

# The Behavioral Economics of Pierre Bourdieu

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## Abstract

This article builds the argument that Bourdieu's dispositional theory of practice can help integrate the sociological tradition with three prominent strands of behavioral economics: bounded rationality, prospect theory, and time inconsistency. I make the case that the habitus provides an alternative framework to show how social and mental structure constitute one another, where cognitive tendencies toward irrationality can be either curtailed or amplified based on one's position in the economic field and a person's corresponding set of dispositions, ranging from more rational *doxic* dispositions to irrational *allodoxic* tendencies. Bridging economic sociology and behavioral economics, this work also bears on issues of persistent financial inequality reproduced through self-defeating patterns of economic behavior inculcated into individuals who occupy dominated positions in the social structure. Bourdieu's thought, and in particular his conception of field+habitus, can usefully be applied to the empirical findings of behavioral economics to understand deviations from rational action as not only cognitive but also socially structured.

## Keywords

Bourdieu, behavioral economics, habitus, rationality, economic sociology

The science called “economics” is based on an initial act of abstraction that consists in dissociating a particular category of (economic) practices, or a particular (economic) dimension of all practice, from the social order in which all human practice is immersed.

—Pierre Bourdieu (2005:1)

The behavioral turn in economics is considered one of the most important developments in contemporary social science research, challenging the hegemony of mainstream economic theory along several lines. Central to this school is an empirical skepticism of the rational economic agent, as demonstrated by systematic deviations from optimizing behavior when

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it comes to practical matters of money and financial risk. Such skepticism has no doubt been shared in the sociological tradition as far back as Max Weber ([1922] 1978:7), who identified instrumental (means-ends) rationality as an analytic “ideal type” that “certainly does not involve a belief in the actual predominance of rational (*zweckrational*) elements in human life.” Still, behavioral economics remains under the narrow purview of cognitive science (see, e.g., DellaVigna 2009), where it is defined as “the combination of psychology and economics that investigates what happens in markets in which some of the agents display human limitations and complications” (Mullainathan and Thaler 2001:1094). Indeed, nearly all the work of behavioral economics thus far has been to ground “irrational” economic proclivities in universal cognitive processes at work within the minds of individualistic agents. The result is a myopic and incomplete understanding of economic behavior.<sup>1</sup>

If the standard model of economics assumes actors that are *a*-social and rational, behavioral economics depicts them as *a*-social and *ir*-rational. To be sure, Streeck (2010:391) underscores that through the process of experimentally falsifying *Homo economicus*, “behavioral economics stripped human beings naked of their social relations and connections.” Sociology as a discipline, and economic sociology in particular, has not seriously engaged with behavioral economics; its main empirical findings remain unfamiliar and largely immaterial to sociological research (but see Bergeron, Castel, and Dubuisson-Quellier 2018). The “new economic sociology” certainly recognizes behavior that is difficult to explain as rational, but it primarily looks to agents’ network ties (e.g., DiMaggio and Louch 1998; Uzzi 1997), drawing an important distinction between arm’s-length (market) transactions and socially embedded (nonmarket) ones (Granovetter 1985; cf. Krippner 2002). Under Granovetter-style embeddedness, network ties constrain self-interested behavior whereas arm’s-length transactions are considered free from such restrictions (Uzzi 1997). Yet behavioral economics shows that people also fail to comply with economic theory for these “purely” economic matters. It would be a profound mistake, however, to relegate non-embedded economic action as unimportant to sociology; it is simply governed through other means. Moreover, the theoretical boundary demarcating the “socially embedded” from “economic” realms is fading as markets are increasingly understood to be socially constructed (Bourdieu 2000a; Fourcade 2007) and arm’s-length transactions are revealed to be relational (Ingham 1996; Zelizer 2012).

Accordingly, this article calls for a sociological intervention into the field of behavioral economics and its empirical oeuvre, to understand *economic* agents as both social and fallible. In particular, I seek reconciliation in Pierre Bourdieu’s dispositional theory of practice. This provides a framework that assimilates both mind and social structure through the mediation of the *habitus*—the “generator” or “organizer” of the practices, representations, and dispositions of individuals. The *habitus* provides an appropriate analytic lens that functions at the meso level (Özbilgin and Tatli 2005; see also Lizardo 2004)—at the interface between objective social structure and subjective experience—and can help integrate these literatures.

Recently, there have been some calls to bridge the psychological with the social in matters of economic behavior. Lamont and colleagues (2017:866, 868) advocate for a synthesis with cultural sociology, pointing out that cognitive processes are variously shaped by “cultural repertoires” that differ across social groups, and “incorporating culture can develop a richer model of how the poor or middle class perceive, evaluate and respond to situations of [economic] scarcity.” Their argument is oriented toward behavioral economics, asking why the poor so often make (apparently) irresponsible financial decisions. From economics, Hoff and Stiglitz (2016:25) similarly urge their colleagues to “broaden economic discourse by importing insights into human behavior not just from psychology, but also from sociology

and anthropology.” Hoff and Stiglitz (2016:26) propose a second strand of behavioral economics that recognizes “durable social influences on preferences and cognition,” highlighting that economic decisions can be shaped by culture and environment. Akerlof and Kranton (2000) likewise adopt a social-psychological approach to economic decision making, one that incorporates the notion of (group) identity, that is, the internalization of norms that characterize how people in different social categories ought to behave.<sup>2</sup> Benabou and Tirole (2011) similarly emphasize how, in a wide range of contexts, agents’ preferences are structured by their choices of a social category, recognizing that such choices are endogenous and shaped by social environment. Acknowledging the intergenerational transmission of culture, Bisin and Verdier (2000) model agents’ economic choices with respect to the socialization of their children. These corners of the economics literature have made important contributions to socializing *Homo economicus* (see also Akerlof 2017; Benabou and Tirole 2006; Carvalho 2012; Hoff and Pandey 2006; Sunstein 2002).

*Behavioral* economics as a distinct subdiscipline, however, has been more stubborn in counseling sociological theory; calls for bridging the social have been largely peripheral to its efforts. Indeed, a radically different scholarship is carrying forward behavioral economists’ central work by uncovering clues to suboptimal economic choices, not at the macro-social level, but from deep within the mind itself. The emerging field of neuroeconomics examines the activity of certain regions of the brain using fMRI machines to reveal how neurons assign values to different options during economic decision making (e.g., Camerer, Loewenstein, and Prelec 2005). This research suggests different parts of the brain may be at work when making optimal versus suboptimal choices or self-interested versus socially preferred decisions. Neuroeconomics can provide important insights about the micro architecture of an economic decision, but it risks putting social structure at even greater distance. The goal here is to abbreviate that distance.

As a field generally tasked with explaining how economic actors actually behave, behavioral economics lacks the capacity to adequately reconcile the psycho-cognitive with the social-structural. How do culture and norms of identity come to be internalized? How can the apparent reductionism of neuroscience predict economic action, which is inherently social? Critics argue that behavioral economics is a normative-descriptive project that lacks a consistent, unified theory; rather, it merely illustrates a collection of (albeit noteworthy) observations (e.g., Berg and Gigerenzer 2010; Gal 2018). “Behavioral economists,” as one commentator put it, “are too often concerned with describing *how* human behavior deviates from the assumptions of standard economic models, rather than with understanding *why* people behave the way they do” (Gal 2018, emphasis original). Throughout this article, I argue that Bourdieusian theory can help resolve the *why* through a synthesis of socially structured and psychologically motivated practice.

At the same time, I seek to recover a coherent sociological theory that is congruent with, and in many ways anticipates, behavioral economics (i.e., practical economic action) from among Bourdieu’s own writings, one that is articulated piecemeal across his work. It is a theoretical framework that butts heads with mainstream economic assumptions of rationality (see, e.g., Christoforou and Lainé 2014; Lebaron 2003) and radically diverges from the cognitive *idée fixe* underlying contemporary behavioral economics.<sup>3</sup> It is in this context that Bourdieu (1998:79) asserts his position: “I want to attempt to show how all of my work has consisted in rejecting these two reductions.” Bourdieu’s theory of practice can thus be construed as a dispositional theory of behavioral economics. Given the prominence of behavioral economics and the sustained interest in the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, the intervention I present is an appeal for sociologists to join in dialogue with behavioral economists and broaden the scope of explanation for “irrationality.” To appreciate how the

particular economic biases and heuristics that have been identified thus far as cognitive can also be explained, moderated, or mediated by top-down influences is an important addition to our understanding of the economy and society.

## BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS

Since the behavioral economics literature is still not well known in sociology, I begin by outlining the field's intellectual motivation and key strands of thought (for comprehensive expositions of behavioral economics, see, e.g., DellaVigna 2009; Heukelom 2014; Kahneman 2011; Thaler and Ganser 2015). Behavioral economics deals primarily with "anomalies in choice"—decisions that do not follow the predictions of rationality or expected utility theory.<sup>4</sup> Behavioral economics is thus a rebuke against the rational actors ratified by mainstream economics. Of course, classical political economists like Adam Smith and Karl Marx understood economic action to be situated in social structure and imbued with cultural and political meaning (e.g., Marx's organization of society into the bourgeois and proletariat). Economic *behavior* was assumed to be an inherently contextual characteristic of various individuals. Over the past 150 years, however, the principles of economics have evolved from individual characterizations in favor of logical positivism (Heukelom 2014:26). Since the 1880s, when the Methodenstreit rejected the German historical school in favor of rationalist idealism, economists have gained stature by hanging their hats on universalizing theorems. Undeniably, the dominant position over the past century has been the neoclassical school, characterized by three core assumptions: individuals are (hyper)rational actors, they maximize utility, and they act independently based on "perfect" information. Neoclassical economics depicts humans as *Homo economicus*, where rational calculation appears in consonant positions: on the one hand, as a tacit assumption built into economic models, and on the other, inculcated into the model builders themselves. To want to explain some deviation observed from a model's predictions would have been dismissed as unscientific and unworthy of serious inquiry. According to Heukelom (2014), this rigid adherence to logical positivism sowed the seeds for the psychological criticism that gave rise to behavioral economics.

Rejecting the assumption of rationality, behavioral economics has since emerged as a dominant research program. Human beings systematically make decisions that vary from neoclassical theory, and behavioral economics has become the repository of heuristics, biases, and errors that permeate economic life. Behavioral economics today mainly follows three key strands (DellaVigna 2009; Thaler and Ganser 2015):<sup>5</sup> (1) Herbert Simon's (1947, 1955) work on bounded rationality; (2) Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky's (1979; Kahneman 2011) development of prospect theory; and (3) issues of intertemporality, often attributed to the work of Richard Thaler and Hersch Shefrin (1981; Shefrin and Thaler 1978). Certifying the status of these three strands, Nobel prizes in economics have been awarded to Simon (in 1978), Kahneman (in 2002), and most recently Thaler (in 2017) for his work on "incorporating psychologically realistic assumptions into analyses of economic decision-making."<sup>6</sup>

### *Bounded Rationality*

Studying issues of psychology in organizational behavior, Simon (1947:88, emphasis original) observed that in the real world "human behavior is *intendedly* rational, but only *boundedly* so." Rather than possessing "Olympian rationality," Simon (1955:101) argued

that “because of the psychological limits of the organism (particularly with respect to computational and predictive ability), actual human rationality-striving can at best be an extremely crude and simplified approximation to the kind of global rationality that is implied.” Simon did not believe people are hopelessly illogical. Instead, he supposed that as a rule we follow heuristics or shortcuts (Simon uses the portmanteau *satisfice*) that are “good enough” solutions in place of the best ones that allow people to achieve their goals. Simon’s (1947:119) empirical work on organizational behavior led him to appreciate that corporate administrators did not operate like *Homo economicus*; rather, managers satisficed on a regular basis, seeking a simple and intuitive “sensible share of the market,” “reasonable profit,” or “fair price.” Simon’s contributions to bounded rationality are considered instrumental for the rise of behavioral economics as an identifiable body of economic thought (Hosseini 2003), where ordinary individuals are found to satisfice in all facets of economic life.

### Prospect Theory

Kahneman and Tversky (1979), elaborating on bounded rationality, showed that contingent on how an (economic) choice is framed, the same individual will behave differently. For instance, if a risky proposition is set up in terms of a gain versus a loss, people will perceive dissimilar subjective value for each possibility rather than objectively evaluating the final outcome. Perhaps the most salient product of this analysis is the concept of *loss aversion*, or the phenomenon that losses loom larger than gains.<sup>7</sup> Consider the following prospect (in Kahneman 2011:283–84):

*You are offered a gamble on the toss of a coin.  
If the coin shows tails, you lose \$100.  
If the coin shows heads, you win \$150.  
Is this gamble attractive? Would you accept it?*

The expected value of the gamble is positive, so a rational actor would accept;<sup>8</sup> but Kahneman (2011) found that a great majority of people dislike this proposition and refuse it: “For most people, the fear of losing \$100 is more intense than the hope of gaining \$150.” Loss aversion is pervasive and leads to myriad “irrational” economic decisions, such as holding on to losing investments for too long (to avoid realizing a loss), missed opportunities, and phenomena like the endowment effect (Knetsch 1989).<sup>9</sup> Loss aversion is attributed primarily to psychological reasoning based on evolutionary biology. As Kahneman (2011:282) explains, “Organisms that treat threats as more urgent than opportunities have a better chance to survive and reproduce.”

Prospect theory posits a dualistic system of cognition that relies on a set of heuristics: “*System-1* operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control; *System-2* allocates attention to the effortful mental activities that demand it, including complex computations. The operations of System-2 are often associated with the subjective experience of agency, choice, and concentration” (Kahneman 2011:20–21). It is the interaction of these two systems that explains systematic errancy when individuals are faced with economic decisions. In the instance of loss aversion, the rejection of the above gamble is due to System-2, but the emotional impulse that leads to that ultimate decision is generated by System-1 (Kahneman 2011).

### Intertemporal Choice

Whereas prospect theory shows that people make suboptimal decisions based on the present context, problems of intertemporal choice arise when people make irrational decisions today that will affect them negatively in the future. The neoclassical model assumes people make decisions consistent with temporal ordering, but experiments show that people systematically violate this assumption—they are *time inconsistent*. The classic behavioral test that elicits this phenomenon follows some variation of Thaler (1981):

- (a) Which do you prefer: to be given \$100 today or \$105 in a week?
- (b) Which do you prefer: to be given \$100 dollars 52 weeks from now or \$105 in 53 weeks from now?

Both prospects offer a \$5 incentive to wait a single week, so one should be indifferent between the choices posed in (a) and (b). Yet, people overwhelmingly choose to receive \$100 today and \$105 in 53 weeks. Loewenstein and Prelec (1992) point out that time-inconsistent preferences tend to overweight the present at the expense of the future (hyperbolic discounting), causing problems with self-control (Ainslie 1991).<sup>10</sup> This discount structure sets up a conflict between today's preferences and the preferences one will hold in the future (Laibson 1997). Real-world implications include shirking on New Year's resolutions, not saving enough for retirement, and overspending on credit. Problems of intertemporal choice are a prominent strand in behavioral economics, and they are traditionally ascribed to humanity's limited cognitive capacity: "The preference for immediate gratification captured in these studies appears to have identifiable neural underpinnings" (DellaVigna 2009:318).

### BOURDIEU'S THEORY OF PRACTICE AND REASONABLE BEHAVIOR

Bourdieu's theory of practice provides an opportunity to revisit these empirical phenomena from a sociological vantage point without dismissing the influence of cognitive processes. In fact, Bourdieusian theory can help us explain the mental state and shared perceptions of economic agents in the world. Bourdieu's concepts are explained thoroughly elsewhere and are likely familiar; therefore, I only very briefly sketch the key elements before orienting them toward the topic at hand.

*Fields* are the social terrain on which action takes place, the structured spaces of relative positions that constitute the social world. Agents occupy various positions in a field in relation to the volume and configuration of *capital* available to and held by them. It is the structure of objective relations between agents on a field that defines dominant and dominated positions (Bourdieu 1998) and thus determines for whom which practices are imaginable and which are not (the space of "possibles and impossibles") (Walther 2014:9). A field sets out the taken-for-granted truths in some microcosm of society (the *doxa*), which will vary based on an agent's composition of capital. This leads individuals to behave (consciously or unconsciously) in a way more or less in correspondence with their position in the field. But, a field is not static: its configuration depends not only on agents' positions, but also on the ever-changing balance of power among agents and the resulting struggle between them for the acquisition of different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984).<sup>11</sup> Field thus provides a template with which to bring in social structure, one that can account for the richness and dynamism of aspects like culture and its influence on behavior, including behavior oriented to the field of economics. The crucial move that Bourdieu makes is to relate the effect of social structure with the mind via the *habitus*.

Each objective position in a field imparts a particular habitus to its occupants, habitus being “a system of lasting, transposable dispositions—which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems” (Bourdieu 1969:100). Habitus is intimately linked to the structure of the field and intervenes repeatedly in the (often unconscious) practices of the agents which it shapes. It is social structure turned mental structure (Wacquant 2005). Involvement in a field shapes the habitus, shaping agents’ perceptions and actions, which in turn leads to a propagation of the rules of the field (Crossley 2001:101). In the same way, mental structures thus emanate outward to confirm and reproduce the objective social structure (Bourdieu 1977). Habitus appears in the mind but also transcends it: “Social reality exists, so to speak, twice, in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside social agents” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:127). The habitus, comments DiMaggio (1979:1464), is “central to all Bourdieu’s work as the link that mediates structure and individual practice.”

Practice, including economic behavior, is the resulting dialectic between field and (economic) habitus. It is the reciprocal relationship between objective structure and subjective dispositions that are simultaneously structured structures (*opus operatum*) and structuring structures (*modus operandi*). Bourdieu’s (1984:101) conception follows the formula: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice.

To understand Bourdieu’s “behavioral economics”—that is, socially inscribed practices that may deviate from rational expectations—it is necessary to first situate *rationality* in terms of a particular habitus oriented to the rules of the economic field. “The so-called ‘rational’ economic agent,” Bourdieu (2000a:18) explains, “is the product of quite particular historical conditions.” Far from being automatic or predetermined, rational expectations are artefacts of socialization within a field where markets and capitalist production are (and have been) pervasive. To this effect, Bourdieu (2005:1) quotes the philosopher Henri Bergson: “It takes centuries of culture to produce a utilitarian such as John Stuart Mill.” Economic agents thus uphold the field’s shared illusion that self-interested maximizing is the self-evident *modus vivendi* and that success (in terms of the struggle for dominant positions in the field) results inevitably from rational calculation. This is the economic field’s *doxa*, the set of fundamental beliefs and pre-reflexive expectations, “an uncontested acceptance of the daily lifeworld” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:73). To possess a habitus compatible with the modern economy does not suggest an intrinsic, asocial rationality—although successful economic agents may appear superficially to be partaking in self-interested calculation. In truth, they simply exist as a “fish in water”; such agents share a set of dispositions that tends to naturally yield and sustain a wealth of capital. They are attuned to the economic *doxa*.

The cultivated *doxa* that elevates the taste of dominant social groups in Bourdieu’s (1984) *Distinction* is matched by the middle-brow penchants of the working class (Deer 2014:122). So too, the apparently rational *doxa* of the dominant economic groups is matched by a proletarian *allodoxia* in dominated positions that appears firmly irrational (e.g., among the poor or uneducated). Indeed, Bourdieu (1984:471–81, 1991:131–32) insists that the struggle over position in a field is about not only accumulation of capital but the right to define the *doxa* itself. As Deer (2014:122) explains, individuals occupying dominated positions share “a learned form of ignorance, that is to say an *allodoxia*, a type of mis-recognition . . . stemming from maladjusted expectations.”<sup>12</sup> Evelev (2006:115) further conveys that for Bourdieu, “middlebrows, lost in their *allodoxia*, do not know how to play [the game], a game in which the terms are established through subtle distinctions by those who set cultural standards.”

**Table 1.** Theories of Economic Behavior.

	Asocial	Social
Rational	Neoclassical economics	Field + habitus ( <i>doxic</i> )
Irrational	Behavioral economics	Field + habitus ( <i>allodoxic</i> )

Accordingly, individuals who *seem* to act rationally may be said to have a habitus that is *doxic* to the economic field, and those who deviate from rationality *allodoxic* (see Table 1).

Frank, Gilovich, and Regan (1993) provide some provocative evidence for the edification of *doxic* economic dispositions. They find that trained economists behave less cooperatively than do noneconomists along a variety of dimensions. Economists receive mental templates for rational self-interestedness through their preparation and practice, which itself is made possible, in part, by the composition of capital that establishes the position they occupy in the social structure: economic capital in the ability to pay tuition and related costs; cultural capital encoded as the skills, values, and knowledge that instill a norm of higher education and professional aspirations; social capital through the personal networks of relations that share adjacent positions in the fields they inhabit; and symbolic capital in the appreciation of the prestige afforded to financial success, as well as the role of the economics discipline in developing the means to achieve desired wealth. On these grounds, economic self-interestedness is unlikely to be essential to the human condition. In fact, quite the opposite appears to be the case: studies in social neuroscience show that important regions of the brain linked with reward processing are stimulated in games like a prisoner's dilemma, involving both monetary and nonmonetary payoffs, when individuals *cooperate* with one another but not when they defect (Decety et al. 2004; Rilling et al. 2002). Of course, even the most appropriately socialized agents who populate the upper echelons of the economic field are still prone to stray from the standard model from time to time, suggesting that default cognitive predilections may tend toward the "irrational." However, the degree of irrationality is greatly moderated by a *doxic* habitus, which is socially constructed and inscribed unto individuals occupying the proper field positions, overriding cognitive errors and biases.

Turning to "irrational" economic behavior, practices that deviate from utility maximization can be understood to result from an *allodoxic* habitus. A key insight Bourdieu (1979:64) brings to economic thought is that "economic . . . dispositions can only be understood by reference to the economic and social situation which structures the agents' whole experience." Rather than moderating irrational tendencies, *allodoxia* magnifies them. Individuals deficient in capital are less likely to have the same (objective) opportunities, and they may not value such (subjective) opportunities even if presented with them. A working-class habitus may deem the very same venture an undesirable risk that a bourgeois disposition will automatically recognize as an attractive investment. Likewise, a working-class mother may think it natural to play the lottery to get ahead (Beckert and Lutter 2013), whereas a businesswoman would never waste her money on such a bad bet.

Other cases of economic *allodoxia* appear in Bourdieu's ethnographic work in the 1960s among the Kabyle people, an agrarian culture situated in the mountainous regions surrounding Algiers. Bourdieu (1979) documented contradictory logics between the Kabyle's pre-capitalist society and the sudden integration of market institutions brought by colonialism prior to the Algerian War. The pursuit of monetary profits and the newfound need for applied calculation created practical mismatches between the existing set of dispositions socialized into the Kabyle and those demanded by the free market. When Kabyle peasants found themselves thrust into a market logic, they appeared to outside observers as irrational. For instance, Bourdieu (1979:40–43; 2000a) witnessed Kabyle "street hawkers" trying to sell



odd items or pieces of fruit, and who, despite often earning far less than the cost of goods sold, returned each day to hawk their wares. Why would somebody choose to operate at a net loss day in and day out? For Bourdieu (1979:42), the answer lies in the precapitalist habitus: "To work, even for a minute income, means, both to oneself and to the group, that one is doing everything in one's power to earn a living by working, in order to escape the state of unemployment."<sup>13</sup> The Kabyle, brought up to believe toil is a social virtue and idleness a moral misconduct, lacked the pragmatic distinction between "productive" versus "unproductive" work, and equating unemployment with idleness, they chose the perfectly *reasonable* but nonetheless self-defeating decision to return to the streets each day to lose money.

From this perspective, (ir)rationality is a situated construct that varies among and between individuals who occupy different field positions, across space and over time. This is an important break with how rationality is traditionally understood, where "economic science treats the prospective and calculating disposition towards the world and time as a natural datum, a universal gift of nature" (Bourdieu 2000b:70). The respective habitus and (*allo*)*doxa* corresponding to a particular field position tend to produce practical beliefs and behaviors that appear sensible to those who share similar positions, yet are potentially nonsensical to those who occupy others. In reframing economic action, Bourdieu (2005:2) revises rationality "by the substitution of the lexicon of dispositions for the language of decision-making, or the term 'reasonable' for 'rational,' which is essential to express a view of action radically different from that which—most often implicitly—underlies neoclassical theory."

In the following sections, I return to each of the three strands of behavioral economics previously outlined through the lens of Bourdieu's dispositional theory of practice. The contemporary glorification of individual responsibility in everything from employment choices to retirement savings tempts us to search *within* our brains for faulty wiring—it seems obvious that when we fail to live up to rational action, our own misdeeds are to blame. But this is deceptive: "Everything conspires to make us forget the socially constructed, and hence arbitrary and artificial, character of investment in the economic game and its stakes: the ultimate reasons for commitment to work, a career or the pursuit of profit in fact lie beyond or outside calculation and calculating reason in the obscure depths of a historically constituted habitus, which means that, in normal circumstances, one gets up every day to go to work without deliberating on the issue, as indeed one did yesterday and will do tomorrow" (Bourdieu 2005:10). We take economic reality for granted, and many of us reprise practical mistakes because they seem (and have always seemed) quite reasonable. As Swedberg (2009:241) quips, "*Homo economicus*, in contrast, has no past or a habitus; everything he does is eternally new."

## SOCIALLY BOUNDED RATIONALITY

Reconsider Simon's concept of bounded rationality, where individuals intend to act rationally but, despite good intentions, are limited in their capacity to identify and achieve optimal outcomes.<sup>14</sup> Bourdieu (2000b:19) writes, "How can it be denied that agents are practically never in a position to gather all the information about the situation that a rational decision would require and that they are in any case very unequally endowed in this respect?" This sentiment indeed rings of bounded rationality; yet, Bourdieu (2000b:19) challenges Simon's account—it is not simply that we satisfice, "redefining the aim of maximizing profit as a quest for 'acceptable minima.'" Rather, the limitations placed upon us are, at least in part, socially inscribed in the space of possibles and impossibles, predetermined by one's position in the field. Simon, unlike Bourdieu, overlooks the way social structure influences the manner in which people carry out their calculations and the information that is available to them in the first place (Swedberg 2011:75).

Socially constructed frames can focus our attention on specific aspects of a decision for consideration, while leaving us to discount or completely fail to see other avenues of inquiry. Choices are framed by one's position in a field, and through the subsequent peer networks, cultural norms, institutions, and mass media preferences that accompany such a position (Dietz and Stern 1995). "Rationality is bounded not only because the available information is curtailed, and because the human mind is generically limited and does not have the means of fully figuring out all situations, especially in the urgency of action, but also because the human mind is *socially* bounded, socially structured and determined, and, as a consequence, limited" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:126, emphasis original).

The CEO of a corporation, for instance, trying to accumulate as much information possible on a potential merger, would hardly be inclined to seek advice from the building's janitor—even though the janitor may know something about the acquiring company having worked in their headquarters as well. Alternatively, the janitor would never approach the CEO for advice on a cleaning product, even if that executive runs a household products manufacturer. Within the scope of Simonian bounded rationality, each seeking information from the other would be perfectly acceptable (if not unlikely) in the process of satisficing; however, such inquiries stand outside the socially bounded realm of possibilities.

The Kabyle farmers provide another example of socially bounded rationality. These farmers commonly engaged in a type of loan called a *charka*, where an ox was lent to a peasant too poor to buy one in exchange for a certain amount of grain (Bourdieu 1979:21). Rather than maximizing *or* satisficing, the Kabyle showed social restrictions against rational intention altogether: "when self-interested calculation is openly revealed, it is sharply reproved" (Bourdieu 1979:21). There was *no* calculation and no expectation of profit from such exchanges. To act in even a modestly self-interested way would be seen as unreasonable.

Every person is socially bounded by a personal sense of self—their identity. Akerlof and Kranton's (2000) identity economics infers different social categories (e.g., gender or race) and how people in these categories should behave. Identity, they argue, can explain behavior that appears maladaptive or even self-destructive by those with other identities (Akerlof and Kranton 2000:717; see also Benabou and Tirole 2011). However, according to Collet (2009:431), Simon's concept of identification, which is similar to how economists conceive of identity, "only referred to the inherent properties of the categories to which we belong and not how they relate to each other." Indeed, identities like "female," "black," and "poverty-stricken" appear in these models as simple dummy variables (Akerlof and Kranton 2000:738). Yet, by allowing for identity to be malleable and relational, their argument that social difference leads one group to perceive of another as "making bad economic decisions" could be expressed in terms of habitus+field. Identity economics presumes that, for example, poor black men are excluded from the dominant groups, which limits their access to the information and resources needed for economic opportunity. This prompts them to adopt an "oppositional identity" replete with pathological behavior (Akerlof and Kranton 2000:739–40). We can now appreciate that such individuals do not so much elect a maladaptive identity but instead occupy dominated (*allodoxic*) positions in the structured microcosm of the economic field. As a consequence, their realm of "possibles and impossibles" is circumscribed by a habitus that essentially provides a reasonable set of norms and practices (e.g., drug dealing or crime) to make ends meet.

## THINKING FAST AND SLOW, AND SOCIAL

Turning to prospect theory, Lizardo (2004:395) argues from constructivist psychology that Bourdieu's theory of practical action is "perfectly compatible" with Kahneman and Tversky's

behavioral model. Prospect theory recognizes that people maintain suboptimal preferences that differ depending on the frame of context. Frame-dependent preferences can now be understood as socially conditioned and incorporated into cognitive structures, where the habitus works particularly at the *unconscious* level. Automatic sociocognitive feats of economic life include “all the capacities and dispositions . . . the art of estimating and taking chances, the ability to anticipate through a kind of practical induction, the capacity to bet on the possible against the probable for a measured risk, the propensity to invest, access to economic information, etc.” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:124).

### *System-1–System-2*

As a central tenet of prospect theory, Kahneman’s (2011) “System-1–System-2” dialectic may thus reveal itself under the guise of the habitus. According to prospect theory, System-1 “is the brain’s fast, automatic, intuitive approach”; System-2 is “the mind’s slower, analytical mode, where reason operates.” Yet, “System-1 is . . . more influential . . . steering System-2 to a very large extent.”<sup>15</sup> Kahneman (2011:21) describes System-1 as “effortlessly originating impressions and feelings that are the main sources of the explicit beliefs and deliberate choices of System-2,” that System-1 can “generate surprisingly complex patterns of ideas.” Moreover, “the main function of System-1 is to maintain and update a model of your personal world, which represents what is normal in it . . . it determines your interpretation of the present as well as your expectations of the future” (Kahneman 2011:71). Taken together, economic action under prospect theory is the dual product of automatic impulses regulated by conscious effort.

Bourdieu’s (1990:53) treatment of the habitus is strikingly similar to this duality (bracketed text are my insertions): “The responses of the habitus [System-1] may be accompanied by a strategic calculation tending to perform in a conscious mode [System-2] the operation that the habitus [System-1] performs quite differently, namely an estimation of chances presupposing transformation of the past effect into an expected objective [System-2]. But these responses are first defined, without any calculation [System-1], in relation to objective potentialities, immediately inscribed in the present.” Like System-1, which “generates impressions, feelings, and inclinations” and “operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort, and no sense of voluntary control” (Kahneman 2011:105), the habitus, too, is an involuntary, generative formula, “the schemes of the habitus . . . owe their specific efficacy to the fact that they function below the level of consciousness and language” (Bourdieu 1984:266).

It would be wrong to interpret the habitus (or System-1 for that matter) as a simple deterministic reflex. Instead, the habitus provides a blueprint for how to feel and act when confronted with novel situations. Although operating below the level of consciousness, habitus does not dictate that individuals simply repeat past behavior; people must consider changes in the fields and environments in which they are situated, as well as adapt to the particular situation that presents itself. Duncan’s (2011:6) analysis of habitus resolves this point succinctly: “Hence agents both follow rules and exercise agency; they combine discursive, practical and unconscious agency.” In prospect theory, economic behavior follows from an interaction between some dispositional impulse and a conscious appraisal of that stimulus. From a Bourdieusian perspective, the homology between System-1 and habitus is clear. It does not follow, however, that System-2 be rendered asocial. Peer effects and localized norms of conduct, for example, can mediate and moderate economic behavior (Manski 1993), and sometimes override the habitus’s impulse entirely. Whereas the habitus is durable and a product of accumulated history, System-2 is contingent and transitory.<sup>16</sup>

What of System-1's ability to orient action based on expectations of the future, with respect to habitus? Bourdieu (1998:80) would reply, "Pre-perceptive anticipations, a sort of practical induction based on previous experience are not given to a pure subject, a universal transcendental consciousness. They are the fact of the habitus as a feel for the game." Depending on one's feel for the game—the compatibility of one's habitus in relation to the field—people will vary in their ability to anticipate the future, to calculate risks and probabilities, to once again appear *doxic* or *allodoxic*.

### Loss Aversion

One of the most widely studied topics in prospect theory is *loss aversion*—the recognition that people systematically prefer to avoid losses than receive an equivalent gain. Across the literature, loss aversion is chalked up to psychological causes; but perhaps it is because people are endowed with systems of transposable dispositions that favor *winning* and condemn losing. People are socially predetermined to fear loss, whether it is injury, death, rejection, or humiliation. Winning and losing come to represent a symbolic opposition, where winners gain not only economic profit but also symbolic capital (i.e., recognition) at the expense of losers. Depending on a particular situation, losing may be more or less acceptable in the eyes of others. For example, to lose to an underdog can be shameful for the favorite; "it is this sense of acceptability, and not some form of rational calculation oriented towards the maximization of . . . profits" that can lead us to avoid losses (Bourdieu 1991:77). Cast in this light, people may come to view certain risks (e.g., a gamble to either win \$150 or lose \$100) as unacceptable. In Kahneman and Tversky's experiments certain people *do*, of course, choose the gambles, acknowledging that some individuals are more loss averse than others (Kahneman 2011:284).<sup>17</sup> It is not (only) that humans are bad at computing expected payoffs; it is that our actual perception of the payoffs is dependent on our habitus: "To view action as the outcome of conscious calculation . . . is to neglect the fact that, by virtue of the habitus, individuals are already predisposed to act in certain ways, pursue certain goals, avow certain tastes, and so on" (Bourdieu 1991:16–17).

Exhibiting loss aversion often goes against one's direct economic interests, as it induces people to *increase* risk taking in hopes of breaking even when presented with a (paper) loss. Doubling down at a blackjack table in hopes of recouping deficits is a prime example of this deleterious effect. Loss aversion also encourages investors to hold on too long to losing investments for fear of locking in a loss, compelling people to sell their winners too early for fear of losing paper gains (in the context of trading, loss-averse behavior is known as the *disposition effect*). Bourdieu (1984, 2005) frequently operationalized distinctions among habitus as corresponding with one's occupation. Individuals who work in finance, for example, should have a more rational (*doxic*) outlook when it comes to risk taking as opposed to, say, undergraduate students or manual laborers. Matching Frank, Gilovich, and Regan's (1993) study of self-interestedness among trained economists, professional traders, whose livelihoods rely on judging the market, are far more tolerant of financial losses than are lay investors or psychology lab subjects (Kahneman 2011; Locke and Mann 2005). Locke and Mann (2005:401) note that "the successful . . . traders in our sample exhibit trading behavior well characterized as rational and disciplined" (cf. Haigh and List 2005).

Economic dispositions that approve of winning and scorn losing are apt to be indoctrinated by virtue of the neoliberal ideology and policy that exists in much of the developed world today. These cultural risk attitudes should vary between subjects by the composition and distribution of capitals ascribed to particular individuals. In an empirical study, Gächter,

Johnson, and Herrmann (2007) found that loss aversion increases with age and decreases with education, and Von Gaudecker, Van Soest, and Wengstrom (2011) report a high degree of heterogeneity in individual loss aversion, with a significant correspondence between a decline in loss aversion and rising income (see also Hjorth and Fosgerau 2011). For a poor person, losing \$100 is often more severe than a \$150 gain. The same holds true for a retiree. Such a logic is consistent with Hoff and Stiglitz's (2016) "enculturated actor" and with other economists seeking to inject culture into their models (e.g., Benabou and Tirole 2006; Bisin and Verdier 2000; Carvalho 2012). For instance, a male situated in a society that maintains traditional gender roles may internalize a greater concern with financial loss as the expected breadwinner. We would also expect loss aversion to be generally greater in societies that value individual autonomy or self-responsibility. Little research compares loss aversion across cultures, but one recent study of fifty-three countries found that people who live in nations ranking higher on both individualism and masculinity do, on average, show increased loss aversion (Wang, Rieger, and Hens 2017).

Neuroeconomics associates loss aversion with a fear response in the brain. Because fear reactions are similar across species, the "animal model" has been seen as a useful way to understand loss as a biological response (Camerer, Loewenstein, and Prelec 2005; Rick 2011). Prey animals will indeed react with fear to a sudden movement, but it is less obvious that the human brain naturally triggers the same instinct when confronted with a monetary loss. A plausible alternative is that people are conditioned with a *habitus* that on the first order generates a shared understanding of what circumstances constitute a loss; and second, that we should collectively seek to avoid such losses (i.e., fear them). Depending on one's position in the economic field, losing a job may be more consequential than losing face. For others, losing to a competitor is worse than failing on one's own. De Martino, Camerer, and Adolphs (2010) studied loss aversion in the brains of people with damaged amygdalas, the part of the brain that experiences emotions. They found that individuals with a damaged amygdala do *not* exhibit loss aversion, and they suggest that loss aversion may reflect a simple Pavlovian approach-avoidance response. Pavlov had to train his dogs to salivate at the sound of a bell, just as quotidian experience within the social structure implants the cognitive pathways for recoiling from a financial loss. A key point with Bourdieu's theory is that as people are variously loss-averse in practice, that gradient of aversion is at the same time generative—it subsequently reinforces the rules of the game of the economic field and conditions particular sensitivities to economic loss at each position. It would be as if dogs' salivation in turn resulted in Dr. Pavlov ringing his bell more often.

## TIME INCONSISTENCY

Finally, to come back to issues of intertemporal choice, Bourdieu (1990:64) argues it is the *habitus* that informs our dispositions toward time, and especially toward the future: "In fact, a given agent's practical relation to the future, which governs his present practice, is defined in the relationship between, on the one hand, his *habitus* with its temporal structures and dispositions towards the future . . . and on the other hand a certain state of the chances objectively offered to him by the social world." Problems of time inconsistency (Thaler 1981) and the desire for immediate gratification (Thaler and Shefrin 1981) may therefore be socially mediated. "It is the discrepancy between . . . a 'subjective' disposition (which does not mean an internal or mental one) and an objective tendency, which gives rise to relations to time such as waiting or impatience" (Bourdieu 2000b:209). For the *habitus*, the past, present, and future all intersect and inform one another. Because of this, the temporal decisions we make will vary depending on our specific dispositions.

During his time in Algeria, Bourdieu (1979:8) noticed that individuals who had not (yet) adapted to the capitalist system had radically different perspectives toward time: “Nothing is more foreign to the pre-capitalist economy than representation of the future as a field of possibles to be explored and mastered by calculation.” The Kabyle did not *lack* dispositions toward the future; instead, they embodied alternative arrangements informed by past experience and a culture of prudence (e.g., storing up a surplus of food) over future-oriented risk taking: “Far from being dictated by a prospective aiming at a projected future, the [Kabyle] practices of fore-sight stem from the desire to conform to inherited models” (Bourdieu 1979:9). For neoclassical economics, the future is postulated as a field of infinite possibilities, each of which can be calculated probabilistically and ranked in order of preferred outcome (see Beckert 2016). Traditional Algerian society, however, “has no ambition to lay hold of the future and of chance” (Bourdieu 1964:70). In a modern economy that increasingly rewards short-term profits and consumption on credit, as opposed to “patient capital” and precautionary saving, the Western economic habitus may indeed be predisposed to prefer \$100 today and \$105 in a year and a week, against rational expectations.

Even in contemporary Western society, individuals’ economic dispositions toward time can be properly understood only with reference to their past and present social situations, informed by the field positions they occupy. “In fact, to each socio-economic position corresponds a system of practices and dispositions organized around the relationship to the future that is implied in that position” (Bourdieu 1964:64). Variations in socioeconomic status will thus inform perceptions of unequally probable trajectories in the set of outcome possibilities, and should predict a diversity in anomalies like the self-control bias.

Indeed, Bernheim, Ray, and Yeltekin (2015:1880) find that the poor are much more likely to seek instant gratification, and “poverty perpetuates itself by undermining the ability to exercise self-control.” Fligstein and Goldstein (2015) present evidence that individuals lower on the socioeconomic status distribution adopt defensive financial strategies, whereas those at the top embrace finance as an opportunity to extend their lifestyles through long-term investment. For Bourdieu, this would seem unsurprising. In his earliest writings, Bourdieu (1964:70–71) notes that “the peasant knows that, whatever he may do, he will not succeed in making ends meet, and he resigns himself to living day by day.” In other words, peasants’ dispositions—just like the contemporary poor—are oriented toward the present and not toward the future; they are present-biased. Bourdieu also suggests that for people to take control over their destiny and begin to think about the future, they first must gain some minimum control over their present situation. We would thus expect present bias to diminish as individuals achieve more dominant positions in the social structure and financial concerns over the quotidian become less salient.

## CONCLUSIONS

Behavioral economists have succeeded in disrupting the traditional order of economics by challenging the field’s assumptions of rational actors. However, like the neoclassicals, the behavioralists have largely reduced action to individual cognition. Economic sociology has also kept its distance from behavioral economics’ phenomena such as loss aversion and time inconsistency—these curious but still arm’s-length occurrences typically fall outside the scope of socially embedded transactions. In this article, I argued that Bourdieu’s dispositional theory of practice is a useful sociological framework with which to analyze and explain the types of “irrational” economic behavior observed by behavioral economists, incorporating both the individual mind and supra-individual social forces. Our mental

templates *are*, in part, embodied social structure, notwithstanding the mind's biological materiality. Lizardo (2004:394, emphasis original) sums up this point succinctly: "The habitus is itself an *objective* structure albeit one located at a different ontological level and subject to different laws of functioning than the more traditional 'structure' represented by the field. . . . The interplay between individual bodily and mental structures and macrolevel social structures has so far been under-exploited." Using Bourdieu's insight, I argue that field and habitus provide an analytical framework that can account for a range of seemingly irrational empirical behavior identified in the economic sphere.

Bourdieu already understood this perfectly well. "Economic agents," he remarked, "make choices systematically different from those predicted in the economic model: either they do not play the game in accordance with the predictions of theory, or they resort to 'practical' strategies, or they evince a concern to act in conformity with their sense of fairness or justice and to be treated in the same way themselves. This empirically observed discordance is merely the reflection of the structural discrepancy I have analysed from my earliest work. . . . The field imposes on everyone, though to varying degrees depending on their economic position and capacities, not just the 'reasonable' means, but also the ends, of economic action" (Bourdieu 2005:8).

Importantly, I do not reject out of hand the role that psychological processes play in economic behavior; instead, I favor an integrative or complementary approach. Thus, when behavioral economics instructs that losses loom larger than gains, I accept that humans may have evolved deeply seated instincts as protection from harm, and as Piore (2010:386) writes, "there is no question that, in some way and at some level, human behavior is rooted in our biological construction." But, Piore (2010) is also quick to note that the human organism, unlike other animals, is uniquely equipped with linguistic capacity that institutionalizes norms, both formal and informal. For this reason, discourses around losing and winning become socially inscribed, which can either minimize or magnify the extent of our loss-averse instincts—within a social order and across cultures. Once we understand deviations from the standard economic model as not only cognitive but also socially structured, individual rationality can then be recognized to vary naturally between and among individuals, over time, and across contexts.

As an empirical project, the thesis put forth here can be evaluated to measure how phenomena like loss aversion vary by social position and habitus. An "analytic Bourdieusian" approach could greatly extend the project of behavioral economics, which already hints that the poor are *allodoxic*—that is, they are found to be more loss averse and have greater issues with intertemporal choice (see Bernheim, Ray, and Yeltekin 2015; Von Gaudecker, Van Soest, and Wengstrom 2011). Following Bourdieu's framework, we would also expect loss aversion to vary along dimensions other than volume of economic capital. Forms of cultural and symbolic capital accumulated through education and financial training (e.g., financial literacy) should provide for a more or less *doxic* orientation and inflect susceptibility to behavioral errors (see Frank, Gilovich, and Regan 1993). At the same time, dispositions that are socialized through immersion in athletics or other competitive activities could transpose *doxic* notions in the field of sport to that of economic decision making—perhaps highly competitive athletes will also be least loss averse.

Many of the most influential findings in behavioral economics to date have been elicited from small samples of college undergraduates at prestigious research universities. This inadvertently homogeneous sample has produced fairly consistent findings in terms of nonstandard preferences and decisions, but this is unsurprising as these subjects likely also share similar field positions. There is a growing critique of behavioral psychology's singular use of Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) samples (e.g., Henrich,

Heine, and Norenzayan 2010; Jones 2010). Using a range of social positions as explanatory variables, both within societies and across cultures, future research can explore a sociological behavioral economics and motivate new strands of inquiry.

Finally, while the emphasis of this article has been to unite sociological thought and behavioral economics by way of field and habitus, Bourdieu's theory is not intended to be the panacea that uncomplicates *all* deviations from the standard economic model. Indeed, other theoretical frameworks from sociology can shed light on certain findings from behavioral economics. For instance, Zelizer's (2012) approach evinces a sociological counterpoint to "mental accounting" that is better explained through relational work and earmarking (Hayes 2019; Wherry 2016; cf. Thaler 1985). Still, Bourdieu serves as a cogent starting point to bridge the gap between these literatures and a worthy place to begin a productive dialogue.

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## NOTES

1. Piore (2010:385) cautions that tracing deviations from rational action to the biology of the human brain could have unintended societal consequences that bear a resemblance to eugenics: "In the extreme, this leads to a willingness to improve economic outcomes through biological intervention."
2. Akerlof and Kranton (2000:717), as well as others in the tradition of identity economics, develop models in which individuals, more or less consciously, *choose* who they want to be (their identity) in order to maximize a utility function subject to societal constraints.
3. Swedberg (2011) interprets Bourdieu as having multiple economic sociologies. I suggest that one of these threads can be understood as oriented to behavioral economics.
4. Expected utility theory holds that agents ("economic man") will make optimal choices that maximize their utility, which by implication means avoiding choices that would make them worse off economically or vulnerable in competitive markets (Ainslie 1991:334).
5. Tomer (2007) identifies no fewer than seven strands of behavioral economics, including Akerlof's behavioral macroeconomics. The three I elaborate are by far the most well cited, but it stands to reason that Bourdieusian theory would also be compatible with the others.
6. See [https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2017/press.html](https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2017/press.html).
7. As opposed to *risk* aversion, which appears in mainstream economics, where a gain and an equivalent loss are treated symmetrically.
8.  $(0.50)(-100) + (0.50)(150) = 25$ .
9. The *endowment effect* states that people ascribe more value to something merely by owning it than when they do not.
10. This is sometimes referred to as *present bias*.
11. Capital exists as several interconvertible types, including economic but also cultural, social, and symbolic, as well as field-specific forms.
12. Unlike *heterodoxy*, which knowingly seeks to subvert the established *doxa*, *allodoxia* is the coincidental result of an incongruous habitus, "consisting in mistakenly recognizing oneself in a particular form of representation and public enunciation of the *doxa*" (Bourdieu 2000b:185). In Bourdieu's early work, *allodoxia* is sometimes construed as a state of confusion, but later it is recast as a practical misapprehension occurring in dominated positions in social fields. For instance, in *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984:323) illustrates how *allodoxic* practice leads the petit bourgeois to take light opera for "serious music." In politics, Bourdieu (1984:459–60) describes how *allodoxia* in the political field leads individuals in dominated positions to endorse opinions that are not their own. Elsewhere, Bourdieu



- (1988) argues that young people from working-class backgrounds opt out of higher education for similar reasons, seeing college as “not for the likes of me,” whereas middle-class youth assume college education to be a natural progression in the life course. Moreover, students who do matriculate from working-class backgrounds are more likely to feel out of their element, whereas middle-class students will comfortably navigate university life and find success.
13. The habitus is durable, yet it adapts to changing conditions. Its adjustment, however, often introduces a lag, or *hysteresis*, whereby its initial state finds itself provisionally incompatible with a rapidly changing external reality.
  14. For an extended sociological discussion on behavioral economics featuring Simon’s bounded rationality, but which arises from an alternative perspective, see Etzioni, Piore, and Streeck (2010).
  15. Interview with Daniel Kahneman at Harvard University (<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2014/02/layers-of-choice/>).
  16. Scholarship on education, in particular, emphasizes the centrality of peer groups in ensuring the reproduction of dominated social groups (see also Bourdieu 1988).
  17. Kahneman and Tversky, and most others who study loss aversion experimentally, do not, however, tell us *which* types of subjects choose the gamble versus those who do not.

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