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

**Functional:**
- Some roles crucial and get rewarded more
- Rewards meaningful if unequal

**Conflict:**
- but
- Ignores the broad middle class
- Ignores coop. between classes

**Functional:**
- 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?”

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Stereotyping (cont’d)

Families assigned to classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>(High)</th>
<th>(Middle)</th>
<th>(Low)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chien Yi Chung</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard O’Bannon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booker T. Brown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leopold Stein</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Garcia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Harrison</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Objective
- $, Education & Occupation Prestige
- North Hatt Scale

Reputational
- Judges used
- Bias monitored

Subjective
- Self evaluation
- Most Americans M-C
- Why reluctant to say “upper?”

What is your social class?
### Soc. 134 Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USA</th>
<th></th>
<th>ISU</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>96% M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
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Examples With Prestige Scale

Respondents Rated Occupation Prestige

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Professor</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Collector</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officer</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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
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%

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

All other families (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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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.?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female head of household</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic children</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black children</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White children</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>