

which orients and organizes the most diverse practices—the choice of a vintage or a cheese or the decoration of a holiday home in the country. This affirmation of power over a dominated necessity always implies a claim to a legitimate superiority over those who, because they cannot assert the same contempt for contingencies in gratuitous luxury and conspicuous consumption, remain dominated by ordinary interests and urgencies. The tastes of freedom can only assert themselves as such in relation to the tastes of necessity, which are thereby brought to the level of the aesthetic and so defined as vulgar. This claim to aristocracy is less likely to be contested than any other, because the relation of the ‘pure’, ‘disinterested’ disposition to the conditions which make it possible, i.e., the material conditions of existence which are rarest because most freed from economic necessity, has every chance of passing unnoticed. The most ‘classifying’ privilege thus has the privilege of appearing to be the most natural one.

THE AESTHETIC SENSE AS THE SENSE OF DISTINCTION Thus, the aesthetic disposition is one dimension of a distant, self-assured relation to the world and to others which presupposes objective assurance and distance. It is one manifestation of the system of dispositions produced by the social conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence when they take the paradoxical form of the greatest freedom conceivable, at a given moment, with respect to the constraints of economic necessity. But it is also a distinctive expression of a privileged position in social space whose distinctive value is objectively established in its relationship to expressions generated from different conditions. Like every sort of taste, it unites and separates. Being the product of the conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence, it unites all those who are the product of similar conditions while distinguishing them from all others. And it distinguishes in an essential way, since taste is the basis of all that one has—people and things—and all that one is for others, whereby one classifies oneself and is classified by

others. Tastes (i.e., manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference. It is no accident that, when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes.⁴⁹ In matters of taste, more than anywhere else, all determination is negation;⁵⁰ and tastes are perhaps first and foremost distastes, disgust provoked by horror or visceral intolerance (‘sick-making’) of the tastes of others. ‘De gustibus non est disputandum’: not because ‘tous les goûts sont dans la nature’, but because each taste feels itself to be natural—and so it almost is, being a habitus—which amounts to rejecting others as unnatural and therefore vicious. Aesthetic intolerance can be terribly violent. Aversion to different life-styles is perhaps one of the strongest barriers between the classes; class endogamy is evidence of this. The most intolerable thing for those who regard themselves as the possessors of legitimate culture is the

sacrilegious reuniting of tastes which taste dictates shall be separated. This means that the games of artists and aesthetes and their struggles for the monopoly of artistic legitimacy are less innocent than they seem. At stake in every struggle over art there is also the imposition of an art of living, that is, the transmutation of an arbitrary way of living into the legitimate way of life which casts every other way of living into arbitrariness.⁵¹ The artist’s life-style is always a challenge thrown at the bourgeois life-style, which it seeks to condemn as unreal and even absurd, by a sort of practical demonstration of the emptiness of the values and powers it pursues. The neutralizing relation to the world which defines the aesthetic disposition potentially implies a subversion of the spirit of seriousness required by bourgeois investments. Like the visibly ethical judgements of those who lack the means to make art the basis of their art of living, to see the world and other people through literary reminiscences and pictorial references, the ‘pure’ and purely aesthetic judgements of the artist and the aesthete spring from the dispositions of an ethos;⁵² but because of the legitimacy which they command so long as their relationship to the dispositions and interests of a group defined by strong cultural capital and weak economic capital remains unrecognized, they provide a sort of absolute reference point in the necessarily endless play of mutually self-relativizing tastes. By a paradoxical reversal, they thereby help to legitimate the bourgeois claim to ‘natural distinction’ as difference made absolute.

Objectively and subjectively aesthetic stances adopted in matters like cosmetics, clothing or home decoration are opportunities to experience or assert one’s position in social space, as a rank to be upheld or a distance to be kept. It goes without saying that the social classes are not equally inclined and prepared to enter this game of refusal and counter-refusal; and that the strategies aimed at transforming the basic dispositions of a life-style into a system of aesthetic principles, objective differences into elective distinctions, passive options (constituted externally by the logic of the distinctive relationships) into conscious, elective choices are in fact reserved for members of the dominant class, indeed the very top bourgeoisie, and for artists, who as the inventors and professionals of the ‘stylization of life’ are alone able to make their art of living one of the fine arts. By contrast, the entry of the petite bourgeoisie into the game of distinction is marked, inter alia, by the anxiety of exposing oneself to classification by offering to the taste of others such infallible indices of personal taste as clothes or furniture, even a simple pair of armchairs, as in one of Nathalie Sarraute’s novels. As for the working classes, perhaps their sole function in the system of aesthetic positions is to serve as a foil, a negative reference point, in relation to which all aesthetics define themselves, by successive negations.⁵³ Ignoring or ignorant of manner and style, the ‘aesthetic’ (in itself) of the working classes and culturally most deprived fractions of the middle classes defines as ‘nice’, ‘pretty’, ‘lovely’ (rather than ‘beautiful’) things that are already defined as

such in the 'aesthetic' of calendars and postcards: a sunset, a little girl playing with a cat, a folk dance, an old master, a first communion, a children's procession. The striving towards distinction comes in with petit-bourgeois aestheticism, which delights in all the cheap substitutes for chic objects and practices—driftwood and painted pebbles, cane and raffia, 'art' handicrafts and art photography.

This aestheticism defines itself against the 'aesthetic' of the working classes, refusing their favourite subjects, the themes of 'views', such as mountain landscapes, sunsets and woods, or souvenir photos, such as the first communion, the monument or the old master (see figure 2). In photography, this taste prefers objects that are close to those of the popular aesthetic but semi-neutralized by more or less explicit reference to a pictorial tradition or by a visible stylistic intention combining the human picturesque (weaver at his loom, tramps quarrelling, folk dance) with gratuitous form (pebbles, rope, tree bark).

Technicians seem to offer the purest form of 'middle-brow' taste. Their tastes in photography locate them centrally in the structure of the middle classes (see figure 2), with the craftsmen, small shopkeepers, clerical workers and junior executives inclining towards the working class and the primary teachers and new petit bourgeois inclining towards the upper classes. They are particularly drawn to the objects most typical of middle-brow photography—the weaver, the still life—whereas the new petit bourgeois prefer objects which they see as lying outside the repertoire of the traditional aesthetic and therefore more 'original' (rope, cabbages), and also those belonging to the 'social picturesque' (tramps quarrelling).

It is significant that this middle-brow art par excellence finds one of its preferred subjects in one of the spectacles most characteristic of middle-brow culture (along with the circus, light opera and bull-fights), the folk dance (which is particularly appreciated by skilled workers and foremen, junior executives, clerical and commercial employees) (C.S. VII). Like the photographic recording of the social picturesque, whose populist objectivism distances the lower classes by constituting them as an object of contemplation or even commiseration or indignation, the spectacle of the 'people' making a spectacle of itself, as in folk dancing, is an opportunity to experience the relationship of distant proximity, in the form of the idealized vision purveyed by aesthetic realism and populist nostalgia, which is a basic element in the relationship of the petite bourgeoisie to the working or peasant classes and their traditions. But this middle-brow aestheticism in turn serves as a foil to the most alert members of the new middle-class fractions, who reject its favoured subjects, and to the secondary teachers whose aestheticism (the aestheticism of consumers, since they are relatively infrequent practitioners of photography and the other arts) purports to be able to treat any object aesthetically, with the excep-

mouth and deep breathing ('doubled up with laughter'), as if to amplify to the utmost an experience which will not suffer containment, not least because it has to be shared, and therefore clearly manifested for the benefit of others.

And the practical philosophy of the male body as a sort of power, big and strong, with enormous, imperative, brutal needs, which is asserted in every male posture, especially when eating, is also the principle of the division of foods between the sexes, a division which both sexes recognize in their practices and their language. It behooves a man to drink and eat more, and to eat and drink stronger things. Thus, men will have two rounds of aperitifs (more on special occasions), big ones in big glasses (the success of Ricard or Pernod is no doubt partly due to its being a drink both strong and copious—not a dainty 'thimbleful'), and they leave the tit-bits (savory biscuits, peanuts) to the children and the women, who have a small measure (not enough to 'get tipsy') of home-made aperitif (for which they swap recipes). Similarly, among the hors d'oeuvres, the *charcuterie* is more for men, and later the cheese, especially if it is strong, whereas the *crudes* (raw vegetables) are more for the women, like the salad; and these affinities are marked by taking a second helping or sharing what is left over. Meat, the nourishing food par excellence, strong and strong-making, giving vigour, blood, and health, is the dish for the men, who take a second helping, whereas the women are satisfied with a small portion. It is not that they are stinting themselves; they really don't want what others might need, especially the men, the natural meat-eaters, and they derive a sort of authority from what they do not see as a privation. Besides, they don't have a taste for men's food, which is reputed to be harmful when eaten to excess (for example, a surfeit of meat can 'turn the blood', over-excite, bring you out in spots etc.) and may even arouse a sort of disgust.

Strictly biological differences are underlined and symbolically accentuated by differences in bearing, differences in gesture, posture and behaviour which express a whole relationship to the social world. To these are added all the deliberate modifications of appearance, especially by use of the set of marks—cosmetic (hairstyle, make-up, beard, moustache, whiskers etc.) or vestimentary—which, because they depend on the economic and cultural means that can be invested in them, function as social markers deriving their meaning and value from their position in the system of distinctive signs which they constitute and which is itself homologous with the system of social positions. The sign-bearing, sign-wearing body is also a producer of signs which are physically marked by the relationship to the body: thus the valorization of virility, expressed in a use of the mouth or a pitch of the voice, can determine the whole of working-class pronunciation. The body, a social product which is the only tangible manifestation of the 'person', is commonly perceived as the most natural expression of innermost nature. There are no merely 'physical' facial

signs; the colour and thickness of lipstick, or expressions, as well as the shape of the face or the mouth, are immediately read as indices of a 'moral' physiognomy, socially characterized, i.e., of a 'vulgar' or 'distinguished' mind, naturally 'natural' or naturally 'cultivated'. The signs constituting the perceived body, cultural products which differentiate groups by their degree of culture, that is, their distance from nature, seem grounded in nature. The legitimate use of the body is spontaneously perceived as an index of moral uprightness, so that its opposite, a 'natural' body, is seen as an index of *laisser-aller* ('letting oneself go'), a culpable surrender to facility.

Thus one can begin to map out a universe of class bodies, which (biological accidents apart) tends to reproduce in its specific logic the universe of the social structure. It is no accident that bodily properties are perceived through social systems of classification which are not independent of the distribution of these properties among the social classes. The prevailing taxonomies tend to rank and contrast the properties most frequent among the dominant (i.e., the rarest ones) and those most frequent among the dominated.²⁵ The social representation of his own body which each agent has to reckon with,²⁶ from the very beginning, in order to build up his subjective image of his body and his bodily hexis, is thus obtained by applying a social system of classification based on the same principle as the social products to which it is applied. Thus, bodies would have every likelihood of receiving a value strictly corresponding to the positions of their owners in the distribution of the other fundamental properties—but for the fact that the logic of social heredity sometimes endows those least endowed in all other respects with the rarest bodily properties, such as beauty (sometimes 'fatally' attractive, because it threatens the other hierarchies), and, conversely, sometimes denies the 'high and mighty' the bodily attributes of their position, such as height or beauty.

PRETENTIOUS OR UNCOUTH? It is clear that tastes in food cannot be considered in complete independence of the other dimensions of the relationship to the world, to others and to one's own body, through which the practical philosophy of each class is enacted. To demonstrate this, one would have to make a systematic comparison of the working-class and bourgeois ways of treating food, of serving, presenting and offering it, which are infinitely more revelatory than even the nature of the products involved (especially since most surveys of consumption ignore differences in quality). The analysis is a difficult one, because each life-style can only really be constructed in relation to the other, which is its objective and subjective negation, so that the meaning of behaviour is totally reversed depending on which point of view is adopted and on whether the common words which have to be used to name the conduct (e.g., 'manners') are invested with popular or bourgeois connotations.

Considerable misunderstanding can result from ignorance of this mechanism in all surveys by questionnaire, which are always an exchange of words. The confusions are made even worse when the interviewer tries to collect opinions about words or reactions to words (as in the 'ethical test' in which the respondents were presented with the same lists of adjectives to describe an ideal friend, garment or interior). The responses he records in this case have in fact been defined in relation to stimuli which, beyond their nominal identity (that of the words offered), vary in their perceived reality, and therefore their practical efficacy, in accordance with the very principles of variation (and firstly, social class) whose effects one is seeking to measure (which can lead to literally meaningless encounters between opposing classes). Groups invest themselves totally, with everything that opposes them to other groups, in the common words which express their social identity, i.e., their difference. Behind their apparent neutrality, words as ordinary as 'practical', 'sober', 'clean', 'functional', 'amusing', 'delicate', 'cosy', 'distinguished' are thus divided against themselves, because the different classes either give them different meanings, or give them the same meaning but attribute opposite values to the things named. Some examples: *soigné* (neat, trim, careful, well-groomed, well-kept), so strongly appropriated by those who use it to express their taste for a job well done, properly finished, or for the meticulous attention they devote to their personal appearance, that it no doubt evokes those who reject it the narrow or 'up-tight' rigour they dislike in the petit-bourgeois style; or *drôle* (amusing, funny, droll), whose social connotations, associated with a socially marked pronunciation, bourgeois or snobbish,²⁷ clash with the values expressed, putting off those who would certainly respond to a popular equivalent of *drôle*, such as *bidonnant*, *marrant* or *rigolo*; or, again, *sobre*, which, applied to a garment or an interior, can mean radically different things when expressing the prudent, defensive strategies of a small craftsman, the aesthetic asceticism of a teacher or the austerity-in-luxury of the old-world *grand bourgeois*. It can be seen that every attempt to produce an ethical organon common to all classes is condemned from the start, unless, like every 'universal' morality or religion, it plays systematically on the fact that language is both common to the different classes and capable of receiving different, even opposite, meanings in the particular, and sometimes antagonistic, uses that are made of it.

Plain speaking, plain eating: the working-class meal is characterized by plenty (which does not exclude restrictions and limits) and above all by freedom. 'Elastic' and 'abundant' dishes are brought to the table—soups or sauces, pasta or potatoes (almost always included among the vegetables)—and served with a ladle or spoon, to avoid too much measuring and counting, in contrast to everything that has to be cut and divided, such as roasts.²⁸ This impression of abundance, which is the norm on special occasions, and always applies, so far as is possible, for the men, whose plates are filled twice (a privilege which marks a boy's accession to manhood), is often balanced, on ordinary occasions, by restrictions

which generally apply to the women, who will share one portion between two, or eat the left-overs of the previous day; a girl's accession to womanhood is marked by doing without. It is part of men's status to eat and to eat well (and also to drink well); it is particularly insisted that they should eat, on the grounds that 'it won't keep', and there is something suspect about a refusal. On Sundays, while the women are on their feet, busily serving, clearing the table, washing up, the men remain seated, still eating and drinking. These strongly marked differences of social status (associated with sex and age) are accompanied by no practical differentiation (such as the bourgeois division between the dining room and the kitchen, where the servants eat and sometimes the children), and strict sequencing of the meal tends to be ignored. Everything may be put on the table at much the same time (which also saves walking), so that the women may have reached the dessert, and also the children, who will take their plates and watch television, while the men are still eating the main dish and the 'lad', who has arrived late, is swallowing his soup.

This freedom, which may be perceived as disorder or slovenliness, is adapted to its function. Firstly, it is labour-saving, which is seen as an advantage. Because men take no part in housework, not least because the women would not allow it—it would be a dishonour to see men step outside their rôle—every economy of effort is welcome. Thus, when the coffee is served, a single spoon may be passed around to stir it. But these short cuts are only permissible because one is and feels at home, among the family, where ceremony would be an affectation. For example, to save washing up, the dessert may be handed out on improvised plates torn from the cake-box (with a joke about 'taking the liberty', to mark the transgression), and the neighbour invited in for a meal will also receive his piece of cardboard (offering a plate would exclude him) as a sign of familiarity. Similarly, the plates are not changed between dishes. The soup plate, wiped with bread, can be used right through the meal. The hostess will certainly offer to 'change the plates', pushing back her chair with one hand and reaching with the other for the plate next to her, but everyone will protest ('It all gets mixed up inside you') and if she were to insist it would look as if she wanted to show off her crockery (which she is allowed to if it is a new present) or to treat her guests as strangers, as is sometimes deliberately done to intruders or 'scroungers' who never return the invitation. These unwanted guests may be frozen out by changing their plates despite their protests, not laughing at their jokes, or scolding the children for their behaviour ('No, no, *we* don't mind', say the guests; 'They ought to know better by now', the parents respond). The common root of all these 'liberties' is no doubt the sense that at least there will not be self-imposed controls, constraints and restrictions—especially not in eating, a primary need and a compensation—and especially not in the heart of domestic life, the one realm of freedom, when everywhere else, and at all other times, necessity prevails.

In opposition to the free-and-easy working-class meal, the bourgeoisie is concerned to eat with all due form. Form is first of all a matter of rhythm, which implies expectations, pauses, restraints; waiting until the last person served has started to eat, taking modest helpings, not appearing over-eager. A strict sequence is observed and all coexistence of dishes which the sequence separates, fish and meat, cheese and dessert, is excluded: for example, before the dessert is served, everything left on the table, even the salt-cellar, is removed, and the crumbs are swept up. This extension of rigorous rules into everyday life (the bourgeois male shaves and dresses first thing every morning, and not just to 'go out'), refusing the division between home and the exterior, the quotidian and the extra-quotidian, is not explained solely by the presence of strangers—servants and guests—in the familiar family world. It is the expression of a habitus of order, restraint and propriety which may not be abdicated. The relation to food—the primary need and pleasure—is only one dimension of the bourgeois relation to the social world. The opposition between the immediate and the deferred, the easy and the difficult, substance (or function) and form, which is exposed in a particularly striking fashion in bourgeois ways of eating, is the basis of all aestheticization of practice and every aesthetic. Through all the forms and formalisms imposed on the immediate appetite, what is demanded—and inculcated—is not only a disposition to discipline food consumption by a conventional structuring which is also a gentle, indirect, invisible censorship (quite different from enforced privations) and which is an element in an art of living (correct eating, for example, is a way of paying homage to one's hosts and to the mistress of the house, a tribute to her care and effort). It is also a whole relationship to animal nature, to primary needs and the populace who indulge them without restraint; it is a way of denying the meaning and primary function of consumption, which are essentially common, by making the meal a social ceremony, an affirmation of ethical tone and aesthetic refinement. The manner of presenting and consuming the food, the organization of the meal and setting of the places, strictly differentiated according to the sequence of dishes and arranged to please the eye, the presentation of the dishes, considered as much in terms of shape and colour (like works of art) as of their consumable substance, the etiquette governing posture and gesture, ways of serving oneself and others, of using the different utensils, the seating plan, strictly but discreetly hierarchical, the censorship of all bodily manifestations of the act or pleasure of eating (such as noise or haste), the very refinement of the things consumed, with quality more important than quantity—this whole commitment to stylization tends to shift the emphasis from substance and function to form and manner, and so to deny the crudely material reality of the act of eating and of the things consumed, or, which amounts to the same thing, the basely material vulgarity of those who indulge in the immediate satisfactions of food and drink.²⁹

The main findings of an extremely detailed survey of the art of entertaining (C.S. XLIII) are brought together in a synoptic table (see table 19) which confirms and extends these arguments. It can be seen first that, in the working class, the world of reciprocal invitations, spontaneous or organized, is restricted to the family and the world of familiars who can be treated as 'one of the family', people 'you feel at home with', whereas 'acquaintances', 'connections', in the sense of professional or business connections who are useful in one's work, appear in the middle classes but are essentially a feature of the dominant class. One sign of this informality is that working-class invitations tend to be for coffee, dessert or an aperitif (whereas, at the other end of the social space, invitations are more often for tea, lunch or dinner, or to go out to a restaurant). If working-class people prefer to limit their spontaneous invitations to the offer of a drink or coffee, this is because there can be no 'half-measures' in giving a meal, no 'quick and easy solutions' (as recommended by the women's weeklies) to save time and effort, such as a buffet or a single course.³⁰

This refusal to skimp (the main thing is to make sure that the guests have enough to eat and that the food 'goes down well', secondarily that they are not bored) is even more clearly seen when the composition of the meals is analysed. For manual workers, a real meal is a meal with nothing left out, from the aperitif through to the dessert (whereas the other classes are often willing to 'simplify' by omitting the hors d'oeuvre, the salad or the dessert.³¹ Because substance takes priority over form, if anything has to be 'simplified' it can only be in the order of form, etiquette, which is seen as inessential, purely symbolic. No matter that the tableware is ordinary, so long as the food is 'extra-ordinary': this is a commonplace underlined by many ritual remarks. No matter that the guests are not seated as etiquette dictates, nor dressed for the occasion. No matter that the children are present at a meal which is in no way a ritual—so long as they do not chip into the conversation, which is adults' business. Since informality is the order of the day, there is no reason not to keep an eye on the television, to break into song at the end of the meal or even organize games; here too, since the function is clearly recognized—'We're here to have fun'—fun will be had, using every available means (drinks, games, funny stories etc.). And the primacy of substance over form, the refusal of the denial implied in formality, is again expressed in the content of the goods exchanged on arrival: flowers, which are seen as gratuitous, as art, art for art's sake (there are jokes to the effect that 'you can't eat them') are discarded in favour of earthly foods, wines or desserts, presents that 'always go down well' and which can be unpretentiously offered and accepted in the name of a realistic view of the costs of the meal and a willingness to share in them.

Given the basic opposition between form and substance, one could re-generate each of the oppositions between the two antagonistic approaches to the treatment of food and the act of eating. In one case, food is claimed as a material reality, a nourishing substance which sustains the body and gives strength (hence the emphasis on heavy, fatty, strong foods, of which the paradigm is pork—fatty and salty—the antithesis of

Table 19 Variations in entertaining, by class fraction (%), 1978.^a

Variations in ways of entertaining	Manual workers	Clerical, junior execs.	Executives, industrialists, professions
Spontaneous invitations reserved for:			
close family	51.7	34.7	32.5
close friends	20.9	35.9	33.2
children's friends	2.8	3.4	8.3
colleagues/associates	1.9	3.1	4.2
Invite in advance:			
close family	41.2	33.1	30.2
colleagues/associates	2.6	8.4	18.9
Invite fairly or very often for:			
coffee	49.2	48.4	38.2
dessert	23.7	24.7	15.1
dinner	51.3	67.8	70.2
Make spontaneous invitations for:			
apéritif	52.8	46.3	39.2
a meal	23.9	31.9	40.0
Most important thing in spontaneous invitations:			
successful cooking	10.1	5.9	9.4
enough to eat	33.6	28.4	26.0
guests not bored	33.4	46.6	47.9
Prefer to offer guests:			
buffet or single dish	19.4	25.3	26.1
a full meal	77.2	71.6	70.9
When entertaining, use (reg. and often):			
silverware	27.8	40.7	61.5
crystal glasses	29.3	49.7	57.3
china crockery	39.6	46.3	60.0
ordinary glasses	84.8	56.5	55.4
earthenware crockery	60.6	55.9	54.8
Like their guests to dress:			
elegantly	10.8	15.9	30.6
casually	79.7	70.9	58.5
Seating—prefer:			
to indicate guest's place	29.7	31.3	46.0
guests to choose places	65.7	63.1	46.8
to separate couples	22.8	35.0	50.6
not to separate couples	26.0	38.4	26.0
Children welcome (avg. min. age in years):			
at meal	6.5	7.5	8.8
at end of evening	10.9	11.9	12.9
in conversation	12.0	12.2	12.1
Guests bring:			
flowers	41.8	56.3	68.3
dessert	24.6	16.6	9.8
wine	18.6	16.9	14.0

Table 19 (continued)

Variations in ways of entertaining	Manual workers	Clerical, junior execs.	Executives, industrialists, professions
When entertaining, like:			
background music	48.1	56.6	57.7
to keep an eye on TV	14.4	4.7	4.2
singing after meal	64.9	55.3	45.3
organizing games	66.4	59.7	50.9

Source: C.S. XLIII (1978).

a. This table is read as follows: 51.7% of manual workers restrict their spontaneous invitations to their close family, 20.9% to close friends etc.; 34.7% of clerical workers and junior executives restrict their invitations to their close family, 35.9% to close friends etc. For each question the total of the percentages may be greater or less than 100, since for each question the respondents could choose several answers or none. Italic figures indicate the strongest tendency in each row.

fish—light, lean and bland); in the other, the priority given to form (the shape of the body, for example) and social form, formality, puts the pursuit of strength and substance in the background and identifies true freedom with the elective asceticism of a self-imposed rule. And it could be shown that two antagonistic world views, two worlds, two representations of human excellence are contained in this matrix. Substance—or matter—is what is substantial, not only 'filling' but also real, as opposed to all appearances, all the fine words and empty gestures that 'butter no parsnips' and are, as the phrase goes, purely symbolic; reality, as against sham, imitation, window-dressing; the little eating-house with its marble-topped tables and paper napkins where you get an honest square meal and aren't 'paying for the wallpaper' as in fancy restaurants; being, as against seeming, nature and the natural, simplicity (pot-luck, 'take it as it comes', 'no standing on ceremony'), as against embarrassment, mincing and posturing, airs and graces, which are always suspected of being a substitute for substance, i.e., for sincerity, for feeling, for what is felt and proved in actions; it is the free-speech and language of the heart which make the true 'nice guy', blunt, straightforward, unbending, honest, genuine, 'straight down the line' and 'straight as a die', as opposed to everything that is pure form, done only for form's sake; it is freedom and the refusal of complications, as opposed to respect for all the forms and formalities spontaneously perceived as instruments of distinction and power. On these moralities, these world views, there is no neutral viewpoint; what for some is shameless and slovenly, for others is straightforward, unpretentious; familiarity is for some the most absolute form of recognition, the abdication of all distance, a trusting openness, a relation of equal to equal; for others, who shun familiarity, it is an unseemly liberty.

sense of meeting the social norms of self-presentation which is the precondition of forgetting oneself and one's body-for-others (C.S. LXI).

But physical culture and all the strictly health-oriented practices such as walking and jogging are also linked in other ways to the dispositions of the culturally richest fractions of the middle classes and the dominant class. Generally speaking, they are only meaningful in relation to a quite theoretical, abstract knowledge of the effects of an exercise which, in gymnastics, is itself reduced to a series of abstract movements, decomposed and organized by reference to a specific, erudite goal (e.g., 'the abdominals'), entirely opposed to the total, practically oriented movements of everyday life; and they presuppose a rational faith in the deferred, often intangible profits they offer (such as protection against ageing or the accidents linked to age, an abstract, negative gain). It is therefore understandable that they should find the conditions for their performance in the ascetic dispositions of upwardly mobile individuals who are prepared to find satisfaction in effort itself and to take the deferred gratifications of their present sacrifice at face value. But also, because they can be performed in solitude, at times and in places beyond the reach of the many, off the beaten track, and so exclude all competition (this is one of the differences between running and jogging), they have a natural place among the ethical and aesthetic choices which define the aristocratic as-

ticism of the dominated fractions of the dominant class.

Team sports, which only require competences ('physical' or acquired) that are fairly equally distributed among the classes and are therefore equally accessible within the limits of the time and energy available, might be expected to rise in frequency, like individual sports, as one moves through the social hierarchy. However, in accordance with a logic observed in other areas—photography, for example—their very accessibility and all that this entails, such as undesirable contacts, tend to discredit them in the eyes of the dominant class. And indeed, the most typically popular sports, football and rugby, or wrestling and boxing, which, in France, in their early days were the delight of aristocrats, but which, in becoming popular, have ceased to be what they were, combine all the features which repel the dominant class: not only the social composition of their public, which redoubles their commonness, but also the values and virtues demanded, strength, endurance, violence, 'sacrifice', docility and submission to collective discipline—so contrary to bourgeois 'rôle distance'—and the exaltation of competition.

Regular sporting activity varies strongly by social class, ranging from 1.7 percent for farm workers, 10.1 percent for manual workers and 10.6 percent for clerical workers to 24 percent for junior executives and 32.3 percent for members of the professions. Similar variations are found in relation to educational level, whereas the difference between the sexes increases, as elsewhere, as one moves down the social hierarchy.³⁷ The variations are even

more marked in the case of an individual sport like tennis, whereas in the case of soccer the hierarchy is inverted: it is most played among manual workers, followed by the craftsmen and shopkeepers. These differences are partly explained by the encouragement of sport in schools, but they also result from the fact that the decline in sporting activity with age, which occurs very abruptly and relatively early in the working classes, where it coincides with school-leaving or marriage (three-quarters of the peasants and manual workers have abandoned sport by age 25), is much slower in the dominant class. These sports are explicitly invested with health-giving functions (as is shown, for example, by the interest in children's physical development). (This explains why, in the synoptic table—table 21—the proportion who regularly perform any sporting activity at a given moment rises strongly with position in the social hierarchy, whereas the proportion who no longer do so but used to at one time is fairly constant, and is even highest among craftsmen and shopkeepers.)

Attendance at sporting events (especially the most popular of them) is most common among craftsmen and shopkeepers, manual workers, junior executives and clerical workers (who often also read the sports paper *L'Equipe*); the same is true of interest in televised sport (soccer, rugby, cycling, horse-racing). By contrast, the dominant class watches much less sport, either live or on TV, except for tennis, rugby and skiing.

Just as, in an age when sporting activities were reserved for a few, the cult of 'fair play', the code of play of those who have the self-control not to get so carried away by the game that they forget that it is 'only a game', was a logical development of the distinctive function of sport, so too, in an age when participation is not always a sufficient guarantee of the rarity of the participants, those who seek to prove their excellence must affirm their disinterestedness by remaining aloof from practices devalued by the appearances of sheep-like conformism which they acquired by becoming more common. To distance themselves from common amusements, the privileged once again need only let themselves be guided by the horror of vulgar crowds which always leads them elsewhere, higher, further, to new experiences and virgin spaces, exclusively or firstly theirs, and also by the sense of the legitimacy of practices, which is a function of their distributional value, of course, but also of the degree to which they lend themselves to aestheticization, in practice or discourse.³⁸

All the features which appeal to the dominant taste are combined in sports such as golf, tennis, sailing, riding (or show-jumping), skiing (especially its most distinctive forms, such as cross-country) or fencing. Practised in exclusive places (private clubs), at the time one chooses, alone or with chosen partners (features which contrast with the collective discipline, obligatory rhythms and imposed efforts of team sports), demanding a relatively low physical exertion that is in any case freely determined, but a relatively high investment—and the earlier it is put in,

Class variations in sports activities and opinions on sport, 1975.

Sports characteristics of respondents	Positive responses (%) by class fraction					Positive responses (%) by sex		
	Professions	Senior excs.	Clerical, junior excs.	Small craftsmen, shopkeepers	Manual workers	Farm workers	Men	Women
Attend sports events fairly or very often	16	26	18	24	22	20	26	10
Watch or listen to sports events (on TV or radio) often or fairly often	50	71	60	60	50	50	47	47
Would like their child to become sports champion	50	52	44	55	61	50	47	47
Think that physical education ought to have a bigger place in the school curriculum	23	47	60	41	48	23	39	39
Regularly practise one or more sports (other than swimming if only on holiday)	17	25	29	29	18	17	15	15
Practise no sport now but used to	26	42	34	34	26	26	21	21
Have never regularly practised any sport	57	33	37	35	48	57	64	64
Regularly practise:								
tennis	15.5	2	2.5	2.5	1.5	0	2.5	2.5
riding	1.5	1	1.5	1	0.5	1.5	1	1
skiing	3.5	3	4.5	6.5	1.5	3.5	3	3
swimming	2.0	4	6.5	3.5	2.5	2.0	4	3
gymnastics	0.5	1.5	5	0.5	3	0.5	4	4
athletics	0	2	2.5	0.5	1.5	0	2	0.5
football	2.5	7	4	4.5	6	2.5	7	0.5

Source: C.S. XXXVIII (1975).
 1. The statistics available (see app. 2, Complementary Sources) only indicate the most general tendencies, which are confirmed in all cases, despite variations due to vague definition of the practice, frequency, occasions etc. (It may also be assumed that the rates are over-estimated, to an unequal extent in the different classes, since all the surveys are based on the respondents' statements and are no substitute for surveys of the actual practitioners or spectators.) For this reason a synoptic table is used to show the proportion of each class or sex of agents who present a given characteristic according to the most recent survey on sporting activities and opinions on sport (C.S. XXXVIII). Italic figures indicate the strongest tendency in each row.

the more profitable it is—of time and learning (so that they are relatively independent of variations in bodily capital and its decline through age), they only give rise to highly ritualized competitions, governed, beyond the rules, by the unwritten laws of fair play. The sporting exchange takes on the air of a highly controlled social exchange, excluding all physical or verbal violence, all anomic use of the body (shouting, wild gestures etc.) and all forms of direct contact between the opponents (who are often separated by the spatial organization and various opening and closing rites). Or, like sailing, skiing and all the Californian sports, they substitute man's solitary struggle with nature for the man-to-man battles of popular sports (not to mention competitions, which are incompatible with a lofty idea of the person).

Thus it can be seen that economic barriers—however great they may be in the case of golf, skiing, sailing or even riding and tennis—are not sufficient to explain the class distribution of these activities. There are more hidden entry requirements, such as family tradition and early training, or the obligatory manner (of dress and behaviour), and socializing techniques, which keep these sports closed to the working class and to upwardly mobile individuals from the middle or upper classes and to maintain them (along with smart parlour games like chess and especially bridge) among the surest indicators of bourgeois pedigree.

In contrast to before (and, even more so, manille), bridge is a game played more at higher levels of the social hierarchy, most frequently among members of the professions (IFOP, 1948). Similarly, among students of the grandes écoles, bridge, and especially intensive playing, with tournaments, varies very strongly by social origin. Chess (or the claim to play it) seems less linked than bridge to social traditions and to the pursuit of the accumulation of social capital. This would explain why it increases as one moves up the social hierarchy, but chiefly towards the area of social space defined by strong cultural capital (C.S. VII).

The simple fact that, at different times, albeit with a change in meaning and function, the same practices have been able to attract aristocratic or popular devotees, or, at the same time, to assume different meanings and forms for the different groups, should warn us against the temptation of trying to explain the class distribution of sports purely in terms of the 'nature' of the various activities. Even if the logic of distinction is sufficient to account for the basic opposition between popular and bourgeois sports, the fact remains that the relationships between the different groups and the different practices cannot be fully understood unless one takes account of the objective potentialities of the different institutionalized practices, that is, the social uses which these practices encourage, discourage or exclude both by their intrinsic logic and by their positional and distributional value. We can hypothesize as a general law that a sport

is more likely to be adopted by a social class if it does not contradict that class's relation to the body at its deepest and most unconscious level, i.e., the body schema, which is the depository of a whole world view and a whole philosophy of the person and the body.

Thus a sport is in a sense predisposed for bourgeois use when the use of the body it requires in no way offends the sense of the high dignity of the person, which rules out, for example, flinging the body into the rough and tumble of 'forward-game' rugby or the demeaning competitions of athletics. Ever concerned to impose the indisputable image of his own authority, his dignity or his distinction, the bourgeois treats his body as an end, makes his body a sign of its own ease. Style is thus foregrounded, and the most typically bourgeois deportment can be recognized by a certain breadth of gesture, posture and gait, which manifests by the amount of physical space that is occupied the place occupied in social space; and above all by a restrained, measured, self-assured tempo. This slow pace, contrasting with working-class haste or petit-bourgeois eagerness, also characterizes bourgeois speech, where it similarly asserts awareness of the right to take one's time—and other people's.

The affinity between the potentialities objectively inscribed in practices and dispositions is seen most clearly of all in flying, and especially military aviation. The individual exploits and chivalrous ethic of the Prussian aristocrats and French nobles who joined the Air Force from cavalry school (everything that *La Grande Illusion* evokes) are implied in the very activity of flying which, as all the metaphors of skimming and high flying suggest, are associated (*per ardua ad astra*) with elevated society and high-mindedness, 'a certain sense of altitude combining with the life of the spirit', as Proust says apropos of Stendhal.³⁹ The whole opposition between a bellicose, jingoistic bourgeoisie, which identified the virtues of leadership with the gallant, risk-taking, stiff-upper-lipped man of action, and a free-trading, multinational bourgeoisie which derives its power from its decision-making, organizational (in a word, cybernetic) capacities is contained in the opposition between the horse-riding, fencing, boxing or flying aristocrats and bourgeois of the Belle Epoque and the modern skiing, sailing or gliding executive.

And just as a history of the sporting practices of the dominant class would no doubt shed light on the evolution of its ethical dispositions, the bourgeois conception of the human ideal and in particular the form of reconciliation between the bodily virtues and the supposedly more feminine intellectual virtues, so too an analysis of the distribution at a given moment of sporting activities among the fractions of the dominant class would bring to light some of the most hidden principles of the opposition between these fractions, such as the deep-rooted, unconscious conception of the relationship between the sexual division of labour and the division of the work of domination. This is perhaps truer than ever

now that the gentle, invisible education by exercise and diet which is appropriate to the new morality of health is tending to take the place of the explicitly ethical pedagogy of the past in shaping bodies and minds. Because the different principles of division which structure the dominant class are never entirely independent—such as the oppositions between the economically richest and the culturally richest, between inheritors and parvenus, old and young (or seniors and juniors)—the practices of the different fractions tend to be distributed, from the dominant fractions to the dominated fractions, in accordance with a series of oppositions which are themselves partially reducible to each other: the opposition between the most expensive and smartest sports (golf, sailing, riding, tennis) or the most expensive and smartest ways of doing them (private clubs) and the cheapest sports (rambling, hiking, jogging, cycling, mountaineering) or the cheapest ways of doing the smart sports (e.g., tennis on municipal courts or in holiday camps); the opposition between the 'manly' sports, which may demand a high energy input (hunting, fishing, the 'contact' sports, clay-pigeon shooting), and the 'introverted' sports, emphasizing self-exploration and self-expression (yoga, dancing, 'physical expression', the 'cybernetic' sports (flying, sailing), requiring a high cultural input and a relatively low energy input.

Thus, the differences which separate the teachers, the professionals and the employers are, as it were, summed up in the three activities which, though relatively rare—about 10 percent—even in the fractions they distinguish, appear as the distinctive feature of each of them, because they are much more frequent there, at equivalent ages, than in the others (C.S. V and VII, secondary analysis). The aristocratic asceticism of the teachers finds an exemplary expression in mountaineering, which, even more than rambling, with its reserved paths (one thinks of Heidegger) or cycle-touring, with its Romanesque churches, offers for minimum economic costs the maximum distinction, distance, height, spiritual elevation, through the sense of simultaneously mastering one's own body and a nature inaccessible to the many.⁴⁰ The health-oriented hedonism of doctors and modern executives who have the material and cultural means of access to the most prestigious activities, far from vulgar crowds, is expressed in yachting, open-sea swimming, cross-country skiing or underwater fishing; whereas the employers expect the same gains in distinction from golf, with its aristocratic etiquette, its English vocabulary and its great exclusive spaces, together with extrinsic profits, such as the accumulation of social capital.⁴¹

Since age is obviously a very important variable here, it is not surprising that differences in social age, not only between the biologically younger and older in identical social positions, but also, at identical biological ages, between the dominant and the dominated fractions, or the new and the established fractions, are retranslated into the opposition between the

teachers.¹⁹ Based on the opposition between ethical dispositions corresponding to different trajectories, it is reinforced and brought to fruition by very different economic conditions.

Once one considers, in addition to the differences in respect to capital composition, those deriving from trajectory, and in particular the fact that the proportion of individuals who owe their place in the dominant class to the accumulation of educational capital rises as one moves from the dominant fractions to the dominated fractions, it is clear why teachers and, secondarily, engineers and executives are those most inclined to direct the ascetic dispositions developed by and for previous cultural accumulation towards further such accumulation—all the more readily since their low economic capital does not lead them to expect many alternative pleasures and profits. By contrast, the members of the professions have the means to realize the dispositions towards indulgence in luxury which are associated with a bourgeois origin and which are encouraged by the requirements of occupations presupposing a large accumulation of symbolic capital. The ascetic aristocratism of the teachers (and public-sector executives), who are systematically oriented towards the least expensive and most austere leisure activities and towards serious and even somewhat severe cultural practices—visiting museums, for example, especially in the provinces (rather than major exhibitions, galleries and foreign museums, like the members of the professions)—is opposed to the luxury tastes of the members of the professions, who amass the (culturally or economically) most expensive and most prestigious activities, reading expensive glossy magazines, visiting antique-dealers, galleries and concert-halls, holidaying in spa towns, owning pianos, illustrated art books, antique furniture, works of art, movie cameras, tape recorders, foreign cars, skiing, playing tennis and golf, riding, hunting and water-skiing.

As in our survey, the third factor brought out by analysis of the correspondences in the SOFRES survey separates all other fractions from the members of the professions. The latter are particularly inclined to luxury goods and activities, as is shown by simply listing (in order of importance) the characteristics which make the highest absolute contributions to this factor: subscriptions to glossy monthly magazines, possession of a movie camera, water-skiing, possession of a tape recorder, art books, playing tennis, spa holidays, bridge, hunting, skiing, riding, business cocktails etc. Since one knows that magazines like *Connaissance des Arts* or *La Maison Française* have a high proportion of professionals among their readers (15.5 percent and 18.5 percent) one may, in addition, on the basis of the 1970 CESP survey, attribute to this fraction properties particularly frequent among the readers of these journals, such as possession of antique furniture and works of art, visits to auction rooms and galleries. One also knows from the INSEE 'leisure' survey that the members of the professions give a particularly large number of receptions.

The members of the professions, possessing neither the competence nor the dispositions needed to reinvest effectively in the economy the high economic profits they derive from their cultural capital, and being attached to 'intellectual values' by education and life-style (they provide a high proportion of the amateur writers),²⁰ find in smart sports and games, in receptions, cocktails and other society gatherings not only intrinsic satisfactions and edification but also the select society in which they can make and keep up their 'connections' and accumulate the capital of honourability they need in order to carry on their professions. This is only one of the cases in which luxury, 'a conventional degree of prodigality', becomes, as Marx observed, 'a business necessity' and 'enters into capital's expenses of representation' as 'an exhibition of wealth and consequently as a source of credit.'²¹

These generic tendencies take different forms depending on the profession, the speciality and the place of residence. Thus, doctors, who have a savings rate much higher than the national average (30 percent of disposable income, as against 15 percent) but with an incomparably higher income, spend a very high percentage of their very high income, particularly on holidays (10 percent of disposable income), cars and 'consumer durables'. Very often owning their own homes (two-thirds of them do), they often own second homes, investment property, agricultural property, woods and land (hardly ever industrial companies) and also shares. Property purchases are most frequent among rural general practitioners, whereas financial investments, which generally increase with age, are more frequent among surgeons and specialists.²² One may assume that surgeons and other specialists—especially in Paris—devote a particularly high proportion of their income to luxury expenditure, particularly the purchase of works of art.

By contrast, each of the teachers' choices (their preference for a harmonious, sober, discreet interior, for example, or for simple but well-presented meals) can be understood as a way of making a virtue of necessity by maximizing the profit they can draw from their cultural capital and their spare time (while minimizing their financial outlay). If the professionals do not always have the tastes to match their means, the teachers hardly ever have the means to match their tastes, and this disparity between cultural and economic capital condemns them to an ascetic aestheticism (a more austere variant of the 'artist' life-style) which 'makes the most' of what it has, substituting 'rustic' for antique, Romanian carpets for Persian carpets, a converted barn for an ancestral manor-house, lithographs (or reproductions) for paintings—unavowed substitutes which, like really poor people's leatherette or 'sparkling white' wine, are the tributes deprivation pays to possession.²³ The disparity between economic capital and cultural capital, or, more precisely, the educational capital which is its certified form, is undoubtedly one of the