

## Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

Deborah Reed-Danahy, *Locating Bourdieu*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005. 208p. Notes, 2 appendices, bibliography, index.

Confessions: the author of *Locating Bourdieu* is an anthropologist; this reviewer is a sociologist. This confession is for whom the distinction matters. For Pierre Bourdieu, it did not. Trained as a philosopher, he became an anthropologist, a sociologist, and a premier public intellectual in France until his untimely death in 2002.

Reed-Danahy's *Locating Bourdieu* is intended to provide "an ethnographic perspective on his work" (p. 14), situating the development of Bourdieu's conceptual and empirical work within the academic milieu of his days. To a large degree, she succeeds. The book is assuredly not a biography (it does not include important personal details, such as family relations. Bourdieu wrote one book with his wife, and his sons have produced video and written about him.) The book succeeds in that it improves our understanding of how the disparate parts of Bourdieu's long career fit together. For example, Reed-Danahy shows how Bourdieu's Algerian ethnographies are precursors of his surprising advent as a *fin de siècle* public intellectual.

Other scholars have noted that Bourdieu developed his concepts over many years. Some of the debate over his sociological theory may be due to the progressing development of his thought which, according to Reed-Danahy, was expressed in the particular *champ* (field) of French academia. Reed-Danahy is best at showing the interweaving of Bourdieu's research and his theorizing. In the Anglophone scholarly community, Bourdieu's work is too often read in a fragmentary way – different parts of his corpus are read by those interested in theory, education, the sociology of intellectuals, and the array of other fields that Bourdieu influenced. This tendency is exacerbated by the way translation of Bourdieu's books into English has been ordered differently than their original publication. Thus, *Locating Bourdieu* is helpful in gaining an overview and the contexts of his life's work.

Reed-Danahy has written extensively on autoethnography and French rural culture. This comes through in numerous ways. She pays attention to Bourdieu's own reflexivity, and the ways that he symbolically situated himself as an outsider, coming from French rural stock into the upper echelons of French scholarly society. Bourdieu first came to the attention

of Anglophone scholars in the 1960s through his writings in the sociology of education. He has usually been cast among those emphasizing education as a system of societal reproduction, and sometimes criticized as deterministic (unfairly I think, and Reed-Danahy concurs). Reed-Danahy's chapter on "Education" considers where change in a possibly deterministic world can come from. The chapter shows how Bourdieu transformed from the rural peasant boy into an intellectual giant. Since he never gave claim to anything other than education for his transformation, we must conclude that education can be more than simply a site of reproduction of the social order.

Although the book is more of an ethnographic biography, it provides a satisfying explanation of Bourdieu's central concepts, such as habitus, symbolic violence and the various forms of capital (social, cultural, etc.). Reed-Danahy includes a revealing discussion of *champ*, *terrain*, and *lieu* (p. 133-136), all of which could be translated as "field." In doing so, Reed-Danahy uses this chapter on "Situated Subjectivities" to link Bourdieu's ethnographies on rural Béarn bachelors and the Algerian Kabyle to his last major field research projects (on those marginalized under neoliberalism). We see Bourdieu shifting from "his initial concerns with domination and social reproduction" to intensified efforts to "reveal the mystifications of dominant ideologies" leading to non-partisan but nonetheless political action (p. 150).

More discussion of Bourdieu's research methods would have been helpful in the book, particularly since the more philosophical European academic climate differs from the discipline-oriented and empirically-intense North American academia. Reed-Danahy only skirts Bourdieu's lack of attention to broader anthropological questions such as representation. Reed-Danahy also concludes that Bourdieu represents an excellent example of the sort of self-reflexive practice that analyzes how the researcher's own practices are the function of her or his own social fields and positions therein, although she also mentions gaps in his autobiographical attention. That she draws on a different literature than that with which I was familiar is also positive.

*Locating Bourdieu* will be useful to Bourdieu scholars, and is readable enough for all those in the diverse fields Bourdieu has influenced. The book provides an introduction to his career and concepts, helpful in reviewing the corpus of his thought. Reed-Danahy brings enough of her own analysis to the book to be respectful but careful in assessing the work of a man whose reputation is growing as more scholars use his conceptual tools to understand the complicated relations of human agency, cultural practice and social structures.

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