

Stratification...Or We Are All Equal, But Some are More Equal Than Others

Objectives:

1. The Meaning of Stratification:
Karl Marx
Max Weber
2. Causes of Stratification:
Functionalism
Conflict
Symbolic Interaction
3. How Do Sociologists Determine One's Social Class?

Activity to Demonstrate Stratification

Processes:

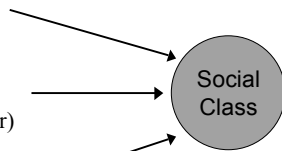
1. Differentiation
2. Evaluation
3. Ranking
4. Rewarding

Marx and Weber on Social Class

Class (Marx)
(Property)

Status (Weber)
(Prestige, Honor)

Power (Weber)
(Pol/Communal)



Three Causes of Stratification

Conflict:

Social conflict is class related
Class "consciousness"
Capitalists cheat workers

but

Ignores the broad middle class
Ignores coop. between classes

Functional:

Some roles crucial and get rewarded more
Rewards meaningful if unequal

but

Many elites inherit \$
Many crucial roles not rewarded e.g. nurses, teachers

Three Causes of Stratification (cont'd)

Symbolic Interaction:

Meaning of belonging to a class

Impact of class on self concept

Much stereotyping of classes

but

Blocked opportunities negate aspirations

Stereotyping and Class

"Possible to determine a family's social class by knowledge of family name?"

SA	2%
A	31%
D	50%
SD	18%
DK	4%

Stereotyping (cont'd)

Families assigned to classes:

Name	(High)	(Middle)	(Low)
	I	III	VI
Chien Yi Chung	2	10	17
Richard O'Bannon	10	47	0
Booker T. Brown	4	11	47
Leopold Stein	44	23	0
John Garcia	0	0	41
Michael Harrison	45	14	0

Sum – people do stereotype others, even by family names.

Determining Social Class

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Reputational</u>	<u>Subjective</u>
\$, Education & Occupation Prestige	Judges used	Self evaluation
North Hatt Scale	Bias monitored	Most Americans say M-C
		Why reluctant to say "upper?"

What is your social class?

Soc. 134 Survey Results

	<u>USA</u>	<u>ISU</u>	
LC	5%	1%	
LM	21%	9%	
MM	57%	92%	55% 96% M
WM	14%	32%	
W	1%	3%	

Examples With Prestige Scale

Respondents Rated Occupation Prestige

As: Excellent – 100 Below Average - 40
 Good – 80 Poor - 20
 Average – 60

College Professor	=	90
Garbage Collector	=	32
Lawyer	=	89
Accountant	=	81
Police Officer	=	70

Social Class Differences in the United States

Objectives:

1. Consequences of One's Social Class
2. Trends in Poverty?
3. Who is Poor Today?

Major Results from Social Class Research

Results:

- Life Chances
- Life Style
- Subcultures
- Conservative, Self-Perpetuating Nature of Social Class

Income and Wealth Gap in the U.S. 1990s

A. First, Consider Income of People in the U.S.

If 20 Families Mirror the National Distribution of Income in the U.S., then:

The Top (#1) which = 5%



Lowest 8 = 40%

The top #1 (5%)
earns more than the
lowest 8 (40%) families

Income and Wealth Gap in the U.S (cont'd)

B. Now, Consider Wealth of People in the U.S.: (Wealth includes all of one's assets)

If 20 families mirror the national distribution of wealth in the U.S., then:

The top #1 = 5%



All other families (95%)

Top #1 (5%) have more assets than
all other families combined (95%)

Income and Wealth Gap in the U.S. (cont'd)

C. Summary

1. U.S. has the biggest gap between those at the top and those at the bottom in any developed country.
2. U.S. has the largest poverty rate.
3. Canada is in the middle of developed countries
4. Scandinavian countries and Japan have the least inequality.

Source: Coleman and Cressey, 1995 6/E

States Ranked by Rates of Hunger (1999, USDA)

% households hungry or near hungry:

New Mexico 15.1%

Texas 12.9%

Florida 11.5%

Iowa 7.0%

North Dakota 4.6%

Average = 9.7% hungry in typical state

✓ Why is rate so high in Texas, New Mexico, Florida?

Trends in Poverty in U.S.

1970	24.6%	
1990	12.2%	("War on Poverty" years)
2000	11.8%	

Who Is Poor in U.S.?

Black	23.6%
Hispanic	22.8%
White	7.7%
Female head of household	36%
Hispanic children	40%
Black children	46%
White children	16%