

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION
Soc. 14 – Spring, 2010

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Broad Center 216 x2852
Office Hrs.: MT 3-5 Broad 216
Thurs. 3-4, Chicano Studies Ctr.

Description:

In this course, we will examine conflicting perspectives on the nature, causes, and consequences of social stratification and inequality. The purpose is: 1. to develop a theoretical foundation as to the various perspectives on how individuals and groups in society are differentiated, ranked, and evaluated 2. to critically analyze the nature and consequences of stratification as it affects gender, race/ethnic, and class inequalities 3. to study the connections between local and global inequalities 4. to apply class concepts, theory, and analysis to a concrete setting.

Course Readings Include the Following:

Harold R. Kerbo, *Social Stratification and Inequality: Class Conflict in Historical and Comparative Perspective*

Rhonda Levine, *Social Class and Stratification*

Readings From America Transformed: Globalization, Inequality, and Power by Gary Hytrek and Kristine M Zentgraf

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assigned readings must be read before coming to class. Class attendance and participation are expected. In cases of borderline grades, class participation and attendance will be taken into consideration. Assignments should be turned in on time. Unless there is a crisis emergency, please do not ask for an extension or an incomplete. I will dock points for any papers that are turned in late. **If all the requisites have not been completed by the end of the semester, a final grade will be given based on the work completed.** Papers should be typed, double-spaced, numbered, proofread, and include references. Group presentations must be completed on time since any change would affect the schedule and the other group presentations.

Grades will be based on percentages allocated as follows:

Essay questions	30%
Class Preparation Questions	10%
Stratification Paper proposal	15%
Cultural Group Presentation	10%
Final research paper	20%
Presentation on paper	5%
Participation and attendance	10%

1. Class essay questions: There will be two take-home essay questions. You should not have any problem on these questions if you are keeping up with your readings and attending class regularly (30%)

2. Class Readings' Questions – As part of developing the seminar aspect of the class, and as part of comparing the arguments of the authors in each segment of the class, this assignment requires students to produce a written question for assigned sections in the syllabus. The students will bring the written question to class that is based on a comparison of the content of the readings for that section. The questions will be used as part of discussion groups in the first part of the class (before coming back together as a whole for collective learning). Since the purpose of the questions is to help facilitate class discussion, they will only be accepted in the class when they are due. A credit/no-credit will be given for the questions and compiled at the end of the semester. No-credit means that the question needs more development (10%).

3.) The Research Proposal: Write a 3 to 5 page proposal on your research project. The proposal will include: 1. An introduction on the main issue or issues that your research will focus on 2. A Literature review on related research and how your study is related to it 3. The methodology or procedure for carrying out the research – describing your approach to the study (interviews, surveys, etc.) 4. Preliminary data gathered 5. Timetable for completing your study and research paper. The proposal is due right before the Spring Break. The proposal is worth 15% of your final grade.

4.) Cultural Group presentation: The class will be divided into cultural groups that will take ownership of one of the sections in the syllabus: The group is responsible for drawing out the primary themes in the section and relate them to course concepts and life experiences. The results should be collectively developed into a class presentation that utilizes a creative medium or combinations of mediums (i. e. video, art, music, skits, etc.). The group presentation is worth 10% of your grade.

5.) The Final Research Paper (10 - 12 pages long): Should apply social stratification/inequality theories to a chosen site, institution, group/s, community, or organization/s. Base your paper on a question that you have about a particular stratification issue that is related to your site. Your purpose is to observe and to know the site directly in order to gather concrete data or information that can help provide an answer to your question. At the same time, look to carry out research on sites and models that can serve as alternatives to stratification and inequality. Data for the paper may be gathered from historical and demographic information, participant observation, interviews, newspapers, magazines, etc. (or any combination of these). For example, you could observe a school and evaluate why some students do better than others. At the same time, you can present how some schools are overcoming tracking systems in the schools. One may want to examine how women and minorities are stratified in various institutions and what it has to do with how they are treated. Similarly, you may present examples of cooperatives or businesses that are seeking to overcome gender, race, and income inequalities. When you have gathered your data, utilize it to develop your analysis and argument. Hence, the data is used to sustain your argument. The paper

should include an introduction, which explains your question, what you are arguing, the data that sustains your argument, and your findings.

Use the data or evidence as a foundation for the argument of the paper. Provide a bibliography of your references. This paper is due on the last days of class. (20%)

4.) Presentation on Stratification research: On the last days of the class, students will make a short presentation on the results of the research project. The presentation should include: description of the site: the primary issue, problem, or argument developed out of the research; the literature related to the topic, the methodology used; the data gathered; and conclusions reached from the findings. (5%)

5.) Participation and Attendance – Weekly attendance to the class, completion of the readings for the class, and your participation in weekly discussions is very important for the character of this class. Now and then, a sign-in sheet will be passed out to give credit for attendance. (10%).

COURSE OUTLINE

Introduction 1/20

Discussion on syllabus, group presentations, and character of course

Concepts of Social Inequality 1/25, 1/27

Kerbo, Chapter 1, “Perspectives and Concepts in the Study of Social Stratification”

Reader: “Introduction” by Rhonda Levine, pages 1-16

Assignment of Stratification Research Proposal 1/27

The History of Inequality 2/1, 2/3

Kerbo, Chapter 3 “Social Stratification in Human Societies”

Reader: Chapter 10 – “Capitalism, Patriarchy, and the Subordination of Women” by Heidi Hartmann

Stratification Research Proposal is due 2/3

Classical Theories of Inequality: The Marxian Heritage 2/8, 2/10

Kerbo, “Early Statements: Chapter 4: “Competing Paradigms in the The Study of Social Stratification and “The Marxian Heritage in Social Stratification: The Development of a Critical-Conflict Paradigm,” 80-97

Reader: Chapter 1 “Manifesto” by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and Chapter 2 “On Classes”

Classical Theories of Stratification: Max Weber 2/15, 2/17

Kerbo, “Weber: An Alternative Conflict Paradigm,” 97-105

Reader: Chapter 3 “Class, Status, Party” by Max Weber, 49-63

Functional Theories of Stratification 2/22, 2/24

Kerbo, “An Uncritical-Order Paradigm Matures: The Functional Theory of Emile Durkheim 105-113,” and “Functional Theories of Stratification: Davis and Moore, Talcott Parsons” 117-130

Levin: Chapter 5 “Some Principles of Stratification” by Kingsley Davis and Wilber Moore 93 -104

Modern Theories of Stratification 3/1, 3/3

Kerbo, Chapter 5, “Conflict Theories of Stratification: Modern Marxian Theory, Erik Olin Wright’s Class Categories, Dahrendorf’s Conflict Theory, Critiques of Power Conflict Theories, and Modern World System Theory” 131-142

“The Convergence of Occupation, Power, and Property on Class Stratification 145-153

Levin: Chapter 8 “Class Analysis” by Erik Olin Wright

Essay Question #1 is passed out 3/3

Globalization and Stratification 3/8, 3/10

Class Hand-out: “Globalization and Change in America” and “Globalization and Stratification” from *America Transformed* by Gary Hytrek and Kristine M Zentgraf

Essay Question #1 is due 3/10

Spring Break 3/16 – 3/20

The Upper Class 3/22, 3/24

Kerbo, “The Upper Class” 157-187

Levin: Chapter 4, “What Social Class is in America” by W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker, and Kenneth Eels

Dolores Huerta at Pitzer as part of Cesar Chavez holiday celebration 3/26

The Corporate Class 3/29, 3/31

Kerbo, “The Corporate Class 188-216

The Middle and Working Classes 4/5, 4/7

Kerbo, Chapter 8, 217-247

Levine: Chapter 14 “The Declining Significance of Race” by William Julius Wilson 215-231

The Lower Classes: The Political Economy of Poverty 4/12, 4/14

Kerbo, Chapter 9, 248 - 295

Class Hand-out: “Globalization and Immigration” ” from *America Transformed* by Gary Hytrek and Kristine M Zentgraf

Essay Question #2 passed out 4/14 and due on 4/21

Gender Stratification and Inequalities 4/19, 4/21

Kerbo, Chapter 10, 296 - 330

Class hand-out: “Globalization and Gender” from *America Transformed* by Gary Hytrek and Kristine M Zentgraf

Essay Question #2 due 4/21

Countermovements to Stratification 4/26, 4/28

Class hand-out: “Countermovements and Community ” from *America Transformed* by Gary Hytrek and Kristine M Zentgraf

Levine, Chapter 16: “Toward A New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection” by Patricia Hill Collins

Presentations on Stratification Research 5/3, 5/5 (and finals day if need be)

Senior Papers due on 5/3

All others due on 5/10