SOCIAL STRATIFICATION and INEQUALITY

"The division of society into distinct social classes is one of the most striking manifestations of the modern world . . . it has often been the source of other kinds of inequality, and . . . the economic dominance of a particular class has very often been the basis for its political rule."

T. B. Bottomore, 1966

Staff
Professor John Pease
Assistants Megan Wilhelm and Yangzi Zhao

Of Course
Social Stratification and Inequality
Sociology 441 (section BL01)
Online & 9:30-10:45 Thursdays Fall 2013
University of Maryland, College Park

Help Us
We are interested in learning what you think we should do to improve this course and to become a better teachers and to help you become a better student. Whenever you have a question, complaint, concern, problem or whatnot about this course, please let us know.

Course Objectives
1 To help you clarify and expand your questions about social stratification, social inequality, and social class;
2 to help you develop your own theory of class stratification;
3 to help you apply some of the concepts and knowledge of social stratification, social inequality, and social class to your own life experiences;
4 to help you better understand changes in social stratification, social inequality, and social class;
5 to encourage you to consider ways in which class inequality might be reduced; and
6 to encourage you to read critically, to think analytically, and to write clearly.

I'd Rather Be Studying

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Primary Course Questions
1. How do the concepts, knowledge, and theories of social inequality and social class illuminate your own experience?
2. What is your theory of social inequality and social class? How do you describe and explain social inequality and social class? How and why does inequality change? What is the source and distribution of class, power, property, prestige, mobility, and poverty?
3. How and why has social inequality and social class in America changed during the past century and what is the significance of these changes?
4. What determines the rate of poverty? What determines who is poor? What is it like to live poorly in America?
5. How can, how should, poverty be reduced or alleviated?

Common Reading
This course features three books and eight articles. The books are available for purchase at the University Book Center. The articles are available in ELMS/Canvas.

The books are:
Any book with one of the following ISBNs is acceptable: 0375713816, 9780375713811, 0375421742, 9780375421747
Any book with one of the following ISBNs is acceptable: 9781400044894, 9781400096527
Any book with one of the following ISBNs is acceptable: 014024137-x, 9780140241372, 0029190959, 9780029190951

The articles are:
Chandler Davidson, “The Culture of Shiftlessness.”
www.tcnj.edu/~kpearson/syllabi/culture.html

Lang Phipps. "Confessions of a Young Wasp"

http://books.google.com/books?id=b-kCAAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PP1&pg=PA24#v=onepage&q&f=false


Videos:

**On my SocheProfessor YouTube Channel and Canvas**

"Blue-collar in a White-collar World“ 10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsdrUBN5Es0

"Bourgeois Blues“ 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljF9xaBTPR8

"Career Colleges“ 14

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-6s5K45BTk

"Feminism" 8

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaxXW8Kjwis

"The Great Depression“ 5

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dViQ9tRZOKc

"The Great Recovery 9

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BM3Ru83BfOI

"The Post-war Boom 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrCrrFWpRQ0

"Poverty and Pickle Pickers“ 5

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fIO2Vrg0pU

"Social Class in America“ 10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6TKVXC115c

"Under the Influence“ 14

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYFojK_3ORc

"Upper Class Wasps“ 8

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omtWalntgGE

"When Work Disappears“ 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV3di1DXLEQ

**Available on the WorldWideWeb**

"Income Inequality: Johnston Interview 13 [N.B.: 0:00-12:35]

www.pbs.org/now/shows/332/index.html

"Income Inequality: Shulman Interview” 13 [N.B.: 12:40-21:20]

www.pbs.org/now/shows/332/index.html

"Inequality: Growing Apart"

http://inequality.org/growing-apart/

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“Inequality Is”
http://inequality.is/

“Robert Reich: On the Economy” 45
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGJZngEwO3w

“The Truth about the Economy” 3
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTzMqm2TwqE

“Wall Street” 5
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PF_iorX_MAw

“Wealth Inequality in America”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTj9AcwkaKM

Streamed from the Library

“Controlling Interest” 46
“Surviving the Bottom Line: Running with the Bulls” 58
“Who Owns Our Government?” 58

Classroom (only)

“Class Dismissed - Class Clowns” 14

Audio:

Billie Holiday “God Bless the Child”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_1LfT1MvzI

Huddie Ledbetter “Bourgeois Blues”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kf6aHIN3wKI

Peggy Lee “Is That All There Is?”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ny5z8gKM18

ELMS/Canvas

Your source for:

Campus Stories, Class Photos, Discussion, Grades, Modules (includes Assignments, Gazettes, Lecture ppts., Readings, Videos), Staff Photos, Study Questions, Syllabus, and Videos

Necessary computer tools:

Pdf reader such as Adobe http://get.adobe.com/reader/
Firefox or Chrome or Safari browser (to view videos)
Flash (to view videos)
Java (to process audio) http://www.java.com/en/
Microsoft Word to submit written work
Quicktime (to access video/mp4 files) http://apple.com/quicktime/download/

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Assignments
The course material (module) for each week is available through Elms/Canvas at 6:00 a.m. Tuesday morning and the graded assignment attached to it is due before 6:00 p.m. the following Monday. This course features 10 weekly assignments. All of these weekly graded assignments are weighted equally and together comprise 40 percent of your final grade in the course. Your performance on the mid-semester exam, the final exam, and each of the two required papers count for the remaining 60 percent of your final grade in the course. All your work is graded for timeliness, accuracy, completeness, written expression, originality and, most of all, how well it demonstrates a profound understanding of the material. The grading schedule for this course is:

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\begin{align*}
A &= 4.0 & A- &= 3.7 & B+ &= 3.3 & B &= 3.0 & B- &= 2.7 \\
C+ &= 2.3 & C &= 2.0 & C- &= 1.7 & D+ &= 1.3 & D &= 1.0 & D- &= 0.7
\end{align*}
\]

Academic Honor Code
Please affirm your commitment to the honor pledge ("I pledge that on my honor I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment") on all your graded assignments. The University Honor Code is available online http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm

Know No
This course does not provide extra-credit assignments.

Disability Support Services
If you are registered with the Office of Disability Support Services please provide us with the accommodation letter. Information about the types of accommodations is available online http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html

CourseEvalUM
At the end of the course please go to http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu and submit your evaluation of the course.

Here We Are
John Pease
Electronic mail: pease@umd.edu
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Yangzi Zhao  
Electronic mail: iamyangtze@live.com  
Office address: 1118 Art-Sociology Building  
Office hours: By appointment

Course Calendar

1 The Week of September 3 and 5  
INTRODUCTION  
Comment: The Study of Stratification and Inequality  
Audio: "God Bless the Child"  
SOCIAL HIERARCHY  
Question: How is social stratification part of your own life experience?  
Lecture: Status Stratification in Everyday Life  
Gazette: Social Hierarchy  
Assignment: Essay

2 The Week of September 10 and 12  
SOCIAL EQUALITY  
Question: What is social equality? What features of social life should be equal, what features should be unequal, and what are the values that require your answer?  
Lecture: The Meaning of Social Equality  
Gazette: Social Equality  
Reading: “Equality”  
Assignment: Discussion

3 The Week of September 17 and 19  
WHAT MARX SAID  
Question: Why is there social stratification and inequality? Why are there classes?  
Lecture: What Marx Said  
Gazette: Marx Theory of Class  
IDEOLOGY  
Question: What is the relevance of ideology for understanding social stratification?  
Lecture: Ideology and Stratification  
Gazette: Ideology  
Video: "Feminism"  
Assignment: Short-answer Test
4 The Week of September 24 and 26
SOCIAL MOBILITY
Question: How much social mobility is there and what causes it?
Lecture: The Pattern and Causes of Structural Mobility
Gazette: Social Mobility
Video: “Bourgeois Blues”
Audio: “Bourgeois Blues”

THE PECKING ORDER
Question: What explains the adult success of siblings?
Reading: The Pecking Order
Gazette: Focus Questions for The Pecking Order

Assignment: Paper

5 The Week of October 1 and 3
WHAT CLASS IS
Question: What is class and what is the shape of the American class structure?
Lecture: The Working Class Majority
Gazette: What Class Is
Reading: “A Parallel to the Negro Problem”
“Confessions of an Upper Class Wasp”
Video: “Social Class in America”
“Upper Class Wasps”

Assignment: Short-answer Test

6 The Week of October 8 and 10
THE CLASS DIVIDE
Question: Is America a Middle Class Society?
Lecture: The Middle Class Middle Mass Myth
Gazette: The Class Divide
Reading: “Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black & White Families”
Video: “Blue Collar in a White Collar World”
“Class Dismissed – Class Clowns”

Assignment: Essay

7 The Week of October 15 and 17
Assignment: Mid-semester exam in the Classroom
8 The Week of October 22 and 24
THE GREAT RECOVERY
Question: How did America Recover from the Great Depression?
Lecture: A Rising Tide Lifts all Boats
Gazette: The Great Recovery
Reading: The Big Squeeze, chapter 5
Video: "The Great Depression"
"The Great Recovery"
"The Post-war Boom"

Assignment: Essay

9 The Week of October 29 and 31
THE GREAT U-TURN
Question: Why has Class Inequality increased in recent decades?
Lecture: Politics, Technology, and Cupidity
Gazette: The Great U-turn
Reading: The Big Squeeze, chapters 3, 7, 11, and 13
Video: "Surviving the Bottom Line: Running with the Bulls"
"Inequality.Is"
"The Truth about the Economy"
"Wall Street"
"Robert Reich: On the Economy"

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY
Question: How and why has class inequality increased in recent decades?
Lecture: Earnings, Income, and Wealth
Gazette: Money, Money, Money
Video: "Inequality: Growing Apart"
"Income Inequality: Johnston Interview" (Minutes 0:00-12:35)
"Wealth Inequality in America"

Assignment: Short-answer Test

10 The Week of November 5 and 7
POWER
Question: What is the source and distribution of power?
Gazette: Power
Reading: "The Structure of Power in American Society"
Video: "Controlling Interest"

POLITICS

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Question: How and why does Political Participation vary by Class?
Lecture: Class and Politics
Gazette: Politics
   The Savings and Loan Crisis
Video: “Under the Influence”
   “Who Owns our Government?”

Assignment: Short-answer Test

11 The Week of November 12 and 14
WHY POVERTY
Question: What determines the rate of poverty and who will be poor?
Lecture: Subculture vs. Political Economy
Gazette: Why Poverty
Reading: “The Culture of Shiftlessness”
Video: “Poverty and Pickle Pickers”

Assignment: Short-answer Test

12 The Week of November 19 and 21
LIVING POORLY
Question: What is it like to live poorly?
Reading: Tell Them Who I Am
Gazette: Focus Questions for Tell Them Who I Am

Assignment: Paper

13 The Week of November 26
REDUCING POVERTY
Question: How can we reduce the rate of poverty?
Lecture: Reducing the Poverty Rate
Reading: The Big Squeeze, chapter 16
Video: “When Work Disappears”
   “Career Colleges”

Assignment: None
14 The Week of December 3 and 5

WAGES

Question: How much should jobs pay?

Gazette: Wages

Reading: The Big Squeeze, chapters 6, 8, 9, and 10
   “Some Principles of Stratification”

Video: “Income Inequality: Shulman Interview” (Minutes 12:40-21:20)

Assignment: Discussion

15 The Week of December 10 and 12

COURSE REVIEW AND REVELRY

Question: What did we learn?

Lecture: Course Review

Reading: “A Secession of the Successful?”

Audio: “Is That All There Is?”

Assignment: None

16 The Week of December 17

Assignment: Final Exam (8:00 a.m.-10:00) in the Classroom