the extension of its range by Marshall McLuhan. Marx's analysis of the commodity, particularly as reconstructed by Alfred Sohn-Rethel, consolidated that movement.
The dominant social contradiction was seen as no longer between labour and capital, but between deep-seated human cultural needs grounded in the less abstract levels of life and the drawing of ever-larger areas of life into the most abstracted, and instrumentalised levels of life. Contemporary life was held to be based on a widespread erroneous assumption that the elements of social life – identity stability, meaning, co-operative solidarity – could be 'taken-for-granted' and would survive intact through any process of technological development.

A re-radicalised emancipatory Left would thus be one in which society had a reflexive relationship to different levels of abstraction, maintaining all in a dynamic relationship – crucial to which was an overcoming of the split between intellectual and manual labour as separate class and culturally grounded activities. Although this approach took up some of the themes of the counter-culture, it was also critical of the counter-culture's excessive valorisation of less abstract levels of life and the belief that modern subjects could or should withdraw into anti-technological primitivism. In Arena's immediate circles it found expression in a decision to establish Arena's own printery and, from 1974 onwards, to typeset, print and publish their own journal and related publications.

Arena's distinctive approach can thus be seen as having some superficial similarities with post-Marxist and post-classical attempts to apply a levels analysis of social life as developed (differently) by Jurgen Habermas and Louis Althusser. Its critical account of instrumentalised abstraction also has some surface parallels with Slavoj Žižek's critique of postmodernism in The Ticklish Subject and The Fragile Absolute, and Zygmunt Bauman's analysis of 'liquid modernity' in his recent works. More generally, Arena's distinctive approach is grounded in an emphasis on the constitutive role of abstraction both within the interpretive and the instrumental expression of rationality.

Though it continued to publish a great deal of conventional radical-left political economic and geopolitical material, it was at this point that its orientation began to diverge from other Australian left publications such as Overland, and the Australian Left Review.

The 1980s: post-structuralism, biotechnology and exterminism

This practical-theoretical approach led those associated with Arena into a number of key debates and causes of the 1980s. The renewal of a 'hot' Cold War by the Reagan administration and of the nuclear arms race – 'exterminism' in E. P. Thompson's phrase - was analysed as an over-determined consequence of an instrumentalised, maximally abstracted way of life. Advances in medical research such as in-vitro fertilization were given a more critical account, examining the manner in which such technologies were harbingers of a wider cultural contradiction arising from the reconstruction of nature at the molecular biological level.

The newly popular work of postmodernists and post-structuralists like Jean Baudrillard and Jacques Derrida, which argued the simulated and deferred nature of the sign and text, was critically analysed as, in fact, a description of a highly abstracted media society, falsely generalised and transhistoricised.

These and other debates increasingly put the Arena editors in a critical relationship to what remained of the Left, which had enthusiastically embraced the celebration of difference and hybridity as the post-structuralist revolution swept English-speaking humanities departments in the 1980s. Paradoxically, this also led to some on the Left failing to grasp Arena's standpoint, representing it, too, as an expression of the post-structuralist wave.

Increasingly, Arena's arguments added up to a critique that was deep-cultural and/or ontological. As the USSR collapsed and capitalism was fully globalised, and as the environmental problem became compelling, it was becoming clear that a global system had developed to such a degree that its basic contradiction was of the possibility of meaningful life itself.
**Arena Magazine and Arena Journal**

By the end of the 1980s it was becoming increasingly difficult to bridge the deeper theoretical debates and more current analysis within one publication. *Arena* (quarterly) was concluded at issue 99/100 in 1992 and two new publications launched – the popular political and cultural commentary publication *Arena Magazine* (6 times per year) and the twice-yearly theoretical, academically refereed publication, *Arena Journal*.

Drawing on a wide variety of writers, and acting as a more pluralist space for debates within critical streams of Australian thought and politics, *Arena*'s editors took part in most of the key debates in Australian political and cultural life over the last fifteen years. These found their most directly engaged expression in the Magazine; they included an extended consideration of the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia, and the challenges faced by traditional Indigenous communities within a modern framework; the importation and development of the 'culture wars' and the rise of right-wing populism as a response to the 'ungrounding' of social life under globalisation; the contradictions arising from the spread of post-human and post-natural technologies, from birth technologies to medication to GM foods; the rise of 'military humanitarianism' in the NATO Balkans interventions in the 1990s and its continuation and expansion in Iraq; and in the 'mandatory detention' regime imposed on refugees in the 2000s. Importantly, many of these debates problematised elements of progressive/radical discourse, for example, the nature of instrumental policies like multiculturalism, the 'no-borders' approach to refugee issues, or unreflective techno-utopianism that rose with the internet and spread of post-human technologies.

In more recent years the *Arena* editors have been particularly concerned to position the environmental movement within a general critique of the neo-liberal trajectory. *Arena Journal* especially, with its more direct focus on a range of theoretical-practical concerns, has sought to develop the more fundamental aspects of the Arena critique. Its brief is to promote ethically and theoretically concerned discussion about the prospects for cooperative life through a central focus on the reconstruction of class relations, forms of selfhood and community life in contemporary society.

It publishes scholarly works by Australian and international scholars.

**Contributors**

Much of the initial theoretical framework for Arena’s editorial approach was developed by founding editor Geoff Sharp, with editors Nonie Sharp and Doug White. Key contributions on theoretical frameworks for analysing education, post-structuralism, feminism, nationalism, technology and subjectivity have been made by John Hinkson, Gerry Gill, Alison Caddick, Paul James, Simon Cooper and Guy Rundle.

Since the late 1960s the publications have been produced by a group of around a dozen to twenty members, many of whom have been part of the project for several decades.

Over the years *Arena*'s publications have featured work from a wide range of Australian and international contributors, including Dennis Altman, Judith Brett, Humphrey McQueen, Don Watson, John Pilger, Julie Stephens, Boris Frankel, Susan Hawthorne, Noam Chomsky, David Holmes, Verity Burgmann, Andrew Milner, Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, Tom Nairn, Larissa Behrendt, Jürgen Habermas, Zygmunt Bauman, Christos Tsiolkas, Kevin Hart, Simon During, Noel Pearson, Raimond Gaita, John Frow, Naomi Klein.
Pamphlets and papers

Arena has also published a range of monographs, pamphlets and papers over the years on topics ranging from nuclear power and critical Australian political economy to the Iraq occupation.

Printing

The Arena co-operative printed their own publications from 1974 to 1992, and continue to run a commercial printery with a specific focus on community and alternative publications, in Fitzroy, Melbourne.

Books


References


External links

• Arena (http://www.arena.org.au)
• Reason in Revolt (http://www.reasoninrevolt.net.au/home.htm)
The RMIT Global Cities Research Institute is one of the four major research institutes of the Australian university the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Melbourne, Victoria. It was formed in 2006 as one of the four flagship research bodies at the university crossing all the disciplines from the humanities and social sciences to applied science and engineering. It has 200 staff, affiliated with seven programs.

1. Global Climate Change
   Research leader: Darryn McEvoy

2. Globalization and Culture
   Research leaders: Formerly Manfred Steger and Chris Hudson

3. Community Sustainability
   Research leaders: Supriya Singh and Yaso Nadarajah

4. Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures
   Research leaders: Ralph Horne and John Fien

5. Human Security and Disasters
   Research Leaders: John Handmer and Jeff Lewis

6. Urban Decision-Making and Complex Systems
   Research Leader: Lin Padgham

7. Global Indigeneity and Reconciliation
   Research Leader: Barry Judd

The Institute's founding Director was Paul James (2006–2013).

**Context**

The research of the Global Cities Institute Cities begins with the proposition that cities are the crucible of contemporary human living. Cities are reframing the way in which people live on this planet. The research of the institute encompasses questions of globalization, cultural change and community sustainability, human security, and urban restructuring under pressure.

Over the last decade, billions of dollars have been spent on development and security projects by both government and non-government agencies. Despite this investment, many communities continue to live under enormous pressure. Understanding this set of problems is central to the research agenda of the Global Cities Institute. It has implications for basic questions of sustainability. For the Global Cities Institute, developing a thorough on-going research program entails going beyond identifying the immediate threats to cities and communities to explore pathways towards enhancing sustainability, security, resilience and adaptation.

The Institute has partnerships with many other programs. The Institute is engaged with the City of Melbourne on a series of projects, including the Future Melbourne project. It has global collaborations with the UN Global Compact, UN-HABITAT, Metropolis, and other institutes and centres across the world. Through the work of the Global Cities Institute...
Institute, RMIT was named in 2008 as the first UN Habitat university in the Asia-Pacific region. From 2007 the Institute has hosted the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, the only International Secretariat of the United Nations in the Asia-Pacific region.[8]

**Approach**

The Global Cities Institute uses an overall approach called Engaged theory which integrates the broad range of methods and tools that different researchers in the Institute draw upon across different disciplines.[9] At the empirical level this approach begins with a tool box for social mapping, organised around four domains of the social: economics, ecology, politics and culture (see Circles of Sustainability). At the most abstract level it engages in research into the way in which such social life is affected by slow changes in the nature of time, space and embodiment.

**References**


## Critical theory

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Critical theory is a school of thought that stresses the reflective assessment and critique of society and culture by applying knowledge from the social sciences and the humanities. As a term, critical theory has two meanings with different origins and histories: the first originated in sociology and the second originated in literary criticism, whereby it is used and applied as an umbrella term that can describe a theory founded upon critique; thus, the theorist Max Horkheimer described a theory as critical insofar as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them."[2]

In philosophy, the term critical theory describes the neo-Marxist philosophy of the Frankfurt School, which was developed in Germany in the 1930s. Frankfurt theorists drew on the critical methods of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. Critical theory maintains that ideology is the principal obstacle to human liberation.[3] Critical theory was established as a school of thought primarily by five Frankfurt School theoreticians: Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, and Erich Fromm. Modern critical theory has been influenced by György Lukács and Antonio Gramsci as well as the second generation Frankfurt School scholars, including Jürgen Habermas. In Habermas's work, critical theory transcended its theoretic roots in German idealism, and progressed closer to American pragmatism. Concern for social "base and superstructure" is one of the remaining Marxist philosophic concepts in much of the contemporary critical theory.[4]

While critical theorists have been frequently defined as Marxist intellectuals,[5] their tendency to denounce some Marxist concepts and to combine Marxian analysis with other sociologic and philosophic traditions has been labeled as revisionism by Classical, Orthodox, and Analytical Marxists, and by Marxist-Leninist philosophers. Martin Jay has stated that the first generation of critical theory is best understood as not promoting a specific philosophical agenda or a specific ideology, but as "a gadfly of other systems". [6]
Definitions

The two meanings of critical theory—from different intellectual traditions associated with the meaning of criticism and critique—derive ultimately from the Greek word *kritikos* meaning judgment or discernment, and in their present forms go back to the 18th century. While they can be considered completely independent intellectual pursuits, increasingly scholars Wikipedia:Avoid weasel words are interested in the areas of critique where the two overlap. [citation needed]

To use an epistemological distinction introduced by Jürgen Habermas in *Erkenntnis und Interesse* [1968] (*Knowledge and Human Interests*), critical theory in literary studies is ultimately a form of hermeneutics, i.e. knowledge via interpretation to understand the meaning of human texts and symbolic expressions—including the interpretation of texts which are themselves implicitly or explicitly the interpretation of other texts. Critical social theory is, in contrast, a form of self-reflective knowledge involving both understanding and theoretical explanation to reduce entrapment in systems of domination or dependence, obeying the emancipatory interest in expanding the scope of autonomy and reducing the scope of domination.

From this perspective, much literary critical theory, since it is focused on interpretation and explanation rather than on social transformation, would be regarded as positivistic or traditional rather than critical theory in the Kantian or Marxian sense. Critical theory in literature and the humanities in general does not necessarily involve a normative dimension, whereas critical social theory does, either through criticizing society from some general theory of values, norms, or “oughts,” or through criticizing it in terms of its own espoused values. [citation needed]

In social theory

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Critical theory was first defined by Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of sociology in his 1937 essay *Traditional and Critical Theory*: Critical theory is a social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented only to understanding or explaining it. Horkheimer wanted to distinguish critical theory as a radical, emancipatory form of Marxian theory, critiquing both the model of science put forward by logical positivism and what he and his colleagues saw as the covert positivism and authoritarianism of orthodox Marxism and Communism.\[8\]

Core concepts are: (1) That critical social theory should be directed at the totality of society in its historical specificity (i.e. how it came to be configured at a specific point in time), and (2) That critical theory should improve understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences, including geography, economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and psychology.

This version of "critical" theory derives from Kant's (18th-century) and Marx's (19th Century) use of the term "critique", as in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and Marx's concept that his work *Das Kapital* (Capital) forms a "critique of political economy." For Kant's transcendental idealism, "critique" means examining and establishing the limits of the validity of a faculty, type, or body of knowledge, especially through accounting for the limitations imposed by the fundamental, irreducible concepts in use in that knowledge system.

Kant's notion of critique has been associated with the disestablishment of false, unprovable, or dogmatic philosophical, social, and political beliefs, because Kant's critique of reason involved the critique of dogmatic theological and metaphysical ideas and was intertwined with the enhancement of ethical autonomy and the Enlightenment critique of superstition and irrational authority. Ignored by many in "critical realist" circles, however, is that Kant's immediate impetus for writing his "Critique of Pure Reason" was to address problems raised by David Hume's skeptical empiricism which, in attacking metaphysics, employed reason and logic to argue against the knowability of the world and common notions of causation. Kant, by contrast, pushed the employment of a priori metaphysical claims as requisite, for if anything is to be said to be knowable, it would have to be established upon abstractions distinct from perceivable phenomena.

Marx explicitly developed the notion of critique into the critique of ideology and linked it with the practice of social revolution, as in the famous 11th of his *Theses on Feuerbach*, "Philosophers have only interpreted the world in certain ways; the point is to change it."

One of the distinguishing characteristics of critical theory, as Adorno and Horkheimer elaborated in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), is a certain ambivalence concerning the ultimate source or foundation of social domination, an ambivalence which gave rise to the "pessimism" of the new critical theory over the possibility of human emancipation and freedom.\[9\] This ambivalence was rooted, of course, in the historical circumstances in which the work was originally produced, in particular, the rise of National Socialism, state capitalism, and mass culture as entirely new forms of social domination that could not be adequately explained within the terms of traditional Marxist sociology.\[10\]
For Adorno and Horkheimer, state intervention in economy had effectively abolished the tension between the "relations of production" and "material productive forces of society," a tension which, according to traditional critical theory, constituted the primary contradiction within capitalism. The market (as an "unconscious" mechanism for the distribution of goods) and private property had been replaced by centralized planning and socialized ownership of the means of production.\[11\]

Yet, contrary to Marx's famous prediction in the *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, this shift did not lead to "an era of social revolution," but rather to fascism and totalitarianism. As such, critical theory was left, in Jürgen Habermas' words, without "anything in reserve to which it might appeal; and when the forces of production enter into a baneful symbiosis with the relations of production that they were supposed to blow wide open, there is no longer any dynamism upon which critique could base its hope."\[12\] For Adorno and Horkheimer, this posed the problem of how to account for the apparent persistence of domination in the absence of the very contradiction that, according to traditional critical theory, was the source of domination itself.

In the 1960s, Jürgen Habermas raised the epistemological discussion to a new level in his *Knowledge and Human Interests*, by identifying critical knowledge as based on principles that differentiated it either from the natural sciences or the humanities, through its orientation to self-reflection and emancipation. Though unsatisfied with Adorno and Horkeimer's thought presented in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Habermas shares the view that, in the form of instrumental rationality, the era of modernity marks a move away from the liberation of enlightenment and toward a new form of enslavement.\[13\]

His ideas regarding the relationship between modernity and rationalization are in this sense strongly influenced by Max Weber. Habermas dissolved further the elements of critical theory derived from Hegelian German Idealism, though his thought remains broadly Marxist in its epistemological approach. Perhaps his two most influential ideas are the concepts of the public sphere and communicative action; the latter arriving partly as a reaction to new post-structural or so-called "post-modern" challenges to the discourse of modernity. Habermas engaged in regular correspondence with Richard Rorty and a strong sense of philosophical pragmatism may be felt in his theory; thought which frequently traverses the boundaries between sociology and philosophy.

**Postmodern critical theory**

While modernist critical theory (as described above) concerns itself with "forms of authority and injustice that accompanied the evolution of industrial and corporate capitalism as a political-economic system," postmodern critical theory politicizes social problems "by situating them in historical and cultural contexts, to implicate themselves in the process of collecting and analyzing data, and to relativize their findings".\[14\] Meaning itself is seen as unstable due to the rapid transformation in social structures. As a result, the focus of research is centered on local manifestations, rather than broad generalizations.

Postmodern critical research is also characterized by the *crisis of representation*, which rejects the idea that a researcher's work is an "objective depiction of a stable other." Instead, many postmodern scholars have adopted "alternatives that encourage reflection about the 'politics and poetics' of their work. In these accounts, the embodied, collaborative, dialogic, and improvisational aspects of qualitative research are clarified".\[15\]

The term "critical theory" is often appropriated when an author (perhaps most notably Michel Foucault) works within sociological terms, yet attacks the social or human sciences (thus attempting to remain "outside" those frames of inquiry).

Jean Baudrillard has also been described as a critical theorist to the extent that he was an unconventional and critical sociologist; this appropriation is similarly casual, holding little or no relation to the Frankfurt School.
Language and construction

The two points at which there is the greatest overlap or mutual impingement of the two versions of critical theory are in their interrelated foci on language, symbolism, and communication and in their focus on social construction.

Language and communication

From the 1960s and 1970s onward, language, symbolism, text, and meaning came to be seen as the theoretical foundation for the humanities, through the influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Ferdinand de Saussure, George Herbert Mead, Noam Chomsky, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and other thinkers in linguistic and analytic philosophy, structural linguistics, symbolic interactionism, hermeneutics, semiology, linguistically oriented psychoanalysis (Jacques Lacan, Alfred Lorenzer), and deconstruction.

When, in the 1970s and 1980s, Jürgen Habermas redefined critical social theory as a theory of communication, i.e. communicative competence and communicative rationality on the one hand, distorted communication on the other, the two versions of critical theory began to overlap to a much greater degree than before.

Construction

Both versions of critical theory have focused on the processes by which human communication, culture, and political consciousness are created. This includes:

- Whether it is through universal pragmatic principles through which mutual understanding is achieved (Habermas).
- The semiotic rules by which objects obtain symbolic meanings (Barthes).
- The psychological processes by which the phenomena of everyday consciousness are generated (psychoanalytic thinkers).
- The episteme that underlies our cognitive formations (Foucault),

There is a common interest in the processes (often of a linguistic or symbolic kind) that give rise to observable phenomena and here there is some mutual influence among the different versions of critical theory. Ultimately, this emphasis on production and construction goes back to the revolution in philosophy wrought by Kant, namely his focus in the Critique of Pure Reason on synthesis according to rules as the fundamental activity of the mind that creates the order of our experience.

Footnotes

[2] (Horkheimer 1982, 244)
[11] “[G]one are the objective laws of the market which ruled in the actions of the entrepreneurs and tended toward catastrophe. Instead the conscious decision of the managing directors executes as results (which are more obligatory than the blindest price-mechanisms) the old law
References

• *Problematising Global Knowledge. Theory, Culture & Society*. Vol. 23 (2–3). (Sage, 2006) ISSN 0263-2764


External links

Archival collections

- University of California, Irvine, Critical Theory Institute Manuscript Materials. (http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt9x0nf6pd) Special Collections and Archives, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California.

Other

- The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory (http://www.iep.utm.edu/ frankfurt) entry in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- "Death is Not the End" (http://www.nplusonemag.com/theory.html) N+1 magazine's short history of academic critical theory.
- Critical Legal Thinking (http://www.criticallegalthinking.com/) A Critical Legal Studies website which uses critical theory in an analysis of law and politics.
Manfred Steger

Manfred B. Steger (1961-) is Professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He was also Professor of Global Studies and Director of the Globalism Research Centre at RMIT University in Australia until 2013.[1]

Background

Steger was born in Austria and left there in 1986 to study in the United States. He earned a PhD in political theory and comparative politics at Rutgers University in 1995.[2]

As of 2013, Steger is a member of the editorial board of the *American Political Science Review*, the research journal of the American Political Science Association.[3]

Scholarship

Steger’s research and teaching spans globalization, ideology, and non-violence.

He won the 2003 Michael Harrington Award with his study on *Globalism: The New Market Ideology* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).[4][5]

Bibliography


Co-Author

Paul James (academic)

Paul James (born 1958, Melbourne), is Professor at the Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney, Australia, and a writer on globalization and social theory. He is Director of the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, a UN International Secretariat with offices in Sydney, Melbourne and New York.

Background

After studying politics at the University of Melbourne James was a lecturer in the Department of Politics at Monash University, Melbourne before moving to Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 2002 as Professor of Globalization and Cultural Diversity.

At RMIT he led and secured funding for several successful initiatives, including the Global Cities Institute (Director, 2006–2013); the UN Global Compact Cities Programme (Director, 2007–present); and the Globalism Institute (Founding Director, 2002–2007; now, Globalism Research Centre) that brought scholars including Tom Nairn, Manfred Steger, Heikki Patomäki and Nevzat Soguk to RMIT.

James lives in North Fitzroy, Melbourne, with Stephanie Trigg[1], Professor of Medieval Literature at the University of Melbourne, and their son.

Contributions

James is primarily known as a theorist of globalization, particularly how nation-states alter under an emergent level of global integration. His work has been read as challenging the simple notion of ‘global flows’ presented by other writers such Zygmunt Bauman and Arjun Appadurai.[2] Using a distinctive comparative method called ‘constitutive abstraction’ or ‘engaged theory’, he has contributed to theories of political culture, the changing nature of community, and the structures and subjectivities of social formation. He is author or editor of 25 books, including a Sage Publications series on globalization. The series, Central Currents in Globalization, is a collection of writings by key figures in the field of globalization. His collaborative work includes writing with other senior scholars such as Jonathan Friedman, Peter Mandaville, Tom Nairn, Heikki Patomäki, Manfred Steger and Christopher Wise, amongst others.

He co-edits Arena Journal (1986–present), a publication concerned with understanding the crisis-ridden transformations of our time, and is on the board of a dozen other journals.[3]

His work also contributes empirically to understanding contemporary politics and culture, particularly in Australia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea. His research on sustainable community development laid part of the foundation for the 2007 legislation that went through the Papua New Parliament,[4] and was developed by the Minister for Community Development at the time, Dame Carol Kidu.

As Director of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme, James also works in the field of urban sustainability. He argues against the mainstream view that ‘smart cities’ are necessarily better or more sustainable cities, suggesting instead that it is the integration of learning and practice which makes for intelligent and sustainable cities.[5] Along these lines he is quoted as saying that London used the 2012 Olympics in an intelligent way ‘where the economy, politics and culture thrive, aided by good transport and a strong information technology infrastructure, all built on a

References

platform of ecological sustainability.\[^6\]

Consistent with this approach, he is one of the key developers of the 'Circles of Sustainability' method used by a number of cities around the world to respond to relatively intractable or complex issues.\[^7\] That method takes the emphasis away from economic growth and suggests that cities should rather be aiming for social sustainability, including cultural resilience, political vibrancy, economic prosperity and ecological adaptation.\[^8\]

As Research Director of Global Reconciliation (2009–present), an organization dedicated to global dialogue and community-level practice, he has (with Paul Komesaroff) contributed to redefining the concept of 'reconciliation'. Instead of an emphasis on reconciliation as an event of testimony and contrition, the Global Reconciliation Foundation treats reconciliation as an ongoing process of dialogue and practice across the boundaries of continuing difference.\[^9\] In 2002, James, Komesaroff, and a management team led by Peter Phipps and Haris Halilovich, ran the first national reconciliation forum in Bosnia Hercegovina. In October 2012, James, Komesaroff and Suresh Sudram, together with a team in Australia and Sri Lanka ran the first national civil-society reconciliation forum in Sri Lanka since the end of the war. This followed a Reconciliation Summit on the Middle East held in Amman, Jordan in 2009, organized by Komesaroff and James.\[^10\]

### Recognition

- Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts (2010–present)
- Melbourne Ambassador (2010–present)
- Collaborating Advisor to the Minister for Community Development of Papua New Guinea (2004-2010); including contributing to drafting the Minister’s New Policy Document (2004) and the Corporate Plan (2004-2007)\[^11\]
- Bronze Medal, 'Beyond the Frontiers of Knowledge', awarded to the Community Sustainability International Project, Malaysia, by the University of Malaya (2005)
- Member of the G20 Advisory Group to the Canadian Prime Minister (2004)
- Crisp Medal by the Australasian Political Studies Association for the best book in the field of political studies (1996)
- Australian Research Council Fellowship (1994-1996)
- Japan-Australia Foundation Fellowship (1991)

### Criticism

Because his work has a general reach, criticisms of Paul James’ work tend to take the form of rebukes for what he does not do or challenges to take seriously mainstream considerations such as citizenship and social movement success.\[^12\] For example, describing James’s book written with Tom Nairn, Global Matrix, Claudia Aradau (2007, p371) writes that: "Contradiction remains however the structuring principle of the book and a method of analysis. It allows the authors to think alternatives from 'the field of our own ideological determinations' (Balibar, 2004, 25)". She then goes onto to criticize the authors for failing to consider citizenship as one of the missing conceptions in the range of alternatives to the world in crisis that the authors describe. In a similar vein, Bihku Parekh says that "James does not explore how the nation and the state are internally related such that the apparently strange idea of the nation-state was considered self-evident by many."[13]
Publications

Books authored


Books edited


References
[16] http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=LYc0sznlHgC&dq=paul+James&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s

External links
• Personal website (http://www.rmit.edu.au/staff/pauljames), RMIT University
• Globalism Research Centre (http://www.rmit.edu.au/globalism), RMIT University
Pierre Bourdieu

<table>
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<th>Pierre Bourdieu</th>
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| **Born**  | 1 August 1930  
Denguin, France |
| **Died**   | 23 January 2002  
(aged 71)  
Paris, France |
| **Era**    | 20th-century philosophy |
| **Region** | Western Philosophy |
| **School** | Structuralism  
Genetic structuralism[1]  
Critical sociology |
| **Main interests** | Power  
Symbolic violence  
Academia  
Historical structures  
Subjective agents |
| **Notable ideas** | Cultural capital  
"Field"  
Habitus  
Doxa  
Social Illusion  
Reflexivity  
Social capital  
Symbolic capital  
Symbolic violence  
Practice theory |

Pierre Bourdieu (French: [buʁdjø]; 1 August 1930 – 23 January 2002) was a French sociologist, anthropologist,[2] and philosopher.[3]

Starting from the role of economic capital for social positioning, Bourdieu pioneered investigative frameworks and terminologies such as cultural, social, and symbolic capital, and the concepts of habitus, field or location, and symbolic violence to reveal the dynamics of power relations in social life. His work emphasized the role of practice and embodiment or forms in social dynamics and worldview construction, often in dialogue and opposition to universalized Western philosophical traditions. He built upon the theories of Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Edmund Husserl, Georges Canguilhem, Karl Marx, Gaston Bachelard, Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Erwin Panofsky, and Marcel Mauss. A notable influence on Bourdieu was Blaise Pascal, after whom Bourdieu titled his *Pascalian Meditations*.

Bourdieu rejected the idea of the intellectual "prophet," or the "total intellectual," as embodied by Jean-Paul Sartre. His best known book is *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1979), in which he argues that judgments of taste are related to social position, or more precisely, are themselves acts of social positioning. His argument is put forward by an original combination of social theory and data from quantitative surveys, photographs and interviews, in an attempt to reconcile difficulties such as how to understand the subject within objective structures. In the process, he tried to reconcile the influences of both external social structures and subjective experience on the individual (see structure and agency).
**Life and career**

Born Pierre Felix Bourdieu in Denguin (Pyrénées-Atlantiques), in southern France on 1 August 1930, to a postal worker and his wife. The language spoken at home was Béarnese, an Occitan dialect. He married Marie-Claire Brizard in 1962; the couple had three sons, Jérôme, Emmanuel, and Laurent.

Bourdieu was educated at the lycée in Pau before moving to the Lycée Louis-le-Grand in Paris. From there, he gained entrance to the École Normale Supérieure (ENS), also in Paris, where he studied philosophy alongside Louis Althusser. After getting his agrégation, Bourdieu worked as a lycée teacher at Moulins for a year before being conscripted into the French Army in 1955. His biographers write that he chose not to enter the Reserve Officer's College like many of his fellow ENS graduates as he wished to stay with people from his own modest social background.[4] He was deployed to Algeria in October 1955 during its war of independence from France and served in a unit guarding military installations before being transferred to clerical work. After his year long military service, Bourdieu stayed on as lecturer in Algiers.[5] During the Algerian War in 1958-1962, Bourdieu undertook ethnographic research into the clash through a study of the Kabyle peoples, of the Berbers laying the groundwork for his anthropological reputation. The result was his first book, *Sociologie de L'Algerie* (*The Sociology of Algeria*), which was an immediate success in France and published in America in 1962.

In 1960, Bourdieu returned to the University of Paris before gaining a teaching position at the University of Lille where he remained until 1964. From 1964 onwards, Bourdieu held the position of Director of Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (the future École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales), in the VIe section, and from 1981, the Chair of Sociology at the Collège de France, in the VIe section (held before him by Raymond Aron and Maurice Halbwachs). In 1968, Bourdieu took over the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, founded by Aron, which he directed until his death.

In 1975, with the research group he had formed at the Centre de Sociologie Européenne, he launched the interdisciplinary journal *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, with which he sought to transform the accepted canons of sociological production while buttressing the scientific rigor of sociology. In 1993 he was honored with the "Médaille d'or du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique" (CNRS). In 1996, he received the Goffman Prize from the University of California, Berkeley and in 2001 the Huxley Medal of the Royal Anthropological Institute.[6] Bourdieu died of cancer at the age of 71.

**Influences**

Bourdieu's work is influenced by much of traditional anthropology and sociology which he undertook to synthesize into his own theory. From Max Weber he retained the importance of domination and symbolic systems in social life, as well as the idea of social orders which would ultimately be transformed by Bourdieu into a theory of fields. From Marx he gained his understanding of 'society' as the ensemble of social relationships: "what exist in the social world are relations – not interactions between agents or intersubjective ties between individuals, but objective relations which exist 'independently of individual consciousness and will'."[7] (grounded in the mode and conditions of economic production), and of the need to dialectically develop social theory from social practice.[8]

The class-based nature of artistic taste had already been firmly established by Arnold Hauser in *The Social History of Art* (1951).

From Émile Durkheim, finally, through Marcel Mauss and Claude Lévi-Strauss, Bourdieu inherited a certain structuralist interpretation of the tendency of social structures to reproduce themselves, based on the analysis of symbolic structures and forms of classification. However, Bourdieu critically diverged from Durkheim in emphasizing the role of the social *agent* in enacting, through the embodiment of social structures, symbolic orders. He furthermore emphasized that the reproduction of social structures does not operate according to a functionalist logic.
Maurice Merleau-Ponty and, through him, the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl played an essential part in the formulation of Bourdieu's focus on the body, action, and practical dispositions (which found their primary manifestation in Bourdieu's theory of *habitus*).\[9\]

Bourdieu was also influenced by Wittgenstein (especially with regard to his work on rule-following) stating that "Wittgenstein is probably the philosopher who has helped me most at moments of difficulty. He's a kind of saviour for times of great intellectual distress".

Bourdieu's work is built upon an attempt to transcend a series of oppositions which he thought characterized the social sciences (subjectivism/objectivism, micro/macro, freedom/determinism) of his time. His concepts of habitus, capital, and field were conceived with the intention of overcoming such oppositions.

**Bourdieu as public intellectual**

During the 1990s Bourdieu became more and more involved in political debate, turning himself into one of the most important public faces of intellectual activity in France. While a fierce critic of neoliberalism, Bourdieu was also critical of the "total intellectual" role played by Sartre, and he dismissed Sartre's attempts within the political sphere of France as "irresponsible" and "opportunistic."\[10\] Bourdieu saw sociology not as a form of "intellectual entertainment" but as a serious discipline of a scientific nature. The paradox between Bourdieu's earlier writings against using sociology for political activism and his later launch into the role of a public intellectual involved some highly "visible political statements" asking whether the role of the academic, in this case the sociologist, is preparation for life as a public intellectual, especially when considering the political implications of Bourdieu's work in the public domain. Although much of his early work stressed the importance of treating sociology as a strict discipline (« La sociologie est un sport de combat » — Sociology is a martial art), his later working life saw him enter the less academic world of political debate in France, raising the issue of whether the sociologist has political responsibilities extending to the public domain.

In 2004 Marxist sociologist Michael Burawoy's presidential address to The American Sociological Association called for a public sociology.\[11\] Burawoy considers the point that sociology has a role to play in the public domain and suggests that the academic sociologist should be more involved in public debate. However, whereas Burawoy suggests that there are shared values amongst sociologists, it also limits the discipline.\[12\] Burawoy argued that the early work of sociologists to change and interpret the world changed to a role of conserving it, as evidenced in Bourdieu's life. Although Bourdieu earlier faulted public intellectuals such as Sartre, he had strong political views which influenced his sociology from the beginning. By the time of his later work his main concern had become the effect of globalisation and those who benefited least from it. His politics then became more overt and his role as public intellectual was born, from an "urgency to speak out against neoliberal discourse that had become so dominant within political debate." Bourdieu developed a project to investigate the impact — particularly the harmful impact — of neoliberal reforms in France. The most significant fruit of this project was the 1993 study 'The Weight of the World,' although his views are perhaps more candidly expressed in his articles.\[13\] 'The Weight of the World' represented a heavyweight scientific challenge to the dominant trends in French politics. Since it was the work of a team of sociologists, it also shows Bourdieu's collaborative character, indicating that he was still in 1993 reluctant to accept being singled out with the category (he deplored the term 'role') of public intellectual. Nevertheless, Bourdieu's activities as a critical sociologist prepared him for the public stage, fulfilling his "constructionist view of social life" as it relied upon the idea of social actors making change through collective struggles. His relationship with the media was improved through his very public action of organizing strikes and rallies that raised huge media interest in him and his many books became more popular through this new notoriety. One of the main differences between the critical sociologist and public intellectual is the ability to have a relationship with popular media resources outside the academic realm.\[15\] It is notable that in his later writings Bourdieu sounded cautionary notes about such individuals, describing them as "like the Trojan Horse" for the unwanted elements they may bring to
Pierre Bourdieu

the academic world. Again Bourdieu seems wary of accepting the description 'public intellectual,' worrying that it might be difficult to reconcile with science and scholarship. Research is needed on what conditions transform particular intellectuals into public intellectuals.

Work

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Bourdieu routinely sought to connect his theoretical ideas with empirical research, grounded in everyday life, and his work can be seen as sociology of culture or, as he labelled it, a "Theory of Practice". His contributions to sociology were both evidential and theoretical (that is, calculated through both systems). His key terms were habitus, capital and field.

He extended the idea of capital to categories such as social capital, cultural capital, financial capital, and symbolic capital. For Bourdieu each individual occupies a position in a multidimensional social space; he or she is not defined only by social class membership, but by every single kind of capital he or she can articulate through social relations. That capital includes the value of social networks, which Bourdieu showed could be used to produce or reproduce inequality.

Ultimately, each relatively autonomous field of modern life, such as economy, politics, arts, journalism, bureaucracy, science or education engenders a specific complex of social relations where the agents will engage their everyday practice. Through this practice, they'll develop a certain disposition for social action that is conditioned by their position on the field (dominant/dominated and orthodox/heterodox are only two possible ways of positioning the agents on the field; these basic binary distinctions are always further analysed considering the specificities of each field). This disposition, combined with every other disposition the individual develops through his engagement on a multidimensional (in the sense of multi-field) social world, will eventually tend to become a sense of the game, a partial understanding of the field and of social order in general, a practical sense, a practical reason, a way of dis-vision (or classification) of the world, an opinion, a taste, a tone of voice, a group of typical body movements and mannerisms and so on. Through this, the social field may become more complex and autonomous, while the individual develops a certain habitus that is typical of his position in the social space. By doing so, social agents will
Pierre Bourdieu often acknowledge, legitimate and reproduce the social forms of domination (including prejudices) and the common opinions of each field as self-evident, clouding from conscience and practice even the acknowledgment of other possible means of production (including, of course, symbolic production) and power relations.

Though not deterministic, the inculcation of the subjective structures of the habitus can be observed through statistical data, for example, while its selective affinity with the objective structures of the social world explains the continuity of the social order through time. As the individual habitus is always a mix of multiple engagements in the social world through the person's life, while the social fields are put into practice through the agency of the individuals, no social field or order can be completely stable. In other words, if the relation between individual predisposition and social structure is far stronger than common sense tends to believe, it is not a perfect match.

Some examples of his empirical results include showing that despite the apparent freedom of choice in the arts, people's artistic preferences (such as classical music, rock, traditional music) strongly tie in with their social position; and showing that subtleties of language such as accent, grammar, spelling and style — all part of cultural capital — are a major factor in social mobility (for example, getting a higher-paid, higher-status job).

Pierre Bourdieu's work emphasized how social classes, especially the ruling and intellectual classes, preserve their social privileges across generations despite the myth that contemporary post-industrial society boasts equality of opportunity and high social mobility, achieved through formal education.

Bourdieu was an extraordinarily prolific author, producing hundreds of articles and three dozen books, nearly all of which are now available in English.

**Bourdieu's theory of class distinction**

Pierre Bourdieu developed theories of social stratification based on aesthetic taste in his 1979 work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (in French, *La Distinction*) published by Harvard University Press. Bourdieu claims that how one chooses to present one's social space to the world — one's aesthetic dispositions — depicts one's status and distances oneself from lower groups. Specifically, Bourdieu hypothesizes that these dispositions are internalized at an early age and guide the young towards their appropriate social positions, towards the behaviors that are suitable for them, and an aversion towards other behaviors.

Bourdieu theorizes that class fractions teach aesthetic preferences to their young. Class fractions are determined by a combination of the varying degrees of social, economic, and cultural capital. Society incorporates "symbolic goods, especially those regarded as the attributes of excellence, [...] as the ideal weapon in strategies of distinction."[17] Those attributes deemed excellent are shaped by the interests of the dominating class. He emphasizes the dominance of cultural capital early on by stating that "differences in cultural capital mark the differences between the classes."[18]

The development of aesthetic dispositions are very largely determined by social origin rather than accumulated capital and experience over time. The acquisition of cultural capital depends heavily on "total, early, imperceptible learning, performed within the family from the earliest days of life." Bourdieu argues that, in the main, people inherit their cultural attitudes, the accepted "definitions that their elders offer them."[19]

He asserts the primacy of social origin and cultural capital by claiming that social capital and economic capital, though acquired cumulatively over time, depend upon it. Bourdieu claims that "one has to take account of all the characteristics of social condition which are (statistically) associated from earliest childhood with possession of high or low income and which tend to shape tastes adjusted to these conditions."[20]

According to Bourdieu, tastes in food, culture and presentation are indicators of class because trends in their consumption seemingly correlate with an individual's fit in society.[21] Each fraction of the dominant class develops its own aesthetic criteria. A multitude of consumer interests based on differing social positions necessitates that each fraction "has its own artists and philosophers, newspapers and critics, just as it has its hairdresser, interior decorator, or tailor."[22]
However, Bourdieu does not disregard the importance of social capital and economic capital in the formation of cultural capital. For example, the production of art and the ability to play an instrument "presuppose not only dispositions associated with long establishment in the world of art and culture but also economic means...and spare time."[23] However, regardless of one's ability to act upon one's preferences, Bourdieu specifies that "respondents are only required to express a status-induced familiarity with legitimate...culture."[24]

"[Taste] functions as a sort of social orientation, a 'sense of one's place,' guiding the occupants of a given...social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which befit the occupants of that position."[25] Thus, different modes of acquisition yield differences in the nature of preferences.[26] These "cognitive structures...are internalized, 'embodied' social structures," becoming a natural entity to the individual (Bourdieu 468). Different tastes are thus seen as unnatural and rejected, resulting in "disgust provoked by horror or visceral intolerance ('feeling sick') of the tastes of others."[27]

Bourdieu himself believes class distinction and preferences are "most marked in the ordinary choices of everyday existence, such as furniture, clothing, or cooking, which are particularly revealing of deep-rooted and long-standing dispositions because, lying outside the scope of the educational system, they have to be confronted, as it were, by naked taste."[28] Indeed, Bourdieu believes that "the strongest and most indelible mark of infant learning" would probably be in the tastes of food.[29] Bourdieu thinks that meals served on special occasions are "an interesting indicator of the mode of self-presentation adopted in 'showing off' a life-style (in which furniture also plays a part)."

The idea is that their likes and dislikes should mirror those of their associated class fractions.

Children from the lower end of the social hierarchy are predicted to choose "heavy, fatty fattening foods, which are also cheap" in their dinner layouts, opting for "plentiful and good" meals as opposed to foods that are "original and exotic."[30] These potential outcomes would reinforce Bourdieu's "ethic of sobriety for the sake of slimness, which is most recognized at the highest levels of the social hierarchy," that contrasts the "convivial indulgence" characteristic of the lower classes.[31] Demonstrations of the tastes of luxury (or freedom) and the tastes of necessity reveal a distinction among the social classes.

The degree to which social origin affects these preferences surpasses both educational and economic capital. Demonstrably, at equivalent levels of educational capital, social origin remains an influential factor in determining these dispositions. How one describes one's social environment relates closely to social origin because the instinctive narrative springs from early stages of development.[32] Also, across the divisions of labor, "economic constraints tend to relax without any fundamental change in the pattern of spending."[33] This observation reinforces the idea that social origin, more than economic capital, produces aesthetic preferences because regardless of economic capability, consumption patterns remain stable.

**Bourdieu’s theory of power and practice**

At the center of Bourdieu's sociological work is a logic of practice that emphasizes the importance of the body and practices within the social world. Against the intellectualist tradition, Bourdieu stressed that mechanisms of social domination and reproduction were primarily focused on bodily know-how and competent practices in the social world. Bourdieu fiercely opposed Rational Choice Theory as grounded in a misunderstanding of how social agents operate. Social agents do not, according to Bourdieu, continuously calculate according to explicit rational and economic criteria. Rather, social agents operate according to an implicit practical logic—a practical sense—and bodily dispositions. Social agents act according to their "feel for the game" (the "feel" being, roughly, habitus, and the "game" being the field).

Bourdieu’s anthropological work was dominated by an analysis of the mechanisms of reproduction of social hierarchies. In opposition to Marxist analyses, Bourdieu criticized the primacy given to the economic factors, and stressed that the capacity of social actors to actively impose and engage their cultural productions and symbolic systems plays an essential role in the reproduction of social structures of domination. What Bourdieu called symbolic violence is the self-interested capacity to ensure that the arbitrariness of the social order is either ignored, or posited...
as natural, thereby justifying the legitimacy of existing social structures. This concept plays an essential part in his sociological analysis.

For Bourdieu, the modern social world is divided into what he calls *fields*. For him, the differentiation of social activities led to the constitution of various, relatively autonomous, social spaces in which competition centers around particular species of capital. These fields are treated on a hierarchical basis wherein the dynamics of fields arises out of the struggle of social actors trying to occupy the dominant positions within the field. Although Bourdieu embraces prime elements of conflict theory like Marx, he diverges from analyses that situate social struggle only within the fundamental economic antagonisms between social classes. The conflicts which take place in each social field have specific characteristics arising from those fields and that involve many social relationships which are not economic.

Pierre Bourdieu developed a theory of the action, around the concept of *habitus*, which exerted a considerable influence in the social sciences. This theory seeks to show that social agents develop strategies which are adapted to the needs of the social worlds that they inhabit. These strategies are unconscious and act on the level of a bodily logic.

**Bourdieu's theory about media and cultural production**

Bourdieu's most significant work on cultural production is available in two books: *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *The Rules of Art* (1996).

Bourdieu builds his theory of cultural production using his own characteristic theoretical vocabulary of habitus, capital and field.

David Hesmondhalgh writes that "by 'Cultural production' Bourdieu intends a very broad understanding of culture, in line with the tradition of classical sociology, including science (which in turn includes social science), law and religion, as well as expressive-aesthetic activities such as art, literature and music. However, his work on cultural production focuses overwhelmingly on two types of field or sub-field of cultural production (...): literature and art."

According to Pierre Bourdieu "the principal obstacle to a rigorous science of the production of the value of cultural goods" is the "charismatic ideology of 'creation' " which can be easily found in studies of art, literature and other cultural fields. In Bourdieu's opinion charismatic ideology 'directs the gaze towards the apparent producer and prevents us from asking who has created this "creator" and the magic power of transubstantiation with which the "creator" is endowed'.[34]

Bourdieu was not a proponent of revolutionary transformations in culture. According to him such moments are always dependent on the possibilities present in the positions inscribed in the field.

**Field and Habitus**

**Field**

Bourdieu shared Weber's view that society cannot be analyzed simply in terms of economic classes and ideologies. Much of his work concerns the role of educational and cultural factors. Instead of analyzing societies solely in terms of classes, Bourdieu uses the concept of *field*: a structured social space with its own rules, schemes of domination, legitimate opinions and so on. Fields are relatively autonomous from the wider social structure (or space, in his terminology), in which people relate and struggle through a complex of connected social relations (both direct and indirect). Among the main fields in modern societies, Bourdieu cited the arts, education, politics, law and economy. Other societies, like the Kabyle people, have not developed such autonomous fields, concentrating the social relations, rules, accumulation of capital and production of *habitus* to the larger social field.
Habitus

Bourdieu's concept of habitus was inspired by Marcel Mauss' notion of body technique and hexis. The word itself can be found in the works of Norbert Elias, Max Weber, Edmund Husserl and Erwin Panofsky as re-workings of the concept as it emerged in Aristotle's notion of Hexis. For Bourdieu, habitus was essential in resolving a prominent antinomy of the human sciences: objectivism and subjectivism. Habitus can be defined as a system of dispositions (lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action).

The individual agent develops these dispositions in response to the objective conditions it encounters. In this way Bourdieu theorizes the inculcation of objective social structures into the subjective, mental experience of agents. For the objective social field places requirements on its participants for membership, so to speak, within the field. Having thereby absorbed objective social structure into a personal set of cognitive and somatic dispositions, and the subjective structures of action of the agent then being commensurate with the objective structures and extant exigencies of the social field, a doxic relationship emerges.

Habitus is somewhat reminiscent of preexisting sociological concepts such as socialization, but habitus also differs from the more classic concepts in several important ways. Firstly, a central aspect of the habitus is its embodiment: Habitus does not only, or even primarily, function at the level of explicit, discursive consciousness. The internal structures become embodied and work in a deeper, practical and often pre-reflexive way. In this sense, the concept has something in common with Anthony Giddens' concept of practical consciousness.

Habitus and Doxa

Doxa refers to the learned, fundamental, deep-founded, unconscious beliefs, and values, taken as self-evident universals, that inform an agent's actions and thoughts within a particular field. Doxa tends to favor the particular social arrangement of the field, thus privileging the dominant and taking their position of dominance as self-evident and universally favorable. Therefore, the categories of understanding and perception that constitute a habitus, being congruous with the objective organization of the field, tend to reproduce the very structures of the field. A doxic situation may be thought of as a situation characterized by a harmony between the objective, external structures and the 'subjective', internal structures of the habitus. In the doxic state, the social world is perceived as natural, taken-for-granted and even commonsensical.

Bourdieu thus sees habitus as an important factor contributing to social reproduction because it is central to generating and regulating the practices that make up social life. Individuals learn to want what conditions make possible for them, and not to aspire to what is not available to them. The conditions in which the individual lives generate dispositions compatible with these conditions (including tastes in art, literature, food, and music), and in a sense pre-adapted to their demands. The most improbable practices are therefore excluded, as unthinkable, by a kind of immediate submission to order that inclines agents to make a virtue of necessity, that is, to refuse what is categorically denied and to will the inevitable.

Reconciling the Objective (Field) and the Subjective (Habitus)

As mentioned above, Bourdieu used the methodological and theoretical concepts of habitus and field in order to make an epistemological break with the prominent objective-subjective antinomy of the social sciences. He wanted to effectively unite social phenomenology and structuralism. Habitus and field are proposed to do so.

Bourdieu's ambition to unite these sociological traditions, which had been widely thought to be incompatible, was and remains controversial. The most important concept to grasp is habitus. Crudely put, the habitus is the system of dispositions which individuals have. Sociologists very often look at either social laws (structure) or the individual minds (agency) in which these laws are inscribed. Great sociological arguments have raged between those who argue that the former should be sociology's principal interest (structuralists) and those who argue the same for the latter (phenomenologists). When Bourdieu instead asks us to consider dispositions, he is making a very subtle intervention in sociology. He has found a middle ground where social laws and individual minds meet and is arguing...
that our proper object of analysis should be this middle ground: dispositions.

Dispositions are also importantly public and hence observable. If I prefer brie to Camembert but keep this fact secret — never showing my preference, scrupulously giving no evidence from which my preference may be observed or deduced — then the preference remains strictly private. It may be aptly called a preference, but it is not a disposition in Bourdieu's sense and arguably not in the everyday sense either. A disposition performs, enacts a preference; however trivial, even when disputing the relative merits of cheeses, a disposition is a public declaration of where one stands, what one's allegiances are.

Amongst any society of individuals, the constant performance of dispositions, trivial and grand, forms an observable range of preferences and allegiances, points and vectors. This spatial metaphor can be analysed by sociologists and realised in diagrammatic form.[36] Ultimately, conceptualising social relations this way gives rise to an image of society as a web of interrelated spaces. These are the social fields.

For Bourdieu, habitus and field can only exist in relation to each other. Although a field is constituted by the various social agents participating in it (and thus their habitus), a habitus, in effect, represents the transposition of objective structures of the field into the subjective structures of action and thought of the agent.

The relationship between habitus and field is a two-way relationship. The field exists only insofar as social agents possess the dispositions and set of perceptual schemata that are necessary to constitute that field and imbue it with meaning. Concomitantly, by participating in the field, agents incorporate into their habitus the proper know-how that will allow them to constitute the field. Habitus manifests the structures of the field, and the field mediates between habitus and practice.

Bourdieu attempts to use the concepts of habitus and field to remove the division between the subjective and the objective. Whether or not he successfully does so is open to debate. Bourdieu asserts that any research must be composed of two "minutes." The first an objective stage of research—where one looks at the relations of the social space and the structures of the field. The second stage must be a subjective analysis of social agents' dispositions to act and their categories of perception and understanding that result from their inhabiting the field. Proper research, he says, cannot do without these two together[citation needed].

Species of capital and symbolic violence

Bourdieu extended the notion of capital, defined as sums of money or assets put to productive use. For Bourdieu, these assets could take many forms which had not received much attention when he began writing. Bourdieu habitually refers to several principle forms of capital: economic, symbolic, cultural and social. Loïc Wacquant describes their status in Bourdieu's work in these terms: "Capital comes in 3 principal species: economic, cultural and social. A fourth species, symbolic capital, designates the effects of any form of capital when people do not perceive them as such.”[37]

Bourdieu sees symbolic capital (e.g., prestige, honor, attention) as a crucial source of power. Symbolic capital is any species of capital that is, in Loïc Wacquant's terms "not perceived as such," but which is instead perceived through socially inculcated classificatory schemes. When a holder of symbolic capital uses the power this confers against an agent who holds less, and seeks thereby to alter their actions, they exercise symbolic violence. We might see this when a daughter brings home a boyfriend considered unsuitable by her parents. She is met with disapproving looks and gestures, symbols which serve to convey the message that she will not be permitted to continue this relationship, but which never make this coercive fact explicit. People come to experience symbolic power and systems of meaning (culture) as legitimate. Hence, the daughter will often feel a duty to obey her parents' unspoken demand, regardless of her suitor's merits.

Symbolic violence is fundamentally the imposition of categories of thought and perception upon dominated social agents who then take the social order to be just. It is the incorporation of unconscious structures that tend to perpetuate the structures of action of the dominant. The dominated then take their position to be "right." Symbolic violence is in some senses much more powerful than physical violence in that it is embedded in the very modes of
action and structures of cognition of individuals, and imposes the spectre of legitimacy of the social order.

In his theoretical writings, Bourdieu employs some terminology of economics to analyze the processes of social and cultural reproduction, of how the various forms of capital tend to transfer from one generation to the next. For Bourdieu, formal education represents the key example of this process. Educational success, according to Bourdieu, entails a whole range of cultural behaviour, extending to ostensibly non-academic features like gait, dress, or accent. Privileged children have learned this behaviour, as have their teachers. Children of unprivileged backgrounds have not. The children of privilege therefore fit the pattern of their teachers' expectations with apparent 'ease'; they are 'docile'. The unprivileged are found to be 'difficult', to present 'challenges'. Yet both behave as their upbringing dictates. Bourdieu regards this 'ease', or 'natural' ability—distinction—as in fact the product of a great social labour, largely on the part of the parents. It equips their children with the dispositions of manner as well as thought which ensure they are able to succeed within the educational system and can then reproduce their parents' class position in the wider social system.

Cultural capital refers to assets, e.g., competencies, skills, qualifications, which enable holders to mobilise cultural authority and can also be a source of misrecognition and symbolic violence. For example, working class children can come to see the educational success of their middle-class peers as always legitimate, seeing what is often class-based inequality as instead the result of hard work or even 'natural' ability. A key part of this process is the transformation of people's symbolic or economic inheritance (e.g., accent or property) into cultural capital (e.g., university qualifications).

Bourdieu argues that cultural capital has developed in opposition to economic capital. Furthermore, the conflict between those who mostly hold cultural capital and those who mostly hold economic capital finds expression in the opposed social fields of art and business. The field of art and related cultural fields are seen to have striven historically for autonomy, which in different times and places has been more or less achieved. The autonomous field of art is summed up as "an economic world turned upside down,"[38] highlighting the opposition between economic and cultural capital.

For Bourdieu, "social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."[39]

**Reflexivity**

Bourdieu insists on the importance of a reflexive sociology in which sociologists must at all times conduct their research with conscious attention to the effects of their own position, their own set of internalized structures, and how these are likely to distort or prejudice their objectivity. The sociologist, according to Bourdieu, must engage in a "sociology of sociology" so as not to unwittingly attribute to the object of observation the characteristics of the subject. She/he ought to conduct their research with one eye continually reflecting back upon their own habitus, their dispositions learned through long social and institutional training.

It is only by maintaining such a continual vigilance that the sociologists can spot themselves in the act of importing their own biases into their work. Reflexivity is, therefore, a kind of additional stage in the scientific epistemology. It is not enough for the scientist to go through the usual stages (research, hypothesis, falsification, experiment, repetition, peer review, etc.); Bourdieu recommends also that the scientist purge their work of the prejudices likely to derive from their social position. In a good illustration of the process, Bourdieu chastises academics (including himself) for judging their students' work against a rigidly scholastic linguistic register, favouring students whose writing appears 'polished', marking down those guilty of 'vulgarity'.[40] Without a reflexive analysis of the snobbery being deployed under the cover of those subjective terms, the academic will unconsciously reproduce a degree of class prejudice, promoting the student with high linguistic capital and holding back the student who lacks it — not because of the objective quality of the work but simply because of the register in which it is written. Reflexivity should enable the academic to be conscious of their prejudices, e.g. for apparently sophisticated writing, and impel
them to take steps to correct for this bias.

Bourdieu also describes how the "scholastic point of view" unconsciously alters how scientists approach their objects of study. Because of the systematicity of their training and their mode of analysis, they tend to exaggerate the systematicity of the things they study. This inclines them to see agents following clear rules where in fact they use less determinate strategies; it makes it hard to theorise the 'fuzzy' logic of the social world, its practical and therefore mutable nature, poorly described by words like 'system', 'structure' and 'logic' which imply mechanisms, rigidity and omnipresence. The scholar can too easily find themselves mistaking "the things of logic for the logic of things" — a phrase of Marx's which Bourdieu is fond of quoting. Again, reflexivity is recommended as the key to discovering and correcting for such errors which would otherwise remain unseen, mistakes produced by an over-application of the virtues that produced also the truths within which the errors are embedded.

Science and objectivity

Bourdieu contended there is transcendental objectivity, only where there were certain historical conditions necessary for its emergence. Bourdieu's ideal scientific field is one that persistently designates upon its participants an interest or investment in objectivity. Transcendental objectivity, he argued, requires certain historical and social conditions for its production. The scientific field is precisely that field in which objectivity may be acquired. The structure of the scientific field is such that it becomes increasingly autonomous and its "entrance fee" becomes increasingly strict. Further, the scientific field entails rigorous intersubjective scrutinizing of theory and data. This makes it difficult for those within the field to bring in, for example, political influence.

Language

Bourdieu takes language to be not merely a method of communication, but also a mechanism of power. The language one uses is designated by one's relational position in a field or social space. Different uses of language tend to reiterate the respective positions of each participant. Linguistic interactions are manifestations of the participants' respective positions in social space and categories of understanding, and thus tend to reproduce the objective structures of the social field. This determines who has a "right" to be listened to, to interrupt, to ask questions, and to lecture, and to what degree.

The representation of identity in forms of language can be subdivided into language, dialect, and accent. For example, the use of different dialects in an area can represent a varied social status for individuals. A good example of this would be in the case of French. Until the French Revolution, the difference of dialects usage directly reflected one's social status. Peasants and lower class members spoke local dialects, while only nobles and higher class members were fluent with the official French language. Accents can reflect an area's inner conflict with classifications and authority within a population.

The reason language acts as a mechanism of power is through forms of mental representations it is acknowledged and noticed as objective representations: as a sign and/or symbol. These signs and symbols therefore transform language into an agency of power.

Legacy

Bourdieu "was, for many, the leading intellectual of present-day France... a thinker in the same rank as Foucault, Barthes and Lacan". His works have been translated into two dozen languages and have had an impact on the whole gamut of disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities. Several works of his are considered classics, not only in sociology, but also in anthropology, education, and cultural studies. Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste (La Distinction) was named as one of the 20th century's ten most important works of sociology by the International Sociological Association. The Rules of Art has had great impact on sociology, history, literature and aesthetics.
In France, Bourdieu was seen not as an ivory tower academic or "cloistered don" but as a passionate activist for those he believed to be subordinated by society. In 2001, a documentary film about Bourdieu – Sociology is a Martial Art – "became an unexpected hit in Paris. Its very title stressed how much of a politically engaged intellectual Bourdieu was, taking on the mantle of Émile Zola and Jean-Paul Sartre in French public life and slugging it out with politicians because he thought that was what people like him should do."

For Bourdieu, sociology was a combative effort, exposing the un-thought structures beneath the physical (somatic) and thought practices of social agents. He saw sociology as a means of confronting symbolic violence and exposing those unseen areas where one could be free.

Bourdieu's work continues to be influential. His work is widely cited, and many sociologists and other social scientists work explicitly in a Bourdieusian framework. One example is Loïc Wacquant, who persistently applies the Bourdieusian theoretical and methodological principles to subjects such as boxing, employing what Bourdieu termed participant objectivation (objectivation participante), or what Wacquant calls "carnal sociology."

Bourdieu also played a crucial role in the popularisation of correspondence analysis and particularly multiple correspondence analysis. Bourdieu held that these geometric techniques of data analysis are, like his sociology, inherently relational. "I use Correspondence Analysis very much, because I think that it is essentially a relational procedure whose philosophy fully expresses what in my view constitutes social reality. It is a procedure that 'thinks' in relations, as I try to do it with the concept of field," Bourdieu said, in the preface to The Craft of Sociology.[44]

Selected publications

- with Luc Boltanski, Le titre et le poste : rapports entre système de production et système de reproduction, in Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales, Vol. 1, n° 2, pp. 95 – 107, 1975
• State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power, Polity, 1998.
• The Social Structures of the Economy, Polity 2005.

Notes
[1] Patrick Baert and Filipe Carreira da Silva, Social Theory in the Twentieth Century and Beyond (http://books.google.gr/books?id=3a2T8L8RRokC&dq=), Polity, 2010, p. 34.
[4] Jane Goodman, 'Bourdieu in Algeria' (2009) pp. 8-9 (http://books.google.ie/books?id=vnVJbr6_oAoc&pg=PA36&lpg=PA36&dq=Did+Bourdieu+kill+in+Algeria?&source=bl&ots=PTg0i8jfxc&sig=C19-qfGKu89o5V6ZDi4gS2dQU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=uxkhUb66EMWChQfC4ICYDg&ved=0ahUKEwifrJT_2z3PAhUe84MKHTGCDFwQ6AEIVAc
[13] collected for example in Bourdieu 'Political Interventions,' Verso 2008 or Bourdieu 'Sociology as a Martial Art,' The New Press 2010
[14] see Bourdieu, 'Thinking About Limits,' Theory, Culture & Society vol. 9 no. 1 pp41-3, SAGE 1992
[18] Distinction, Bourdieu 1984 p 69
[22] Distinction, Bourdieu 1984 pp 231-2
[23] Distinction, Bourdieu 1984 p 75
References and further reading

External links

Obituaries and biographical material

• Guardian obituary (http://www.guardian.co.uk/obituaries/story/0,640396,00.html)
• Biography at Pegasos (http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/bourd.htm)
• The Nation remembrance (http://web.archive.org/web/20080315162700rn_1/www.thenation.com/doc/20020218/pollitt)
• La sociologie est un sport de combat (http://www.homme-moderne.org/images/films/pcarles/socio/index.html) French Documentary by Pierre Carles
• A list of obituaries with links (http://hyperbourdieu.jku.at/hbObits.htm)
• Counterpunch obituary (http://www.homme-moderne.org/societe/socio/bourdieu/mort/co2501.html) by Norman Madarasz

Other resources

• HyperBourdieu@WorldCatalogue (http://hyperbourdieu.jku.at/) - a multilingual bibliography
• Bourdieu and Social Theory (http://ollion.net/courses/PBST09/) - Website with resources and a syllabus for a course at the University of Chicago
• Bourdieu bibliography at Massey University (http://web.archive.org/web/20080212072448/http://www.massey.ac.nz/~nzsrda/bourdieu/home.htm)
• "NewLiberalSpeak" (http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel_id=2187&editorial_id=9956) in Radical Philosophy
• "Practice and field: Revising Bourdieusian concepts" (http://www.cric.ac.uk/cric/Pdfs/DP65.pdf)
• Bourdieu articles (http://www.analitica.com/bitbioteka/bourdieu/) on neoliberalism and globalisation
• Comment (http://www.homme-moderne.org/societe/socio/bourdieu/mort/znet1802.html) on Bourdieu and international crisis
• On Male Domination (http://mondediplo.com/1998/10/10bourdieu) by Pierre Bourdieu
• Twitter Pierre Bourdieu (http://twitter.com/bourdieu) Twitter Pierre Bourdieu.
• Blog Contemporary Sociology Category Bourdieu (http://sociologiac.net/category/bourdieu/) Electronic resources for those interested in the Social Sciences (in Spanish)
• Bourdieu has been a member of the Editorial Board of The International Scope Review (http://www.socialcapital-foundation.org/TSCF/TSCF journal.html)
• Article by David Hesmondhalgh "Bourdieu, the media and cultural production" (http://mcs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/2/211)
Benedict Richard O'Gorman Anderson (born August 26, 1936) is Aaron L. Binenkorb Professor Emeritus of International Studies, Government & Asian Studies at Cornell University, and is best known for his celebrated book *Imagined Communities*, first published in 1983. Anderson was born in Kunming, China, to James O'Gorman Anderson and Veronica Beatrice Bigham, and in 1941 the family moved to California.[1] In 1957, Anderson received a Bachelor of Arts in Classics from Cambridge University, and he later earned a Ph.D. from Cornell's Department of Government, where he studied modern Indonesia under the guidance of George Kahin. He is the brother of historian Perry Anderson.

**Biography**

Anderson was born in 1936 in Kunming, China, to an Anglo-Irish father and English mother. His father, James Carew O'Gorman Anderson, was an official with Chinese Maritime Customs from Waterford in Ireland. The family descended from the Anderson family of Ardbrake, Bothriphnie, Scotland, who settled in Ireland in the early 1700s.[2][3][4] Benedict's grandmother, Lady Frances Anderson, belonged to the Gaelic Mac Gormáin clan of County Clare and was the daughter of the Irish Home Rule MP Major Purcell O'Gorman.[5][6] Major Purcell O'Gorman was in turn the son of Nicholas Purcell O'Gorman who had been involved with the Republican Society of United Irishmen during the 1798 Rising, later becoming Secretary of the Catholic Association in the 1820s.[7][8] Benedict Anderson takes his middle names from the cousin of Major Purcell O'Gorman, Richard O'Gorman, who was one of the leaders of the Young Irelander Rebellion of 1848.[9][10]

Anderson was brought up mainly in California, and after moving to Ireland, studied at Eton College and at the University of Cambridge. His graduate work in politics at Cornell resulted in a paper (the "Cornell Paper") detailing the political situation in Indonesia for which he was barred from the country during the Suharto regime.

He is best known for his book *Imagined Communities*, in which he systematically describes, using an historical materialist or Marxist approach, the major factors contributing to the emergence of nationalism in the world during the past three centuries. Anderson defined a nation as "an imagined political community [that is] imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."[11]

Anderson is currently professor emeritus of International Studies at Cornell University, and head of its Indonesian program. He is also widely regarded as an authority on twentieth-century Indonesian history and politics. He has published widely on Thailand and the Philippines. As in the case of his work on Indonesia, his work on those countries is grounded in his formidable linguistic competence. He was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1994.
Imagined Communities

Anderson argues that the main causes of nationalism and the creation of an imagined community are the reduction of privileged access to particular script languages (e.g. Latin), the movement to abolish the ideas of divine rule and monarchy, as well as the emergence of the printing press under a system of capitalism (or, as Anderson calls it, print capitalism).

Anderson's view of nationalism places the roots of the notion of 'nation' at the end of the 18th century. While Ernest Gellner considers the spread of nationalism in connection with industrialism in Western Europe (and thus not explaining sufficiently nationalism in the eastern non-industrialised European regions), Elie Kedourie connects nationalism with ideas of the Enlightenment, with the French revolution and the birth of the centralised French state, Anderson contends that the European nation-state came into being as a response to nationalism in the European diaspora beyond the ocean, in colonies, namely in both Americas.

He considers nation state building as imitative action, in which new political entities were "pirating" the model of the nation state. As Anderson sees it, the large cluster of political entities that sprang up in North America and South America between 1778 and 1838, almost all of which self-consciously defined themselves as nations, were historically the first such states to emerge and therefore inevitably provided the first real model of what such states should look like. If, for the more elite-centric theorizing of Kedourie, it was the Enlightenment and Kant who produced the "nation", Anderson holds that nationalism, as an instrument of nation-state building, began in the Americas and France. He calls this first wave nationalism, and ascribes to it a civic nationalist character, differentiating it from the ethnic nationalism of the second wave.

Nationalism and print

Of particular importance to Anderson's theory is his stress on the role of printed literature and its dissemination. The rise of nationalism is in Anderson's mind closely connected with the growth of printed books and with the technical development of print as a whole.

According to Anderson, a new emerging nation imagines itself to be antique. In this he somewhat takes the point of Anthony D. Smith, who considers the nation-building mythology and national myths of the "origin" in rather functionalist terms—they are more invented narratives than real stories. Anderson supposes that "antiquity" was, at a certain historical juncture, the necessary consequence of "novelty". "Though after the 1820s, atavistic fantasizing characteristics of most nationalists appear an epiphenomenon: what is really important is the structural alignment of post 1820s nationalist 'memory' with the inner premises and conventions of modern biography and autobiography" (xiv).

Multi-ethnic empires

Anderson, more than other theoreticians, focuses his attention on the official nationalism in multiethnic empires. He introduces an important concept: "naturalization" of Europe's dynasties that represented retention of power over huge polyglot domains.

Some of them, like the Romanov empire, successfully transformed themselves into "national" empires. According to Anderson, in the course of the 19th century, the philological-lexicographic revolution and the rise of nationalist movements, themselves the products not only of capitalism, but of the hypertrophy of the dynastic states, created increasing cultural and therefore political difficulties for many "dynasts". Until that time the legitimacy of these dynasties had nothing to do with nationalness.

Yet those dynasties, for exclusively administrative purposes, tried to settle on certain print-vernaculars before the nationalist big bang. Simultaneously with the rise of nationalism in Europe, there were tendencies among Central and Eastern Europe and Balkan monarchies to re-identify themselves, to re-legitimise themselves on nationalist grounds. This will for re-identification caused, in fact, well-known crises of legitimacy of multiethnic empires.
Dynasties and monarchies, re-identifying themselves as members of the particular ethno-linguistic group, lost their universalistic legitimacy and became only the most privileged members of the one large family.

Anderson's historical materialist approach may be contrasted with Liah Greenfeld's methodological individualist or Max Weber's approach in "Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity".

Indonesia

Anderson was banned from Indonesia during the Suharto era because of his treatment of materials relevant to the overthrow of Sukarno. Wrote the Jakarta Post: "Anderson... was banned from entering Indonesia in 1973 after he and colleague Ruth McVey at Cornell produced a paper, known as the Cornell Paper disputing Indonesia's claim that the Sept. 30, 1965 Movement was the work of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)." He returned to the country in 1999.[12]

Selected works

In a statistical overview derived from writings by and about Benedict Anderson, OCLC/WorldCat encompasses roughly 100+ works in 400+ publications in 20+ languages and 7,500+ library holdings.[13]

- Mythology and the Tolerance of the Javanese (1965)
- A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia (1966)
- Java in a Time of Revolution; Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946 (1972)
- Religion and Social Ethos in Indonesia (1977)
- Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate (1982)
- Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983)
- In the Mirror: Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era (1985)
- Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia (1990)
- Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia (2001)
- The Fate of Rural Hell: Asceticism and Desire in Buddhist Thailand (2012)

Honors

- Association for Asian Studies (AAS), 1998 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Asian Studies[14]

Notes

[2] Perry Anderson's short biography of his father James: http://www.lrb.co.uk/v20/n15/perry-anderson/a-belated-encounter
[3] Page 7, para. 9
[7] http://archive.org/stream/s3unitedirishmen00maduoft#page/270/mode/1up
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External links

• A short biography (http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Anderson.html)

• "The Nation as Imagined Community" (http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/anderson.htm) An excerpt from *Imagined Communities*


• "The Current Crisis in Indonesia" (http://www.zmag.org/zmag/articles/dec96seaman.htm) Interview with Benedict Anderson by William Seaman.


• Archive of articles (http://www.newleftreview.net/getResults.asp?Author=benedict+anderson&KeyWord1=&Subject=Any&Type=Any&StartDate=1960&EndDate=2005&fullText=0&Ordered=0) written by Anderson in the *New Left Review*, (requires subscription).

• Interview with Anderson: "I like nationalism's utopian elements" (http://www.culcom.uio.no/english/news/2005/anderson.html) by Anderson (University of Oslo)


• "Petruk Dadi Ratu" (http://newleftreview.org/A2242) New Left Review Article on Indonesia G30S Coup D'État
Charles Margrave Taylor, CC GOQ FRSC (born November 5, 1931) is a Canadian philosopher from Montreal, Quebec best known for his contributions to political philosophy, the philosophy of social science, and intellectual history. This work has earned him the prestigious Kyoto Prize and the Templeton Prize, in addition to widespread esteem among philosophers. In 2007, Taylor served with Gérard Bouchard on the Bouchard-Taylor Commission on Reasonable Accommodation with regard to cultural differences in the province of Quebec. He is a practicing Roman Catholic.

| **Born**       | November 5, 1931  
| November 5, 1931  
| Montreal, Quebec |
| **Era**        | 20th century philosophy |
| **Region**     | Western philosophy |
| **School**     | Analytic, Communitarianism |
| **Main interests** | Political philosophy  
| Cosmopolitanism  
| Secularism  
| Religion  
| Modernity |
Career

Taylor began his undergraduate education at McGill University (B.A. in History in 1952). He continued his studies at the University of Oxford, first as a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College (B.A. in Philosophy, Politics and Economics) in 1955, and then as a post-graduate, (D.Phil. in 1961), under the supervision of Isaiah Berlin and G. E. M. Anscombe.

He succeeded John Plamenatz as Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory at the University of Oxford and became a Fellow of All Souls College. For many years, both before and after Oxford, he was Professor of Political Science and Philosophy at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where he is now professor emeritus. Taylor was also a Board of Trustees Professor of Law and Philosophy at Northwestern University in Evanston for several years after his retirement from McGill.

Taylor was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1986. In 1991, Taylor was appointed to the Conseil de la langue française in the province of Quebec, at which point he critiqued Quebec's commercial sign laws. In 1995, he was made a Companion of the Order of Canada. In 2000, he was made a Grand Officer of the National Order of Quebec. Taylor was awarded the 2007 Templeton Prize for progress towards research or discoveries about spiritual realities, which includes a cash award of US$1.5 million. In 2007 he and Gérard Bouchard were appointed to head a one-year Commission of Inquiry into what would constitute "reasonable accommodation" for minority cultures in his home province of Quebec, Canada.\[1\] In June 2008 he was awarded the Kyoto Prize in the arts and philosophy category. The Kyoto Prize is sometimes referred to as the Japanese Nobel.\[2\]

Views

In order to understand Taylor's views it is helpful to understand his philosophical background, especially his writings on Hegel, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty. Taylor rejects naturalism and formalist epistemologies. He is part of an influential intellectual tradition of Canadian Idealism that includes John Watson, Paxton Young, C.B. Macpherson, and George Parkin Grant.\[3\]

In his essay "To Follow a Rule", Taylor explores why people can fail to follow rules, and what kind of knowledge it is that allows a person to successfully follow a rule, such as the arrow on a sign. The intellectualist tradition presupposes that to follow directions we must know a set of propositions and premises about how to follow directions.

Taylor argues that Wittgenstein's solution is that all interpretation of rules draws upon a tacit background. This background is not more rules or premises, but what Wittgenstein calls "forms of life". More specifically, Wittgenstein says in the Philosophical Investigations that "Obeying a rule is a practice." Taylor situates the interpretation of rules within the practices that are incorporated into our bodies in the form of habits, dispositions, and tendencies.

Following Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Gadamer, Michael Polanyi, and Wittgenstein, Taylor argues that it is mistaken to presuppose that our understanding of the world is primarily mediated by representations. It is only against an unarticulated background that representations can make sense to us. On occasion we do follow rules by explicitly representing them to ourselves, but Taylor reminds us that rules do not contain the principles of their own
application: application requires that we draw on an unarticulated understanding or "sense of things"—the background.

**Taylor's critique of naturalism**

Taylor defines naturalism as a family of various often quite diverse theories that all hold "the ambition to model the study of man on the natural sciences." [4]

Philosophically naturalism was largely popularized and defended by the unity of science movement that was advanced by logical positivist philosophy. In many ways, Taylor's early philosophy springs from a critical reaction against the logical positivism and naturalism that was ascendant in Oxford while he was a student.

Initially, much of Taylor's philosophical work consisted of careful conceptual critiques of various naturalist research programs. This began with his 1964 dissertation *The Explanation of Behavior*, which was a detailed and systematic criticism of the behaviorist psychology of B.F. Skinner that was highly influential at mid-century. [5]

From there Taylor also spread his critique to other disciplines. The still hugely influential essay, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," was published in 1972 as a critique of the political science of the behavioral revolution advanced by giants of the field like David Easton, Robert Dahl, Gabriel Almond, and Sydney Verba. [6] In 1983's "Cognitive Psychology" Taylor criticized the naturalism he saw distorting the major research program that had replaced B.F. Skinner's behaviorism. [7]

But Taylor also detected naturalism in fields where it was not immediately apparent. For example, in 1978's "Language and Human Nature" he found naturalist distortions in various modern "designative" theories of language, [8] while in 1989's *Sources of the Self* he found both naturalist error and the deep moral, motivational sources for this outlook in various individualist and utilitarian conceptions of selfhood.

**Taylor and hermeneutics**

Concurrent to Taylor's critique of naturalism was his development of an alternative. Indeed, Taylor's mature philosophy begins when as a doctoral student at Oxford he turned away, disappointed from analytic philosophy in search of other philosophical resources which he found in French and German hermeneutic and phenomenology. [9]

The hermeneutic tradition develops a view of human understanding and cognition as centered on the decipherment of meanings (as opposed to, say, foundational theories of brute verification or an apodictic rationalism). Taylor's own philosophical outlook can broadly and fairly be characterized as hermeneutic. This is clear not only in his championing of the works of major figures within the hermeneutic tradition like Dilthey, Heidegger, Merleau Ponty, and Gadamer. [10] It is also evident in his own original contributions to hermeneutic and interpretive theory. [11]

**Communitarian critique of liberalism**

Taylor (as well as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Walzer, Michael Sandel, and Gad Barzilai) is associated with a communitarian critique of liberal theory's understanding of the "self." Communitarians emphasize the importance of social institutions in the development of individual meaning and identity.

In his 1991 Massey Lecture, "The Malaise of Modernity," Taylor argued that political theorists, from John Locke and Thomas Hobbes to John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, have neglected the way in which individuals arise within the context supplied by societies. A more realistic understanding of the "self" recognizes the social background against which life choices gain importance and meaning.
Philosophy and sociology of religion

Taylor's later work has turned to the philosophy of religion, as evident in several pieces including the lecture “A Catholic Modernity” and the short monograph "Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited."[12] However, Taylor's most impressive contribution to date is his book *A Secular Age* which argues against the secularization thesis of Max Weber, Steve Bruce, and others.[13] In rough form, the secularization thesis holds that as modernity (a bundle of phenomena including science, technology, and rational forms of authority) progresses, religion gradually diminishes in influence.

Taylor begins from the fact that the modern world has not seen the disappearance of religion but rather its diversification and in many places its growth.[14] He then develops a complex alternate notion of what secularization actually means given that the secularization thesis has not been borne out. In the process, Taylor also greatly deepens his account of moral, political, and spiritual modernity that he had begun in *Sources of the Self*.

Politics

Taylor was a candidate for the social democratic New Democratic Party in Mount Royal on three occasions in the 1960s, beginning with the 1962 federal election when he came in third behind Liberal Alan MacNaughton. He improved his standing in 1963, coming in second. Most famously, he also lost in the 1965 election to newcomer and future prime minister, Pierre Trudeau. This campaign garnered national attention. Taylor's fourth and final attempt to enter the Canadian House of Commons was in the 1968 federal election, when he came in second as an NDP candidate in the riding of Dollard. In 2008, he endorsed the NDP candidate in Westmount—Ville-Marie, Anne Lagacé Dowson. He was also a professor to Canadian politician and former leader of the New Democratic Party Jack Layton.

In 2010, Taylor said multiculturalism was a work in progress that faced challenges. He identified tackling Islamophobia in Canada as the next challenge.

Interlocutors

- Richard Rorty
- Bernard Williams
- Alasdair MacIntyre
- Will Kymlicka
- Martha Nussbaum
- Hubert Dreyfus
- Quentin Skinner
- Talal Asad
- Arjun Appadurai
- Paul Berman
- William E. Connolly
- Robert Bellah
- John Milbank
- Stuart Hall
- Catherine Pickstock
- James Tully
- Jürgen Habermas
Selected books by Taylor

- Forthcoming. With Hubert Dreyfus, *Retrieving Realism.*

Notes

Further reading

Books


Selected peer-reviewed articles

• 1991 Skinner, Quentin. "Who Are 'We'? Ambiguities of the Modern Self", Inquiry, vol. 34, pp. 133–53. (a critical appraisal of Taylor's 'Sources of the Self')

External links

• A wide-ranging interview with Charles Taylor, including Taylor's thoughts about his own intellectual development. (http://www.the-utopian.org/2010/09/Spiritual-Gains.html)
• The Immanent Frame (http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/immanent_frame/) a blog with posts by Taylor, Robert Bellah, and others concerning Taylor's book A Secular Age
• Text of Taylor's essay "Overcoming Epistemology" (http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/taylor.htm)
• Charles Taylor's syndicated op/ed column (http://www.project-syndicate.org/contributor/214)
• Bibliography of Taylor's works and works on Taylor's philosophy (http://www.nd.edu/~rabbey1/)
• Links to secondary sources, reviews of Taylor's works, reading notes (http://bearspace.baylor.edu/Scott_Moore/www/Taylor_info.html)
• Lecture notes to Charles Taylor's talk on Religion and Violence (with a link to the audio) Nov 2004 (http://goodreads.ca/lectures/taylor/rel_violence04.html)
• Lecture notes to Charles Taylor's talk on 'An End to Mediational Epistemology’, Nov 2004 (http://www.goodreads.ca/lectures/taylor/larkin-stuart04.html)
• Study guide to Philosophical Arguments and Philosophical Papers 2 (http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jgrf6/NMT/Taylor_Index.html)
• Templeton Prize announcement (http://www.templetonprize.org/bios.html)
• Short essay by Dene Baker, philosophers.co.uk (http://philosophers.co.uk/cafe/phil_may2003.htm)
• Taylor's famous essay the The Politics of Recognition (http://elplandeiram.org/documentos/JoustingNYC/Politics_of_Recognition.pdf)

Online videos of Charles Taylor

• Can Human Action Be Explained? (http://vimeo.com/7803207); Charles Taylor gives a lecture at Columbia University
• A Political Ethic of Solidarity (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKVnLwsI5JI); Charles Taylor gives a lecture on a future politics self-consciously based on differing views and foundations in Milan
• "Spiritual Forgetting" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hA1dtTImv0g&feature=PlayList&list=PL474E37C6632442&playnext_from=PL&index=13); Charles Taylor at awarding of Templeton Prize

Circles of Sustainability

Circles of Sustainability is a method for assessing sustainability and for managing projects directed towards socially sustainable outcomes. It is intended to handle ‘seemingly intractable problems’. Circles of Sustainability, and its treatment of the social domains of ecology, economics, politics and culture, provides the empirical dimension of an approach called ‘engaged theory’. Developing Circles of Sustainability is part of larger project called ‘Circles of Social Life’ conducted by the UN Global Compact Cities Programme, which is using the same four-domain model to analyze questions of resilience, adaptation, security, reconciliation. It is also being used in relation to themes such as ‘Circles of Child Wellbeing’ (with World Vision).

The rational for this new method is clear. As evidenced by Rio+20 and the 2012 UN Habitat World Urban Forum in Napoli, sustainability assessment is on the global agenda. However, the more complex the problems, the less useful current sustainability assessment tools seem to be for assessing across different domains: economics, ecology, politics and culture. For example, the Triple Bottom Line approach tends to take the economy as its primary point of focus with the domain of the environmental as the key externality. Secondly, the one-dimensional quantitative basis of many such methods means that they have limited purchase on complex qualitative issues. Thirdly, the size, scope and sheer number of indicators included within many such methods means that they are often unwieldy and resist effective implementation. Fourthly, the restricted focus of current indicator sets means that they do not work across different organizational and social settings—corporations and other institutions, cities, and communities. Most indicator approaches, such as the Global Reporting Initiative or ISO14031, have been limited to large corporate organizations with easily definable legal and economic boundaries. Circles of Sustainability was developed to respond to those limitations.

Origins

The method began with a fundamental dissatisfaction with current approaches to sustainability and sustainable development, which tended to treat economics as the core domain and ecology as an externality. Two concurrent developments provided impetus: a major project in Porto Alegre, and a United Nations’ paper called Accounting for Sustainability, Briefing Paper, No. 1, 2008. The researchers developed a method and an integrated set of tools for assessing and monitoring issues of sustainability while providing guidance for project development.[1] The method was then further refined through projects in Melbourne and Milwaukee, and through an ARC-funded cross-disciplinary project[2] that partnered with various organizations including Microsoft Australia, Fuji Xerox Australia, the City of Melbourne, World Vision, UN-Habitat and mostly crucially Metropolis.[3]
Use of the method

The method is used by a series of global organizations including the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, The World Association of Major Metropolises,[4] and World Vision to support their engagement in cities. It is also used by a number of cities across the world in different ways to manage major projects or to provide feedback on their sustainability profiles (e.g., Hyderabad, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi, São Paulo and Tehran).

Global Compact Cities Programme

The methodology is made available by UN Global Compact Cities Programme for its engagement with its more than 80 Signatory Cities. In particular, some of the 14 Innovating Cities in the Programme have influenced the development of the Circles of Sustainability method through their management of major projects in their cities, some with intensity and others as a background feature. They use a cross-sectoral and holistic approach for developing a response to self-defined seemingly intractable problems.

Porto Alegre, Vila Chocolatão project

The Vila Chocolatão project refers to the recent (2011) resettlement of approximately 1,000 residents of the inner-city Vila Chocolatão slum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The resettlement project of Vila Chocolatão commenced in 2000 in response to an imminent eviction of the community, with community members seeking resources and support to resettle through the City of Porto Alegre’s renown Participatory budgeting system. The lengthy preparation to resettle was led by a local cross-sectoral network group, the Vila Chocolatão Sustainability Network, The group was initially instigated by the Regional Court, TRF4 and consisted of the Vila Chocolatão Residents Association, local government departments, federal agencies, non-government organisations and the corporate sector. The project was supported by the City of Porto Alegre through the municipality’s Local Solidarity Governance Scheme. In 2006, the Vila Chocolatão resettlement project was recognised as a pilot project for the then new Cities Programme cross-sectoral model with City Hall assembling a Critical Reference Group to identify critical issues and joint solutions to those issues involved in the resettlement.

This long-standing collaborative project has been successful in rehousing a whole community of slum dwellers, it has also effected a restructuring of how the city approaches slums. The project ensured sustainability was built into the relocation through changes such as setting up of recycling depots next to existing slums and developing a formal recycling sorting facility in the new site, Residencial Nova Chocolatão, linked to the garbage-collection process of the city (an example of linking the sub-domains of ‘emission and waste’ and ‘organization and governance’); and establishing a fully resourced early childhood centre in the new community. The Vila Chocolatão Sustainability Network group continues to meet and work with the community post the resettlement. This network-led model is now being utilized by the City of Porto Alegre with other informal settlements.

Milwaukee, water sustainability project

In 2009, the City of Milwaukee in Wisconsin, United States of America, wanted to address the issue of water quality in the city.[5] The Circles of Sustainability methodology became the basis for an integrated city project. In the period of the application of the method (2009–present) there has been a rediscovery of the value of water from an industry and broader community perspective.

In 2011, Milwaukee won the United States Water Prize given by the Clean Water America Alliance, as well as a prize from IBM Better Cities program worth $.5 million. The community has also attracted some leading water treatment innovators and is establishing a graduate School of Freshwater Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
**Metropolis (World Association of the Major Metropolises)**

The methodology was first used by Metropolis for *Commission 2, 2012, Managing Urban Growth*. This Commission, which met across the period 2009–2011, was asked to make recommendations for use by Metropolis’s 120 member cities on the theme of managing growth. The Commission Report using the Circles of Sustainability methodology was published on the web in three languages—English, French and Spanish—and is used by member cities as a guide to practice.

In 2011, the research team were invited by Metropolis to work with the Victorian Government and the Cities Programme on one of their major initiatives. The methodology is central to the approach used by the ‘Integrated Strategic Planning and Public-Private Partnerships Initiative’ organized by Metropolis, 2012–2013 for Indian, Brazilian and Iranian cities. A workshop was held in New Delhi, 26–27 July 2012, and senior planners from New Delhi, Hyderabad and Kolkata used the two of the assessment tools in the Circles of Sustainability toolbox to map the sustainability of their cities as part of developing their urban-regional plans. Other cities to use the same tools have been Tehran (in relation to their mega-projects plan) and São Paulo (in relation to their macro-metropolitan plan).

Since 2012, the Cities Programme and Metropolis have worked together to refine the 'Circles of Sustainability' method to use with their respective member cities. A Metropolis Taskforce was charged with further developing the method.

**The Economist**

In 2011, *The Economist* invited Paul James (Director of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme) and Chetan Vedya (Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs, India) into a debate around the question of urban sustainability and metropolitan growth. It led to over 200 letters to the editor in direct response as well as numerous linked citations on other websites.

**World Vision**

In 2011, recognising how much the two processes of urbanization and globalization were changing the landscape of poverty, World Vision decided to shift its orientation towards urban settings. Previously 80 per cent of its projects had been in small rural communities. The Circles of Sustainability method now underpins that reorientation and pilot studies are being conducted in India, South Africa, Lebanon, Indonesia and elsewhere, to refine the methodology for aid delivery in complex urban settings.

**Domains and subdomains**

The Circles of Sustainability approach is explicitly critical of other domain models such as the triple bottom line that treat economics as if it is outside the social, or that treat the environment as an externality. It uses a four-domain model - economics, ecology, politics and culture. In each of these domains there are 7 subdomains.

**Economics**

The economic domain is defined as the practices and meanings associated with the production, use, and management of resources, where the concept of ‘resources’ is used in the broadest sense of that word.

1. Production and resourcing
2. Exchange and transfer
3. Accounting and regulation
4. Consumption and use
5. Labour and welfare
6. Technology and infrastructure
7. Wealth and distribution

**Ecology**
The ecological domain is defined as the practices and meanings that occur across the intersection between the social and the natural realms, focusing on the important dimension of human engagement with and within nature, but also including the built-environment.
1. Materials and energy
2. Water and air
3. Flora and fauna
4. Habitat and settlements
5. Built-form and transport
6. Embodiment and sustenance
7. Emission and waste

**Politics**
The political is defined as the practices and meanings associated with basic issues of social power, such as organization, authorization, legitimation and regulation. The parameters of this area extend beyond the conventional sense of politics to include not only issues of public and private governance but more broadly social relations in general.
1. Organization and governance
2. Law and justice
3. Communication and critique
4. Representation and negotiation
5. Security and accord
6. Dialogue and reconciliation
7. Ethics and accountability

**Culture**
The cultural domain is defined as the practices, discourses, and material expressions, which, over time, express continuities and discontinuities of social meaning.
1. Identity and engagement
2. Creativity and recreation
3. Memory and projection
4. Belief and ideas
5. Gender and generations
6. Enquiry and learning
7. Wellbeing and health

**Criticisms**
The Circles of Sustainability method has had its primary operational testing in cities, municipalities and international NGOs, and apart from being used to develop the materiality process for FujiXerox does not appear to be used by any corporations. While the method includes a relatively simple self-assessment process, earlier versions of the Circles of Sustainability method have been criticised for requiring substantial commitment of time and expertise.
References


[4] The methodology was used by Metropolis for Commission 2, 2012, Managing Urban Growth. This Commission, which met across the period 2009–2011, was asked to make recommendations for use by Metropolis’s 120 member cities on the theme of managing growth. The Commission Report using the ‘Circles of Sustainability’ methodology was published on the web in three languages—English, French and Spanish—and is used by member cities as a guide to practice. (See http://www.metropolis.org/publications/commissions)

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