

stern) accounts of what happened does call into question how open the West really is. If materialism leaves no space for minority cultures, then electoral politics seems to leave little space for non-party politics, (whether supported by minorities or majorities).

Dahrendorf says that 'the round table politics' of the

revolution were not 'normal'. But what are 'normal politics'? How does 'normal politics' succeed in excluding issues like environmental concern or concern about nuclear weapons that large numbers of people care deeply about? These are issues that it would surely be valuable to discuss with our counterparts in the East. ●

Peter Collier on the rise of Pierre Bourdieu

Homo Academicus

Since François Mitterrand declared education a national priority in 1988, his second socialist government has launched an extraordinary campaign to expand institutions and staff, with the goal of doubling the 40 per cent rate of pupils qualifying for (an almost free) university education. This month the education budget has overtaken the defence budget. One possible explanation of this flamboyantly anti-Thatcherite scenario might be that Michel Rocard's minister of education, Lionel Jospin, invited Pierre Bourdieu to join his advisory committee.

It was as if Raymond Williams had been given a blank cheque and asked to redesign British education. Bourdieu, whose work is now being published in English by Polity Press, has spent much of his career demystifying the French education system. **Homo Academicus** (Polity, hbk £35, pbk £10.95) in particular revealed how the professorial mandarins cloned and inhibited their successors, fostering elitism and inertia. Most worrying for the socialist government, still shaken by the failure of its 1984 education bill, were Bourdieu's rude statistics: the real agents provocateurs of the May 1968 revolution were neither student conspirators nor brutal riot police, but a careless government which failed to match its random expansion of student numbers with any commensurable increase in resources.

Bourdieu has shunned media attention, which is perverse in a country where the

Camus-Sartre quarrel was a public spectacle, and where Simone de Beauvoir or Lacan could mobilise teams of literati to publicise their causes. Like Sartre and de Beauvoir, Bourdieu studied the noble discipline of philosophy at the highly competitive Ecole Normale Supérieure, but he surprised his tutor, Althusser, by leaving his research on phenomenology in order to work within an allegedly minor discipline, social anthropology.

Like Foucault, Barthes and Lévi-Strauss before him, Bourdieu is professor at the Collège de France, a famous but marginal institute which enrolls no students and awards no diplomas. But meanwhile he has founded a 'Centre for European Sociology' at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, where he has trained a whole team of graduates who contribute their research to the unorthodox review, *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, which uses techniques borrowed from the popular press (cartoons, photographs, interviews).

Over the last year he has thrown his energies into a multi-lingual review, *Liber*, in an attempt to break the parochial mould of European literary journalism. It was never easy to believe that partnership with the *Times Literary Supplement* would fulfil his path-breaking ambitions. But, in the long term, Bourdieu's work has transformed at least French sociology and its public image.

His works analyse specific cases of behavioural disposition, or habitus, through elaborate survey work. In *Dis-*

inction, photographs, interviews and extracts from magazines mingle cheerfully with statistics on education, income and class. Intricate charts illustrate the social factors leading to divergent tastes for Bach, tennis, Petula Clark, face cream, antiques, and holidays in Majorca.

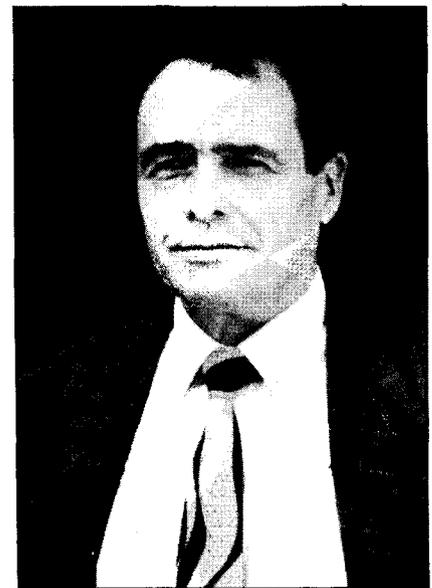
Despite – or because of – his adventurous methodology and irreverent choice of topics, Bourdieu has been accused of pragmatism, eclecticism and pessimistic functionalism by fellow sociologists. Yet he does not believe that the social determinisms which he exposes are inevitable. He writes in the tradition of Weber, Marx and Irving Goffman, taking what seem to be natural phenomena and exposing their constructed nature: *Homo Academicus* detects social snobbery in the adjectives used by a professor when grading her students' essays; **The Love of Art** (Polity, hbk £29.50) extrapolates from questionnaires distributed at museums by Bourdieu's students in order to disclose how neatly aesthetic feelings correlate with levels of schooling.

Bourdieu owes a part of his success to the creation of a new language. Recycling terms from Freud and Marx, he reveals a social unconscious, and exposes the economic drive behind moral and cultural matters. He takes his metaphors – without always accepting that they are metaphors – from economics: agents work to amass cultural capital; they invest in education and receive interest in the form of social power as well as high salaries. Language plays a key part in creating and sustaining this social world. In **Other Words** (Polity, hbk £29.50, pbk £8.95) shows how politicians and sociologists themselves manipulate opinion by using terms like 'the people' as a convenient way of avoiding analysis of the social construct.

It is through this attention to language that Bourdieu returns to philosophy with a vengeance. In *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger* Bourdieu examines

the public discourse of Weimar and the Reich, and plots the transposition of social and political judgements into sublimated philosophical system where they are reformulated in terms of 'care' and 'being'. In France this iconoclastic essay was met with disdainful silence.

Many of the above mentioned works were collective efforts by Bourdieu and his colleagues, reflecting a conscious drive towards cultural egalitarianism and scientific collaboration. But Bourdieu refuses to claim objectivity. On the contrary, he admits and studies the problem of the social scientist's presence as a participant in the field of his research. And his strong personality emerges in the complex language which articulates his work. His phrases crawl with alternatives and



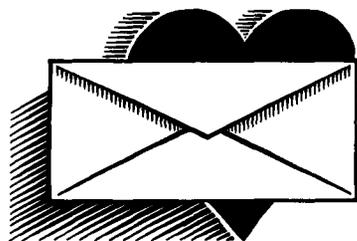
after-thoughts (or 'tendrils', to quote David Lodge). But there are reasons. Bourdieu is alert to the unconscious transactions that underpin discourse: determined not to yield to linguistic facility, he persistently filters and refracts an argument, hoping to preempt a whole range of potential misreadings. And there are times when a little more complexity in public thinking about society must be welcome. We have seen the havoc wrought when the literal-minded are entrusted with power. ●

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● **Haringey: "Going Green".** Women are at the forefront of the Green movement, what does the gender-gap on environmentalism mean for the future of politics? A panel discussion with speakers from Womens Environmental Network, Labour Party, New Statesman. Tuesday November 27th, 7.45pm at Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Crouch End N8. Organised by Haringey Marxism Today Group, details on (081) 348 8915.

● **Manchester: "The Euroconference".** Manchester Marxism Today Group is organising this major European day of discussion covering 1992, end of the cold war, federalism and much more. Takes place at Manchester Town Hall, Saturday February 23, 1991. Info: (061) 445 6333/434 8930.

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MESSAGES

● **Single, 29-year-old male**, native American/European, seeks correspondence. I have a wide range of interests, e.g., politics, science, human rights, law, dream interpreting. Status: Prisoner. Please write: Dominic Olivo, 901187, PO Box 520, Walla Walla, Washington, USA 99362-0520.

● **In memoriam**. Samson, Peter. October 17, 1922 – September 7, 1989. The changes you lived through and worked for made you the person we love and miss so deeply. Suzanne, John, Peter, Robin, Nicola, Jen and grandchildren.

● **The YCL**. Were you ever involved? Would you respond to a questionnaire? Contact Mike Waite, Sociology Department (Post Grad), University of Lancaster, LA1 4YW.

● **Interested in anti-sexist gay men's group?** If so, contact John, Box No. 72.

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● **Leeds: 'Beyond Thatcherism'**. A Leeds Marxism Today Event, on Saturday November 3. Full details from 0532-6263343.

● **CARDIFF MT GROUP**: waging semiological guerilla warfare in the chaotic hyperreality of the Welsh metropolis. Ambitious database network desires couch potatoes with haircuts to make encoded chips. Ring MT Buzzwords on Cardiff 227255.

● **North London: Two Marxism Today events** planned for 1991, a Gramsci centenary seminar, and a major day event on sexual politics. Help and ideas on both most welcome, please write to North London MT Forum, c/o 28 Wargrave Avenue, London N15 6UD.

● **Cardiff: Active Marxism Today Group** continues to meet on the second Monday of each month. Details from Peter, 0222-227255.

● **Haringey: "Going Green"**. Women are the forefront of the Green movement, what does the gender-gap on environmentalism mean for the future of politics? A panel discussion with speakers from Women's Environmental Network, Labour Party, New Statesman. Tuesday November 27th, 7.45pm at Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Crouch End N8. Organised by Haringey Marxism Today Group, details on (081) 348 8915.

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Andrea Dworkin

What magazines and newspapers do you take? *Ms.*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, *National Review*, *Rolling Stone*, *New York*, *Mirabella*, *Sears*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, *TV Guide*, *Woman Of Power*, *Media Report to Women*, *The Iconoclast*, *Women Hurt In Systems Of Prostitution*, *Media Week*.

What foreign languages do you speak? I used to speak Dutch and Greek, but that was long ago. I read Hebrew as a child and French as a teenager. I've also studied Russian. Now I speak gutter American.

What is your favourite tv programme? *Nightline*, a late night chatshow on ABC.

When do you listen to music? When I work and when I am extremely upset.

When was the last time you prayed? I often pray to a god I don't believe in.

Do you have a recurring dream? I have several – they seem completely real and I don't know they are until I wake up. I seem to visit places or people in ways that develop over years.

What is the most common colour in your wardrobe? Black. When I was a child it made me feel grown up, but I wasn't allowed to wear it.

What is your favourite meeting place? Gran Café degli Artisti in New York. It's dark, old, quiet and no one bothers me there.

What is your favourite piece of architecture? I don't notice architecture; it makes me think of Ayn Rand.

Who do you reveal your secrets to? Not you. Close tried and true friends, though I keep many things strictly to myself.

What makes you feel secure? Nothing.

How regularly do you consult your horoscope? Often.

What do you blame your parents for? Nothing anymore.



Andrea Dworkin was born in Camden, New Jersey in 1946, and now lives in New York. She is America's foremost radical feminist, lauded for her power as a writer, activist and anti-pornography campaigner. Her analysis of pornography and sexual mores has provoked controversy among both feminists and the establishment. Her fictional work has produced critical outcry, accusing her of the very thing she has campaigned against for years – pornography.

When did you last visit your parents? I can't remember.

What is your biggest regret? Getting married.

You're driving through a hot, desolate expanse. What's playing on the stereo? Country music.

Which is your city of the nineties? New York. The city is dying – I can't bear it, but I don't want to desert it.

Where do you wish you were living? I keep thinking about where I want to go, but I don't know.

Where is your favourite holiday destination? I just get on a plane and go somewhere I

haven't been. This happens only when I am so exhausted I can't say whole words.

How has your diet changed in the past ten years? Less meat, more seltzer.

What physical exercise do you do? Walk, think, type, read, and write letters.

At what age do you want to stop working? I don't want to stop.

Do you really need your car? I don't have a car.

What is your favourite advertisement? How can anyone like advertisements? I hate advertisements for their ideas, reality, and intrusion.

What are you doing for the environment? Staying out of it as much as possible.

What part of your life would you take into a next life? My love for the friend I live with.

Who do you respect? Most of my colleagues in the political work I do: they are very brave and very loving.

What do you no longer believe in? Sexual liberation.

What would you die for? My work.

What current campaign do you most support? Creating a civil law to redress injury through pornography, and the trafficking of women; stopping rape, battery, prostitution and incest. It's all interconnected.

What do you now own that you had never dreamed of owning? A house.

What single thing has most influenced or changed your life? Rape.

What is the most amount of money you've spent on an item of clothing? £500 on a jacket.

What hi-tech device scares you? I don't like any of it. Anything scares me if it breaks or stops working.

How much time do you spend each day on the phone? Hours, I hate it.

Under what circumstances would you support censorship? None.

What makes you feel guilty? Insisting on luxurious hotels when I travel.

Complete this sentence: If I were dictator for a day..... I would probably execute all the pimps and rapists – let everyone else give you utopian answers!

How much more do you want to achieve? I want to go as far as there is in my creative and political work. Past any boundary known. Past anything you or I can now imagine. ●