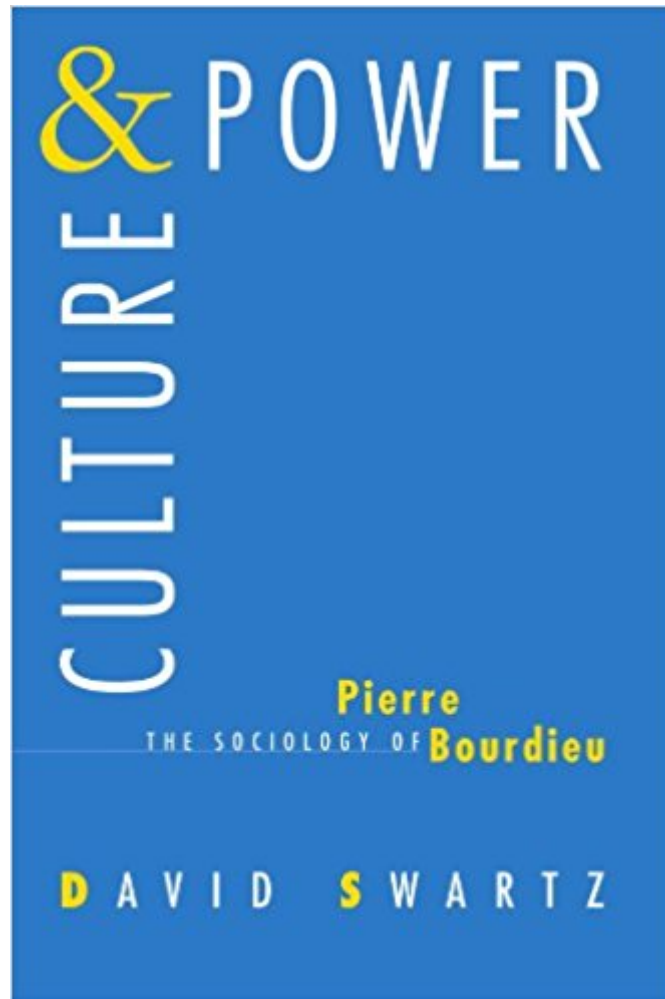


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Culture And Power: The Sociology Of Pierre Bourdieu



Synopsis

Pierre Bourdieu is one of the world's most important social theorists and is also one of the great empirical researchers in contemporary sociology. However, reading Bourdieu can be difficult for those not familiar with the French cultural context, and until now a comprehensive introduction to Bourdieu's oeuvre has not been available. David Swartz focuses on a central theme in Bourdieu's work—the complex relationship between culture and power—and explains that sociology for Bourdieu is a mode of political intervention. Swartz clarifies Bourdieu's difficult concepts, noting where they have been misinterpreted by critics and where they have fallen short in resolving important analytical issues. The book also shows how Bourdieu has synthesized his theory of practices and symbolic power from Durkheim, Marx, and Weber, and how his work was influenced by Sartre, Levi-Strauss, and Althusser. *Culture and Power* is the first book to offer both a sympathetic and critical examination of Bourdieu's work and it will be invaluable to social scientists as well as to a broader audience in the humanities.

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Customer Reviews

This is a great way to get acquainted with Bourdieu's work on culture and power. Swartz provides an excellent overview of key concepts such as "symbolic capital", "habitus", "field" and "symbolic violence". This work definitely makes Bourdieu more readable, but it is no mere Cliff Notes -- there is a critical and analytical component to Swartz' treatise that invites the reader to not just take the given theories at face value but examine past criticisms these theories have drawn. This is essential reading for sociology grad students and anyone looking for a comprehensive and comprehensible

introduction to Bourdieu's scholarship. Bourdieu's own work is brilliant but is not easy reading. Swartz eases the reader into Bourdieu's world of thought, and once you are hooked, reading Bourdieu himself becomes worth the trouble.

If you need to learn about Pierre Bourdieu, this book is fantastic! I had to read this book for a class, but it was one of the most clear, thought-provoking, and understandable syntheses of a theorist's works that I've ever read. If only such a book existed for Foucault or any of the other theorists and philosophers that I've had to struggle through, only understanding half of it! After reading this book, I feel that I actually, clearly understand the theory of Bourdieu.

Swartz has done a masterful job in bringing Bourdieu's complicated thought and style to an Anglo-American readership. But he has gone even further in demonstrating the ways in which Bourdieu's work is problematic and/or falls short. Truly, a remarkable work of synthesis, scholarship, and critique.

This helped me distill and grasp Bourdieu better than any other text on the subject I have read, including Bourdieu himself. If you are a graduate student this is a must read. Or if you just need a refresher on his work, better than reading the original.

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