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Louise Holt

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What is This?

Embodied social capital and geographic perspectives: performing the habitus

Louise Holt*

Department of Geography, University of Reading, Whiteknights,
PO Box 227, Reading RG6 6AB, UK

Abstract: This paper reopens debates of geographic theorizations and conceptualizations of social capital. I argue that human geographers have tended to underplay the analytic value of social capital, by equating the concept with dominant policy interpretations. It is contended that geographers could more explicitly contribute to pervasive critical social science accounts. With this in mind, an embodied perspective of social capital is constructed. This synthesizes Bourdieu's capitals and performative theorizations of identity, to progress the concept of social capital in four key ways. First, this theorization more fully reconnects embodied differences to broader socio-economic processes. Second, an exploration of how embodied social differences can emerge directly from the political-economy and/or via broader operations of power is facilitated. Third, a path is charted through the endurance of embodied inequalities and the potential for social transformation. Finally, embodied social capital can advance social science conceptualizations of the spatiality of social capital, by illuminating the importance of broader sociospatial contexts and relations to the embodiment of social capital within individuals.

Key words: Bourdieu, Butler, embodied, exclusion, inclusion, normalization, performativity, reproduction, social capital, transformation.

I Introduction

Recent commentaries have illuminated how the utilization of social capital within human geography is on the wane, with some authors suggesting that geographical accounts of social capital are '(almost) dead' (Radcliffe, 2004: 517). However, a vibrant research agenda that focuses upon social capital continues to flourish within broader social science investigations (eg, Families and Social Capital ESRC Research Centre, London South Bank University). Taking inspiration from this fertile research terrain, this paper seeks to reinvigorate debates of the analytic value of social capital for human geographers, by more fully opening the 'black box' of social capital (Radcliffe, 2004: 519). The rationale for this is twofold. First, human geographers may be in danger of missing the opportunity of recapturing a concept that continues to have high political currency at a variety of intersecting institutional levels, from the global (eg, World Bank) to the micro (Amin, 2005; Mohan *et al*., 2005).

*Email: l.holt@reading.ac.uk

At a UK national scale, social capital and related concerns (such as community capacity and civic relations) are integral to New Labour's 'Third Way'[1] approach (Baron, 2004). Social capital features prominently in a variety of UK national policy arenas, particularly health (Health Development Agency, 2004), community development, and social exclusion and inclusion (Social Exclusion Unit, 2004). Second, I contend that critical concepts of social capital can have analytical value. It is therefore useful for geographers to contribute to debates of social capital.

Broadly, social capital illuminates the value of social relationships and networks to societies and individuals. However, it is a highly contested concept (DeFilippis, 2001). There is much divergence between the three key 'theorists' of social capital; Robert Putnam, James Coleman and Pierre Bourdieu (Schaefer-McDaniel, 2004). Robert Putnam's envisionings of social capital have been particularly influential within policy accounts. It can be argued that many geographical debates of social capital have focused upon the dominant conceptualization forwarded by Putnam (Putnam *et al*., 1993; Putnam, 2000). Consequently, the diversity of approaches to social capital has been somewhat under-represented within geography (cf. DeFilippis, 2001). Given fundamental criticisms levelled at Putnam (eg, Portes, 1998), it is not surprising that many geographers have 'disinvested'[2] (Foley and Edwards, 1999) in social capital.

I argue that this disinvestment is problematic as social capital can have potential analytical value, although it requires explicit conceptualization. In particular, critical accounts of social capital can provide insights into the (re)production of inequalities and advantage through everyday sociability within a variety of intersecting social networks. It is therefore valuable to challenge and endeavour to resignify dominant representations of social capital.

As an alternative to dominant accounts, this paper provides a reconceptualization of social capital, which focuses upon how social capital becomes embodied within individuals' dynamic corporeality. Embodied social capital engages with Bourdieu's theories of capitals, which been influential within the broader social sciences (eg, Morrow, 2001; Adkins, 2004; Reay, 2004a). I argue that Pierre Bourdieu's accounts address many of the critiques levelled at social capital by geographers (eg, Mohan and Mohan, 2002; Das, 2004). Three key aspects of Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital are of particular importance to this discussion. First, Bourdieu emphasizes the inter-relations between social capital and a variety of capitals, including cultural and economic. Second, Bourdieu highlights how the social is one key form of capital that serves to (re)produce socio-economic differentiation and intergenerational (dis)advantage, rather than operating as a 'general social good' (cf. Putnam, 2000). Third, although not fully developed in relation to social capital, Bourdieu offers a nuanced and embodied account of agency via the concepts of practice and habitus. Habitus provides an insight into the embodied and pre-reflexive, albeit always sociospatially contextualized, nature of practice. In this paper, I synthesize Bourdieu's insights into social capital and habitus with Judith Butler's conceptualization of performativity and subjection to point to an embodied conceptualization of social capital.

The paper is divided into four key sections. In the following section, I review some geographical accounts of social capital. The subsequent section engages with critical social science debates to discuss Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital. I then outline the concept of embodied social capital, which synthesizes Bourdieu's capitals with Butler's performativity and subjection theories. In the 'Discussion' section I briefly consider how embodied social capital can be

empirically mobilized. Finally, a brief conclusion is offered.

II Geographical accounts of social capital

The concept of social capital occupies a contradictory position within human geography and the policy arena. It has high political currency within a range of national and 'global' political bodies (eg, Health Development Agency, 2004; Social Exclusion Unit, 2004; The World Bank – Bebbington *et al*., 2004). By contrast, many human geographers, following endeavours to operationalize social capital, have decried the concept as having only limited, if any, explanatory value (DeFilippis, 2001; Radcliffe, 2004; Das, 2004; Mohan *et al*., 2005[3]). Indeed, the 'decline' of social capital is increasingly taken as a given within geographical debates (Houston *et al*., 2005).

Overall, these geographical contributions are critical of social capital as articulated within health-related (Mohan *et al*., 2005) or development fields (DeFilippis, 2001; Radcliffe, 2004; Amin, 2005). Arguably, this scepticism is tied to the capture of social capital by dominant policy perspectives, which are limited and even erroneous. Policy understandings are predominantly associated with Robert Putnam's[4] envisionings of social capital, and/or endeavours to synthesize ontologically and epistemologically disparate conceptualizations. The political ascendancy of particular versions of social capital tends to underplay the conceptual weaknesses that social scientists have identified as (almost) fatal flaws within Putnam's accounts (DeFilippis, 2002).

Arguably, the apparently contradictory positions of social capital within policy arenas and human geography debates are interconnected. Although geographers, in common with many social scientists, are highly sceptical of the neoliberal[5] underpinnings and apparent 'panacea' (Fine, 2001) status of dominant representations of social capital (Mohan and Mohan, 2002; Amin, 2005),

these facets are attractive to many policy-makers, given the generalized neoliberal shift in global and national governance. As Ponthieux (2004) states, social capital:

> may have appeared as a miracle remedy to solve deep social problems, and ease the experts' charitable minds, particularly since it is apparently costless (… not requiring higher taxes). (Ponthieux, 2004: 19)

Dominant accounts of social capital have been subject to criticism upon interconnected conceptual, methodological and epistemological grounds (Portes and Landolt, 1996; Jackman and Miller, 1998; Foley and Edwards, 1999; Amin, 2005). Despite these critiques, facets of Putnam's accounts have proved enduring. Putnam's conceptualization of the nature and formation of social capital holds particular appeal. Social capital has been equated to membership of formal civic organizations (Putnam, 2000). Subthemes of informal social relationships and generalized norms of trustingness, trustworthiness and reciprocity are also evident. The general consensus that social capital is constructed through formal, and to a lesser extent, informal social networks has been widely adopted, even within critical accounts (eg, Li *et al*., 2002; 2003a; 2003b; Mohan *et al*., 2005). Formal networks within voluntary associations are often prioritized. Many studies utilize quantitative measures not specifically designed to measure social capital. Increasingly, however, specific 'social capital' variables are incorporated into large-scale surveys, such as the UK General Household Survey (GHS) and national censuses (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2002).

In addition to existing critiques, I contend that Putnam's accounts demonstrate troubling ontological tendencies, as he endeavours to produce an objectivist and even universal account (Grootaert, 1998; cf. Bebbington *et al.*, 2004). Indeed, Putnam (2000: 228) claims that: 'an impressive and growing body of research suggests that civic connections help make us healthy, wealthy and wise'. The

causal, universally applicable status accorded to social capital in Putnam's theorizations are implicitly bound up with a particular neoliberal politics that shifts the cause of inequality, hardship, socio-economic exclusion and poverty away from the operations of the political economy ultimately onto individuals' and groups' civic engagement (Fine, 2001).

Such universalizing tendencies may be particularly unappealing to geographers on a variety of grounds; not least because of a lack of a critical conceptualization of space. Putnam treats spaces as static, pre-existing, and 'given'. Such an approach contrasts with complex conceptualizations of space and spatiality forwarded by geographers and other social scientists (eg, Massey, 2005). Mohan *et al*. (2005) illuminate some practical limitations of Putnam's view of space. More explicitly, however, dominant conceptualizations of social capital do not fully consider places as 'becoming'; as dynamic material expressions of broader sociospatial processes and power enactments, which then constrain and enable social change.

Overall, geographers have critiqued dominant envisionings of social capital, rather than fully retheorizing the concept in critical dialogue with social science accounts. Mohan and Mohan (2002) in this journal are ambivalent towards hegemonic versions of social capital. However, rather than fully destabilizing Putnam's version of social capital, they critically engage with, and aim to enhance, his measures. Unsurprisingly, then, when empirically mobilizing their conceptualizations of social capital, Mohan *et al*. (2005) conclude:

> we suggest that our work adds weight to a growing body of research … which challenges the explanatory power of social capital (vis-à-vis material circumstances) and which is therefore sceptical about whether demonstrable health benefits will be obtained from investing in social capital. (Mohan *et al*., 2005: 1282)

By contrast, DeFilippis (2001) begins to re-signify social capital, to transform hegemonic understandings. By drawing upon Bourdieu (especially 1986) and Loury (1977), DeFilippis points to the need to theorize how social networks can reproduce unequal relations of capital in a socio-economic sense, and power in more general terms. Thus, DeFilippis enhances geographical debates of social capital. However, his account does not fully take on board critical sociocultural conceptualizations of power and community. Thus, power is viewed as something tangible that can be held, or transferred, rather than as multifarious and having diverse expressions, including operating through embodied individuals (cf. Rose, 1997). Although DeFilippis critiques Putnam's suggestions that communities have 'agency', he does not fully question whether communities can be representative of the individuals that comprise them (cf. Amin, 2005). The ways in which dominant and marginalized identity positionings, and a variety of inclusions and exclusions, can be (re)produced within community groups and associations, requires further exploration.

Critiques that have illuminated such points have often emerged from feminist perspectives, highlighting gender as an axis of difference (eg, Silvey and Elmhurst, 2003). At the same time, these discussions have generally not offered a new conceptualization of social capital that more substantially illuminates gendered differences, and have tended to jettison Bourdieu's accounts, by contrast with feminist research within other disciplines (Adkins, 2004; Reay, 2004a; Silva, 2005). Although focusing attention upon the norms reproduced though sociability, feminist discussions have not as yet fully married social capital theory with understandings of normalization power. Further, most accounts of social capital in geography have underplayed other social differences, and how they intertwine with those of gender and 'social class'. Radcliffe (2004) states:

> Social capital's specific approach to social interaction has tended to focus attention away from

analyses of social difference, primarily aspects of gender and ethnicity (issues around disability, generation and sexuality are completely off the radar as yet). (Radcliffe, 2004: 527)

In the rest of the paper I critically engage with Bourdieu's theory of social capital to forward the concept of embodied social capital. Embodied social capital simultaneously engages with, and suspends, interpretations that emerge from Bourdieu, which have received attention within social sciences, and considers broader issues of power, identity and inequality.

III Retheorizing social capital as a mechanism for reproducing privilege

Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital addresses many of the critiques levelled at Putnam; including the lack of sensitivity to socio-economic inequalities and wider historical-political and material processes. Further, Bourdieu does not posit social capital as an independent variable. By contrast, he theorizes the co-construction of a variety of 'capitals' (social, cultural, symbolic and economic) through which privilege and disadvantage are covertly reproduced (Butler and Robson, 2001). Thus, a reconfigured conceptualization that draws upon Bourdieu's social capital can address the scathing critique of social capital by Das (2004):

> it is untenable to posit social capital as an independent variable and poverty as a dependent variable because the economic-political conditions of poor people have an enormous constraining effect on social capital itself and its supposed material benefits for the poor. (Das, 2004: 27)

1 Defining (social) capital

Bourdieu (1984; 1986) conceives of social capital as one of four key forms of capital, along with economic, cultural (embodied, objectified or institutional) and symbolic (Painter, 2001; T. Butler and Robson, 2001; Gatrell *et al.*, 2004). Social capital is defined as:

> the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (Bourdieu, 1986: 249–50)

Importantly, Bourdieu offers insights into both the measurement and the (re)production of social capital. It is theoretically possible to measure an individual's social capital, given:

> The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent … depends on the size of the network of connections he [*sic*] can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his [*sic*] own right by each of those to whom he [*sic*] is connected. (Bourdieu, 1986: 250)

This theoretical measurement of social capital is arguably difficult to mobilize empirically (Baron, 2004; cf. Silva and Edwards, 2004; Gatrell *et al.*, 2004). Such an understanding of social capital is certainly not currently measurable via the large-scale quantitative data sets favoured by many advocates of social capital.

The key significance of Bourdieu's work is the emphasis placed on the differing capital value of social relationships. Individuals who have access to particular social networks will be able to mobilize this social capital, transforming it into different types of capital; maintaining their advantages within particular 'fields' of activity.[6] Bourdieu emphasizes that social capital requires an investment:

> the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term i.e. at transforming contingent relations … into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations

selectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship) or institutionally guaranteed (rights). (Bourdieu, 1986: 250–51)

More attention could be paid to the hierarchical and conflictual nature of all social relationships (Turner and An Nguyen, 2005). It is unlikely that all members of any given social network have equal access to the capital resources held by all other members. However, Bourdieu does nuance his argument to suggest that investments made into social capital, like those in cultural capital, do not guarantee a particular 'return'. Investing in social capital is a risky venture; given that a member of the network may fail to perceive or act upon a mutual obligation. As the transformation of the social into capital depends upon an unspoken, intuitive agreement, unfulfilled obligations must be commonplace. It therefore seems reasonable to question the value of investing in social (or cultural) capital. Bourdieu suggests that the benefits of cultural and social capital are as concealed forms of intergenerational capital accumulation, which reproduce privilege and disadvantage, and thus defy attempts at redistribution, such as progressive taxation. His work on cultural capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979; Bourdieu, 1984) illuminates more fully how these processes of capital accumulation are concealed within the taken-for-granted assumptions of meritocracy and democracy.

There is evidently a recursive relationship between the development of social and cultural capital. Cultural capital (institutionalized, objectified and, perhaps most importantly, embodied) facilitates the development of social capital. For instance, particular forms of institutional and objectified cultural capital may open up spaces within which particular contingent relationships can emerge (such as the golf club or the university). Further, embodied cultural capital inculcates within individuals the dispositions and manners that facilitate the types of appropriate sociability which allow the 'alchemy of consecration'

(Bourdieu, 1986: 251) to transform contingent relationships into relations of mutual obligation.

Conversely, social capital can facilitate the acquisition of cultural capital. For instance, the social networks to which an individual belongs influence the individual, embodied habitus (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). Equally, at a more obvious level, the social networks to which children and young people belong encourage or constrain their acquisition of institutionalized cultural capital, in the form of educational qualifications (Thomas and Webber, 2001). Thus, the interconnections between social and cultural capital are far more complex and nuanced than suggested by Coleman (1988).

2 A more nuanced understanding of agency
Along with theorizing the co-construction of capitals, Bourdieu offers a more nuanced understanding of the subject/agent, via habitus, which emphasizes the beyond conscious, habitual, embodied and non-reflexive elements of practice. The intersection between habitus and the accumulation of social capital is clearly fruitful for a consideration of embodied social capital. However, to date, within geographical accounts, discussion of habitus and social capital remain largely disparate. By contrast, habitus has been theorized within studies of cultural capital, most notably within the fields of gentrification (eg, Zukin, 1995; Butler, 1997; Podmore, 1998; Bridge, 2001; Smith and Phillips, 2001; Ley, 2003; Butler and Robson, 2003a), and migration (Kelly and Lusis, 2006). Recent accounts have interpolated the fields of education with gentrification (Butler and Robson 2003b; Bridge, 2006) and migration (Walters, 2006). The concept of habitus has been refined and empirically investigated via studies of the 'metropolitan or inner city (gentrification) habitus' (Butler, 2002; Ley, 2003), 'rural habitus' (Smith and Phillips, 2001) 'minihabituses; (Bridge, 2006) and the 'transnational habitus' (Kelly and Lusis, 2006).

Habitus is the embodied materialization of individuals' capitals, or 'internalized capital' (Bourdieu, 1984: 114; Painter, 2001; Shilling, 2003). Habitus is expressed via embodied dispositions, largely subconsciously inculcated, primarily, although not exclusively, during childhood (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). Jenkins (1992) identifies three key ways in which 'dispositions' are utilized within Bourdieu's conceptualization of habitus: first as an organizing principle for engaging in practice – habitus provides an unconscious framework and resource drawn upon in individuals' encounters with the world; second, as a 'way of being' or 'habitual state' (including deportment and ways of speaking); and third as 'tendency', 'propensity' or 'inclination' – tastes (p. 76) (see also Reay, 2004b). These three elements of habitus are clearly interconnected, and thus habitus provides an unconscious backdrop to individuals' practices within particular social 'fields'.[7] Jenkins (1992) states that:

> The habitus disposes actors to do certain things; it provides a *basis* for the generation of practices. Practices are produced in and by the encounter between the habitus and its dispositions, on the one hand, and the constraints, demands and opportunities of the social field or market to which the habitus is appropriate or within which the actor is moving, on the other. (Jenkins, 1992: 76)

One of Bourdieu's central concerns is to overcome key dichotomies within the social sciences; notably between 'structure' and 'agency' and 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity'. Thus, although habitus prioritizes experience and everyday practice, it is not from a position that accords epistemological privilege to the individual who experiences (McNay, 2004). Bourdieu endeavours to negotiate a path between the all knowledgeable (humanist) actor and individuals as 'epiphenomena' of structures (Bouveresse, 1999) by establishing habitus as a context to social action which, although dynamic, exhibits a certain friction to change. Habitus is the mechanism by which

the 'objective' external world, expressed as 'fields' becomes incorporated within the 'subjective' internal, embodied, experience. It is 'those embodied rituals of everydayness by which a given culture produces and sustains belief in its own "obviousness"' (Butler, 1999: 114). Thus, dominant relations in society are often reproduced via habitus, as frequently social and cultural relations are not reflected upon, they are just 'lived' (Cresswell, 1996).

Rather than being consciously learned, habitus is acquired via less-than-conscious embodied practices, or 'mimesis'; the subconscious inculcation of the specific 'rules of the game' of a particular field (Bourdieu, 1990: 66). Habitus then provides a 'practical knowledge' or 'feel for the game' that is drawn upon when negotiating unfamiliar social contexts or fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Thus, habitus mediates the positions that individuals occupy in new social fields. Habitus is therefore a key mechanism for the reproduction of intergenerational inequality (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979), given its production in relation to the position held within the fields that an individual has previously encountered, particularly during childhood (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991).

Thus, Bourdieu's conceptualization of habitus questions other key dichotomies in social science, including that between mind/body, conscious/unconscious (Lawler, 2004) and body/society (Shilling, 2003), by illuminating how practice is simultaneously a series of conscious and beyond conscious embodied acts that are socially situated. This decentring of the body-individual and society dualism facilitates a variety of interpretations of habitus as variously primarily embodied within individuals (eg, Nash, 2003) or as a collective, shared consciousness, that can ultimately be mapped onto tangible spaces (eg, Butler and Robson, 2001; Smith and Phillips, 2001). Bourdieu's habitus also resonates strongly with enduring concerns about the beyond consciousness, the reflexive and the Affectual realm within human geography (Cresswell, 2002; Probyn, 2004). However,

by contrast with recent geographical concerns with the Affectual, which often prioritizes flexibility above endurance (Holt, 2007), Bourdieu's concept of habitus is a particularly useful lens for examining social reproduction. As Cresswell (2002: 381) contends, 'the habitus represents the internalisation of the social order, which in turn reproduces the social order'.

The notion of habitus facilitates a more nuanced understanding of agency within social capital. Bourdieu emphasizes that agents are only partially knowledgeable; they are also influenced by subconscious and embodied motivations. Therefore, it is not necessary for an individual to be consciously aware of the value of their social relationships for these networks to count as capital (cf. Morrow, 1999). Equally, sociability that confers social capital is not (always) consciously engaged in for personal gain (cf. Coleman, 1988). For Bourdieu, capital exchanges may be subconscious and governed by dispositions and choices that defy rational reflection. The key strength of Bourdieu's 'capitals' is that they bring to light concealed intergenerational processes that serve to reproduce socio-economic advantage, disadvantage and privilege.

3 Critiques of Bourdieu's capitals and habitus
Bourdieu's theories of capitals, habitus and practice are not without limitations. Three critiques are particularly focused upon here. First, Bourdieu often prioritizes social reproduction above transformation. Second, although usefully emphasizing the role of the broader political economy to the (re)production of social capital, Bourdieu's account arguably veers into economic reductionism by placing the political-economy at the root of all capitals. This has implications for Bourdieu's theories of agency and the applicability of his accounts for theorizing differences other than class and class faction. Finally, Bourdieu's accounts are not particularly sensitive to spatial differences.

I suggest that these critiques can begin to be resolved by synthesizing Bourdieu's theory of capitals with performative understandings of power and identity developed by Judith Butler.

First, although Bourdieu explicitly endeavoured to move away from structuralism, his focus on the reproduction of privilege and inequality serves to foreground *reproduction* rather than instances of transformation (Jenkins, 1992). Thus, albeit agency is important to Bourdieu's theorizations, many analyses influenced by his work underplay the potential for individuals to act as agents to transform general structural patterns (eg, Nash, 2003). Thereby, the duality of 'structure' and 'agency' is somewhat undertheorized in Bourdieu's analyses. Bridge (2001) argues that Bourdieu underplays the role of purposeful agency. By uniting Bourdieu and 'game theory', a subset of Rational Action Theory, Bridge (2001) usefully destabilizes the epistemological privilege accorded by Bourdieu to the researcher. Unlike the majority of individuals, Bourdieu represents social scientists as capable of, and responsible for, instigating change in the objective relations of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). However, Bridge's approach is also in danger of sidelining some of the key contributions of habitus, notably the role of embodied, intuitive, extra-reflexive dispositions to practice, and habitus as an embodied historic consolidation of pervious social relationships. Although action can be, if not rational, then purposeful and reflexive, destabilizing the erroneous rational and autonomous agent is crucial to attempts to illuminate the subconscious and pre-reflexive level at which much social reproduction occurs.

Second, despite Bourdieu's attempts to overcome the economic reductionism inherent in historical-materialist accounts, his capitals ultimately refer back to socio-economic advantages and disadvantages emanating from the capitalist mode of

production and consumption (Jenkins, 1992). Thus, despite illuminating the need to examine the 'specific efficacy of the other [non-economic] types of capital' Bourdieu (1986: 253), he insists that this efficacy occurs precisely because of 'the fact that economic capital is at their root, in other words – but only at the last analysis – at the root of their effects' (Bourdieu, 1986: 253). This insistence on the sovereignty of the economic ultimately casts children and other groups rendered dependent, and therefore unable to convert other forms of capital into economic gain, as somehow outside of capitals. This tendency is problematic for social scientists interested in examining children's social capital (Morrow, 1999). A further consequence of this apparent economic reductionism is that, although Bourdieu's influential notion of habitus is embodied, linking bodily dispositions to socio-economic and cultural factors (Shilling, 2003), there are difficulties inherent in applying habitus to embodied (dis)advantages that do not exclusively emerge from the capitalist political economy and class (faction) relations, such as gender (Silvey and Elmhurst, 2003; Reay, 2004a), 'race' or 'ethnicity' and disability (cf. Edwards and Imrie, 2003; Allen, 2004), despite some explicit attempts by Bourdieu to engage with gender differences (Bourdieu, 2001; Silva, 2005).

This tendency to focus upon the class or class faction habitus is reproduced within geographical debates (see, for instance, Butler and Robson, 2001; Butler, 2002; Ley, 2003; Walters, 2006). Therefore, the host of embodied inequalities reproduced, and potentially transformed, through everyday practice, have not been fully illuminated within geographic discussions of Bourdieu's capitals. By contrast, recent debates are beginning to consider the importance of a variety of social differences to the acquirement of social capital (eg, Nederveen Pieterse, 2006). Radcliffe (2006) points to the need to further synthesize the role of a host of social differences and embodied power relations to conceptualizations of social capital:

> The conversation initiated by social capital would be usefully directed towards the analysis of class, gender, and racial-ethnic relations that underpin social networks and forms of inequality. The challenge is to maintain this conversation around culturally meaningful interactions embedded in complex articulations of politics, power, race, and global-local ties. (Radcliffe, 2006: 24)

Finally, and connected to Radcliffe's call for a spatially sensitive approach to social capital, although geographers have usefully enhanced Bourdieu's rather dualistic theorizations of objective and social space (eg, Butler and Robson, 2001; Smith and Phillips, 2001), Bourdieu's most influential theories and empirical work have tended to underplay the difference that space/place makes (for exceptions see Bourdieu, 1990; Painter, 2001; McNay, 2004). Schaefer-McDaniel (2004) begins to consider the importance of material spaces and places to young people's 'social capital'. She develops a conceptualization of social capital of resonance to children and youth, which has three key components: 'social networks and sociability', 'trust and reciprocity' and 'sense of belonging and place attachment'. The third of these elements provides a useful starting point for conceptualizing social capital and space/place. Within Schaefer-McDaniel's account, these spaces are presented as pre-existing the performances that bring them to life. A useful way forward would be to consider Bourdieu's capitals in light of performative understandings of place/space (Gregson and Rose, 2000). Thus, geographers could more fully tease out how social capital is embodied through individuals' encounters in particular 'places' which are specific, unbounded, moments in broader sociospatial relationships (Massey, 2005). Hence geographers could increasingly explore the sociospatially specific (re)production, and perhaps also the transformation, of

broader-scale (in)equalities through individual embodiments.

Bourdieu's notion of social capital is useful for illuminating the role of sociability and social networks in reproducing socioeconomic inequality. Thus, such a vision of social capital begins to answer calls to re-emphasize a particular type of material, and enduring 'structural' inequalities and privileges, within human geography and accounts of social capital. Inequality and equality are, however, not exclusively linked to social 'class' or 'class factions'. Thus, it is necessary to bring into play some wider operations of power. Power is a diffuse subject matter which is inherently difficult to define (cf. Allen, 2003); not least because many of its operations are insidious. Social relationships and the powers they constitute, reproduce and transform are multilayered and multifaceted. In the following section, I focus on Judith Butler's performativity theories and her (Foucauldian) notion of subjectification in order to explicitly theorize the reproduction and transformation of embodied inequalities.

IV Embodying social capital

There are keen points of commonality between Judith Butler's performativity and Bourdieu's habitus and capitals, engendering some debate between the two theorists (see McNay, 2004). For instance, Butler (1999) critiques Bourdieu's rather static and dualistic conceptualizations of 'habitus' and 'fields'. Despite acknowledging Bourdieu's attempts to overcome the dominant dualism between the objective and subjective, Butler contends that this dichotomy is reinscribed within the division between the 'subjective' (habitus) versus 'objective' (field). Butler suggests that this dualistic representation of habitus and field underplays the interconnection and dynamism between the field and habitus. Habitus can be altered because of 'objective' changes in the field whereas the 'field' is taken as an objective and pre-existing given. Thus Bourdieu denies individuals (other than social scientists) the

capacity to alter the conditions of the field; ultimately reinscribing an agency/structure dualism (Jenkins, 1992).

Despite the many contributions of the notion of habitus, a dualism is established between the 'internal' (subjective) body and 'external' (objective) society (Butler, 1999), which has been problematized from a variety of perspectives (Grosz, 1994; Doel, 1995; Shilling, 1997; 2003). This underplays the dynamic nature of embodiment that only *becomes* within specific sociospatial encounters; and presents fields and space as static, isotropic surfaces. An engagement between feminist and poststructuralist theories of performativity and Bourdieu's theories of capital, could begin to answer these critiques levelled at habitus. At the same time such a mutual dialogue could serve to more fully reconnect such theories of embodiment to enduring material inequalities and the (re)production of privilege (McNay, 2004).

By contrast to Bourdieu, feminist and/or postmodernist/poststructuralist scholars have emphasized the diversity of embodied inequalities, rather than reifying 'class' as a social cleavage. Arguably most attention has been paid to gender, sexuality and race/ethnicity (Bell *et al.*, 1994; Gregson and Rose, 2000; Thomas, 2005). Increasingly, geographers are illuminating age and (dis)ability as embodied sociospatial differences (Edwards and Imrie, 2003; Holt, 2004a, 2007). Importantly, these axes of identity do not operate in isolation from each other; rather they are intertwined and mutually recursive. Individuals are differentially gendered, classed, racialized, sexualized, (dis)abled and so on (Moss and Dyck, 1996; Allen, 2004). Such embodied locations are key mechanisms for the (re)production of broader patterns of (dis)advantage. To take the example of (dis)ability; many individuals defined as disabled experience high levels of marginalization and exclusion within social, economic, cultural and political arenas (Kitchin, 1998; Butler and Parr, 1999; Imrie and Edwards, 2007).

Understanding embodied identities as the site of the reproduction (and potential transformation) of broader societal differences requires a destabilization of some key naturalized dichotomies. First, evidently, the dualism between the body and society is deconstructed. Thus, bodies are reconfigured as unbounded and cross-cut and dissected by broader power relations (Longhurst, 2001). Second, nature and society are reconfigured as mutually reinforcing and constituted (Rose, 1993). The 'nature' of the materiality of the body is not a pre-given, rather it is a dynamic material process intersecting with, *and impinging upon*, social and cultural relations (Shilling, 2003). Third, the dichotomy between the self and society is critiqued; in particular the dominant conceptualization of an interior and socially anterior psyche (Foucault, 1990; Butler, 1997).

The performativity behind individuals' becoming as human subject/agents has been illuminated from a number of theoretical starting-points (eg, Harrison, 2000; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000; Dewsbury *et al*., 2002; Latham and Conradson, 2003). Crucially, performativity theory has highlighted that apparently natural subject positions, such as gender/sex, 'race' or 'disability' (Holt, 2007) are inherently fragile repetitions. Feminist theories of performativity, drawing upon Judith Butler (1990; 1993; 1997; 2004), have emphasized how norms of appropriate identity performances become unconsciously inculcated into individuals. Thus, identity performances are not entirely conscious, rationalized or staged; they are often just 'done' (Nash, 2000; Gregson and Rose, 2000). Performativity theories illuminate that the agent does not precede the 'doing' of the performative act or event. Rather, the actor 'becomes' through the event, while simultaneously drawing upon and reproducing a historical consolidation of previous (gendered) acts (Butler, 1993).[8] The fragility of the performance or the event, which is configured by the juxtaposition of a host of human and non-human actants, raises the importance of context. The playing-out of identity is thus inherently spatial (Thomas, 2005). The spatial contexts of performances, however, are themselves not just 'given'; rather they are performed and 'become' through enactments of power (Gregson and Rose, 2001).

1 Negotiating reproduction and transformation

Performative theories of identity point to the relationality and contextuality of individual subjectivity. Such theories have the potential to redress the balance away from the reproduction of 'structures' as opposed to transformation within Bourdieu's capitals, and provide a more nuanced understanding of 'structure' and 'agency'. At the same time, an engagement between performativity theory and Bourdieu's capitals can promote a sharper focus upon how the 'non-representational', 'affectual', 'emotional' realm, which is always equivocal, fragile and contextual, often (re)produces relatively enduring material sociospatial inequalities via embodied social identities. This would address some critiques levelled at poststructuralist thought (Martin, 2001). Although these are arguably overly simplistic representations[9] of the terrain, perhaps performativity/non-representational theories tend to focus upon the specific, the idiographic, the unique – the potential to be otherwise (Harrison, 2000), the fragility and the dynamism above the endurance and the (re)production of enduring social inequalities. In particular, such accounts tend to shy away from explicitly exploring how such identity performances are interconnected with, (re)produce and can transform, broader scale 'patterns' of material sociospatial inequality (see also McNay, 2004). For instance, Thomas (2005: 1235) following Rose (2002) argues 'against reading practice within a sociostructural framework'. By contrast, it is arguably important to consider how everyday performances (re)produce or transform

socio-spatial expressions of inequality operating at a variety of interconnected spatial scales (Holt, 2007).

Understanding broader embodied identity locations, such as gender, race, sexuality and disability as *embodied social capital* is a potential mechanism for usefully synthesizing Bourdieu's theories of capitals and performativity theory. This strategic label foregrounds the different 'value' accorded to various embodiments. Shilling (2003) labels such bodily capital 'physical capital' (see also Edwards and Imrie, 2003). Embodied social capital more explicitly emphasizes how the process of becoming an embodied individual is inherently bound up with the sociospatial contexts within which people's lives are lived, and their social networks and relationships. What it means to be subjectified as, for instance, disabled, white, heterosexual, 'working class' and female, is sociospatially contextual (Thomas, 2005). An individual's previous social encounters are embodied and influence their future social performances. The ways in which social, cultural, political and economic networks come together around and through individuals' embodiments and subjectivities, requires further exploration.

The concept of embodied social capital thus destabilizes the benign norms presented in dominant accounts of social capital, by drawing upon theorizations of the diffuse power of normalization. Norms of identity performance are central to the processes by which a person is subjectified. Judith Butler, following Foucault, emphasizes that individuals becoming recognized as knowable subjects/agents is always configured within normative frameworks of personhood (Butler, 1997; 2004). Crucially, then, subjectivities are inherently social. Rather than being bounded, individuals 'become' relationally. For instance, Judith Butler's recent work focuses upon the interdependence of human beings. This interdependence is both physical and emotional. First, we '… liv[e] in a world of beings who are, by definition, physically

dependent upon one another, physically vulnerable to one another' (Butler, 2004: 22). Second, in an emotional sense, Butler (2004: 2) argues that: 'desire is always a desire for recognition and that it is only through the experience of recognition that any of us becomes constituted as socially viable beings'. By pointing to the emotionality of existence, Butler's discussions of recognition provide insight into why individuals (subconsciously) accept marginal identity positionings, or those which foreclose specific aspects of themselves. Such a position emphasizes that emotional interdependence is a central mechanism for the inculcation of norms that ultimately confer embodied capital, pointing to a further facet of the centrality of geographies of emotions to issues of political, social, cultural and economic (re)production (Anderson and Smith, 2001; Davidson *et al*., 2005).

It is through relationships based upon a measure of reciprocity and trust (and no doubt also a mix of conflict and distrust) that normative expectations of personhood are transmitted often through beyond-conscious relational bodily acts. These norms are frequently not consciously conveyed; rather they are (re)produced though practices and constellations that often confound, or at least render complex, the representational. These norms and expectations become incorporated into individuals' self-identity, as people recognize themselves and are recognized by others as subject/agents.

To briefly trace a substantive example, I draw upon some previous research, which examined how (dis)ability is (re)produced as an embodied identifier by children and adults though mundane everyday practices, primarily within school spaces (see Holt, 2003; 2004a; 2004b; 2007). Children's experiences of being cast as (dis)abled via institutionalized processes and everyday practices is sociospatially shifting, even at relatively small spatial scales, and interconnected with other axes of power relations (Holt, 2004b). However, young people often accept the positioning as 'disabled' that is offered to

them, and incorporate some negative aspects of dominant discourses of disability into their sense of self. For instance, many young people internalize a position of dependence, a key facet of dominant, individual tragedy models of disability (Kitchin, 1998), perhaps because it provides a subject position that is recognized by peers. As Ben, a boy with mind and body differences, states:

> [My friend] always comes with me at playtime 'cause he didn't have a friend, and now, whenever I'm lonely and he's there, he always comes and cares for me. (Holt, 2004a: 225)

The 'dependent' subject position that Ben accepts is sociospatially shifting, and in other spatial contexts he might not be portrayed as dependent. However, being cast as dependent might have enduring effects, particularly if Ben is placed in such a positioning consistently or within a variety of intersecting spatial contexts. This dependence can become incorporated into Ben's sense of self and influence the position that he occupies within other sociospatial relations, both present and future. Crucially, Ben's subjectification as 'disabled' and 'dependent' interconnects with broader patterns of sociospatial inclusion/exclusion, given the marginalized position that devalued performances of disability often (re)produce (Kitchin, 1998).

Hence, the 'norms' produced through sociability are wider than those seemingly innocuous ties of reciprocity and trust,[10] emphasized in dominating accounts of social capital. These norms influence (but do not determine) the different levels of capitals that individuals can acquire. However, differences such as gender/sex, 'race', 'disability', age and sexuality are as central to the unequal distribution of capitals as class and class faction.

2 Spatiality, transformation and embodied social capital
The norms that (re)produce identity positions are not fixed or given; they are dynamic and subject to change (Butler, 2004). This opens up at least two potentialities. First, these norms are sociospatially variable and, importantly, intersecting (see Holloway, 1998; Duncan and Smith, 2002, in relation to class and gender). This focus on things coming together in specific spatial contexts provides an opening for a more spatially sensitive theory of capitals. It emphasizes that capitals are not simply inculcated in a vacuum; rather individuals' capital accumulation occurs within specific spatial moments – themselves not neutral and pre-existing, but becoming though everyday performances and within broader 'power geometries' (Massey, 1994). However, I would argue that, to date, much performativity theory has not fully articulated how individual embodied identities are specific moments within *broader* social (economic, political, 'cultural') processes that emerge from a variety of intersecting spatial scales from the individual (including dynamic bodily materiality) to the global (cf. Aitken, 2001; Katz, 2004).

The second key potentiality is for transformation. Performative conceptualizations of identity are arguably more dynamic and shifting than Bourdieu's notion of habitus, and can more fully account for change (Rose, 2002; Holt, 2007). Norms can be transformed through conscious acts, such as resignification (Butler, 2004) or contestation. In addition, transformation can occur via slippage; unconscious 'inappropriate' performances that can destabilize the expectations placed on particular bodies and, at least briefly, disrupt the appearance that identity categories are natural or given (Butler, 1990; Gregson and Rose, 2000).

Overall, I contend that the potentials of social transformation opened up by performative readings of identity have not been fully empirically realized by geographers (cf. Longhurst, 2000). Returning to my previous research provides a useful entrée point to considering the potentials for transforming dominant representations of (dis)ability. Holt (2007) reflects upon how young people both

reproduce *and transform* dominant societal positionings of (dis)ability through their everyday sociospatial practices. Examples are provided of young people, with a diversity of mind-body-emotional characteristics, resignifying the meaning of both disability and composite components of dominant representations of disability. Although these practices are often reflective acts, the challenge made to broader discourses of disability are generally not consciously entered into. Further, examples are presented of young people producing relationships of recognition wherein mind-body-emotional difference is either suspended or not understood within a framework of otherness (Holt, 2007). The positive relationships forged within one context can become embodied within individuals and influence their negotiation of future social situations (see also Valentine and Skelton, 2003).

Such transformation is rendered complex, given norms are often reproduced within the realms of the beyond consciousness. Within the empirical examples I trace, dominant facets individual tragedy models of disability are often (re)produced, rather than transformed. Thus, attention needs to be paid to how individuals' sociospatial positionings influence their capacity to transform broader societal processes and representations (McNay, 2004); without negating the potentialities for a range of non-conforming practices, ranging from 'resilience', 'reworking' to 'resistance' (Katz, 2004). Arguably, along with examining how enduring inequalities and exclusions are reproduced, embodied social capital can present an insight into how to affect social transformation; a central concern of human geography (Thrift, 2004; Valentine, 2005).

V Discussion
In this paper, I have argued the need to revisit the concept of social capital within human geography, and pointed to some possible ways forward. Recent critiques levelled at social capital are arguably underpinned by the ascendancy of a disputed version within policy and some academic debates. Despite the many inadequacies of dominating accounts, the notion of social capital has refocused policy attention to the importance of social networks, sociability and 'community' within people's everyday lives. However, these concepts, as applied within national and global policies, are often inherently neoliberal and serve to detract from, rather than enhance, considerations of broader material processes that reproduce inequality. Rather than being distinct from wider sociospatial process that operate on a variety of intersecting spatial scales to reproduce/transform inequalities, social capital should be seen as a constituent component of these mechanisms.

By contrast, Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital, which is influential within broader social science debates (eg, see Foley and Edwards, 1999; Silva and Edwards, 2004), illuminates how sociability can reproduce socio-economic inequalities. However, this version of social capital prioritizes the operations of the political economy and downplays other embodied differences. The conceptualization of embodied social capital presents geographers with the opportunity to enhance current discussions within the social sciences. Synthesizing performative theorizations of subjectification and social capital illuminates the (re)production of embodied inequalities. Individual identities are not forged in isolation. Rather, subject/agents become relationally. The social norms and expectations reproduced through everyday sociability subconsciously frame identity performances and are, at least partially, incorporated into individuals' subjectivity, with effects on current and future social relationships. These identities can be understood as embodied social capital, as they are the dynamic historical materialization of the interconnections between individuals' social networks and relationships and corporeality. Thus individuals' embodied identities as woman/man, boy/girl, disabled/non-disabled,

and in racialized and sexualized terms offer diverse abilities to convert capitals, and position them differently in relation to a host of power relations.

Crucially, however, these identity locators are not fixed or given. These various norms intersect, and are (re)produced differently, at heterogeneous spatial moments. Gendered identities are classed, sexualized, racialized, (dis)abled and so on (see, for instance, Allen, 2004). The (de)valuations with which different identities are imbued are also sociospatially shifting. However, individuals embody previous sociospatial relations as 'habitus' that influences, without determining, future social relations. Importantly, these embodied identity locations reproduce and/or can transform broader axes of privilege and exclusion in a variety of interconnected cultural, social, political arenas; including, crucially, access to economic capitals.

The critical, embodied conceptualization pointed to in this paper presents new methodological challenges for empirically investigating social capital. It is therefore apt to consider some brief points about empirically investigating embodied social capital, although of course, it is not possible to provide a standardized recipe. Empirical evaluation is clearly tied to the conceptualization of the forms and mechanisms of social capital. Crucial here is the need to dismantle an apparent orthodoxy of 'social capital' as exclusively institutionalized social networks and/or sociocultural values such as levels of trust and reciprocity (ONS, 2002). The alternative vision of social capital presented in this paper suggests the need to explore how individuals become embodied subject/agents within informal (along with formal), everyday (although not necessarily co-present) emotionally painful and gratifying social relationships that make up the gritty lived 'reality' of social life, along with having a critical view to how such relationships variously confer capitals and thus (re)produce or transform broader sociospatial axes of inequality.

It would arguably be inappropriate to establish a new orthodoxy of empirical analysis, given critiques levelled at attempts to produce a universally applicable measurement of social capital earlier. Arguably, therefore, embodied social capital can be most effectively mobilized via an eclectic range of methods, underpinned by a reflexive methodology. There are two key and currently somewhat disparate strands of geographic debate that offer insights into the empirical realization of embodied social capital. First, discussions of cultural capital particularly related to gentrification and migration have foregrounded Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus. Second, recent debates about social capital have pointed to the importance of bodily difference in (re)producing capital inequalities. I suggest that dialogue between theorists of social and cultural capital can suggest ways of conceptualizing and empirically operationalizing critical, embodied understandings of social capital. Scholars have drawn upon a variety of methods to examine habitus, cultural capital and social capital, which could be usefully applied in studies of embodied social capital. Useful strategies have included semi-structured interviews and questionnaires (Butler and Robson, 2001; Smith and Phillips, 2001; Ley, 2003; Bridge, 2006; Walters, 2006; Kelly and Lusis, 2006), analyses of secondary data sources (Gatrell *et al.*, 2004) and network analyses (Savage *et al.*, 2004).

Empirical mobilization could usefully deconstruct the qualitative/quantitative dichotomy to utilize a variety of methods, either in conjunction within specific projects or via collaboration between researchers across the field (see Holt, 2006, for fuller discussion). For instance, network analysis provide useful insights into the type and extent of individuals' networks (Savage *et al.*, 2004). However, it does little to demonstrate the normative power embedded within such relationships. Given the importance placed on beyond conscious elements of embodied practice in the (re)production of embodied social capital,

innovative methods could be utilized, that seek to point to limits of representation (see, for instance, Morton, 2005), along with ethnographies (see McNay, 2004, for an exploration of Bourdieu's phenomenology). Certainly the conceptualization and empirical investigation of social capital should move beyond broad-brush analyses of formal civic engagement, which are underpinned by an uncritical notion of the active citizen. Such a view of the active subject can reproduce the marginalization of many individuals, whose citizenship is often already rendered tenuous, including children and young people and those with mind-body-emotional differences.

Arguably, empirically realizing a critical, embodied conceptualization of social capital works at the level of methodology, rather than as a particular set of methods. Critical embodied accounts of social capital can only be understood as context-specific and relational to other types of capital. Certainly, critical, embodied accounts of social capital are not ontological explanations, nor can they be universally applied. However, such conceptualizations can provide one tool to encourage attention to the interconnections between the performances and (de)valuations of embodied identities in specific sociospatial contexts, and the reproduction or transformation of enduring (in)equalities at a variety of intersecting scales.

VI Conclusion

In this paper, I have asserted that, despite recent criticisms of social capital, it is a concept that has potential value to enhance geographical analyses of inequality and privilege. Importantly, the notion of social capital can illuminate the differential value inherent within social relationships. An alternative conceptualization of embodied social capital is proposed in an endeavour to begin to resignify and challenge dominant representations of social capital. This conceptualization emphasizes how bodies are components of broader sociospatial relationships, which become differentially imbued with value as

they are subjectified along a variety of axes of difference. Thus, embodied social capital facilitates a synthesis of Bourdieu's notion of capital with performative theorizations of identities: serving to reconnect broader embodied differences to wider sociospatial processes including the political economy, without entirely reducing such differences to the realm of historical-materialist relations. Finally, a critical synthesis of Bourdieu's capitals and performative theories of identity can suggest possibilities for transformation. The paper provides an impetus to re-open debate and discussion about the usefulness and mobilization of 'social capital' for geographers. Such debates can promote the cross-fertilization of conceptualizations of social capital and spatiality between geography and the broader social sciences.

Notes

1. 'The Third Way' is often attributed to Anthony Giddens. It has been adopted as a political approach that claims to chart a broadly social democratic path between 'statist democracy' and neoliberalism (see Giddens, 2000, for a positive review).
2. Despite the title of Foley and Edwards (1999), they conclude that the concept of social capital has analytic value, and should not be entirely jettisoned (cf. Fine, 2001).
3. Notwithstanding this general disinvestment, social capital continues to feature prominently within certain interdisciplinary fields, such as the examination of health inequalities, particularly in seeking to explain neighbourhood effects (see Mohan and Mohan, 2002); economic geography (Bathelt and Glücker, 2005); and geographies of development (Radcliffe, 2006).
4. Coleman (1987; 1988) has also been influential, particularly in relation to education, and as an inspiration to Putnam (see Schaefer-McDaniel, 2004).

5. Neoliberalism is associated with moves towards increasing freedom of the market economy, reduction in universal welfare states and state protection (except for those associated with the rights of the individual and the market), increasingly targeted welfare systems, and often, increasing reliance on non-state civic organizations. Radcliffe (2005a) emphasizes the complex spatial variations in the ways in which general neoliberal shifts are interpreted within various national and subnational contexts, suggesting that neoliberalism is most usefully understood as generalized trends and tendencies diversely played out, rather than a homogeneous enterprise.

6. Importantly, however, maintaining advantage in particular fields of activity is not always a fully conscious and rational act.

7. 'a field … [is] a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation … in the structure of and distribution of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions …' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 39).

8. Some commentators have contended that Butler does not provide an account of agency and removes from individuals the capacity to act (McNay, 2000). Although McNay arguably underplays the role of material bodies and non-discursive action in Butler's performativity, I would concede that Butler often deconstructs liberal, Modern conceptualizations, rather than providing a fully workable alternative, agency. Butler's later work (especially Butler, 2004) redresses this balance somewhat, although it seems to return, to a degree, to an autonomous liberal notion of agency.

9. Debates about the 'relevance' of human geography often underplay both the potential for examining enduring inequalities inherent within much post-structuralist discussions, and substantive examinations of such material considerations in a great deal of feminist and post-colonialist thought (see, for instance, Radcliffe, 2005b).

10. This adds another layer onto Portes' (1998) critique of the restricted individual freedom often associated with strong community networks and shared normative values.

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