



Understanding inequality as we 'move forward'

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- Some quotes
- Some background
- Some theory
- Some data
- And then finally some challenges

Quote #1

- 'He says to me: 'I don't want you to get a job'. And I said: 'why?' And he said: 'because I'm used to you being here and being available for me when I'm at work and I need particular things or items to help finish the job off...'. But then he'll say: 'Get a job, we need more money', so it's sort of like you're stuck.'

-Sharon

Quote # 2

- 'I was so excited when I got told that I had a job with [supermarket]. I was very eager to learn ... However, hours have been very erratic ranging from 19 hours one week to 3 hours in one fortnight. ... I have very, very good work ethics but I now feel very demoralised and upset that things are not what they seem or what I was lead to believe'

- Branko

Quote #3

- ‘Those in paid employment need a bit more sensitivity in their position. I would like a job, have always worked until I got cancer, raised 3 children as a single parent and through grit and determination, working hard, I am in the enviable position of owning my own home. [...] I feel the ageism is alive and well [...] I always thought income support through the tax system was a right not a privilege’.

- Melanie

Understanding inequality



Amartya Sen & Pierre Bourdieu



Amartya Sen (above) joined former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin and President Lawrence H. Summers in the 2002 Harvard Colloquium on International Affairs. (Staff file photo by Stephanie Mitchell) <http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2002/06.06/99-timeline.html> . Pierre Bourdieu <http://caughtlearning.org/work/free-at-the-point-of-interest>

Capability approach

- **Functionings:** ‘the various things a person may value being or doing’ (Sen 1999 p. 75)
- **Capabilities:** ‘the substantive freedoms’ that allow an individual to ‘lead the kind of life he or she has reason to value’ (Sen 1999 p. 87)
- **Agency:** ‘what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important’ (Sen 1985 p. 203)

Bourdieu



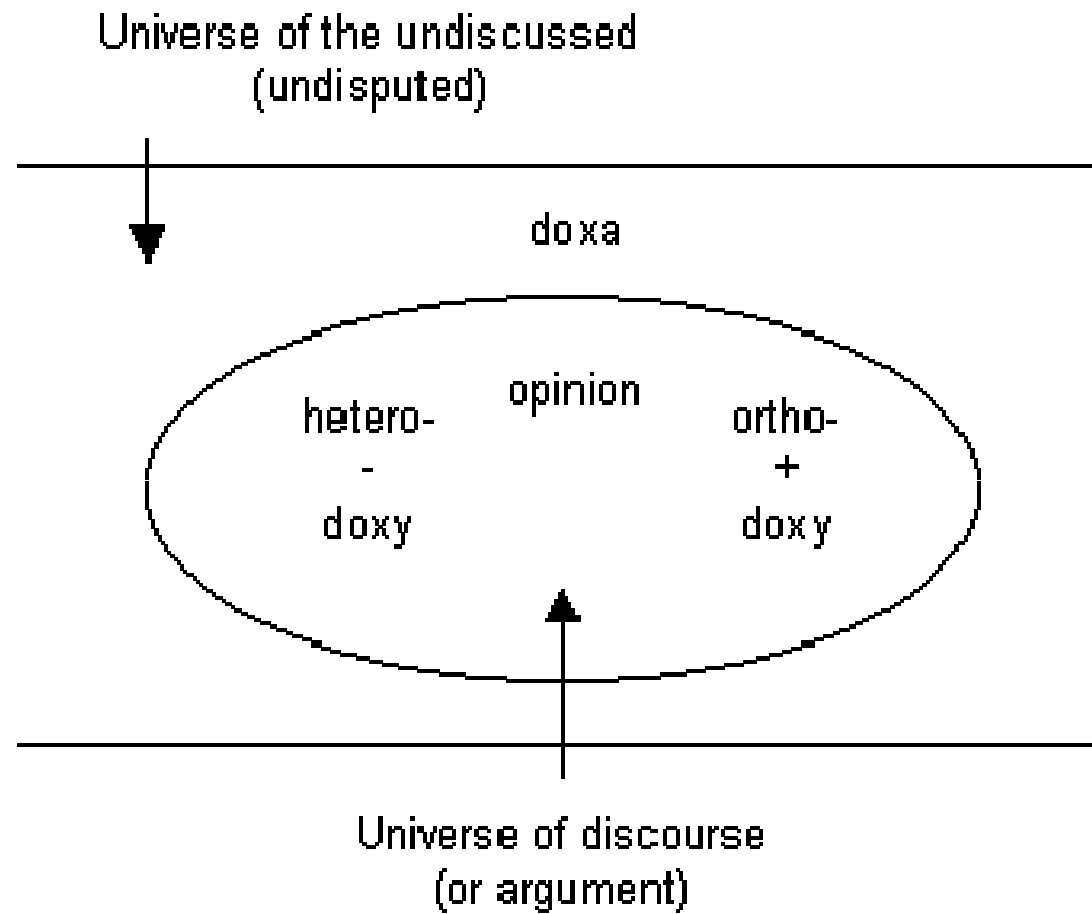
<http://rugby-pioneers.blogs.com/rugby/2008/12/index.html>

Bourdieu's concepts

- **Fields:** overlap and interpenetrate; are dynamic and shaped both by internal practices and by other fields.
- **Habitus:** is social *and* individual in that it reflects and reinforces social classifications and is a reflection of an individual's lived experience
- **Forms of capital:** economic, symbolic, cultural, social, linguistic >>> emotional, etc

Misrecognition

‘... the dominated perceive the dominant through the categories that the relation of domination has produced and which are thus identical to the interests of the dominant’ (Bourdieu 1998 p.121).



‘... ‘ ... the primary historical mission of critical thought [...] is to serve as a *solvent of doxa, to perpetually question the obviousness and the very frames* of civic debate so as to give ourselves a chance to think the world, rather than being *thought by it, to take apart and understand its mechanisms, and thus to* reappropriate it intellectually and materially.’ (Wacquant 2004 p.101)

- Thank you
- References available on request.