Sociology 923: Social Stratification
Mondays, 2:10 to 4:40 PM, 6322 Sewell
Office hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30 or by appointment

Instructor
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Course Description
This course is a graduate level seminar on social stratification. This is a difficult field to bound as it incorporates several subfields, including the study of gender, race/ethnicity, sociology of education and much of social demography. There’s a lot to cover. As a graduate seminar, this class relies heavily on your participation. I will seldom lecture, and when I do my lectures will be brief and most likely methodological in nature (enough information to get you through the readings). The substantive work of this course falls to you. I expect you to complete all of the readings on time, submit summaries in a timely fashion (described below), and attend every class unless you are SERIOUSLY ill or have some other very legitimate reason for not attending (religious, family emergency, etc.). You will take turns leading our discussions.

Course format
We will meet for 2 hours and 20 minutes each week, with a five-minute break somewhere in there. In addition to completing ALL of the readings that are required (denoted by a *), each of you will complete one or two article summaries most weeks. You will upload your summaries to the drop box on the course web page by 8:00 AM Friday each week. This will give your classmates time to review your summaries before we meet. We will divide up readings for class a week ahead of time.

Each week, two students will co-lead our discussion. This means that each of you will co-lead our discussion three times over the course of the semester. As leaders, your job will be to send out a series of discussion questions by 8:00 AM Monday that will guide our review of key concepts and controversies in the week’s reading. Discussion questions should help us talk about the key points of the readings. They should be open-ended and thoughtful. Questions like “How did Coleman define social capital?” are neither and you should avoid them. On the other hand, questions like “How does Coleman’s notion of social capital inform or constrain our understanding of social inequalities in educational attainment?” may provoke some interesting discussion.

Prerequisites
Although there are no explicit requirements for this class other than graduate standing, students unfamiliar with multiple regression (e.g., SOC 361) will find some of the readings tough going. I believe you will understand the main points of such articles, but you will not be able to engage critically with such work to the level of students who have taken coursework in intermediate and advanced quantitative methods. At the end of the syllabus I include some statistical references that may be particularly useful to those of you with less familiarity with quantitative methods.
**Evaluation**
You grade for this class will be calculated as follows:

- General participation: 10%
- Leading discussion: 10%
- Article summaries: 15%
- Term paper: 65%

**Participation**
I will grade your participation as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Didn’t show up</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Showed up and said little or nothing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nominal participation (a few comments)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Active participation</td>
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**Leading discussion**
The discussion portion of your grade will be based on the quality of the questions you send to the rest of us in advance of class and your ability to facilitate a productive exchange of ideas in class.

**Article summaries**
The literature in the social stratification is expansive. In order to make the task of reviewing that literature more manageable, each of you will summarize an article or two each week for the rest of the class. Your summary should be concise (no more than a page or two if possible) but thorough enough to give the reader a good sense of the article or chapter you summarized. I will grade article summaries on a 0 to 3 scale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Summaries not received</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Summaries are misleading or overly vague</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Summaries cover the main points but with an inadequate level of detail</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Detailed summaries of main points. Summaries include each of the following (if appropriate): hypotheses, data, methods, findings, discussion</td>
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I will deduct one point from each summary for each day late.

**Term paper**
If you have data available to you, I strongly encourage you to use this course as an opportunity to produce an initial draft of a publishable article. I use the term ‘data’ inclusively to refer to quantitative data from surveys or administrative records, qualitative data from interviews or observations, archival data or any other empirical artifacts of social phenomena relevant to the social stratification. My only requirement is that the paper engage in dialogue with other work in the subfield.

Alternatively, you may choose to write a review of some aspect of social stratification suitable for publication as an annual review piece in sociology (*Annual Review of Sociology*). If you choose to write such a paper I will expect your treatment of your topic to be as thorough as a review published in that venue.

Finally, you may choose instead to write a project proposal. This will take the form of the project description piece of an NSF-style research proposal. Here’s some text to guide you (from [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/nsf13_1.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf13001/nsf13_1.pdf)):

“The Project Description should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and must include: objectives for the period of the proposed work and expected significance; relation to longer-term goals of the PI's project; and relation to the present state of knowledge in the field, to work in progress by the PI under other support and to work in progress elsewhere.
The Project Description should outline the general plan of work, including the broad design of activities to be undertaken, and, where appropriate, provide a clear description of experimental methods and procedures. Proposers should address what they want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified. These issues apply to both the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions.

The Project Description must contain, as a separate section within the narrative, a discussion of the broader impacts of the proposed activities. Broader impacts may be accomplished through the research itself, through the activities that are directly related to specific research projects, or through activities that are supported by, but are complementary to the project. NSF values the advancement of scientific knowledge and activities that contribute to the achievement of societally relevant outcomes.

A successful proposal will situate a proposed project in the extant research literature (6-10 pages), motivate the project by arguing for the need for this important work to fill a consequential hole in our understanding of the topic (2-4 pages) and describe in detail the work to be undertaken (10-15 pages).

Whichever of these three styles of paper you choose to write, your paper should not exceed 30 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins). Shorter is better, but if you are under about 20 pages you probably haven’t said enough.

Deadlines for the term paper are as follows:
- March 14: brief statement of topic (1-3 paragraphs)
- March 28: Revised topic statement (if necessary) and key cites
- May 13: Paper due

Accommodations
If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please let me know by the end of the second week of class. The McBurney Disability Resource Center (263-2741) provides resources for students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation of disability to them in order to receive official university services and accommodations.
Course calendar

*=required reading [except for the first 2 meetings]

January 25: What is Social Stratification? *READ ALL

Kearney, Melissa Schettini. 2014. "Testimony before the Joint Economic Committee."


Kingsley Davis & Wilbert E. Moore. Some Principles of Stratification. (GR: 28-30)


February 1: Theories of inequality * READ ALL

Marxian

Karl Marx (GR: 127-161)
Alienation and Social Classes (GR)
Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism (GR)
Ideology and Class (GR)

Ralf Dahrendorf: Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (GR 143)
Erik Olin Wright: A General Framework for the Analysis of Class Structure (GR 149)

Weberian

Max Weber (GR: 165-216)
Class, Status, Party (GR)
Status Groups and Classes (GR)
Open and Closed Relationships (GR)

Anthony Giddens: The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies (GR 183)
Frank Parkin: Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique (GR 193)
February 8: Class and occupation

* Emile Durkheim: The Division of Labor in Society (GR 217)
* Kim Weeden & David B. Grusky: The Three Worlds of Inequality (GR 222)

Debates


Measuring occupational status
* 24. Donald J. Treiman, Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective (GR: 233-236)


* 26. David L. Featherman & Robert M. Hauser, Prestige or Socioeconomic Scales in the Study of Occupational Achievement? (GR: 244-245)


http://www.jstor.org/stable/2780816

* Occupations as a site of inequality  

http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/344121


http://asr.sagepub.com/content/78/3/390.abstract

http://asr.sagepub.com/content/75/3/402.abstract

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**February 15: Occupational mobility and status attainment**


http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0049089X75900198

http://smr.sagepub.com/content/44/4/555.abstract


55. Jan O. Jonsson, David B. Grusky, Matthew Di Carlo, & Reinhard Pollak. It’s a Decent Bet That Our Children Will Be Professors Too (GR: 480-500)


**Comparative models of occupational mobility**


54. Richard Breen. Social Mobility in Europe (GR: 464-479)


Classic Models of Status Attainment
* 58. Peter M. Blau & Otis Dudley Duncan, with the collaboration of Andrea Tyree. The Process of Stratification (GR: 506-516)


Social Psychological Models


Variation across groups

http://www.jstor.org/stable/2778629h


Critiques


Multigenerational patterns of attainment
http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s13524-011-0014-7


February 22: Income, wealth and skills

* Emmanuel, Saez. 2015. “Striking it Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States (Updated with 2013 preliminary estimates).”


http://asr.sagepub.com/content/73/6/903.abstract


The transmission of income and wealth

* 56. Gary Solon. Intergenerational Income Mobility. (GR: 496-500)

http://jhr.uwpress.org/cgi/content/abstract/43/1/139


Effects of income and wealth on life chances of children


Cognitive and noncognitive skills


**February 29: Education I**

*Trends in education*

*Attainment*


*Achievement*

* 61. Sean F. Reardon. The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor (GR: 536-550)


* 63. Michelle Jackson. Determined to Succeed (GR: 562-569)


* 64. Sigal Alon. Towards a Theory of Inequality in Higher Education (GR: 569-577)


Theories of Educational Stratification


Human capital


March 7: Education II: Theories of educational stratification

Signaling


**Credentialism**


**MMI**


EMI


RRA


Reproduction


³ I assign this so you can get a flavor of Bourdieu’s style of presentation. The most relevant stuff is summarized in DiMaggio (1979) and in Horvat (2001) so don’t work too hard untangling Bourdieu’s prose.
**Brief statement of topic (1-3 paragraphs) due**

*Segmented labor markets*

70. Michael J. Piore. The Dual Labor Market: Theory and Implications (GR: 629-632)


*Job search and employment*


*Social ties and networks*

74. Mark S. Granovetter. The Strength of Weak Ties (GR: 653-657)


Ronald S. Burt. Structural Holes (GR: 659-663)

77. Roberto M. Fernandez & Isabel Fernandez-Mateo Networks, Race, and Hiring. (GR: 663-671)


Internal labor markets and careers


Deskilling or skill biased technical change?


Measuring skill demands

**Unions**


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**March 21: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

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**March 28: Gender**

► **Revised topic statement (if necessary) and key cites**


* 93. Lisa Belkin. The Opt-Out Revolution (GR: 807-811)


**Discrimination**

* 98. Barbara F. Reskin. Rethinking Employment Discrimination and Its Remedies (GR: 849-858)


**Sex Segregation**

* 100. William T. Bielby. The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation (GR: 865-875)


* 104. Maria Charles & David B. Grusky. Essentialism and Gender Inequality (GR: 902-911)


**Gender Gap in Wages**

* 105. Trond Petersen & Laurie A. Morgan. The Within-Job Gender Wage Gap (GR: 912-919)

* 106. Paula England. Devaluation and the Pay of Comparable Male and Female Occupations (GR: 919-923)

107. Tony Tam. Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less? (GR: 924-928)

* 108. Francine Blau. The Sources of the Gender Pay Gap (GR: 929-941)


Gender and earnings within the family


A Stalling Out?

112. David Cotter, Joan M. Hermsen, & Reeve Vanneman. The Anti-Feminist Backlash and Recent Trends in Gender Attitudes (GR: 965-973)


* 113. Cecilia Ridgeway. The Persistence of Gender Inequality (GR: 973-980)


*Labor markets and earnings*


*Maternity*


*Socialization*


Education


April 4: Race/ethnicity

Empirical Patterns

African Americans


Latinos


Constructing Racial Categories


* 80. Andrew M. Penner & Aliya Saperstein. The Dynamics of Racial Fluidity and Inequality (GR: 687-695)


http://www.jstor.org/stable/3088948


http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0049089X10000086


*Classic Modes of Incorporation*


http://www.jstor.org/stable/29737713

*New Modes of Incorporation*


http://asr.sagepub.com/content/76/4/602.abstract
**Discrimination**


* 87. Claude Steele. Stereotype Threat and African-American Student Achievement (GR: 752-756)

**Are Racial and Ethnic Distinctions Declining in Significance?**


http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-3808%28199610%29104%3A5%3C869%3ATROPFI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8

* 89. William Julius Wilson (GR: 765-779)  
The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions  
The Declining Significance of Race: Revisited & Revised

90. Reanne Frank, Ilana Redstone Akresh, & Bo Lu. How Do Latino Immigrants Fit Into the Racial Order? (GR: 780-787)


**Segregation**

Neighborhoods and Segregation


Poverty


* 49. Greg J. Duncan & Katherine Magnuson. The Long Reach of Early Childhood Poverty (GR: 417-423)

* 47. Patrick Sharkey & Felix Elwert. The Legacy of Multigenerational Disadvantage (GR: 403-411)


Trends


**Affluence**

* 30. Gaetano Mosca. The Ruling Class (GR: 276-281)

* 31. C. Wright Mills. The Power Elite (GR: 282-292)


| April 18: Demography and Stratification |


*Family configuration: Sibship size and birth order*


Assortative mating


Mare, Robert D. 2016. "Educational Homogamy in Two Gilded Ages: Evidence from Intergenerational Social Mobility Data." The ANNUALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 663:117-139. http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/663/1/117


Health and mortality
http://www.sciencemag.org/content/344/6186/856.abstract

http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pam.21805

http://asr.sagepub.com/content/76/6/913.abstract

http://asr.sagepub.com/content/77/4/548.abstract


http://hsb.sagepub.com/content/51/4/478.full.pdf+html


http://hsb.sagepub.com/content/49/1/72.abstract


### April 25: Crime and social stratification


Turney, Kristin. 2014. The Unequal Consequences of Mass Incarceration for Children. Unpublished manuscript.


May 2: Stratification and place: Neighborhoods and Urbanicity

* Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez. 2014. "Where is the land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States." The


Neighborhoods


Something to read before the prelim