

CALL FOR PAPERS
International Conference
Bourdieu, Work and Inequalities

Paris, 16th, 17th and 18th November 2022

Submission Details:

Deadline: 15th April 2022 midnight (GMT)

Form: <https://bit.ly/bourdieu2022>

Organising Committee:

Maxime Quijoux (CNRS, CNAM)

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More details:

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OVERVIEW

What can Pierre Bourdieu teach us about work and inequalities? On the 20th anniversary of his death, this conference will gather social scientists from all around the world to discuss how his legacy can shed light on workplace and labour market processes and how these feed into inequalities. While Bourdieu is widely perceived as a sociologist of social class, education, and culture, many recent works prove that it is possible and fruitful to analyse work and employment in Bourdieusian terms. At a time of rising economic inequality, we revisit Bourdieu to reflect on how his concepts can be deployed, elaborated, and refined in research on work and inequality.

The conference will take place from 16-18 November 2022 at the *Centre National des Arts et Metiers* (CNAM) in Paris.

THEMES AND TOPICS

We invite theoretical and empirical papers from all social science disciplines on the broad theme of how Bourdieu can help us understand work and inequalities. This of course involves contributions that combine Bourdieusian theory with other approaches. We also encourage participation from researchers who challenge colour-blind and gender-blind approaches to key Bourdieusian concepts. Themes and topics for papers might include, but are not limited to:

Work and Socialisations

What does work do to those who do it? On the one hand, Bourdieu argues that early experiences settled in the form of durable dispositions (what he calls the habitus) inform how we feel and behave in a variety of settings, including the workplace. How then do the ways of being acquired away from work shape ways of performing work tasks and roles? How do past experiences, shape beliefs, representations, goals, expectations, emotions and practices relative to work? On the other hand, Bourdieu recognised that habitus undergo permanent revisions over the life course. How then do workplaces, with their controls, constrains and cultures, play into this process? Can we observe occupational or organisational habitus and dispositions? How are these produced and through which mechanisms are they inculcated? Looking beyond the workplace, what does the neoliberal economy of work mean for habitus formation and practice beyond work? How do recurring experiences of inequality, insecurity and discontinuity leave their mark on workers?

Work and Stratifications

Who gets what and why? Bourdieu chiefly studied how schools sort people and regulate stratification by imposing cultural hierarchies (*valuation*) while masking their arbitrary character (*legitimization*). But what role do workplaces and the labour market play into this dual process? What are the attitudes, preferences, knowledges and behaviours that bring respect, recognition and esteem in the workplace? How do gatekeepers define and measure merit, talent, effort, and performance in the workplace? How do these definitions of the ideal worker relate to and reproduce hierarchies beyond market relations?

Relatedly, how do economic, social and cultural capitals shape hiring decisions, pay determination, and career progression? How do competences, dispositions and resources acquired from the family, class background and schooling experiences regulate access to employment and the distribution of rewards at work? In a context of educational massification, how do certifications and credentials intersect with other forms of cultural capital? Last but not least, how do gender categorisations, ethnoracial classifications, and class markers or disability labelling mediate the currency of skills and dispositions held by workers?

Work and Confrontations

When, why and how do workers consent or dissent? Since the 19th century, what confrontations between workers and employers mean for politics, mobilisations and conflict has spawned entire libraries of sociological work. With a conceptual armoury leaving room for both reproduction and transformation, Bourdieu can help us account for the dialectic of conflict and consent in the modern workplace. Under what conditions does work produce symbolic violence? And under what conditions can they break away from doxic scripts and challenge power imbalances? Along with traditional forms of collective action (trade unions and strikes), what everyday resistance strategies do workers use to obstruct or derail management control? How have recent political and economic transformations (neoliberalism, weaker trade unions, uberisation, new public management) affected all this? Can Bourdieu be a thinker of emancipation at work?

SUBMISSION DETAILS

How to submit your abstract

Please submit your abstract via [this online form](#). Abstracts should be submitted in English and be approximately 500-1000 words in length. Note that it is important that correct contact details are provided at the time that abstracts are submitted.

When to submit your abstract

The deadline for submission is the 15 April 2022 at 23.59 (UK time). Unfortunately, we cannot accept late submissions.

Notification of acceptance of your abstract

Presenters will be sent an email informing them whether their abstract has been accepted in July 2022. Presenters will subsequently be informed by email of the day and time slot allocated for their presentation.

People who are giving a presentation

All oral presentations will be delivered in English. Oral presentations will be 30-minute papers, so you should plan to speak for 15-20 minutes and allow at least 10 minutes for comments and questions.