

FRG application-in-progress

'Cultural inequality': Is there such a thing and what is it?

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Abstract

The project argues that all relevant scholarly fields have avoided or failed to answer the questions of 'whether there is cultural inequality and what cultural inequality is.' I mobilize citation statistics to illustrate that extremely few scholars mention the term 'cultural inequality' and related concepts. I critically review major relevant fields (eg. cultural sociology, political theory, and international communication theory) and focus especially on sociology (Weber and Bourdieu). I propose two main reasons that 'cultural inequality' is so commonly avoided, even after the cultural turn of the 1990s: it is extremely difficult to operationalize measurement of cultural capital and to distinguish between unjust and non-unjust cultural inequality. I propose a macro framework to put into perspective how 'cultural inequality' relates to several other familiar kinds of inequality.