

## Phenomenological Additions to the Bourdieusian Toolbox: Two Problems for Bourdieu, Two Solutions from Schutz\*

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*In constructing his renowned theory of practice, Pierre Bourdieu claimed to have integrated the key insights from phenomenology and successfully melded them with objectivist analysis. The contention here, however, is that while his vision of the social world may indeed be generally laudable, he did not take enough from phenomenology. More specifically, there are two concepts in Alfred Schutz's body of work, which, if properly defined, disentangled from phenomenology, and appropriated, allow two frequently forwarded criticisms of Bourdieu's perspective to be overcome: on the one hand, a particular interpretation of the concept of lifeworld can remedy identified weaknesses on the problem of individuation; while on the other hand, Schutz's notion of the stock of knowledge can rectify Bourdieu's overly nonconscious depiction of agency. Given my overall support for Bourdieu's scheme and the fact that the extant criticisms on these two grounds are often excessive and obfuscatory, both the suggested elaborations will be prefaced by a clarificatory partial defense of his position.*

Throughout his long and illustrious career, the pioneering French social thinker Pierre Bourdieu made frequent reference to and use of the insights of the luminaries of the phenomenological tradition on topics central to his formulation of social being and action—such as the body, habit, protention, and quotidian practice—but mercilessly chided them for their general ignorance of objective social structures. Indeed, shortly before he passed away, in response to a biting critique of his intellectual relationship to phenomenology (Throop and Murphy 2002), Bourdieu (2002) insisted that he had overcome the shortcomings of phenomenology by integrating it as one “phase” of his theory of practice, complemented by the objectivist phase, appropriated from structuralism, of uncovering the social structures underlying and generating that which the phenomenologists set out merely to describe. The product of this integration is, of course, one of the most influential perspectives in social theory today, garnering vast amounts of appreciative discussion, application in empirical research, and, inevitably, critical commentary. Given the numerous advantages it bears over alternative models—such as structuration theory, which has been kept alive since its originator, Anthony Giddens, effectively abandoned it only through incorporation of many Bourdieusian themes (see Stones 2005)—such attention is well deserved.

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The contention here, however, is that Bourdieu's theory, while by and large laudable, has not integrated *enough* from phenomenology. More specifically, appropriation of two concepts from Schutz's phenomenological sociology, I want to argue, can respectively quash two problems that otherwise mar his conception of practice.<sup>1</sup> First, an interpretation of Schutz's conceptualization of the lifeworld can resolve deficiencies concerning *individuation*; while second, reconceiving the habitus as more akin to the stock of knowledge can surmount the overly *nonconscious* and *corporeal* conceptualization of action it otherwise entails. In both cases, though, it will be necessary to preface the suggested elaborations with a *defense* of Bourdieu against extant criticisms on these fronts, for only when these are scrutinized and their superficialities exposed through further elaboration of Bourdieu's thought do the real sources of trouble emerge.

This is, therefore, a sympathetic critique and so I do not take phenomenology to be a sound body of work on its own or "better" than Bourdieu's, as Throop and Murphy (2002) or Endress (2005) evidently do. Rather, I recognize there are links and convergences between the two systems of thought that can be usefully exploited to overcome real sources of weakness in Bourdieu's oeuvre (cf. Crossley 2001). It should also be noted that though others have suggested parallels, mutual interests, and points of reciprocal complementation between Bourdieu and phenomenology before (e.g., Charlesworth 2000; Crossley 2001; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1993; Marcoulatos 2001; Ostrow 1981), in turning primarily to Schutz rather than Merleau-Ponty or Heidegger, and then only to an interpretation of some of Schutz's key concepts, I am breaking with a prevailing trend. This is not because Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, or for that matter Husserl, are irrelevant—on the contrary, they have much of interest to offer—but the ideas taken from Schutz integrate their chief insights (especially in the case of Husserl, but for an approving discussion of Merleau-Ponty on the body, for example, see Schutz 1970a). With all this said, let us set the scene with a basic outline of Bourdieu's theory of practice.

## OUTLINE OF A THEORY OF PRACTICE

If Bourdieu's perspective comprises an objectivist phase and a subjectivist phase, as he claims, then the former consists of the quasi-structuralist idea that individuals are positioned in social space—his substitute for conventional depictions of the class structure—and in a multitude of fields. The first of these is conceived as a relational space in which all agents are plotted according to three axes or dimensions (Bourdieu 1984:114): the overall amount of capital that the individual holds—including *economic* capital (wealth and property), *cultural* capital (signifiers of cultural competencies such as owned artworks or educational qualifications), and finally *social* capital (resources based on personal networks and associations with certain names or titles); the composition of their capital (i.e., whether it is predominantly economic or cultural); and the individual's trajectory through social space over time as his or her volume and composition of capital evolves.

<sup>1</sup>The arguments presented here form part of a larger project of elaborating Bourdieu's perspective using phenomenology, the focus of the latter being more specifically the improvement of his theory in dialogue with ongoing qualitative research on social class. I would hope, therefore, to dampen down charges of (1) ignoring related issues—there is space here to put forward only the core suggestions—and (2) producing a purely scholastic, theoreticist treatise divorced from actual social inquiry—the concepts developed here have also been developed through and mobilized in research.

The link to the subjectivist phase lies in the French thinker's contention that those in neighboring positions within social space share similar "conditions of existence" and conditionings by virtue of their capital possession, which, in turn, produce within them similar *habitus*, that is, a complex of durable dispositions, propensities, and schemes of perception and appreciation that then guide practice. By "conditions of existence" Bourdieu generally means the agent's relative distance from material necessity and the experiences this generates, with those in the upper regions of social space, possessing plentiful stocks of capital, being subject to an overall distance from necessity while those in the lower sections, holding less capital, being rather closer to its demands and urgencies. Through the practical adaptation to frequently experienced situations—making a "virtue of necessity," as Bourdieu often likes to say—the objective probabilities of "access to goods, services, and powers" inscribed in these conditions are then transformed into the dispositions, schemes of perception, and subjective aspirations of the *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990a:60, 2000a:136).

This adjustment takes the form of a subconscious bodily learning process in which the limits and regularities of the world are inscribed into the *habitus* as a practical, nonconscious evaluation of what goods, practices, and aspirations are accessible and reasonable (the "feel for the game"). We "learn bodily," says Bourdieu (2000a:141), with much of this learning taking place in childhood. Here, "familial manifestations of necessity"—"forms of the division of labor between the sexes," "household objects," "modes of consumption," "parent-child relations," "domestic morality," and the like (Bourdieu 1977:78, 1990a:54)—feed into the *habitus* via "silent censures" (2000a:167) and implicit and explicit pedagogy, often inculcating their effects through the experience of corporeal suffering and visceral emotion (2000a:141), as well as through subconscious forms of mimesis and "sheer familiarization, in which the learner insensibly and unconsciously acquires the principles of an 'art' and an art of living" (1990a:74). For example, in households rich in cultural capital, the "bourgeois culture and the bourgeois relation to culture" are acquired

pre-verbally, by early immersion in a world of cultivated people, practices and objects. When a child grows up in a household in which music is not only listened to (on hi-fi or radio nowadays) but also performed (the "musical mother" of bourgeois autobiography), and a fortiori when the child is introduced from an early age to a "noble" instrument—especially the piano—the effect is at least to produce a more familiar relationship to music, which differs from the always somewhat distant, contemplative and verbose relation of those who have come to music through concerts or even only through records, in much the same way as the relation to painting of those who have discovered it belatedly, in the quasi-scholastic atmosphere of the museum, differs from the relation developed by those born into a world filled with art objects, familiar family property, amassed by successive generations, testifying to their wealth and good taste, and sometimes "home-made" (like jam or embroidered linen). (Bourdieu 1984:75)

However, because the *habitus* is an "open system of dispositions" constantly subject to new experiences well beyond infancy, Bourdieu adds, it is "endlessly transformed" through a dialectic with its environment (Bourdieu 1990b:116; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:133). On the other hand, agents are statistically bound to encounter similar, reinforcing situations as a result of their objective social conditions of existence (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:133), and because so much is instilled in

childhood and the habitus operates as the individual's lens through which to receive new experiences, it proves to be remarkably durable. Thus, for example, the habitus acquired in the family underlies the reception of the experiences of schooling, that is, the "reception and assimilation of the pedagogic message," with the habitus as transformed by schooling going on to frame all subsequent experiences of culture, work, and so on (Bourdieu 1977:87). On the basis of this process, Bourdieu often describes the habitus as the "integration of past experiences" (1977:83) or the "active presence of the past" in the present (1990a:56). Yet this does not imply a role for consciousness in the form of memory, for the body

does not represent what it performs, it does not memorize the past, it *enacts* the past, bringing it back to life. What is "learned by body" is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one *is*. (Bourdieu 1990a:73)

The habitus is not an apparatus of the conscious, then, but instead functions "below the level of consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will" (Bourdieu 1984:466). The "unchosen principle of all choices" (Bourdieu 1990a:61), it orients action and practices based not on consciousness or intentional aims but on the dispositions and inclinations built out of a practical, prereflective, corporeal sense of limits and realistic possibilities, leading agents, as captured in the phrase "that's not for the likes of us," to refuse what they are refused in reality anyway (Bourdieu 1977:77). Bourdieu is, however, keen to stress that the habitus is not a mechanistic translation of objective structures into action, but a *generative* and *creative* capacity for thought and action within limits (e.g., Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:122). More particularly, he claims, the habitus is predisposed to generate unconscious "lines of action" or *strategies* aimed at maximizing agent's profits, whether they be economic or, more importantly, symbolic (1990a:16, 2000a:55; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:25).

The picture painted so far, however, is complicated by the fact that agents are positioned not just in social space but also in multiple *fields*, that is, the various domains of practice in which they participate—such as art, politics, sport, the media—organized as relational spaces dependent upon the possession of the forms of capital valued there. An individual's position within each field further differentiates the conditions of life and hence the form of experience sedimenting into the habitus and generating lines of action, again seen by Bourdieu largely in terms of strategies to either conserve or subvert the state of the field. So, for example, in his study of Heidegger, the German existentialist's habitus—and thus the underlying principle of his action—is said to be a product of not just his position and trajectory within social space (a rural *Mittelstand* background to philosophy professor), as important as these are, but also of his positions and trajectories within the academic field and the field of philosophy (Bourdieu 1991:47; cf. Bourdieu 1975, cited in Lahire 2003:334–35). An individual's collection of positions in fields and social space Bourdieu (2000b:302) dubs their "social surface" and ties to an analytical distinction between "empirical individuals"—concrete human beings in their biological singularity—and "epistemic individuals"—analytically constructed individuals with only their pertinent properties for the study of any one field isolated (cf. Bourdieu 1988:21ff, 2000b:303 n8).

## TWO PROBLEMS, PHENOMENOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Such are the rudiments of Bourdieu's position, and so far, it seems, so good: the recognition of practical knowledge and perceptual schemes in the formation of action effectively reintroduces the creative agent banished by structuralism, while the anchoring of subjective states in objective structural relations dispels the subjectivist myth of unfettered meaningful action. However, if we begin to probe a little deeper in pursuit of sources of critics' discontent, it soon becomes clear that the Bourdieusian conceptual machinery is far from faultless. There are, in particular, two issues that pose a serious challenge to its explanatory capabilities, though these are not the ubiquitous accusations of objectivism, determinism, or materialism primarily because such indictments usually fall victim to Bourdieu's greatest bugbears—misreading, misinterpretation, and decontextualization—and are also often driven by intentions to forward more subjectivist, voluntarist, or idealist agendas (this is certainly the case, for example, with King 2000). To be sure, the two issues to be investigated have been misconstrued and exaggerated by critics—hence the need to clear the ground by showing their errors—but they nevertheless draw attention to areas that even those who sympathize with Bourdieu can recognize are in need of elaboration and modification. So what are these two problems?

*Individuation: Bringing in the Structured Lifeworld*

The first font of dissatisfaction Lau describes as a “well-known” problem and has been discussed by various critics (see, e.g., Cicourel 1993; Reay 2004; Silva 2006), but Bernard Lahire (2003) has voiced it most forcefully. This is the treatment of what might be called *individuation*, that is, the ability to explain the multitude of differentiating factors among individuals in similar relational locations that make them—their habitus and hence their practices—idiosyncratic. This might seem a strange concern for the sociologist, whose theories are often designed for generality and reductionism, yet Lahire's point clearly has ramifications for qualitative studies that, equipped with Bourdieu's conceptual tools, seek to dissect individual lives and lay bare the multitudinous social forces refracted through concrete events, persons, and places that have and continue to fashion them while being able to handle conceptually the individuality of their circumstances and habitus that may in extreme cases, such as the capital-poor individual with a love for fine art, engender “dissonance” from established homologies between structural positions and practices (see Bennett 2007; Silva 2006). The question is, therefore, can Bourdieu adequately grasp *in abstracto* the interplay of individuality and social structure or, as he himself puts it, the comprehension of “particularity in generality and generality in particularity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:75)?

The thrust of Lahire's criticism is that Bourdieu's notion of the habitus and its constitutive dispositions built out of distance from necessity, while offering promise, capitalize on the supposed homogeneity of habitus between individuals in sectors of social space and, as a result, are unable to adequately handle the heterogeneity and subtlety of human lives. Furthermore, the reduction of the individual habitus to the collection of positions occupied in different fields, argues Lahire, fails to remedy the situation. The use of fields to study Heidegger, for example, just cannot grasp the impact on his habitus and dispositions, and thus actions, of a whole array of social factors such as the different schools he attended, his family, his friendships, his political contacts, and so on (Lahire 2003:335)—and for the less

celebrated members of society, one might conjecture, their work, their neighborhood, particular events, and the like. There is, however, a sense in which Lahire's account is premised on a simplistic understanding of Bourdieu on individuation. For one thing, the focus on membership in different fields allows a greater grasp of the factors shaping individuals, such as their specific workplace or their particular schooling, than Lahire makes out. After all, in one of his later studies Bourdieu (2005:69ff) suggested that firms, at least those with a large workforce, *can themselves be fields* generating different positions and thus experiences for their employees, putting flesh on his earlier assertion that sociologists must account for "occupational effects" on agents' habitus, that is, "the effects of the nature of work, of the occupational milieu, with its cultural and organizational specificities" (Bourdieu 1987:4). Similarly, in the case of schooling, in the methodological addendum to *The Weight of the World*—a study very much concerned with concrete individuals—Bourdieu stresses that to "grasp the essential of each [person's] *idiosyncrasy* and all the singular complexity of [his or her] actions and reactions" sociologists must uncover the objective structures past and present expressed in the actual academic establishments through which they traverse and which are themselves organized with other academic institutions in a relational field (Bourdieu et al. 1999:618).

Furthermore, the "social surface" is only one aspect of Bourdieu's approach. Elsewhere, while rightly stressing the homogeneity of habitus between individuals in the same region of social space, he also writes that

[t]he singular habitus of members of the same class are united in a relationship of homology, that is, of diversity within homogeneity reflecting the diversity within homogeneity characteristic of their social conditions of production. Each individual system of dispositions is a structural variant of the others, expressing the singularity of its position within the class and its trajectory. "Personal" style, the particular stamp marking all the products of the same habitus, whether practices or works, is never more than a deviation in relation to the style of a period or class...

He continues: "The principle of the differences between individual habitus lies in the singularity of their social trajectories, to which there correspond series of chronologically ordered determinations that are irreducible to one another." No two members of the same class will have had "the same experiences in the same order," he argues, but "it is certain that each member of the same class is more likely than any member of another class to have been confronted with the situations most frequent for members of that class," and so while the habitus brings about a "unique integration" of experience it remains an integration of "the experiences statistically common to members of the same class" (Bourdieu 1990a:60).

However, probing into Bourdieu's perspective on individuation to counter Lahire's claims reveals that the former's thought on this issue is not entirely unproblematic. On the one hand there is a sense in which the idea of the social surface yields a fragmented depiction of the agent, with individuals being abstracted from the total experiential context of their lives as they live them in concrete time and space to trace the effects of each field without then recombining these multiple field effects to grasp the whole. Indeed, at its most extreme it leads Bourdieu (2000b:299–300) to imply that a single person should be conceived and analyzed as *multiple social agents*, unified only by a personal name and biological individuality, as if the stream of experience and action could be neatly compartmentalized. Such a strategy, and the

conjoined distinction between empirical individuals and epistemic individuals, may be parsimonious in the analysis of any given field, but it proves less palatable when the focus of analysis is either an individual or a set of individuals whose practice, unlike that of Heidegger (Bourdieu 1991), Flaubert (Bourdieu 1996), or even Bourdieu himself (Bourdieu 2008), is difficult to map into fields other than the social space (it is hard to imagine, for example, a field of workers in a small factory). This raises, on the other hand, a second, related issue: it remains unclear how some elements of the individual's experiential and situational milieu, which clearly imprint upon the dispositions, expectations, sense of what is "normal," and schemes of perception of the habitus (such as his or her particular job, locality, certain events, consociates, and so on), while remaining generally configured by material and cultural conditions of existence and fields, are graspable with Bourdieu's conceptual tools. After all, even Bourdieu surreptitiously admitted that fields did not exhaust the social but only captured the effects of those realms of practice where difference and competition are key—for example, he himself "seriously doubted" whether the "ensemble of cultural associations" of a given area ("choirs, theatre groups, reading groups, etc.") could form a field, leaving open the question of how the social effects of being a member of these groups is to be understood (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:100). There is, in short, a residual element of formative experience and thus practice seemingly left unaccounted for.

Consider the passage from *Distinction* cited above, in the exposition of conditions of existence, on the practical familiarization with music or art in early life. This account, highlighting the structuring of formative experience by possession of cultural capital and the latter's reproduction, is highly persuasive, yet the experience and incorporation into the habitus of the *specific* worlds of art or music is not fully accounted for by position in social space (both require the same level of economic and cultural capital), participation in fields (what field is the young child a member of?), or trajectory, only its general conditions of possibility. A similar example is offered, though in a different conceptual vocabulary, by Margaret Archer (2000): though position in social space may indicate a likely "set of the role array" (or a "field of possibles" in Bourdieu's terminology) for a future career—for example, semiskilled or skilled manual work, or perhaps life in the emergency services where an occupational culture centered around masculinity, toughness, excitement but also conservatism, honor, and respectability (on the police, e.g., see Reiner 2000) accord with the dispositions of a certain section of social space (in this case, the upper reaches of the lower section of social space)—only a more differentiated account of residual factors such as "available information, role models, and work experience" would allow a fuller understanding of precisely "why Johnny becomes a fireman and Tommy a policeman" (Archer 2000:285).

The task, then, is to mop up this residual element in a way compatible with, while deepening the explanatory powers of, Bourdieu's framework. To achieve this, I want to argue, we can introduce the phenomenological notion of the *lifeworld*, though, admittedly, not as commonly interpreted by the majority of phenomenologists. The founding stone is Schutz's (1970b:320, emphasis added)—or more precisely Helmut Wagner's, the editor of the volume in which it appears in the glossary—specific declaration that the lifeworld denotes "[t]he total sphere of experiences of an *individual* which is circumscribed by the objects, persons, and events encountered in the pursuit of the pragmatic objectives of living." On this definition, the lifeworld is the agent's practical, everyday world consisting of the domains encountered in his or her routine "time-space paths" (see Giddens 1984:110–16, 132–39)—their home

and family, school or work, neighborhood, and so on—and containing a certain type and particular manifestation of objects (tools, clothes, furnishings), events and people (friends, family, work colleagues), the last of these conveying certain values, beliefs, and discourses. The agent is born into this world, experiencing it from the outset as not only “already constituted” (Schutz 1962:133) but as what is “normal,” familiar, and taken for granted. There are phenomena that are only peripherally part of one’s lifeworld because of their infrequent occurrence and there are phenomena that, because they are never or rarely encountered, are not a part of the lifeworld at all, yet that which is distant in physical space can, because of telecommunications and the media, be brought into the lifeworld in the form of “secondary” or “mediated” experience (Schutz and Luckmann 1973:44; cf. Giddens 1991; Thompson 1995).

This characterization of the lifeworld differs in two key respects from alternative usages of the concept and, in so doing, avoids following phenomenological sociology and its offshoots down the less fruitful path they trod post-Schutz. First, the lifeworld is not, as some understandings seem to imply (e.g., Crossley 2002:173), a phenomenon of consciousness similar to or collapsible into the habitus. It is, to be precise, the stream of incoming experience granted by the recurrent material, spatiotemporal, and interpersonal—and always socially differentiated—milieux and read by the extant perceptual schemes of the habitus, which, because of recurrence, sediments into the latter as familiar and taken for granted.<sup>2</sup> The habitus and lifeworld are thus analytically separable, such that even if the constitution of the former is embedded in the nature of the latter, their *interplay* can be analyzed, as in the case of the “hysteresis effect” noted by Bourdieu in which the dispositions of the habitus jar with the lifeworld on account of the conditions and experiences of the latter shifting too rapidly.

The second departure from received phenomenological wisdom is more significant and, in all likelihood, more controversial: conceiving the lifeworld as an *individual* rather than *collective* entity. The prevailing view among phenomenologists, invariably lodged in a reading of Husserl and Schutz, has long been that the lifeworld is essentially coextensive with, in Gurwitsch’s words (1970:50), “the cultural world of a certain socio-historical group,” that is to say, the web of shared taken-for-granted meanings and intersubjective understandings within collectivities of varying size—whether more or less coterminous with a society as a whole, as in Vaitkus’s (2000:292) assertion that there is “one and only one life-world pre-given to everyone, which allows for no plurals,” or, following Benita Luckmann’s (1970) analysis, the smaller realms of experience such as occupations (e.g., the “lifeworld of nursing”), communities, associations, and so on—the parameters of which are testable with the infamous breaching experiments of phenomenology’s ethnomethodological outgrowth. The reality is, however, that both Schutz and Husserl were, to say the least, equivocal, constantly wavering between the collective, cultural definitions of the lifeworld seized upon by the majority and the more individual-level characterization sometimes employed by a minority and favored here. Husserl, for example, regularly referred to the lifeworld as the “surrounding world” or the realm of “immediate perception” or “immediate experience” and elucidated its spatial patterning with the body as the ultimate locus, all of which—as even the translator of *The*

<sup>2</sup>This definition takes insight from the Lund school of time-geography (and Giddens’s [1984] reworking of it to better incorporate routinization), which traces individual spatiotemporal trajectories and in certain versions—and here is one of the fundamental links to phenomenology (and indeed Bourdieu)—views these as the conduits of formative experience (for an overview, see Parkes and Thrift 1980:Ch. 6).



*Crisis of the European Sciences*, where the lifeworld is given its fullest expression, noted (Carr 1977, 1970:xl–xli)—points more toward the lifeworld being an *individual* phenomenon. Schutz, too, discussed the spatial structuring of the lifeworld in terms of “reach” (actual, potential, attainable), described the lifeworld as a reality perceived as “my world” (e.g., Schutz 1970a:134ff) and, as the quote above acting as the launching pad for this discussion indicates, often talked of the lifeworld in individual terms more generally. Perhaps the most favorable way to characterize this oscillation is to say that, for Schutz and Husserl, the lifeworld concept covers several *levels* of experience, from the individual to the communal.

In any case, the collective definition of the lifeworld is not only limited but already assimilated by Bourdieu. It is limited because, like the Hobbesian/Parsonian “problem of order” that undergirded much American phenomenological sociology and favors such a definition, it *overemphasizes homogeneity* and the shared elements of experience—despite purportedly allowing a grasp of “micro” sociality in all its complexity—at the expense of *differentiation, degrees of similarity and difference*, cases of mutual *incomprehension* (“why would anyone like rock music/opera/boxing/ballet/etc.?”), and, ultimately, *inequality*. Yet it is assimilated and transcended by Bourdieu in his use of the terms *nomos*, *doxa* (from Husserl), and *illusio*, the first indicating the fundamental orientation of any field (“art for art’s sake” or “business is business”) and the other two denoting, respectively, belief and interest in the *nomos*, parameters and stakes of the social space and separate fields (including those of certain occupational groups), which all presuppose shared comprehension among participants—thus recognizing that there are experiences and conditions binding large numbers of people—but also generating difference and struggle within and between each realm. What Bourdieu is missing, though, is a conceptual means of *unifying* the realms of experience, *doxa*, and *illusio* in a biographical whole and incorporating those experiences that otherwise fall between the gaps. This can, I believe, be supplied by the individual-level characterization of the lifeworld.

So, cleaving away the defunct collective conceptualizations and keeping only the useful, the lifeworld is conceived from here on as the individual agent’s milieu and conduit of everyday experience that, being particular to her, builds uniquely into her biography and habitus. However, having now wrestled a suitable definition of the lifeworld from phenomenology, here is the point where we turn back to Bourdieu and situate it among his theoretical tools, avoiding the predominantly descriptive and antigenetic tendencies of phenomenological sociology by arguing that *the experiences of the lifeworld are structured by, among other things,<sup>3</sup> one’s positions in social space and fields*, such that while the actual *articulation* of experience is particular to the individual it remains patterned by the material and cultural conditions of existence and field effects associated with his or her positions.<sup>4</sup> So, two agents close in social space have individual lifeworlds insofar as they attended different schools, have

<sup>3</sup>Such as, for example, gender, a binary relation that mediates position in social space and the various fields.

<sup>4</sup>Compare Bourdieu’s (1977:86) fleeting remarks on both the structuring of the “physiognomy of social environments” by the “dead ends,” “closed doors,” and “limited prospects” associated with particular conditions of existence (cf. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:144 n96) and the “immersion in a world of cultivated people, practices, and objects” (Bourdieu 1984:75) characteristic of bourgeois socialization, as well as his earlier frequent appeals to “milieu” (e.g., Bourdieu 1974) and definition of conditions of existence as including “dwelling place and the daily life associated with it” and “environment and working conditions”—a definition broader than simply distance from necessity and suggestive of the lifeworld (Bourdieu and Passeron 1979:12, 1990:259; see also the passage building on a revealing quote from Husserl in Bourdieu 1971:205). A similar argument to that pursued here, but using Merleau-Ponty rather than Schutz, is presented in Bufton’s (2003) investigation of the lifeworlds of working-class university students.

different occupations and workplaces, live in different neighborhoods, and have had and have different consociates—not just because of their membership of different fields—and thus have distinctive experiences, biographies, and habitus, but because all these facets of the lifeworld are structured to some degree according to material conditions of existence they and the experiences and habitus they generate display clear analogies or, to use Wittgenstein's (1952) phrase, "family resemblances," which are, as Bourdieu so astutely noted, perceived by the agents themselves as a sense of social similarity (they are "like me" or "one of us"). This can then help explain the differences that lead one agent in the cultural section of the dominant class to pursue, be at ease with, and be knowledgeable of music and another art—both agents' past and present lifeworlds involve a cultured upbringing and distance from necessity, but one may well be characterized by musicality (e.g., a musical parent or family friends, instruments and paraphernalia around the home), the other by all things artistic (most lifeworlds are, obviously, more complex than this and full of contradictory elements, which then play out in the habitus and patterns of action). It can also bring within explanatory reach the dispositions and practices stemming from experiences granted by particular locales, interactions, consociates, nonfield associations (including workplace dynamics), and particular biographical events, at all times noting the effects of the structural positions of all interactants and institutions involved, thus allowing deeper social analysis of, say, vocational options (police officer or firefighter), workplace culture, perceptual schemas, or dissonant consumption tastes—all of which are of interest to the qualitative researcher or "micro" sociologist—without reference to some account of unconstrained meaning (or, worse, rationality).<sup>5</sup>

Positions in social space and fields designate the structuring of the lifeworld and typical experiences at any one time, not those that have flowed into the agent's habitus hitherto (unless their position has remained more or less static over time). So, Bourdieu's focus on trajectory, the temporal dimension, is still of crucial importance, for it designates the past structuring of the lifeworld, and thus the past experiences, that have shaped the individual's habitus. The individual can remain in the same point of social space and thus face similar, reinforcing experiences over time, though the character of the lifeworld and experience inevitably changes in other respects and over time as one gets older; or individuals can move through social space and fields with the accumulation, depletion, or conversion of capital and enter and leave fields, changing the domains of and thus character of experience in the lifeworld, through "gearing into it" with his or her own actions (see Schutz 1970b:318) or through the actions of others, including distant, "abstract" others.

### *Mundane Consciousness and the Habitus as Stock of Knowledge*

As one of the central columns in Bourdieu's theoretical edifice the habitus has been subject to a multitude of criticisms from all sides of the sociological spectrum, from

<sup>5</sup>Of course, if the explanatory concern is more "macro," historical, or quantitative—for example, if one is studying the general structure and dynamics of a particular field, much like Bourdieu did, or the historical shifts in the relations of social space—then the complexities of lifeworlds can be largely "bracketed" in the same way that Giddens (1984) bracketed "strategic conduct" when conducting institutional analysis, that is, set to one side but not neglected. On the other hand, when the detailed analysis of lifeworlds and biographies is the task at hand, knowledge of the general structures of fields and social space cannot be fully bracketed. This serves to reiterate that the concept of lifeworld is not meant to *replace* fields and social space, but to work *with* them to allow a more differentiated account of micro processes, dissonances, and the impact of social relations and ties on individual biography.

structuralists such as Levi-Strauss condemning it as a vehicle for a “spontaneist” philosophy of action (see Bourdieu 1990b:10, 61–62) to Jeffrey Alexander’s (1995:136) infamous description of the term as a “Trojan horse for determinism.” Much of this criticism is, to my mind, misplaced, yet there is one issue raised by Alexander (1995:143ff) and noted by an increasing number of other commentators (e.g., Crossley 2001; Jenkins 2002; Lau 2004; Margolis 1999; Reay 2004; Sayer 2005; cf. Schatzki 1987) that seems to have more weight behind it: the extent to which Bourdieu claims that action based on the habitus, including strategic action, is “bodily” and seemingly undertaken without any consciousness or intention. In Alexander’s (1995:144) terms, Bourdieu practices a crude “sociologized biologism” that “allows him to ignore the complexities and subjectivities that the category ‘self’ implies,” “eliminates the significance of motive” (1995:139), expunges reflexivity and intentionality from social life (1995:146), and, ultimately, as McLennan (1998:84) summarizes it, eradicates any sense of a “thinking, feeling self.” Similarly, Jenkins (2002:93), another scathing, though slightly more sympathetic, critic of Bourdieu, claims that the focus on the primacy of the corporeal effectively reduces conscious activity to “an epiphenomenon, almost an *effect*, of the body,” while Reay (2004:437) and Sayer (2005:29) argue that Bourdieu is in danger of denying the “life of the mind” in others. Other critics (e.g., Crossley 2001) recognize that Bourdieu does not deny that there *is* conscious or “rational” action, but decry the fact that he generally sees it as an *exception, separate from the habitus*, and, as in pragmatism, surfacing only in times of crisis such as when the habitus fails to fit with a situation (see, e.g., Bourdieu 1990b:108, 2000a:64).

Bourdieu supplies plenty of ammunition for this kind of criticism: his descriptions of the habitus do underscore the bodily dimension, especially in later works such as *Pascalian Meditations*, and can give the impression that talk of intentions or consciousness should be banished from sociology altogether. Thus, we are told that the habitus grants “spontaneity without consciousness or will” (Bourdieu 1990a:56; cf. 2000a:137) and “intentionless improvisation” (1977:79), with the underlying practical sense being nothing other than social necessity “converted into motor schemes and bodily automatisms” (1990a:69) that “lead the mind unconsciously along with [them]” (1990a:68). “[S]tates of the body,” he puts it elsewhere, give rise to “states of mind” by “awaken[ing] ready-made feelings and experiences” or “recall[ing] associated thoughts and feelings” (1984:474, 1990a:69). Furthermore, he argues, action takes place “without a conscious aiming at ends” (1977:72) and is guided not by projects and plans, that is, the future, but by the past as embodied in dispositions (1977:72) or, if anything, by the protentive sense of the upcoming immediacies furnished by the “feel for the game” (1990b:12, 2000a:Ch. 6, 2005:214). As such, “thought objects,” reasons, and motives should never be treated as the “determining causes of practices” (1977:21). At its most extreme there are, as Crossley (2001:115) and Farnell (2000:403) have noted, moments in Bourdieu’s writing when the agent disappears from the formulation of action altogether and is effectively replaced by the habitus, with the latter, as in Freud’s depiction of the id, ego, and superego, being falsely attributed capacities (action, comprehension) only agents possess (cf. Giddens 1984:42). For example, adopting the antihumanist idiom of structural Marxism, agents are said to be “supports” of the habitus (Bourdieu 1977:85) “possessed by [it] more than they possess it” as it “acts within them” to organize action (1977:18), while it is the habitus rather than the agent that comprehends the similarities and differences of social space (2000a:130) and possesses a margin of freedom (2005:131).

The result of all this, it seems, is a model of action grossly at odds with the realities of the social world, including those documented in *The Weight of the World* (Bourdieu et al. 1999, esp. 580–89), where agents appear as thinking, intending, deliberating beings. Conscious and intentional (including, though not necessarily, “rational”) action, deliberation, and even some form of reflexivity, Bourdieu’s critics argue (e.g., Crossley 2001:117, 140–60; Jenkins 2002:97; Mouzelis 1995:112; Sayer 2005:27–30), are simply much more of a routine feature of the human condition than he admits. However, these points often (though not always) miss the point that Bourdieu, borrowing a phrase from Mao Tse-tung, is usually “twisting the stick in the opposite direction,” that is, playing up his propositions in reaction to academic orthodoxy. In fact, buried underneath the kind of assertions documented above, and especially in his earlier writings, is a much more subtle concept than that typically described by critics, one in which conscious thought, intentions, and “rational” action, despite Bourdieu’s usual disclaimers, are not antithetical to or separate from it at all, but rather *based on it*. Thus his contention that agents’ “wills and intentions” depend on their positions in social space (Bourdieu 1981:308), his claim that the propensity to be “rational” depends on one’s habitus and particular conditions of existence (1990a:64; cf. Bourdieu 1979, 2005; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:124), his assertion that the habitus informs “all *thought* and action (including *thought of action*)” (1977:18, emphasis added), and Wacquant’s (2005:316, emphasis added) description of the habitus as “propensities to *think*, feel, and act in determinate ways, which then guide them in their creative responses to the constraints and solicitations of their extant milieu.” Indeed, Bourdieu’s stress on the “generative” capacities of the habitus should be read as a claim that the schemes of perception and dispositions of the habitus generate, alongside more automatic modes of conduct, *intentional* actions, with his refutation of “conscious” or “rational” action simply being a justified dismissal of the idea that agents—for example, the working-class adolescent leaving school—fully consider and weigh up all options (work, college, university, etc.) in formulating their intentions rather than a rejection of intentional action altogether (the working-class adolescent still thinks about and intends to get a job). Perhaps to make this clearer and to separate it from scholastic visions of voluntaristic agents formulating action *ex nihilo*, the latter should be called, adapting a phrase from Sayer (2005:29), “mundane consciousness.”<sup>6</sup>

This reading of the habitus accords with well-established arguments in the philosophy of mind and cognitive neuroscience to the effect that there are different *layers* of consciousness and knowledge, or rather a continuum—for example, declarative and procedural memory, “knowledge that” and “knowledge how” for Ryle, Dewey, and James, or even discursive and practical consciousness for Giddens—but that *this whole continuum* and its allied forms of action, though involving different

<sup>6</sup>I use the term “consciousness,” knowing this to be a contentious word, rather than Sayer’s own phrase “mundane reflexivity,” which he posits as a criticism of and addition to Bourdieu’s conception of the habitus, for two reasons. Firstly, it avoids the intellectual minefield generated by the proliferating meanings of the term “reflexivity” in sociological theory. For Beck (1992), Giddens (1991), and Sweetman (2003), for example, it refers specifically to the (empirically unsubstantiated) self-orientedness of late-modern individuals, whilst for some Bourdieu-inspired feminists (e.g., McCall 1992; McNay 1999), it denotes a gendered disposition toward self-consciousness—an idea that generally remains locked within a “disjunctive” rather than mundane model of consciousness insofar as, similar to Bourdieu, it presupposes critical prompting by discordant situations. There is also the only use of the term “reflexivity” that I would endorse: the epistemic reflexivity of the well-trained social scientist according to Bourdieu (2004). Secondly, I have doubts over the prevalence of the “internal conversation,” a concept taken from Peirce and developed by Archer (2003), on which Sayer’s term is based—while more conscious forms of action often involve some form of “mental talk,” as well as mental images, projections, and such like, only a proportion of deliberated forms of action involve something approaching an inner conversation.

regions of the brain, remain guided by the synaptic connections established through experience—the neural base of the habitus as the repository of lifeworld experiences channeled by past and present structural locations and sedimented into dispositions (especially in the form of schemes of perception and interpretation), and the tacit sense of the “normal,” “acceptable,” and so on it yields.<sup>7</sup> Yet it remains true that Bourdieu has not really done the theoretical work to accommodate all this. His comments on thought and volition are unelaborated and submerged by his more frequent assertions that “practical sense,” the primary mode of being in the world granted by the habitus, is comparable to such phenomena as tennis players rushing the net (e.g., Bourdieu 1990b:11) and, thus, a low level of mental participation and conditioned, skilful reflex that, as others have pointed out, comes close to a behaviorist-style tale of stimulus and response (cf. Jenkins 2002:93). Fortunately, however, the groundwork for such a conception of the habitus has been provided within phenomenology, and no prizes for guessing by whom in particular: Schutz, with his concept of the “subjective stock of knowledge” and its framing “attitudes.”

A number of clear convergences between the two theorists’ concepts facilitate cooption here: for example, like the habitus the stock of knowledge and attitudes, according to Schutz, serve as the agent’s “scheme of interpretation” (or perception) for making sense of the world and experience (Schutz 1964:283; cf. 1972:84), and both are products of sedimentations of multiple past experiences anchored in manifold situations and encounters, which, as should be established by now, are shaped by the material and cultural conditions of existence characterizing the agent’s lifeworld.<sup>8</sup> However, what Schutz makes explicit is that the stock of knowledge is *multilayered*, that is, inclusive of many different interpenetrating levels, from the more declarative forms of knowledge gleaned from past experiences and “at hand” in consciousness from situation to situation in different degrees of clarity and coherence (which Bourdieu seems to downplay), through routinized modes of knowledge, conduct, and skills (or “know how” to borrow the terminology of Ryle 1949) down to the most basic, habitual, and bodily forms of knowledge so ingrained into agents that they no longer appear as elements of knowledge at all but are instead “on hand” in all instances, that is, automatically implicated in situations and acts without the need to direct attention at them (Schutz and Luckmann 1973:105–11). As Bourdieu would say, the latter are less something we *have* than that we *are*. This is even more the case for what Schutz calls “attitudes,” that is, the complex of “inclinations to act” and propensities to “steer toward certain goals and modes of conduct” (i.e., dispositions) combining skills, habitual knowledge, and “frames of mind,” which articulate the stock of knowledge and underlie expectations and verbalizable forms of knowledge

<sup>7</sup>This appeal to the neural level should make clear that I am not trying to rehabilitate some form of Cartesian dualism when I complain about the overly “bodily” nature of the habitus—the schemes of perception and dispositions underlying all levels of consciousness are rooted in the material (yet malleable) brain—but simply surmount Bourdieu’s equation of dispositional action with corporal skills and minimal mental activity. Nor, though, am I advocating a strict physicalism. There is not the space to argue it here, but a nonreductive materialism in the philosophy of mind seems the best companion for the habitus (cf. Crossley 2001; Elder-Vass 2007).

<sup>8</sup>Schutz, however, rarely considered explicitly the broad structural patterning of stocks of knowledge (e.g., by class, ethnicity, gender, and so on), though it is implicit in his entire corpus (for an encouraging exception, which is likely due to the co-author’s influence, see Schutz and Luckmann 1989:115–16). Furthermore, though the stock of knowledge is clearly compatible with the quasi-structuralist *relational* conception of social structures advanced by Bourdieu, the Schutz-inspired have tended to operate with a weak, nonrelational conception of social structure, usually in terms of roles (e.g., Berger and Luckmann 1967). It is for this reason that I advocate ferrying Schutz’s concept over to the Bourdieusian toolbox rather than phenomenological sociology, or indeed ethnomethodology, *per se*.

without themselves (usually) being reflectively grasped (Schutz and Luckmann 1973:215–23, 1989:20–21).<sup>9</sup>

Importantly, for Schutz the different levels of the stock of knowledge and the attitudes that frame it combine, in conjunction with the characteristics or demands of the situational context in the lifeworld (and sometimes pronounced physiological prompts, e.g., hunger), to give rise to a variety of forms of action, from consciously deliberated projects and long-term plans through habitual or routinized modes of conduct that “unreel almost without the actor’s participation and conscious planning” at all, the goals of which enter consciousness “at most just briefly” (Schutz and Luckmann 1989:39, 27), right down to the “completely autonomized” elements of action, which Bourdieu puts under the label of *hexis*—ways of walking, standing, and so on (Schutz and Luckmann 1973:108). Furthermore, more conscious or intentional action is seen as having two faces: one in which it is motivated by the future, by the actor’s consciously formulated projects, or goals of varying time-scales and clarity that they can supply reasons for, that is, in which it is constructed “in order to” do something;<sup>10</sup> and one in which it is “caused” (or “generated”) by the sedimented past experiences constituting the stock of knowledge and attitudes or, to use the preferred nomenclature, the *habitus*, that is, in which it is done “because” of the prior experiences sedimented as dispositions, inclinations, and so on (Schutz 1962:69–72, 1964:11–12, 1972:86–96; Schutz and Luckmann 1973:209–23, 1989:19ff). To put it more simply, action is often driven by conscious projects, but those projects themselves *issue from the past experiences of the agent*—combining particular declarative sedimentations and the totality of sedimentations embodied in dispositions or giving rise to the sense of what is “reasonable” or “for us”—which are, of course, materially and culturally patterned. This is true even for action preceded by deliberation—the “dramatic rehearsal in imagination of various competing possible lines of action,” as Dewey (1922:190) defined it—and even so-called rational action: what is rehearsed, considered and weighed up, the ends valued and means considered, and the final choice or decision, are not separate from the interpretative schemes and dispositions of the situated *habitus* but *based on* them (cf. Sayer 2005:27). The *habitus* thus remains the unchosen principle of choices, but those choices—such as those of the cogitating working-class adolescent—are infused with intentions and mundane consciousness and originate not from the body alone.<sup>11</sup>

What, in all this, of the vexed notion of strategy, a concept closely tied to the *habitus*? Bourdieu’s use of the term seems, as several commentators have noted (Alexander 1995; Crossley 2001; Jenkins 2002; Sayer 2005; Swartz 1997), problematic,

<sup>9</sup>A common reference point should serve to put the similarities and differences in sharp relief: Bourdieu (1990b:108) and Schutz (1962:211) both referred to Leibniz’s claim that “we are empirical [i.e., practical, habitual, unthinking] in three-quarters of our action.” Schutz accommodated, if hastily, this “empirical” element and saw it as flowing from the stock of knowledge, but also incorporated (and spent most of his time considering) more discursive levels of knowledge and intentional forms of action, with the “whole” person therefore being seen as guided by his or her stock of knowledge, whereas Bourdieu tended, for the most part, to view the *habitus* as covering the empirical behavior alone and ignored, downplayed or, perhaps most unconvincingly, saw as a special case—a “principle of action” separable from the *habitus* (including its schemes of perception?) even—the nonempirical.

<sup>10</sup>For Schutz, projects—from the most short-term to elaborate life plans—always seem to involve an envisioning of the completed act, but this is surely a universalization of a particular possibility.

<sup>11</sup>Conceiving the *habitus* in this way also has ramifications for the way in which its subjective schemes of perception are understood and, given that Bourdieu was usually content to say no more than that they represented the internalization of objective divisions, provides a fuller account of their genesis. There is not, however, the space to consider it in any detail here, so suffice it to say that they should be interpreted in terms of what Husserl and Schutz called “typifications” and “pairings,” both of which are built out of lifeworld experience. Crossley (2001:130–13) provides the starting point of such an account in his own Husserlian-Merleau-Pontyan reading of the *habitus*.

excessive, and, like rational action theory, tautological insofar as practically any action can be reconstructed in retrospect as being a “move” in an “objectively economic” strategy that the agent herself has no idea about (Bourdieu 1990b:90). Yet the idea, notwithstanding Bourdieu’s infelicitous use of it at times, is more nuanced than usually depicted. This is because strategies are aimed at maximizing *symbolic* profit rather than economic profit, status or power *per se*—though these are misperceived as means of achieving symbolic profit—and in the end this equates to nothing other than the desire for social value, dignity, or recognition, to feel important and worthy, in whichever walks of life one finds oneself in (Bourdieu 1990b:196–98, 2000a:240–45; Wacquant 1998:218). It would thus be foolhardy to claim that the concept has no theoretical mileage whatsoever. On the other hand its universality is still contestable, and so perhaps it would be better to argue that agents often possess a deep-seated and not necessarily verbalizable, calculative, or competitive inclination, instilled via a complex combination of childhood socialization and later experiences, for themselves or their offspring to “do well” or “better” or to conserve what they have through some of the methods described by Bourdieu, even in disinterested spheres of life, but that if action can be demonstrated not to be guided by this inclination then it is inappropriate to superimpose the language of strategy onto it. The existence and character of strategies would thus be more of an empirical question, as would their differential distribution among agents (cf. Lau 2004:378).

This leaves one final issue to be resolved: What is the relationship between the lifeworld and habitus? How, in other words, are lifeworld experiences translated into the dispositions and interpretive schemes of the habitus? A complex issue for sure, and one that Bourdieu has done much to answer convincingly. However, while sedimentation and disposition formation do indeed take place through many of the “practical” processes he identifies—the “sheer familiarization” with the objects, events, and likelihoods of the lifeworld through recurrent experience, which builds into the agent’s sense of what is “normal” and “reasonable,” a presymbolic “imitative acceptance” of observed modes of conduct (Bourdieu’s “mimesis”) (Schutz and Luckmann 1973:270), and so on—critics are right to note his tendency to understate the extent to which some learning can involve or indeed require varying levels of conscious participation—from phenomena simply becoming themes to consciousness, however transient, fuzzy, and ill-formed, through to some form of understanding (Sayer 2005:28). Not only is this slightly contradictory—pedagogy and inculcation, both acknowledged by Bourdieu as key methods in forming the habitus, presuppose conscious or cognitive internalization (Lau 2004:374)—but, as Sayer (2005:26–27) and Schutz and Luckmann (1973:106, 1989:28) before him point out, even the most “bodily” or “practical” of knowledge from dancing and boxing to swimming and walking was once problematic and, to some extent, consciously thematized. Bourdieu is, however, absolutely right to emphasize the disproportionate weight of childhood experiences in the formation of the habitus, and these can be conceived as flowing from the lifeworld into which the child is born and that is structured by the capital of its parents or guardians and from the socialization practices of the parents, again based on the parents’ capital possession (documented in the research of, e.g., Bernstein 1971; Lareau 2003; Lawler 2000; Walkerdine and Lucey 1989).

## CONCLUSION: ADDITIONS TO THE TOOLBOX

Some 15 years ago, Loïc Wacquant, Bourdieu’s most adroit advocate, defender, and elaborator in English-speaking sociology over the last two decades, declared that

“Bourdieu’s work is not free of contradictions, gaps, tensions, puzzlements, and unresolved questions,” such that to think *with* Bourdieu necessitates thinking *beyond* and even *against* Bourdieu, “where required” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:xiii–xiv). Guided by this inspiring maxim, the central aim here has been to demonstrate that if we are to successfully think with Bourdieu then we are indeed required to overcome gaps and problems in his theory and think beyond and against him by integrating the insights from phenomenology he himself neglected. Schutz’s notions of lifeworld and stock of knowledge in particular, I have argued, hold the key to a framework better able to handle the sticky issues of individuation and conscious action. If Bourdieu likes to think of his concepts as Wittgensteinian “thinking tools” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:160), then new tools can be said to have been added to the toolbox—or more precisely, one tool has been added and another sharpened up—in order to better equip us for the task of explaining the processes and patterns of the social world.

This venture, then, is not a scholastic jaunt in total abstraction from the business of sociological research, and neither is it merely a “synthesis of . . . sociological and philosophical traditions decisively wrenched out of their context,” to use the disparaging terms in which Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001:5) described Giddens’s structuration theory. Bourdieu, it is true, was endlessly frustrated by the misunderstandings of his ideas and fruitless attempts to compare them with those of this or that thinker born of a decontextualized importation of his theory into an alien national field of inquiry (see, e.g., Bourdieu 1999), and faithful Schutzians might retort that their intellectual progenitor’s thought, honed in the American context where the problem of order, unlike in France, loomed large and where Parsons was a chief interlocutor (in the literal sense in Schutz’s case: Grathoff 1978), is irredeemably at odds with Bourdieu’s, forged as it was against Levi-Strauss and Sartre and focused more on the perpetuation of inequality, power differentials, and difference.<sup>12</sup> Of course, this overlooks the fact that, while Schutz did indeed spend his later years plugging into the American scene, both he and Bourdieu share the intellectual heritage bequeathed by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty and are hence easily reconciled. More importantly, though, it should never be forgotten that ideas—their explanatory power and interconnections—are irreducible to their context alone, as important as an understating of the latter are for a full grasp of the formulation of concepts, but, in the end, arbitrated by the twin pillars of applied rationalism: logical analysis and empirical investigation (Bourdieu et al. 1991; Bourdieu 2004).

<sup>12</sup>This has not stopped people trying to work out how Bourdieu would approach the problem of order. Bohman (1999:133), for example, claims that:

Bourdieu solves the Parsonian problem of order not through the internalization of norms, but through the “inculcation” of dispositions that come not only from being socialized into a culture generally but into a particular subordinate or dominant position within it. It operates through the agent’s own dispositions rather than coercion, through “generative and implicit schema” rather than sanctioned rules. Even if sanctions or rules were present, it would still have to be explained why it is that agents are predisposed to accept them. This is the role of the *habitus*.

A little added historicization of the issue, perhaps drawing on Elias’s (1994) account of the internalization of self-constraint in the “civilized” habitus as well as Bourdieu’s studies of education (e.g., 1971), would complement this.



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