

# The Two-fold Truth of the Work of the Housing Professional

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# Critique of theoretical reason

- **Social physics** – objectivism – scientific / theoretical knowledge (Marx, Durkheim) scholastic bias
- **Social phenomenology** – subjectivism – common sense / practical knowledge (Weber, Schutz) limited view of being-in-the-world
  - ...we need to construct, as our object, the dialectical relation between the two, namely **objectivity of the second order** (the shared norms and values, the collective conventions, the categories of perception which groups apply to the world)

# Against Utilitarianism

- 1) Utilitarians pretend that agents are moved by conscious reasons, as if they consciously posed the objectives of their action
- 2) They reduce everything that can motivate agents to economic interests (monetary profit)
- **Against this Bourdieu proposes that we seek answers within the relationship between *habitus* and *field* – between the agent and the social world**

# On Justification

(Boltanski and Thevenot 1991)

- The critical moment – when action needs to be justified – agents go from *personal convenience* to *collective convention*.
- What determines these conventions?
  - History objectified in ‘things’ i.e. structures, laws, regulations (externalisation)
  - History objectified in ‘bodies’ i.e. the dispositions (bodily and mental schemata) which make up *habitus* (internalisation)

# The economy of worth model

Boltanski and Thevenot 1991

<b>Order of Worth</b>	<b>Principle concerns</b>
Market World	The logic of exchange and enterprise.
Inspired World	Creativity, spirituality
Domestic World	Logic of good human relations – hierarchy and tradition
World of Renown	Fame. Marketing. Good public relations
Civic World	Logic of social contracts and citizenship rights
Managerial World	Logic of productivity, efficiency

	Civic Order	Managerial Order
HIGHER COMMON PRINCIPLE	<b><i>The preeminence of collectives</i></b> Collective, All, Will (general)	<b><i>Efficiency</i></b> Performance, Future
STATE OF WORTHINESS	<b><i>Rule governed and representative</i></b> Unitary, Legal, Official, Representative, Authorised, Confirmed	<b><i>Efficient</i></b> Effective, Functional, Reliable, Operational
STATE OF UNWORTHINESS	<b><i>Unrepresentative</i></b> Individualistic, Unauthorised, Unconfirmed	<b><i>Inefficient</i></b> Unproductive, Not optimal, Inactive, Unsuitable, Breakdown (in a state of), Unreliable.
SUBJECTS	<b><i>Collective persons and their representatives</i></b> Public collectives, Party, Federation, Office, Committee, Elected official, Representative, Delegate, Secretary, Member.	<b><i>Professionals</i></b> Expert, Specialist, Person in Charge, Operator
OBJECTS	<b><i>Legal forms</i></b> Rights, Legislation, Decree, Order, Measure, Courts, Formality, Procedure, Infringement, Capacity (electoral), District, Programme, Policy, Statement, Ballot, Tract, Slogan, Seat, Headquarters, Local office, Acronym, Card.	<b><i>Means</i></b> Tool, resource, Method, Task, Space, Environment, Axis, Direction, Dimension, Criterion, Definition, List, Graph, chart, Calendar, Plan, Goal, Quantity, Variable, Series, Average, Probability, Standard, Factor, Cause

# Civic and Managerial

The (most common) compromise which made the Welfare state possible

- **Objective** – the rightward tilting of the state increases the ‘managerial’ (paternal, conditional) nature of welfare while reducing the Civic dimension (Raco’s Regulatory Capitalism, 2013)
- **Subjective** – Civic life (particularly strong in Scotland?) fostered strong civic values, social solidarity , a commitment to the collective welfare of the many – against the irresponsible individualism of the few

# The Two-Fold Truth

- If 'gift giving' exists in an 'economy of generous practices' (Bourdieu 2000), then housing service provision can be said to exist within an 'economy of civic (managerial) practices'.
- No matter how 'barbaric' (unjust, inconsistent) evictions of families with young children appear to the Objectivist view point, they will always tend to appear as 'rational' to those caught-up in the 'civic game' – those who 'take seriously' the collective interests of the community of tenants, the importance of social housing, and the essential role the effective collection of rent has for its survival.

# References

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