Habitus and Field
General Sociology, Volume 2
PIERRE BOURDIEU
Translated by Peter Collier

This is the second of five volumes based on the lectures given by Pierre Bourdieu at the Collège de France in the early 1980s under the title ‘General Sociology’. In these lectures, Bourdieu sets out to define and defend sociology as an intellectual discipline, and in doing so he introduces and clarifies all the key concepts which have come to define his distinctive intellectual approach. In this volume, Bourdieu focuses on two of his most important and influential concepts. For the social scientist, the object of study is neither the individual nor the group but the relation between these two manifestations of the social in bodies and in things: that is, the obscure, dual relation between the habitus – as a system of schemas of perception, appreciation and action – and the field as a system of objective relations and a space of possible actions and struggles aimed at preserving or transforming the field.

Classification
Struggles
General Sociology, Volume 1
PIERRE BOURDIEU
Translated by Peter Collier

In this first volume of ‘General Sociology’, Bourdieu focuses on the fundamental social processes of naming and classifying the world, the ways that social actors use words to construct social objects and the struggles that arise from this. The sociologist encounters a world that is already named, already classified, where objects and social realities are marked by signs that have already been assigned to them. In order to avoid the naiveté and confusion that stem from taking for granted a world that has already been socially constituted, sociologists must examine the part played by words in the construction of social things – or, to put it differently, the contribution that classification struggles, a dimension of all class struggles, play in the constitution of classes, including classes of age, sex, race and social class.

Manet
A Symbolic Revolution
PIERRE BOURDIEU
Translated by Margaret Rigaud-Drayton and Peter Collier

What is a ‘symbolic revolution’? Using the exemplary case of Édouard Manet, Pierre Bourdieu treats Manet’s paintings as so many challenges to the conservative academicism of the pompidol painters, the populism of the Realists, the commercial eclecticism of genre painting, and even the ‘Impressionists’, showing that such a revolution is inseparable from the conditions that allow fields of cultural production to emerge. The new vision of the world that emerged from Manet’s break with the established order still shapes our categories of perception and judgement today – the very categories that we use every day to understand the representations of the world and the world itself.

Down to Earth
Politics in the New Climatic Regime
BRUNO LATOUR
Sciences Po, Paris
Translated by Catherine Porter

“It’s fascinating to see a thinker like Latour grapple with the political moment and deploy the abstractions of his intellectual program to help clarify it. His book is a success in this regard. It’s even encouraging.” – Los Angeles Review of Books

Ecological degradation on a planetary scale can be traced on the political landscape, contributing to the deadly cocktail of exploding inequalities, massive deregulation, and globalization disintegrating into a looming nightmare for most of the earth’s inhabitants. These three phenomena are united in the conviction, shared by some powerful people, that the only way for them to survive is to abandon any pretense at sharing a common future with the rest of the world. Hence their flight offshore and their massive investment in climate change denial.

The political Left has been slow to turn its attention to this new situation. Its efforts continue to be located on a continuum that runs from investment in local values to a hopeful view of globalization – and just at the time when people are turning away from global connectivity and back to the protection of national or even ethnic borders.

This is why it is urgent to move the dial and to define politics as what leads toward the Earth and not toward the global or the national. Belonging to a territory is the phenomenon most in need of rethinking and careful redescription; learning new ways to inhabit the Earth is our biggest challenge. Bringing us down to earth is the task of politics today.

Facing Gaia
Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime
BRUNO LATOUR
Translated by Catherine Porter

For the last three centuries new ideas of nature have been continually developed by theology, politics, economics, and science, especially the sciences of the material world. The situation is even more unstable today, now that we have entered a new climatic regime. And a new regime it certainly is, since it obliges every one of us to reopen the earlier notions of nature and redistribute what has been packed inside. So the question now arises: what will replace the old ways of looking at nature?

This book explores a potential candidate proposed by James Lovelock when he chose the name ‘Gaia’ for the fragile, complex system through which living phenomena modify the Earth. The fact that he was immediately misunderstood proves simply that his readers have tried to fit this new notion into an older frame, transforming Gaia into a single organism, a kind of giant thermostat, some sort of New Age goddess, or even divine Providence. Bruno Latour argues that the complex and ambiguous figure of Gaia offers, on the contrary, an ideal way to disentangle the ethical, political, theological, and scientific aspects of the now obsolete notion of nature. He lays the groundwork for a future collaboration among scientists, theologians, activists, and artists as they, and we, begin to adjust to the new climatic regime.

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