Yet another major contribution Boserup made to the literature on development was her book *Woman's Role in Economic Development* (1970). In this book, Boserup made clear that gender is one of the main criteria for the division of labor in all societies; but, she argued, there is a great diversity in this division of labor between the sexes across societies. The primary factors that are related to the work and subsequent status of women are population density and the availability of land. This division of labor in farming systems carries over into nonfarm activities as well.

Boserup does not so much refute Malthus as round him out by providing a more complete picture of the multitude of relationships between population, agricultural production, and the environment. While Malthus focused upon the necessity to keep human numbers in line with the food that could be produced, Boserup focuses upon how the amount of food that can be produced is dependent upon human numbers. She demonstrates that agricultural production is quite responsive to increased labor. Malthus, on the other hand, also recognized that the production of food could be increased, but he asserted that such intensification could never equal natural population growth for long. Boserup did not dispute this; she did document the fact, however, that a growing population often stimulates an intensification of agricultural production. Malthus made similar assertions in his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). For Malthus, the principle of population “keeps the inhabitants of the earth always fully up to the level of the means of subsistence; and is constantly acting upon man as a powerful stimulus, urging him to the further cultivation of the earth, and to enable it, consequently, to support a more extended population” (Malthus [1798] 2001, p. 281). Boserup’s main contribution is in clearly positing these relationships and empirically verifying them throughout the social evolutionary process. Her basic model had great influence on the social evolutionary theory of Mark Cohen, Marvin Harris, and Gerhard Lenski.

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BOURDIEU, PIERRE

1930–2002

Pierre Bourdieu was one of the most prolific and influential social theorists of the second half of the twentieth century. Not only was his output astonishing, but his work has been cited continuously and approvingly by an array of scholars from many disciplines. His initial work intervened in sociology, but as his scholarship broadened, he sought to influence philosophy, anthropology, cultural criticism, psychology, gender studies, linguistics, economics, and finally, for the last two decades of his life, the political arena itself. He is well known for introducing a number of important sociological concepts that have since gained wide currency.

The son of a postal employee, Bourdieu spent his earliest years in a small town in southwestern France, speaking the provincial language, Gascon. At eleven he moved to a boarding school, and by sixteen he was attending the Lycée Louis-le-Grand in Paris. From there he gained entrance to the prestigious École Normale Supérieure. After this background at the top schools of the nation, Bourdieu became a teacher himself; but military service took him to Algeria (then still a colony of France), where he secured a teaching post.

His earliest study, *Sociologie de l’Algérie* (1958, translated as *The Algerians* in 1962), published in the midst of the war of independence in Algeria, established Bourdieu as an important and daring sociologist. In this first book, he divided the peoples of Algeria into four major ethnic categories and showed how colonization had impacted their lives, in effect causing what he called “the total disruption of society.” In this book’s core distinction between traditional and modern life, the former being swept aside by the latter, one can already see the seeds of Bourdieu’s major theoretical concerns with social domination and practice theory. His lifelong ethical commitment to the notions of autonomy, fairness, and equality also gained its first footing in this study.

After returning from his five-year stay in Algeria in 1960, Bourdieu taught at the Sorbonne and was later appointed director of studies at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in 1964. In 1975 he launched his influential journal, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (Records of Research in the Social Sciences), and...
by 1981 he had attained the prestigious chair of sociology at the Collège de France.

While still publishing influential articles and books on Algeria, he also became interested in social reproduction and began to look deeply into the French educational system and the culture of the Bearn, the part of France where he grew up. As he admitted in several interviews, his own dramatic social trajectory along these same paths contributed much to the sparks of insight that led to his most illuminating theories.

In his much-cited Outline of a Theory of Practice (1977), Bourdieu sets forth many of his central ideas, including symbolic capital, doxa, habitus, and misrecognition. His signal contribution in advancing these ideas was to overcome the limits of subjectivism and objectivism then current in much social thought, divided as it was between the phenomenological tradition and the structuralist one. As a major contributor to the emergent school of poststructuralism, Bourdieu continued to rely heavily on the central dichotomies and contradictions that he found prevailing throughout social life, but he attempted to return agency to the individual within these “objective” structures; this was masterfully displayed, for example, in his analysis of the gift in the Outline.

Bourdieu’s Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste (1984) remains as influential as the Outline (it was named one of the “books of the century” by the International Sociological Association); in it, he uses extensive empirical data to show that cultural preference is constituted by endless competition over scarce symbolic, cultural, and economic capital. Distinction also stands as strong testimony to Bourdieu’s commitment to inductive research methods.

In many ways, Bourdieu was a stalwart defender of the scientific heritage of the social sciences. He issued methodological statements concerning the best way to maintain an objectivist stance while undertaking necessarily subjectivist research, and his central belief in the process of misrecognition revealed that, for Bourdieu, the social world was clouded and distorted by the interests of specific powerful players. The task of sociology was then to unveil the actual reality lying underneath these strategies.

Late in life, Bourdieu joined with another French scholar, Loïc Wacquant, in applying these theories to the social world of scholarship itself. In a salvo titled “On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason” (1999), Bourdieu and Wacquant accused American social science of employing its financial and social clout in order to export American folk theories of race to the rest of the globe, much as he had documented the French state’s exportation of social categories to Algeria long ago. In this manner, the misrecognized American system of race was insidiously imposing itself abroad and was seen to be creating racial categories where perhaps none existed previously. John French, a scholar of Brazil, strongly rebuked Bourdieu and Wacquant, not least by pointing out that their argument rested upon an idealized French folk theory that imagines the creation of a social world devoid of all forms of prejudice. Further, the debate revealed a central weakness of the concept of misrecognition by showing that it is built upon the problematic idea that good scientists can gain access to a non-socially produced, and therefore “objective,” reality.

In this regard, Bourdieu can be seen as an heir to Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and Johann Fichte (1762–1814), for he strongly believed that a rationalist social science could liberate humankind from its current “objective conditions.” Bourdieu put this belief into practice consistently in the latter part of his life, as he became one of the more outspoken and articulate opponents of neoliberalism and globalization.

SEE ALSO Lévi-Strauss, Claude

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Gustav Peebles

BOURGEOIS MODE OF PRODUCTION

SEE Capitalist Mode of Production.