Social Stratification:
Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective
For my parents and
in memory of my grandparents
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This book is designed to be used in conjunction with study materials that are available at http://www.inequality.com. In the various pages of this site, readers will not only find materials that are explicitly devised for readers of Social Stratification (e.g., study questions, supplementary readings), but also a wealth of additional information more broadly relevant to issues of inequality and poverty. This site further reports on ongoing activities of the Center for the Study of Inequality at Cornell University and provides links to related centers as well. The materials provided in this site will of course be frequently revised to reflect changes in the field as well as reactions to the book by professors, students, and other readers.

In using this book, some professors may prefer to treat it as a stand-alone text, whereas others may instead treat it as a source of supplementary readings that are assigned in conjunction with other texts. Although most of the chapters are reprints of past and present classics in the field, many are newly commissioned pieces that provide students with the conceptual background and introductory commentary that a stand-alone text requires. The lead chapter was formulated with this didactic objective explicitly in mind, while the concluding chapters for each of the six substantive parts of the book provide further commentary on the main subfields of stratification research and the analytic orientations underlying them. In all cases, the contributing authors were permitted to write with their own "voice," and the present book thus departs from conventional texts that seek to represent fields of research in (putatively) objective or balanced fashion.

In assembling this text, every effort was made to select articles that were both pathbreaking and readable, yet on occasion it proved necessary to compromise on one of these two objectives. The following chapters, in particular, rest on concepts or methods that might be challenging to some undergraduate students:

Karl Marx, "Alienation and Social Classes"
Edward Shils, "Deference"
David L. Featherman & Robert M. Hauser, "A Refined Model of Occupational Mobility"
David B. Grusky & Robert M. Hauser, "Comparative Mobility Revisited: Models of Convergence and Divergence in 16 Countries"
Richard Breen & John H. Goldthorpe, "Explaining Educational Differentials: Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory"
John Allen Logan, "Rational Choice and the TSL Model of Occupational Opportunity"
David B. Grusky & Maria Charles, "Is There a Worldwide Sex Segregation Regime?"
Margaret Mooney Marini & Pi-Ling Fan, "The Gender Gap in Earnings at Career Entry"
Barbara Stanek Kilbourne, Paula England, George Farkas, Kurt Beron, & Dorothea Weir, "Returns to Skill, Compensating Differentials, and Gender Bias: Effects of Occupational Characteristics on the Wages of White Women and Men"

Although the foregoing chapters present materials that should be mastered by all advanced students (both graduates and undergraduates), they can be safely excised for the purposes of a purely introductory course. The remaining readings were selected so as to ensure that introductory students will still be acquainted with the most important concepts, findings, and debates in the field.

D.B.G.
The standard rationale for publishing an anthology is that new concepts, theories, and findings have been accumulating so rapidly that some sort of organizing or synthesizing effort is needed. Indeed, given the frequency with which rhetoric of this kind appears in the prefaces of anthologies, the skeptical consumer of sociology might reasonably ask whether such a wide array of subfields and specialties can possibly be flourishing at once. In this context, there is something to be said for passing over the usual partisan rhetoric and providing, as much as possible, a more dispassionate reading of the current standing of stratification research. If, for example, one uses publication rates as an arbiter of disciplinary standing, the available evidence suggests that the position of stratification research has remained quite stable in recent decades (almost eerily so), with issues of inequality and mobility playing a featured role in roughly 25 percent of all articles published in major sociology journals since the 1960s (see Figure 1 in Mary Diane Burton and David B. Grusky, 1992, “A Quantitative History of Comparative Stratification Research,” Contemporary Sociology 21, pp. 623–631). The appropriate conclusion is not that some sort of “take-off period” is still underway, but rather that stratification research is firmly institutionalized and has successfully consolidated its standing as one of the dominant approaches within sociology.

In the six years following the publication of the first edition of Social Stratification, the field has made substantial progress on a number of fronts, perhaps most obviously in the areas of race, ethnicity, and gender. Although it may be unfashionable to represent intellectual change as “progress,” in the present case this characterization may have some merit, at least in the naive sense that much new evidence has accumulated and many old theories and hypotheses have been supplanted. This rapid change has made it necessary to revise the first edition substantially. To be sure, virtually all of the so-called classics appearing in the first edition were retained, but a great many contemporary pieces were replaced with yet newer selections that provided important extensions, revisions, and even rebuttals of prior research. The second edition is therefore half-new; that is, of the 95 selections appearing in the second edition, 36 are fresh additions that cannot be found in the first edition, while another 10 are revised versions of pieces that appeared in the first edition. These new selections address issues such as the functions of postmodern inequality (Part II); the class structure of post-communist societies (Part III); the usefulness of neo-Marxian and post-Marxian concepts of exploitation (Part III); the rationale for abandoning or overhauling conventional socioeconomic scales of inequality (Part III); the effects of social capital and networks on finding jobs and “getting ahead” (Part IV); the amount of persistent poverty in advanced industrialism and the plausibility of the “welfare trap” hypothesis (Part IV); the viability of rational action and related choice-based models of mobility and attainment (Part IV); the alleged decoupling of individual attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles from objective class situations (Part V); the structure of recent trends in racial and ethnic inequality (Part VI); the life chances of second-generation immigrants who either assimilate or remain ensconced in their ethnic enclaves (Part VI); the contribution of spatial segregation to maintaining racial inequality (Part VI); the rise of a dual racial hierarchy in which the black–nonblack distinction intensifies even as inequality among nonblacks lessens (Part VI); the extent to which occupational segregation can explain the gender gap in wages (Part VI); the empirical case for policies of “comparable worth” that seek to eliminate wage discrimi-
nation against female-dominated occupations (Part VI); the sources and causes of recent increases in income inequality (Part VII); and the likely future of social inequality and mobility under postindustrialism or postmodernity (Part VII).

As this listing suggests, the research literature has become so large and complex that the task of reducing it to manageable form poses difficulties of all kinds, not the least of which is simply defining defensible boundaries for a field that at times seems indistinguishable from sociology at large. In carrying out this task, it was clearly useful to start off with some "priors" about the subfields and types of contributions that should be featured, yet much of the organizational structure of the first and second editions emerged more gradually in the course of sifting through the literature. As a result, one might view the prefatory comments that follow as a dissonance reduction exercise in which the goal is to infer, after the fact, the larger logic that presumably guided the project. The six organizing principles listed below should be interpreted accordingly:

1. In assembling this collection, the first and foremost objective was to represent the diversity of research traditions on offer, while at the same time giving precedence to those traditions that have so far borne the greatest fruit. As is often the case, the pool of disciplinary knowledge has developed in uneven and ramshackle fashion, so much so that any attempt to cover all subjects equally would grossly misrepresent the current strengths and weaknesses of contemporary stratification research.

2. This sensitivity to disciplinary fashion reveals itself, for example, in the relatively large number of selections addressing and discussing issues of race, ethnicity, and gender. These subfields rose to prominence in the 1970s and continue to be popular even after a quarter-century of intensive and productive research. If the concepts of class, status, and power formed the "holy trinity" of postwar stratification theorizing, then the (partly overlapping) concepts of class, race, and gender are playing analogous roles now.

3. The second disciplinary development of interest is the emergence of stratification analysis as the preferred forum for introducing and marketing new methods. Although the study of stratification has become increasingly technical in method, most of the articles selected for this anthology are nonetheless accessible to introductory sociology students and other novices who are committed to careful study and dissection of the texts (see the Study Guide for details).

4. The readers of this volume will thus be disproportionately exposed to contemporary approaches to analyzing stratification systems. However, given that most stratification research has a strongly cumulative character, there is didactic value in incorporating earlier sociological classics as well as some of the "near-classics" that were written well after the foundational contributions of Karl Marx or Max Weber. The latter body of intervening work is often ignored by editors of anthologies, thereby perpetuating (in some small way) the view that all sociological research can or should be stamped with an exclusively Marxian or Weberian imprimatur.

5. In most anthologies, the classics so chosen make the research literature appear more coherent and cumulative than it truly is, as the natural tendency is to emphasize those aspects of the sociological past that seem to best anticipate or motivate current disciplinary interests. The novice reader may be left, then, with the impression that all past sociological work leads directly and inevitably to current disciplinary interests. This form of academic teleology will likely always be popular, yet in the present case some inoculation against it was secured by commissioning a series of concluding essays that locate the selections within a broader historical and substantive context.

6. The final, and most difficult, task faced by editors of anthologies is to chart an optimal course between the Scylla of overly aggressive excerpting and the Charybdis of excessive editorial timidity. By the usual stan-
standards of anthologies, the course charted here was very much an average one, as the objective was to eliminate all inessential material while still preserving the analytic integrity of the contributions. To be sure, some of our readers and contributors would no doubt oppose all excerpting, yet the high cost of implementing such a radical stance would be a substantial reduction in the number of articles that could be reproduced.

The editing rules adopted throughout this anthology were in most cases conventional. For example, brackets were used to mark off a passage that was inserted for the purpose of clarifying meaning, whereas ellipses were used whenever a passage appearing in the original contribution was excised altogether. The latter convention was violated, however, if the excised text was merely a footnote or a minor reference to a table or passage (e.g., “see table 1”) that was itself excerpted out. When necessary, tables and footnotes were renumbered without so indicating in the text, and all articles that were cited in excised passages were likewise omitted, without indication, from the list of references appearing at the end of each chapter. The spelling, grammar, and stylistic conventions of the original contributions were otherwise preserved. In this respect, the reader should be forewarned that some of the terms appearing in the original contributions would now be regarded as inappropriate (e.g., “Negro”), whereas others have passed out of common usage and will possibly be unfamiliar. Although a strong argument could clearly be made for eliminating all language that is no longer acceptable, this type of sanitizing would not only exceed usual editorial license but would also generate a final text that contained inconsistent, and possibly confusing, temporal cues. At the end of the book, a special section can be found that details the more controversial editing decisions that in some circumstances had to be made, such as omitting tables, resequencing paragraphs, and smoothing out transitional prose between adjacent sections (see “Supplementary Information on Sources and Excerpting”).

The truism that scholarly research is a collective enterprise probably holds for this book more so than others. Among the various functions that an anthology fills, one of more obvious ones is to define and celebrate what a field has achieved, and in so doing to pay tribute to those who made such achievement possible. I am duly grateful, therefore, to the dozens of scholars who allowed their work to be reproduced for this anthology or who agreed to write one of the commissioned essays that glue the various sections of it together. This book provides a well-deserved occasion to recognize the many successes of a field that is perhaps better known for its contentiousness and controversy.

The task of fashioning a book out of such a large and diverse field rested, in large part, on the careful labor of dedicated graduate research assistants. In assembling the first edition, I relied extensively on Karen Aschaffenburg and Ivan K. Fukumoto to locate and review hundreds of possible selections, while Mariko Lin Chang provided invaluable help in constructing the subject index and proofing the galleys. The same functions were filled admirably by Matthew Di Carlo, Gabriela Galescu, and Devah Pager in assembling the second edition. I have also profited from the advice and suggestions of the following scholars: James N. Baron, Monica Boyd, Mary C. Brinton, Mary Diane Burton, Phillip A. Butcher, Maria Charles, Paul J. DiMaggio, Thomas A. DiPrete, Mitchell Duneier, Paula England, Mariah Evans, John H. Goldthorpe, Oscar Grusky, Robert M. Hauser, Jerald R. Herting, Leonard J. Hochberg, Michael Hout, Jonathan Kelley, Harold R. Kerbo, Gerhard E. Lenski, Robert D. Mare, John W. Meyer, Martina Morris, Victor Nee, Trond Petersen, Barbara F. Reskin, Manuela Romero, Rachel A. Rosenfeld, Aage B. Sørensen, Jesper B. Sørensen, Eve B. Spangler, Kenneth I. Spenner, Iván Szelenyi, Marta Tienda, Nancy B. Tuma, Kim A. Weeden, Raymond S. Wong, and Morris Zelditch Jr. The seven anonymous reviewers of the first edition also provided con-
structive criticisms that were most helpful in assembling the second edition. If this book proves to be at all useful, it is in large part because my friends and colleagues guided me in fruitful directions.

The selections reproduced here have all been pre-tested in graduate and undergraduate stratification classes at the University of Chicago, Stanford University, and Cornell University. I am indebted to the many students in these classes who shared their reactions to the selections and thereby shaped the final product more than they may appreciate or realize. The students attending my first stratification class at Cornell University require special mention in this regard, as they were unusually dedicated in commenting on the selections appearing in the first edition and suggesting useful revisions and excisions.

The funding for this project came from the usual assortment of public and private sources. The first draft of my introductory essay was completed while I was on fellowship leave funded by the National Science Foundation through the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (NSF BNS-8700864). The honoraria for some of the commissioned essays were paid from Stanford University and Cornell University research funds, while the monies for research assistance were provided by the Presidential Young Investigator Program of the National Science Foundation (NSF SES-8858467), the Stanford Center for the Study of Families, Children, and Youth, and my Stanford University and Cornell University research funds. Although I am most grateful for the monies that these organizations so generously provided, they are of course in no way responsible for the views and opinions expressed herein.

It is fitting to conclude by singling out those contributions that make the concept of altruism seem all the more necessary. I would like to give special thanks to Stanley Lieberson for his active assistance in assembling selections for the second edition and to Andrew Day, Thomas Kulesa, Michelle Mallin, David McBride, Adina Popescu, and Leo Wiegman of Westview Press for their advice and support throughout the ordeal that publishing a book inevitably becomes. At the latter stages of the production process, Jennifer Ballentine dealt with impossible deadlines with improbable calm, and Jill Rothenberg of Westview Press was likewise a steadying influence whose wise counsel averted many potential disasters. I am most appreciative, finally, of the grace with which Szonja Szelenyi shouldered the triple burden of being a wife and mother, an academic, and an in-house scholarly advisor to her husband. This book bears her imprint in innumerable ways.

D.B.G.
Part I
Introduction
The Past, Present, and Future of Social Inequality

In advanced industrial societies, much rhetoric and social policy have been directed against economic and social inequality, yet despite such efforts the brute facts of poverty and massive inequality are still everywhere with us. The human condition has so far been a fundamentally unequal one; indeed, all known societies have been characterized by inequalities of some kind, with the most privileged individuals or families enjoying a disproportionate share of power, prestige, and other valued resources. The task of contemporary stratification research is to describe the contours and distribution of inequality and to explain its persistence despite modern egalitarian or anti-stratification values.

The term stratification system refers to the complex of social institutions that generate observed inequalities of this sort. The key components of such systems are (1) the institutional processes that define certain types of goods as valuable and desirable, (2) the rules of allocation that distribute these goods across various positions or occupations in the division of labor (e.g., doctor, farmer, “housewife”), and (3) the mobility mechanisms that link individuals to occupations and thereby generate unequal control over valued resources. It follows that inequality is produced by two types of matching processes: The social roles in society are first matched to “reward packages” of unequal value, and individual members of society are then allocated to the positions so defined and rewarded. In all societies, there is a constant flux of occupational incumbents as newcomers enter the labor force and replace dying, retiring, or out-migrating workers, yet the positions themselves and the reward packages attached to them typically change only gradually. As Schumpeter (1953, 171) puts it, the occupational structure can be seen as “a hotel . . . which is always occupied, but always by different persons.”

The contents of these reward packages may well differ across modern societies, but the range of variability appears not to be great. We have listed in Table 1 the various goods and assets that have been socially valued in past or present societies (for related listings, see Kerbo 2000, 43-44; Rothman 1999, 2-4; Gilbert 1998, 11-14; Duncan 1968, 686-90; Runciman 1968; Svalastoga 1965, 70). In constructing this table, we have followed the usual objective of including all those goods that are valuable in their own right (i.e., consumption goods) while excluding any “second-order goods” (i.e., investments) that are deemed valuable only insofar as they provide access to other intrinsically desirable goods. The resulting list nonetheless includes resources and assets that serve some investment functions. For example, most economists regard schooling as an investment that generates future streams of income (see Becker 1975), and some sociologists likewise regard cultural resources (e.g., Bourdieu 1977) or social networks (e.g., Coleman 1990) as forms of capital that can be parlayed into educational credentials and other goods. Although most of the assets listed in Table 1 are clearly convertible in this fashion, they are not necessarily regarded as investments by the individuals involved. In fact, many valuable
TABLE 1
Types of Assets, Resources, and Valued Goods Underlying Stratification Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Group</th>
<th>Selected Examples</th>
<th>Relevant Scholars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Economic</td>
<td>Ownership of land, farms, factories, professional practices, businesses, liquid assets, humans (i.e., slaves), labor power (e.g., serfs)</td>
<td>Karl Marx; Erik Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Political</td>
<td>Household authority (e.g., head of household); workplace authority (e.g., manager); party and societal authority (e.g., legislator); charismatic leader</td>
<td>Max Weber; Ralf Dahrendorf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural</td>
<td>High-status consumption practices; “good manners”; privileged lifestyle</td>
<td>Pierre Bourdieu; Paul DiMaggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social</td>
<td>Access to high-status social networks, social ties, associations and clubs, union memberships</td>
<td>W. Lloyd Warner; James Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Honorific</td>
<td>Prestige; “good reputation”; fame; deference and derogation; ethnic and religious purity</td>
<td>Edward Shils; Donald Treiman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Civil</td>
<td>Rights of property, contract, franchise, and membership in elective assemblies; freedom of association and speech</td>
<td>T. H. Marshall; Rogers Brubaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Human</td>
<td>Skills; expertise; on-the-job training; experience; formal education; knowledge</td>
<td>Kaare Svalastoga; Gary Becker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implicit claim underlying Table 1 is that the listed assets exhaust all possible consumption goods and, as such, constitute the raw materials of stratification systems. Given the complexity of modern reward systems, one might expect stratification scholars to adopt a multidimensional approach, with the objective being to describe and explain the multivariate distribution of goods. Although some scholars have indeed advocated a multidimensional approach of this sort (e.g., Halaby and Weakliem 1993; Landecker 1981), most have instead opted to characterize stratification systems in terms of discrete classes or strata whose members are endowed with similar levels or types of assets. In the most extreme versions of this approach, the resulting classes are assumed to be real entities that pre-exist the distribution of assets, and many scholars therefore refer to the “effects” of class location on the assets that their incumbents control (see the following section for details).

The goal of stratification research has thus been reduced to describing the structure of these social classes and specifying the processes by which they are generated and maintained. The following types of questions are central to the field:

- **Forms and sources of stratification:** What are the major forms of inequality in human history? Can the ubiquity of inequality be attributed to individual differences in talent or ability? Is some form of inequality an inevitable feature of human life?
- **The structure of contemporary stratification:** What are the principal “fault lines” or social cleavages that define the contemporary class structure? Have these cleavages strengthened or weakened with the transition to modernity and postmodernity?
The Past, Present, and Future of Social Inequality

- **Generating stratification**: How frequently do individuals move into new classes, occupations, or income groups? Is there a permanent "underclass?" To what extent are occupational outcomes determined by such forces as intelligence, effort, schooling, aspirations, social contacts, and individual luck?

- **The consequences of stratification**: How are the lifestyles, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals shaped by their class locations? Are there identifiable "class cultures" in past and present societies?

- **Ascriptive processes**: What types of social processes and state policies serve to maintain or alter racial, ethnic, and sex discrimination in labor markets? Have these forms of discrimination weakened or strengthened with the transition to modernity and postmodernity?

- **The future of stratification**: Will stratification systems take on completely new and distinctive forms in the future? How unequal will these systems be? Is the concept of social class still useful in describing postmodern forms of stratification? Are stratification systems gradually shedding their distinctive features and converging toward some common (i.e., "postmodern") regime?

The foregoing questions all adopt a critical orientation to human stratification systems that is distinctively modern in its underpinnings. For the greater part of human history, the existing stratification order was regarded as an immutable feature of society, and the implicit objective of commentators was to explain or justify this order in terms of religious or quasi-religious doctrines (see Bottomore 1965; Tawney 1931). It was only with the Enlightenment that a critical "rhetoric of equality" emerged in opposition to the civil and legal advantages of the aristocracy and other privileged status groupings. After these advantages were largely eliminated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the same egalitarian ideal was extended and recast to encompass not merely civil assets (e.g., voting rights) but also economic assets in the form of land, property, and the means of production. In its most radical form, this economic egalitarianism led to Marxist interpretations of human history, and it ultimately provided the intellectual underpinnings for socialist stratification systems. Although much of stratification theory has been formulated in reaction and opposition to these early forms of Marxist scholarship, the field nonetheless shares with Marxism a distinctively modern (i.e., Enlightenment) orientation based on the premise that individuals are "ultimately morally equal" (see Meyer 2001; see also Tawney 1931). This premise implies that issues of inequality are critical in evaluating the legitimacy of stratification systems.

The purpose of the present volume is to acquaint readers with some of these modern theories and analyses. As has frequently been noted (e.g., Grusky and Takata 1992), the field of stratification covers an exceedingly diverse terrain, and we shall therefore delimit our review by first defining some core stratification concepts and then focusing on the six classes of empirical questions previously identified. The readings presented after this introductory essay are likewise organized around the same set of empirical questions.

### Basic Concepts and Simplifying Strategies

The stratification literature has developed its own vocabulary to describe the distribution of assets, goods, and resources listed in Table 1. The key concepts of this literature can be defined as follows:

1. The degree of *inequality* in a given reward or asset depends, of course, on its dispersion or concentration across the individuals in the population. Although many scholars seek to characterize the overall level of societal inequality with a single parameter, such attempts will obviously be compromised insofar as some types of rewards are distributed more
equally than others. This complexity clearly arises in the case of modern stratification systems; for example, the recent emergence of "citizenship rights" implies that civil goods are now widely dispersed across all citizens, whereas economic and political goods continue to be disproportionately controlled by a relatively small elite (see, e.g., Marshall 1981).

2. The rigidity of a stratification system is indexed by the continuity (over time) in the social standing of its members. The stratification system is said to be highly rigid, for example, if the current wealth, power, or prestige of individuals can be accurately predicted on the basis of their prior statuses or those of their parents. It should again be emphasized that the amount of rigidity (or "social closure") in any given society will typically vary across the different types of resources and assets listed in Table 1.

3. The stratification system rests on ascriptive processes to the extent that traits present at birth (e.g., sex, race, ethnicity, parental wealth, nationality) influence the subsequent social standing of individuals. If ascriptive processes of this sort are in operation, it is possible (but by no means guaranteed) that the underlying traits themselves will become bases for group formation and collective action (e.g., race riots, feminist movements). In modern societies, ascription of all kinds is usually seen as undesirable or discriminatory, and much governmental policy is therefore directed toward fashioning a stratification system in which individuals acquire resources solely by virtue of their achievements. 6

4. The degree of status crystallization is indexed by the correlations among the assets in Table 1. If these correlations are strong, the same individuals (i.e., the "upper class") will consistently appear at the top of all status hierarchies, while other individuals (i.e., the "lower class") will consistently appear at the bottom of the stratification system. By contrast, various types of status inconsistencies (e.g., a poorly educated millionaire) will emerge in stratification systems with weakly correlated hierarchies, and it is correspondingly difficult in such systems to define a unitary set of classes that have predictive power with respect to all resources.

The foregoing discussion suggests, then, that stratification systems are complex and multidimensional. However, many scholars are quick to argue that this complexity is mere "surface appearance," with the implication being that stratification systems can in fact be adequately understood with a smaller and simpler set of principles. We shall proceed by reviewing three simplifying assumptions that have proved to be especially popular.

Reductionism

The prevailing approach is to claim that only one of the "asset groups" in Table 1 is truly fundamental in understanding the structure, sources, or evolution of societal stratification. 7 There are nearly as many claims of this sort as there are dimensions in Table 1. To be sure, Marx is most commonly criticized (with some justification) for placing "almost exclusive emphasis on economic factors as determinants of social class" (Lipset 1968, 300), but in fact much of what passes for stratification theorizing amounts to reductionism of one form or another. Among non-Marxist scholars, inequalities in honor or power are frequently regarded as the most fundamental sources of class formation, whereas the distribution of economic assets is seen as purely secondary (or "epiphenomenal"). For example, Dahrendorf (1959, 172) argues that "differential authority in associations is the ultimate 'cause' of the formation of conflict groups" (see also Lenski 1966), and Shils (1968, 130) suggests that "without the intervention of considerations of deference position the . . . inequalities in the distribution of
any particular facility or reward would not be grouped into a relatively small number of vaguely bounded strata.” These extreme forms of reductionism have been less popular of late; indeed, even neo-Marxian scholars now typically recognize several stratification dimensions, with the social classes of interest then being defined as particular combinations of scores on the selected variables (e.g., Wright 1997; see also Bourdieu 1984). The contributions in Part III of this volume were selected, in part, to acquaint readers with these various claims and the arguments on which they are based.

**Synthesizing Approaches**

There is an equally long tradition of research based on synthetic measures that simultaneously tap a wide range of assets and resources. As noted above, many of the rewards in Table 1 (e.g., income) are principally allocated through the jobs or social roles that individuals occupy, and one can therefore measure the standing of individuals by classifying them in terms of their social positions. In this context, Parkin (1971, 18) has referred to the occupational structure as the “backbone of the entire reward system of modern Western society,” and Hauser and Featherman (1977, 4) argue that studies “framed in terms of occupational mobility . . . yield information simultaneously (albeit, indirectly) on status power, economic power, and political power” (see also Duncan 1968, 689–90; Parsons 1954, 326–29). The most recent representatives of this position, Grusky and Sørensen (1998), have argued that detailed occupations are not only the main conduits through which valued goods are disbursed but are also deeply institutionalized categories that are salient to workers, constitute meaningful social communities and reference groups, and provide enduring bases of collective action (see also Grusky and Sørensen 2001). Although close variants of the Parkin scheme continue to be used, the emerging convention among quantitative stratification scholars is to apply either the 12-category neo-Marxian scheme fashioned by Wright (1997; 1989; 1985) or the 11-category neo-Weberian scheme devised by Erikson and Goldthorpe (2001; 1992). At the same time, new classification schemes continue to be regularly proposed, with the impetus for such efforts typically being the continuing expansion of the service sector (e.g., Esping-Andersen 1999; 1993) or the associated growth of contingent work relations (e.g., Perrucci and Wysong 1999). The question that necessarily arises for all contemporary schemes is whether the constituent categories are purely nominal entities or are truly meaningful to the individuals involved. If the categories are intended to be meaningful, one would expect class members not only to be aware of their membership (i.e., “class awareness”) but also to identify with their class (i.e., “class identification”) and occasionally act on its behalf (i.e., “class action”).

**Classification Exercises**

Regardless of whether a reductionist or synthesizing approach is taken, most scholars adopt the final simplifying step of defining a relatively small number of discrete classes. For example, Parkin (1971, 25) argues for six occupational classes with the principal “cleavage falling between the manual and non-manual categories,” whereas Dahrendorf (1959, 170) argues for a two-class solution with a “clear line drawn between those who participate in the exercise [of authority] . . . and those who are subject to the authoritative commands of others.” Although close variants of the Parkin scheme continue to be used, the emerging convention among quantitative stratification scholars is to apply either the 12-category neo-Marxian scheme fashioned by Wright (1997; 1989; 1985) or the 11-category neo-Weberian scheme devised by Erikson and Goldthorpe (2001; 1992). At the same time, new classification schemes continue to be regularly proposed, with the impetus for such efforts typically being the continuing expansion of the service sector (e.g., Esping-Andersen 1999; 1993) or the associated growth of contingent work relations (e.g., Perrucci and Wysong 1999). The question that necessarily arises for all contemporary schemes is whether the constituent categories are purely nominal entities or are truly meaningful to the individuals involved. If the categories are intended to be meaningful, one would expect class members not only to be aware of their membership (i.e., “class awareness”) but also to identify with their class (i.e., “class identification”) and occasionally act on its behalf (i.e., “class action”).

There is no shortage of debate about the condi-
tions under which classes of this (real) sort are generated.

The simplifying devices listed here are discussed in greater detail in our review of contemporary models of class and status groupings (see "The Structure of Modern Stratification"). However, rather than turning directly to the analysis of contemporary systems, we first set the stage by outlining a highly stylized and compressed history of the stratification forms that appear in premodern, modern, and postmodern periods.

**Forms of Stratification**

The starting point for any comparative analysis of social inequality is the purely descriptive task of classifying various types of stratification systems. The staple of modern classification efforts has been the tripartite distinction among class, caste, and estate (e.g., Tumin 1985; Svalastoga 1965), but there is also a long and illustrious tradition of Marxian typological work that introduces the additional categories of primitive communism, slave society, and socialism (see Wright 1985; Marx [1939] 1971). As shown in Table 2, these conventional approaches are largely (but not entirely) complementary, and it is therefore possible to fashion a hybrid classification that incorporates most of the standard distinctions (for related work, see Kerbo 2000; Rossides 1996; Runciman 1974).

The typology presented here relies heavily on some of the simplifying devices discussed earlier. For each of the stratification forms listed in Table 2, we have assumed not only that certain types of assets tend to emerge as the dominant stratifying forces (see column 2), but also that the asset groups so identified constitute the major axis around which social classes or status groupings are organized (see column 3). If the latter assumptions hold, the rigidity of stratification systems can be indexed by the amount of class persistence (see column 5), and the degree of crystallization can be indexed by the correlation between class membership and each of the assets listed in Table 1 (see column 6). The final column in Table 2 rests on the further assumption that stratification systems have (reasonably) coherent ideologies that legitimate the rules and criteria by which individuals are allocated to positions in the class structure (see column 7). In most cases, ideologies of this kind are largely conservative in their effects, but they can sometimes serve as forces for change as well as stability. For example, if the facts of labor market processes are inconsistent with the prevailing ideology (e.g., racial discrimination in advanced industrial societies), then various sorts of ameliorative action might be anticipated (e.g., affirmative action programs).

The stratification forms represented in Table 2 should thus be seen as ideal types rather than as viable descriptions of real systems existing in the past or present. In constructing these categories, our intention is not to make empirical claims about how existing systems operate in practice, but rather to capture (and distill) the accumulated wisdom about how these systems might operate in their purest form. These ideal-typical models can nonetheless assist us in understanding empirical systems. Indeed, insofar as societies evolve through the gradual "overlaying" of new stratification forms on older (and partly superseded) ones, it becomes possible to interpret contemporary systems as a complex mixture of several of the ideal types presented in Table 2 (see Schumpeter 1951).

The first panel in this table pertains to the "primitive" tribal systems that dominated human society from the very beginning of human evolution until the Neolithic revolution of some 10,000 years ago. The characterizations of columns 2–7 necessarily conceal much variability; as Anderson (1974, 549) puts it, "merely in the night of our ignorance [do] all alien shapes take on the same hue." These variable features of tribal societies are clearly of interest, but for our purposes the important similarities are that (1) the total size of the distributable surplus was in all cases quite limited, and (2) this cap on the surplus placed corresponding limits on the
overall level of economic inequality (but not necessarily on other forms of inequality). It should also be noted that customs such as gift exchange, food sharing, and the like were commonly practiced in tribal societies and had obvious redistributive effects. In fact, some observers (e.g., Marx [1939] 1971) treated these societies as examples of "primitive communism," because the means of production (e.g., tools, land) were owned collectively and other types of property typically were distributed evenly among tribal members. This is not to suggest that a perfect equality prevailed; after all, the more powerful medicine men (i.e., shamans) often secured a disproportionate share of resources, and the tribal chief could exert considerable influence on the political decisions of the day. However, these residual forms of power and privilege were never directly inherited, nor were they typically allocated in accord with well-defined ascriptive traits (e.g., racial traits).\textsuperscript{13} It was only by demonstrating superior skills in hunting, magic, or leadership that tribal members could secure political office or acquire status and prestige (see Kerbo 2000; Nolan and Lenski 1998; Lenski 1966). Although meritocratic forms of allocation are often seen as prototypically modern, in fact they were present in incipient form at the very earliest stages of societal development.

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Basic Parameters of Stratification for Eight Ideal-Typical Systems}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{System} & \textbf{Principal Assets} & \textbf{Major Strata or Classes} & \textbf{Inequality} & \textbf{Rigidity} & \textbf{Crystallization} & \textbf{Justifying Ideology} \\
\textbf{(1)} & \textbf{(2)} & \textbf{(3)} & \textbf{(4)} & \textbf{(5)} & \textbf{(6)} & \textbf{(7)} \\
\hline
\textbf{A. Hunting and gathering society} & & & & & & \\
1. Tribalism & Human (hunting and magic skills) & Chiefs, shamans, and other tribe members & Low & Low & High & Meritocratic selection \\
\hline
\textbf{B. Horticultural and agrarian society} & & & & & & \\
2. Asiatic mode & Political (i.e., incumbency of state office) & Office-holders and peasants & High & Medium & High & Tradition and religious doctrine \\
3. Feudalism & Economic (land and labor power) & Nobility, clergy, and commoners & High & Medium-High & High & Tradition and Roman Catholic doctrine \\
4. Slavery & Economic (human property) & Slave owners, slaves, "free men" & High & Medium-High & High & Doctrine of natural and social inferiority (of slaves) \\
5. Caste society & Honorific and cultural (ethnic purity and "pure" lifestyles) & Castes and subcastes & High & High & High & Tradition and Hindu religious doctrine \\
\hline
\textbf{C. Industrial society} & & & & & & \\
6. Class system & Economic (means of production) & Capitalists and workers & Medium-High & Medium & High & Classical liberalism \\
7. State socialism & Political (party and workplace authority) & Managers and managed & Low-Medium & Low-Medium & High & Marxism and Leninism \\
8. "Advanced" industrialism & Human (i.e., education, expertise) & Skill-based occupational groupings & Medium & Low-Medium & Medium & Classical liberalism \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
With the emergence of agrarian forms of production, the economic surplus became large enough to support more complex systems of stratification. Among Marxist theorists (e.g., Godelier 1978; Chesneaux 1964), the "Asiatic mode" is often treated as an intermediate formation in the transition to advanced agrarian society (e.g., feudalism), and we have therefore led off our typology with the Asiatic case (see line B2). In doing so, we should emphasize that the explicit evolutionary theories of Godelier (1978) and others have not been well received, yet many scholars still take the fallback position that Asiaticism is an important "analytical, though not chronological, stage" in the development of class society (Hobsbawm 1965, 37; see also Anderson 1974, 486; Mandel 1971, 116-39).

The main features of this formation are (1) a large peasant class residing in agricultural villages that are "almost autarkic" (O'Leary 1989, 17); (2) the absence of strong legal institutions recognizing private property rights; (3) a state elite that extracts surplus agricultural production through rents or taxes and expends it on "defense, opulent living, and the construction of public works" (Shaw 1978, 127); and (4) a constant flux in elite personnel due to "wars of dynastic succession and wars of conquest by nomadic warrior tribes" (O'Leary 1989, 18; for more extensive reviews, see Brook 1989; Krader 1975).

Beyond this skeletal outline, all else is open to dispute. There are long-standing debates, for example, about how widespread the Asiatic mode was (see Mandel 1971, 124-28) and about the appropriateness of reducing all forms of Asian development to a "uniform residual category" (Anderson 1974, 548-49). These issues are clearly worth pursuing, but for our purposes it suffices to note that the Asiatic mode provides a conventional example of how a "dictatorship of officialdom" can flourish in the absence of private property and a well-developed proprietary class (Gouldner 1980, 327-28). By this reading of Asiaticism, the parallel with modern socialism looms large (at least in some quarters), so much so that various scholars have suggested that Marx downplayed the Asian case for fear of exposing it as a "parable for socialism" (see Gouldner 1980, 324-52; see also Wittfogel 1981).

Whereas the institution of private property was underdeveloped in the East, the ruling class under Western feudalism was, by contrast, very much a propertied one. The distinctive feature of feudalism was that the nobility not only owned large estates or manors but also held legal title to the labor power of its serfs (see line B3). If a serf fled to the city, this was considered a form of theft: The serf was stealing that portion of his or her labor power owned by the lord (Wright 1985, 78). Under this interpretation, the statuses of serf and slave differ only in degree, and slavery thereby constitutes the "limiting case" in which workers lose all control over their own labor power (see line B4). At the same time, it would obviously be a mistake to reify this distinction, given that the history of agrarian Europe reveals "almost infinite gradations of subordination" (Bloch 1961, 256) that confuse and blur the conventional dividing lines between slavery, serfdom, and freedom (see Finley 1960 on the complex gradations of Greek slavery; see also Patterson 1982, 21-27). The slavery of Roman society provides the best example of complete subordination (Sio 1965), whereas some of the slaves of the early feudal period were bestowed with rights of real consequence (e.g., the right to sell surplus product), and some of the (nominally) free men were in fact obliged to provide rents or services to the manorial lord (Bloch 1961, 255-74). The social classes that emerged under European agrarianism were thus structured in quite diverse ways. In all cases, we nonetheless find that property ownership was firmly established and that the life chances of individuals were defined, in large part, by their control over property in its differing forms. Unlike the ideal-typical Asiatic case, the nation-state was largely peripheral to the feudal stratification system, because the means of production (i.e., land, labor) were controlled by a proprietary class that emerged quite independently of the state.
The historical record makes it clear that agrarian stratification systems were not always based on strictly hereditary forms of social closure (see panel B, column 5). The case of European feudalism is especially instructive in this regard, because it suggests that stratification systems often become more rigid as the underlying institutional forms mature and take shape (see Kelley 1981; Hechter and Brustein 1980; Mosca 1939). Although it is well-known that the era of classical feudalism (i.e., post-twelfth century) was characterized by a "rigid stratification of social classes" (Bloch 1961, 325),20 there was greater permeability during the period prior to the institutionalization of the manorial system and the associated transformation of the nobility into a legal class. In this transitional period, access to the nobility was not yet legally restricted to the offspring of nobility, nor was marriage across classes or estates formally prohibited (see Bloch 1961, 320–31, for further details). The case of ancient Greece provides a complementary example of a (relatively) open agrarian society. As Finley (1960) and others have noted, the condition of slavery was indeed heritable under Greek law, yet manumission (i.e., the freeing of slaves) was so common that the slave class had to be constantly replenished with new captives secured through war or piracy. The possibility of servitude was thus something that "no man, woman, or child, regardless of status or wealth, could be sure to escape" (Finley 1960, 161). At the same time, hereditary forms of closure were more fully developed in some slave systems, most notably the American one. As Sio (1965, 303) notes, slavery in the antebellum South was "hereditary, endogamous, and permanent," with the annual manumission rate apparently as low as 0.04 percent by 1850 (see Patterson 1982, 273). The slave societies of Jamaica, South Africa, and rural Iraq were likewise based on largely permanent slave populations (see Rodriguez and Patterson 1999; Patterson 1982).

The most extreme examples of hereditary closure are of course found in caste societies (see line B5). In some respects, American slav-
cation possible. Under the class system that ultimately emerged (see line C6), the estates of the feudal era were replaced by purely economic groups (i.e., "classes"), and closure rules based on heredity were likewise supplanted by (formally) meritocratic processes. The resulting classes were neither legal entities nor closed status groupings, and the associated class-based inequalities could therefore be represented and justified as the natural outcome of competition among individuals with differing abilities, motivation, or moral character (i.e., "classical liberalism"). As indicated in line C6 of Table 2, the class structure of early industrialism had a clear "economic base" (Kerbo 1991, 23), so much so that Marx ([1894] 1972) defined classes in terms of their relationship to the means of economic production. The precise contours of the industrial class structure are nonetheless a matter of continuing debate (see "The Structure of Contemporary Stratification"); for example, a simple Marxian model focuses on the cleavage between capitalists and workers, whereas more elaborate Marxian and neo-Marxian models identify additional intervening or "contradictory" classes (e.g., Wright 1997; 1985), and yet other (non-Marxian) approaches represent the class structure as a continuous gradation of "monetary wealth and income" (Mayer and Buckley 1970, 15).22

Whatever the relative merits of these models might be, the ideology underlying the socialist revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was of course explicitly Marxist. The intellectual heritage of these revolutions and their legitimating ideologies can again be traced to the Enlightenment, but the rhetoric of equality that emerged in this period was now directed against the economic power of the capitalist class rather than the status and honorific privileges of the nobility. The evidence from Eastern Europe and elsewhere suggests that these egalitarian ideals were only partially realized (e.g., Lenski 2000; Szelenyi 1998; Connor 1991). In the immediate postrevolutionary period, factories and farms were indeed collectivized or social-ized, and various fiscal and economic reforms were instituted for the express purpose of reducing income inequality and wage differentials among manual and nonmanual workers (Parkin 1971, 137-59; Giddens 1973, 226-30). Although these egalitarian policies were subsequently weakened through the reform efforts of Stalin and others, inequality on the scale of prerevolutionary society was never reestablished among rank-and-file workers (cf. Lenski 2001). There nonetheless remained substantial inequalities in power and authority; most notably, the socialization of productive forces did not have the intended effect of empowering workers, as the capitalist class was replaced by a "new class" of party officials and managers who continued to control the means of production and to allocate the resulting social surplus (see Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley 2001). This class has been variously identified with intellectuals or intelligentsia (e.g., Gouldner 1979), bureaucrats or managers (e.g., Rizzi 1985), and party officials or appointees (e.g., Djilas 1965). Regardless of the formulation adopted, the presumption is that the working class ultimately lost out in contemporary socialist revolutions, just as it did in the so-called bourgeois revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Whereas the means of production were socialized in the revolutions of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the capitalist class remained largely intact throughout the process of industrialization in the West. However, the propertied class may ultimately be weakened by ongoing structural changes, with the most important of these being (1) the rise of a service economy and the growing power of the "service class" (Esping-Andersen 1999; 1993; Goldthorpe 1982; Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich 1979), (2) the increasing centrality of theoretical knowledge in the transition to a new "information age" (Castells 1999; Bell 1973), and (3) the consequent emergence of technical expertise, educational degrees, and training certificates as "new forms of property" (Berg 1973, 183; Gouldner 1979). The foregoing developments all
suggest that human and cultural capital are replacing economic capital as the principal stratifying forces in advanced industrial society (see line C8). By this formulation, a dominant class of cultural elites may be emerging in the West, much as the transition to state socialism (allegedly) generated a new class of intellectuals in the East.

This is not to suggest that all theorists of advanced industrialism posit a grand divide between the cultural elite and an undifferentiated working mass. In fact, some commentators (e.g., Dahrendorf 1959, 48–57) have argued that skill-based cleavages are crystallizing throughout the occupational structure, with the result being a finely differentiated class system made up of discrete occupations (Grusky and Sørensen 1998) or a continuous gradation of socioeconomic status (e.g., Parsons 1970; see also Grusky and Van Rompuy 1992). In nearly all models of advanced industrial society, it is further assumed that education is the principal mechanism by which individuals are sorted into such classes, and educational institutions thus serve in this context to “license” human capital and convert it to cultural currency.23 The rise of mass education is sometimes represented as a rigidifying force (e.g., Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), but the prevailing view is that the transition to advanced industrialism has equalized life chances and produced a more open society (see line C8, column 5).24

As postmodernism gains adherents, it has become fashionable to argue that such conventional representations of advanced industrialism, both in their Marxian and non-Marxian form, have become less useful in understanding contemporary stratification and its developmental tendencies (e.g., Pakulski and Waters 1996; Bradley 1996; Crook, Pakulski, and Waters 1992; Beck 1992; Bauman 1992). Although the postmodern literature is notoriously fragmented, the variants of postmodernism that are relevant for our purposes invariably proceed from the assumption that class identities, ideologies, and organization are attenuating and that “new theories, perhaps more cultural than structural, [are] in order” (Davis 1982, 585). In the parlance of Table 2, the core claim is that postmodern stratification involves a radical decline in status crystallization, as participation in particular life-styles or communities is no longer class-determined and increasingly becomes a “function of individual taste, choice, and commitment” (Crook, Pakulski, and Waters 1992, 222).25

This line of argument has not yet been subjected to convincing empirical test and may well prove to be premature (for critiques, see Marshall 1997; Hout, Brooks, and Manza 1993). However, even if lifestyles and life chances are truly “decoupling” from economic class, this ought not be misunderstood as a more general decline in stratification per se. The brute facts of inequality will of course still be with us even if social classes of the conventional form are weakening. As is well-known, some forms of inequality have increased in recent years (see Levy 1998; Danziger and Gottschalk 1993; 1995), and others clearly show no signs of disappearing or withering away.

**Sources of Stratification**

The preceding sketch makes it clear that a wide range of stratification systems emerged over the course of human history. The question that arises, then, is whether some form of stratification or inequality is an inevitable feature of human society. In taking on this question, one turns naturally to the functionalist theory of Davis and Moore (1945, 242), as it addresses explicitly “the universal necessity which calls forth stratification in any system” (see also Davis 1953; Moore 1963a; 1963b). The starting point for any functionalist approach is the premise that all societies must devise some means to motivate the best workers to fill the most important and difficult occupations. This “motivational problem” might be addressed in a variety of ways, but perhaps the simplest solution is to construct a hierarchy of rewards (e.g., prestige, property, power) that privileges the incumbents of func-
tionally significant positions. As noted by Davis and Moore (1945, 243), this amounts to setting up a system of institutionalized inequality (i.e., a “stratification system”), with the occupational structure serving as a conduit through which unequal rewards and perquisites are allocated. The stratification system may be seen, therefore, as an “unconsciously evolved device by which societies consciously fill the most qualified persons” (Davis and Moore 1945, 243).

The Davis-Moore hypothesis has of course come under criticism from several quarters (see Huaco 1966 for an early review). The prevailing view, at least among postwar commentators, is that the original hypothesis cannot adequately account for inequalities in “stabilized societies where statuses are ascribed” (Wesolowski 1962, 31; Tumin 1953). Indeed, whenever the vacancies in the occupational structure are allocated on purely hereditary grounds, one cannot reasonably argue that the reward system is serving its putative function of matching qualified workers to important positions. What must be recognized, however, is that a purely hereditary system is rarely achieved in practice; in fact, even in caste societies of the most rigid sort, one typically finds that talented and qualified individuals have some opportunities for upward mobility. With the Davis-Moore formulation (1945), this slow trickle of mobility is regarded as essential to the functioning of the social system, so much so that elaborate systems of inequality have evidently been devised to ensure that the trickle continues (see Davis 1948, 369–70, for additional and related comments). Although the Davis-Moore hypothesis can therefore be used to explain stratification in societies with some mobility, the original hypothesis is clearly untenable insofar as there is complete closure.

The functionalist approach has been further criticized for neglecting the “power element” in stratification systems (Wrong 1959, 774). It has long been argued that Davis and Moore failed “to observe that incumbents [of functionally important positions] have the power not only to insist on payment of expected rewards but to demand even larger ones” (Wrong 1959, 774; see also Dahrendorf 1968). The stratification system thus becomes “self-reproducing” (see Collins 1975) insofar as incumbents of important positions use their power to preserve or extend their privileges. By this argument, the distribution of rewards reflects not only the latent needs of the larger society but also the balance of power among competing groups and their members. The emerging neo-Marxian literature on exploitative “rents” is directly relevant to such anti-functionalist formulations, because it identifies the conditions under which workers enjoy economic returns that are greater than training costs (e.g., schooling, wages foregone) and hence in excess of the functionally necessary wage. The standard rent-generating tactic among modern workers is to create artificial labor shortages; that is, excess returns can be secured by restricting opportunities for training or credentialing, as doing so prevents additional rent-seeking workers from entering the field and driving wages down to the level found elsewhere (Sorensen 2001; 1996; RoeMer 1988; Wright 1985). These excess returns therefore arise because occupational incumbents can use their positional power to limit the supply of competing labor.

It bears emphasizing that the foregoing position operates outside a functionalist account but is not necessarily inconsistent with it. Under a Davis-Moore formulation, the latent function of inequality is to guarantee that labor is allocated efficiently, but Davis and Moore (1945) acknowledge that excess inequality may also arise for other reasons and through other processes. The extreme forms of stratification found in existing societies may thus exceed the “minimum . . . necessary to maintain a complex division of labor” (Wrong 1959, 774). There are of course substantial cross-national differences in the extent and patterning of inequality that are best explained in historical and institutional terms (Fischer et al. 1996). Most notably, there is much institutional variability in the conditions under which rent-generating closure is
allowed, especially those forms of closure involving manual labor (i.e., unionization). As argued by Esping-Andersen (1999; 1990), countries also "choose" different ways of allocating production between the market and the state, with market-based regimes typically involving higher levels of inequality. The American system, for example, is highly unequal not merely because union-based closure has historically been suppressed, but also because state-sponsored redistributive programs are poorly developed and market forces are relied on to allocate services that in other countries are provided universally (e.g., healthcare).

Obversely, the egalitarian policies of state socialism demonstrate that substantial reductions in inequality are achievable through state-mandated reform, especially during the early periods of radical institutional restructuring (see Kelley 1981). It is nonetheless possible that such reform was pressed too far and that "many of the internal, systemic problems of Marxist societies were the result of inadequate motivational arrangements" (Lenski 2001). As Lenski (2001) notes, the socialist commitment to wage leveling made it difficult to recruit and motivate highly skilled workers, and the "visible hand" of the socialist economy could never be calibrated to mimic adequately the natural incentive of capitalist profit-taking. These results lead Lenski (2001) to the neo-functionalist conclusion that "successful incentive systems involve . . . motivating the best qualified people to seek the most important positions." It remains to be seen whether this negative reading of the socialist "experiments in destratification" (Lenski 1978) will generate a new round of functionalist theorizing and debate.

The Structure of Contemporary Stratification

The history of stratification theory is in large part a history of debates about the contours of class, status, and prestige hierarchies in advanced industrial societies. These debates might appear to be nothing more than academic infighting, but the participants treat them with high seriousness as a "necessary prelude to the conduct of political strategy" (Parkin 1979, 16). For example, considerable energy has been devoted to identifying the correct dividing line between the working class and the bourgeoisie, because the task of locating the oppressed class is seen as a prerequisite to devising a political strategy that might appeal to it. It goes without saying that political and intellectual goals are often conflated in such mapmaking efforts, and the assorted debates in this subfield are thus infused with more than the usual amount of scholarly contention. These debates are complex and wide-ranging, but it suffices for our purposes to distinguish the following five schools of thought (see Wright 1997 for a more detailed review).

Marxists and Post-Marxists

The debates within the Marxist and neo-Marxist camps have been especially contentious, not only because of the foregoing political motivations, but also because the discussion of class within Capital (Marx [1894] 1972) is too fragmentary and unsystematic to adjudicate between various competing interpretations. At the end of the third volume of Capital, the now-famous fragment on "the classes" (Marx [1894] 1972, 862–63) breaks off just when Marx appeared ready to advance a formal definition of the term, thus providing precisely the ambiguity needed to sustain decades of debate. It is clear, nonetheless, that his abstract model of capitalism was resolutely dichotomous, with the conflict between capitalists and workers constituting the driving force behind further social development. This simple two-class model should be viewed as an ideal type designed to capture the developmental tendencies of capitalism; indeed, whenever Marx carried out concrete analyses of existing capitalist systems, he acknowledged that the class structure was complicated by the persistence of transitional classes (e.g., landowners), quasi-class group-
ings (e.g., peasants), and class fragments (e.g., the lumpen proletariat). It was only with the progressive maturation of capitalism that Marx expected these complications to disappear as the “centrifugal forces of class struggle and crisis flung all dritte Personen [third persons] to one camp or the other” (Parkin 1979, 16).

The recent history of modern capitalism reveals that the class structure has not evolved in such a precise and tidy fashion. As Dahrendorf (1959) points out, the old middle class of artisans and shopkeepers has indeed declined in relative size, yet a new middle class of managers, professionals, and nonmanual workers has expanded to occupy the newly vacated space (see also Wright 1997; Steinmetz and Wright 1989). The last 50 years of neo-Marxist theorizing can be seen as the intellectual fallout from this development, with some commentators seeking to minimize its implications, and others putting forward a revised mapping of the class structure that accommodates the new middle class in explicit terms.

Within the former camp, the principal tendency is to claim that the lower sectors of the new middle class are in the process of being proletarianized, because “capital subjects [nonmanual labor] . . . to the forms of rationalization characteristic of the capitalist mode of production” (Braverman 1974, 408; see Spenner 1995 for a review of the “deskilling” literature). This line of reasoning suggests that the working class may gradually expand in relative size and therefore regain its earlier power. In an updated version of this argument, Aronowitz and DiFazio (1994, 16) also describe the “proletarianization of work at every level below the [very] top,” but they further suggest that such proletarianization proceeds by eliminating labor as well as deskilling it. The labor-saving forces of technological change thus produce a vast reserve army of unemployed, underemployed, and intermittently employed workers.

At the other end of the continuum, Poulantzas (1974) has argued that most members of the new intermediate stratum fall outside the working class proper, because they are not exploited in the classical Marxian sense (i.e., surplus value is not extracted). The latter approach may have the merit of keeping the working class conceptually pure, but it also reduces the size of this class to “pygmy proportions” (see Parkin 1979, 19) and dashes the hopes of those who would see workers as a viable political force. This result has motivated contemporary scholars to develop class models that fall somewhere between the extremes advocated by Braverman (1974) and Poulantzas (1974). For example, the neo-Marxist model proposed by Wright (1978) generates an American working class that is acceptably large (i.e., approximately 46 percent of the labor force), yet the class mappings in this model still pay tribute to the various cleavages and divisions among workers who sell their labor power. That is, professionals are placed in a distinct “semi-autonomous class” by virtue of their control over the work process, and upper-level supervisors are located in a “managerial class” by virtue of their authority over workers (Wright 1978; see also Wright 1985). The dividing lines proposed in this model rest, then, on concepts (e.g., autonomy, authority relations) that were once purely the province of Weberian or neo-Weberian sociology, leading Parkin (1979, 25) to claim that “inside every neo-Marxist there seems to be a Weberian struggling to get out.”

These early class models, which were once quite popular, have now been superseded by various second-generation models that rely more explicitly on the concept of exploitation. As noted previously, Roemer (1988) and others (especially Sørensen 2000; 1996; Wright 1997) have redefined exploitation as the extraction of “rent,” where this refers to the excess earnings that are secured by limiting access to positions and thus artificially restricting the supply of qualified labor. If an approach of this sort is adopted, one can then test for skill-based exploitation by calculating whether the cumulated lifetime earnings of skilled labor exceed that of unskilled labor by an amount larger than the implied training costs (e.g., school tuition, forgone earnings).
In a perfectly competitive market, labor will perforce flow to the most rewarding occupations, thereby equalizing the lifetime earnings of workers and eliminating exploitative returns. However, when opportunities are limited by imposing restrictions on entry (e.g., qualifying exams), the equilibrating flow of labor is disrupted and the potential for exploitation within the labor market emerges. This approach was devised, then, to recognize various dividing lines within the working class and to understand them as the outcome of exploitative processes. There is of course no guarantee that these internal fractures can be overcome; that is, a rent-based model appreciates that workers have potentially differing interests, with more privileged workers presumably oriented toward preserving and extending the institutional mechanisms (e.g., credentialing) that allow them to reap exploitative returns (cf. Wright 1997).

Weberians and Post-Weberians

The rise of the “new middle class” has proven less problematic for scholars working within a Weberian framework. Indeed, the class model advanced by Weber suggests a multiplicity of class cleavages, given that it equates the economic class of workers with their “market situation” in the competition for jobs and valued goods (Weber [1922] 1968, 926–40). Under this formulation, the class of skilled workers is privileged because its incumbents are in high demand on the labor market, and because its economic power can be parlayed into high wages and an advantaged position in commodity markets (Weber [1922] 1968, 927–28). At the same time, the stratification system is further complicated by the existence of “status groupings,” which Weber saw as forms of social affiliation that can compete, coexist, or overlap with class-based groupings. Although an economic class is merely an aggregate of individuals in a similar market situation, a status grouping is defined as a community of individuals who share a style of life and interact as status equals (e.g., the nobility, an ethnic caste). In some circumstances, the boundaries of a status grouping are determined by purely economic criteria, yet Weber ([1922] 1968, 932) notes that “status honor normally stands in sharp opposition to the pretensions of sheer property.”

This formulation has been especially popular in the United States. During the postwar decades, American sociologists typically dismissed the Marxist model of class as overly simplistic and one-dimensional, whereas they celebrated the Weberian model as properly distinguishing between the numerous variables that Marx had conflated in his definition of class (see, e.g., Barber 1968). In the most extreme versions of this approach, the dimensions identified by Weber were disaggregated into a multiplicity of stratification variables (e.g., income, education, ethnicity), and the correlations between these variables were then shown to be weak enough to generate various forms of “status inconsistency” (e.g., a poorly educated millionaire). The resulting picture suggested a “pluralistic model” of stratification; that is, the class system was represented as intrinsically multidimensional, with a host of cross-cutting affiliations producing a complex patchwork of internal class cleavages. The multidimensionalists were often accused of providing a “sociological portrait of America as drawn by Norman Rockwell” (Parkin 1979, 604), but it should be kept in mind that some of these theorists also emphasized the seamy side of pluralism. In fact, Lenski (1954) and others (e.g., Lipset 1959) have argued that modern stratification systems might be seen as breeding grounds for personal stress and political radicalism, given that individuals with contradictory statuses may feel relatively deprived and thus support “movements designed to alter the political status quo” (Lenski 1966, 88). This line of research ultimately died out in the early-1970s under the force of negative and inconclusive findings (e.g., Jackson and Curtis 1972).

Although postmodernists have not explicitly drawn on classical multidimensionalist accounts, there is nonetheless much similarity,
apparently inadvertent, between these two lines of theorizing. Indeed, contemporary postmodernists argue that class-based identities are far from fundamental or "essential," that individuals instead have "multiple and cross-cutting identities" (Crook, Pakulski, and Waters 1992, 222), and that the various contradictions and inconsistencies among these identities can lead to a "decentered self" and consequent stress and disaffection (see Bauman 2000; Bradley 1996; Pakulski and Waters 1996; Beck 1992; 1987). There are of course important points of departure as well; most notably, postmodernists do not regard status affiliations as fixed or exogeneous, instead referring to the active construction of "reflexive biographies that depend on the decisions of the actor" (Beck 1992, 91–101). The resulting "individualization of inequality" (Beck 1992) implies that lifestyles and consumption practices could become decoupled from work identities as well as other status group memberships. Despite these differences, postmodern commentators might well gain from reexamining this older neo-Weberian literature, if only because it addressed the empirical implications of multidimensional theorizing more directly and convincingly.

It would be a mistake to regard the foregoing multidimensionalists as the only intellectual descendants of Weber. In recent years, the standard multidimensionalist interpretation of "Class, Status, and Party" (Weber 1946, 180–95) has fallen into disfavor, and an alternative version of neo-Weberian stratification theory has gradually taken shape. This revised reading of Weber draws on the concept of social closure as defined and discussed in the essay “Open and Closed Relationships” (Weber [1922] 1968, 43–46, 341–48; see also Weber 1947, 424–29). By social closure, Weber was referring to the processes by which groups devise and enforce rules of membership, with the purpose of such rules typically being to "improve the position [of the group] by monopolistic tactics" (Weber [1922] 1968, 43). Although Weber did not directly link this discussion with his other contributions to stratification theory, subsequent commentators have pointed out that social classes and status groupings are generated by simple exclusionary processes operating at the macrostructural level (e.g., Manza 1992; Murphy 1988; Goldthorpe 1987; Parkin 1979; Giddens 1973). Under modern industrialism, there are no formal sanctions preventing labor from crossing class boundaries, yet various institutional forces (e.g., private property, union shops) are nonetheless quite effective in limiting the amount of class mobility over the life course and between generations. These exclusionary mechanisms not only "maximize claims to rewards and opportunities" among the incumbents of closed classes (Parkin 1979, 44), they also provide the demographic continuity needed to generate distinctive class cultures and to "reproduce common life experience over the generations" (Giddens 1973, 107). As noted by Giddens (1973, 107–12), barriers of this sort are not the only source of "class structuration," yet they clearly play a contributing role in the formation of identifiable classes under modern industrialism. This revisionist interpretation of Weber has reoriented the discipline toward examining the sources and causes of class formation rather than the (potentially) fragmenting effects of cross-cutting affiliations and cleavages.

**Durkheim and Post-Durkheimians**

Although Marx and Weber are more frequently invoked by contemporary scholars of inequality, the work of Durkheim ([1893] 1933) is also directly relevant to issues of class. In his preface to *The Division of Labor*, Durkheim ([1893] 1933, 28) predicted that interdependent corporate occupations would gradually become "intercalated between the state and the individual," thereby solving the problem of order by regulating industrial conflict and creating local forms of "mechanical solidarity" (i.e., solidarity based on shared norms and values). As the occupational structure differentiates, Durkheim argued that shared values at the societal level would become more abstract and less constraining,
while compensating forms of local solidarism would simultaneously emerge at the level of detailed occupations. For Durkheim ([1893] 1933, 27), the modern order is thus characterized by "moral polymorphism," where this refers to the rise of multiple, occupation-specific "centers of moral life" that provide a counterbalance to the threat of class formation on one hand and that of state tyranny on the other (see Grusky 2000).

This line of argumentation may well have contemporary relevance. Indeed, even if class-based organization is an increasingly "spent force" in the postmodern period (e.g., Pakulski and Waters 1996), it is well to bear in mind that occupation-level structuration of the sort emphasized by Durkheim is seemingly alive and well (Grusky and Sorensen 2001; 1998; Barley 1996; Barley and Tolbert 1991; see also Bourdieu 1984). The conversion of work-based distinctions into meaningful social groupings occurs at the disaggregate level because (1) the forces of self-selection operate to bring like-minded workers into the same occupation; (2) the resulting social interaction with coworkers tends to reinforce and elaborate these shared values; (3) the homogenizing effects of informal interaction may be supplemented with explicit training and socialization in the form of apprenticeships, certification programs, and professional schooling; and (4) the incumbents of occupations have common interests that may be pursued, in part, by aligning themselves with their occupation and pursuing collective ends (e.g., closure, certification). The foregoing processes all suggest that social closure coincides with occupational boundaries and generates gemeinschaftlich communities at a more disaggregate level than neo-Marxian or neo-Weberian class analysts have appreciated (Weeden 1998; Sorensen and Grusky 1996; Van Maanen and Barley 1984). In effect, a neo-Durkheimian mapping allows for a unification of class and Stand that, according to Weber ([1922] 1968), occurs only rarely in the context of conventional aggregate classes.

The neo-Marxian concept of rent can likewise be recast in Durkheimian terms (see Grusky and Sorensen 2001; 1998; Sorensen 2001; 1996). In some neo-Marxian schemes, aggregate "class" categories are formed by grouping together all workers who profit from similar types of exploitation (e.g., Wright 1997), with the apparent claim being that incumbents of these categories will ultimately come to appreciate and act on behalf of their shared interests. If a neo-Durkheimian approach is adopted, such aggregation becomes problematic because it conceals the more detailed level at which social closure and skill-based exploitation occurs. The key point in this context is that the working institutions of closure (i.e., professional associations, craft unions) restrict the supply of labor to occupations rather than aggregate classes. As a result, the fundamental units of exploitation would appear to be occupations themselves, whereas neo-Marxian "classes" are merely heterogeneous aggregations of occupations that have similar capacities for exploitation.

The main empirical question that arises in this context is whether the contemporary world is becoming "Durkheimianized" as local structuration strengthens at the expense of aggregate forms of class organization. The prevailing "postoccupational view" is that contemporary firms are relying increasingly on teamwork, cross-training, and multiactivity jobs that break down conventional skill-based distinctions (e.g., Casey 1995; Baron 1994; Drucker 1993). At the same time, this account is not without its critics, some of whom (especially Barley 1996) suggest that pressures for an occupational logic of organizing may be rising because (1) occupationally organized sectors of the labor force (e.g., professions) are expanding in size, (2) occupationalization is extending into new sectors (e.g., management) that had previously been resistant to such pressures, and (3) the spread of outsourcing replaces firm-based ties and association with occupation-based organization (see also Barley and Bechky 1994; Freidson 1994, 103-4). In this regard, the archetypal organizational form of the future may well be the construction industry, relying as it does on
the collaboration of independent experts who guard their occupationally defined bodies of knowledge jealously.

**The Ruling Class and Elites**

With elite studies, the focus shifts of course to the top of the class structure, with the typical point of departure again being the economic analysis of Marx and various neo-Marxians. The classical elite theorists (Mills 1956; Mosca 1939; Pareto 1935) sought to replace the Marxian model of economic classes with a purely political analysis resting on the distinction between the rulers and the ruled. As Mills (1956, 277) put it, Marx formulated the "short-cut theory that the economic class rules politically," whereas elite theorists contend that the composition of the ruling class reflects the outcome of political struggles that may not necessarily favor economic capital. In their corollary to this thesis, Pareto and Mosca further claim that the movement of history can be understood as a cyclical succession of elites, with the relative size of the governing minority tending to diminish as the political community grows (Mosca 1939, 53). The common end point of all revolutions is therefore the "dominion of an organized minority" (Mosca 1939, 53); indeed, Mosca points out that all historical class struggles have culminated with a new elite taking power, while the lowest class invariably remains as such (see also Gouldner 1979, 93). Although Marx would have agreed with this oligarchical interpretation of presocialist revolutions, he nonetheless insisted that the socialist revolution would break the pattern and culminate in a dictatorship of the proletariat and ultimately a classless state.30 The elite theorists were, by contrast, unconvinced that the "iron law of oligarchy" (Michels 1949) could be so conveniently suspended for this final revolution.

As elite theory evolved, this original interest in the long-term dynamics of class systems was largely abandoned, and emphasis shifted to describing the structure and composition of modern elites (cf. Lachmann 1990). The research agenda of contemporary elite theorists is dominated by the following types of questions:

1. Who wields power and influence in contemporary society? Is there an "inner circle" of powerful corporate leaders (Useem 1984), a "governing class" of hereditary political elites (Shils 1982; Mosca 1939), or a more encompassing "power elite" that cuts across political, economic, and military domains (Domhoff 1998; Mills 1956)?

2. How cohesive are the elite groupings so defined? Do they form a unitary "upper class" (Domhoff 1998, 2), or are they divided by conflicting interests and unable to achieve unity (Lerner, Nagai, and Rothman 1996; Keller 1991)?

3. Are certain sectors of the elite especially cohesive or conflictual? Is the business elite, for example, fractured by competition and accordingly weakened in pressing its interests? Or have interlocking directorates and other forms of corporate networking and association unified the business elite (Mizruchi 1996; 1982)? How has the separation of ownership and control affected elite unity (e.g., Fligstein and Brantley 1992)?

4. How much elite mobility is there? Are elites continuously circulating (Shils 1982; Pareto 1935), or have hereditary forms of closure remained largely intact even today (see Baltzell 1991; 1964; 1958)?

5. What are the prerequisites for elite membership? Are elites invariably drawn from prestigious schools (Lerner, Nagai, and Rothman 1996; Useem and Karabel 1986)? Are women and minorities increasingly represented in the economic, political, or cultural elite of advanced industrial societies (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 1998)?

6. How do elites adapt and react to revolutionary change? Were socialist elites
successful, for example, in converting their discredited political capital into economic or cultural power (see Nee 2001; Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley 1998; Rona-Tas 1997; 1994; Szelenyi and Szelenyi 1995)?

There are nearly as many elite theories as there are possible permutations of responses to questions of this sort. If there is any unifying theme to contemporary theorizing, it is merely that subordinate classes lack any meaningful control over the major economic and political decisions of the day (Domhoff 1998). Although it was once fashionable to argue that "ordinary citizens can acquire as much power . . . as their free time, ability, and inclination permit" (Rose 1967, 247), such extreme versions of pluralism have of course now fallen into disrepute.

**Gradational Measurements of Social Standing**

The foregoing theorists have all proceeded by mapping individuals or families into mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories (e.g., "classes"). As the preceding review indicates, there continues to be much debate about the location of the boundaries separating these categories, yet the shared assumption is that boundaries of some kind are present, if only in latent or incipient form. By contrast, the implicit claim underlying gradational approaches is that such "dividing lines" are largely the construction of overzealous sociologists, and that the underlying structure of modern stratification can, in fact, be more closely approximated with gradational measures of income, status, or prestige (Nisbet 1959; see also Clark and Lipset 1991; cf. Hout, Brooks, and Manza 1993). The standard concepts of class action and consciousness are likewise typically discarded; that is, whereas most categorical models are based on the (realist) assumption that the constituent categories are "structures of interest that provide the basis for collective action" (Wright 1979, 7), gradational models are usually represented as taxonomic or statistical classifications of purely heuristic interest.\(^{31}\)

There is no shortage of gradational measures that might be used to characterize the social welfare or reputational ranking of individuals. Although there is some sociological precedent for treating income as an indicator of class (e.g., Mayer and Buckley 1970, 15), most sociologists seem content with a disciplinary division of labor that leaves matters of income to economists. It does not follow that distinctions of income are sociologically uninteresting; after all, if one is truly intent on assessing the "market situation" of workers (Weber [1922] 1968), there is much to recommend a direct measurement of their income and wealth. The preferred approach has nonetheless been to define classes as "groups of persons who are members of effective kinship units which, as units, are approximately equally valued" (Parsons 1954, 77). This formulation was first operationalized in the postwar community studies (e.g., Warner 1949) by constructing broadly defined categories of reputational equals (e.g., "upper-upper class," "upper-middle class").\(^{32}\) However, when the disciplinary focus shifted to the national stratification system, the measure of choice soon became either (1) prestige scales based on popular evaluations of occupational standing (e.g., Treiman 1977; 1976), or (2) socioeconomic scales constructed as weighted averages of occupational income and education (e.g., Blau and Duncan 1967). The latter scales have served as standard measures of class background for nearly 40 years (for reviews, see Wegener 1992; Grusky and Van Rompuaey 1992).

The staying power of prestige and socioeconomic scales is thus impressive in light of the faddishness of most sociological research. This long run may nonetheless be coming to an end; indeed, while a widely supported alternative to socioeconomic scales has yet to appear, the socioeconomic tradition has been subjected to increasing criticism on various
fronts. The following four lines of questioning have attracted special attention:

- **Are conventional scales well-suited for the purpose of studying social mobility and socioeconomic attainment?** There is much research suggesting that conventional prestige and socioeconomic scales overstate the fluidity and openness of the stratification system (Hauser and Warren 1997; Rytina 1992; Hauser and Featherman 1977). This finding has motivated various efforts to better represent the “mobility chances” embedded in occupations; for example, Rytina (2000; 1992) has scaled occupations by the mobility trajectories of their incumbents, and Hauser and Warren (1997) have suggested that attainment processes are best captured by indexing occupations in terms of education alone (rather than the usual weighted combination of education and earnings).33

- **Is the underlying desirability of jobs adequately indexed by conventional scales?** In a related line of research, some scholars have questioned whether the desirability of jobs can be adequately measured with any occupation-based scale, given that much of the variability in earnings, autonomy, and other relevant job attributes is located within detailed occupational categories rather than between them (see Jencks, Perman, and Rainwater 1988).34 This criticism implies that new composite indices should be constructed by combining job-level data on all variables relevant to judgments of desirability (e.g., earnings, fringe benefits, promotion opportunities).

- **Can a unidimensional scale capture all job attributes of interest?** The two preceding approaches share with conventional socioeconomic scaling the long-standing objective of “gluing together” various dimensions (e.g., education, income) into a single composite scale of social standing (cf. Hauser and Warren 1997, 251). If this objective is abandoned, one can of course construct any number of scales that separately index such job-level attributes as authority, autonomy, and substantive complexity (Halaby and Weakliem 1993; Kohn and Schooler 1983; see also Bourdieu 1984). This multidimensionalism has appeal because the attributes of interest (e.g., earnings, authority, autonomy) are imperfectly correlated and do not perform identically when modeling different class outcomes.

- **Should occupations necessarily be converted to variables?** The latter approach nonetheless retains the conventional assumption that occupations (or jobs) should be converted to variables and thereby reduced to a vector of quantitative scores. This assumption may well be costly in terms of explanatory power foregone; that is, insofar as distinctive cultures and styles of life emerge within occupations, such reductionist approaches amount to stripping away precisely that symbolic content that presumably generates much variability in attitudes, lifestyles, and consumption practices (Grusky and Sørensen 1998; Aschaffenburg 1995).

These particular lines of criticism may of course never take hold and crystallize into competing traditions. Although socioeconomic scales are hardly optimal for all purposes, the advantages of alternative scales and purpose-specific measurement strategies may not be substantial enough to overcome the forces of inertia and conservatism, especially given the long history and deep legitimacy of conventional approaches.

**Generating Stratification**

The language of stratification theory makes a sharp distinction between the distribution of social rewards (e.g., the income distribution) and the distribution of opportunities for se-
curing these rewards. As sociologists have frequently noted (e.g., Kluegel and Smith 1986), it is the latter distribution that governs popular judgments about the legitimacy of stratification: The typical American, for example, is quite willing to tolerate substantial inequalities in power, wealth, or prestige provided that the opportunities for securing these social goods are distributed equally across all individuals (Hochschild 1995; 1981). Whatever the wisdom of this popular logic might be, stratification researchers have long sought to explore its factual underpinnings by monitoring and describing the structure of mobility chances.

In most of these analyses, the liberal ideal of an open and class-neutral system is treated as an explicit benchmark, and the usual objective is to expose any inconsistencies between this ideal and the empirical distribution of life chances. This is not to suggest, however, that all mobility scholars necessarily take a positive interest in mobility or regard liberal democracy as “the good society itself in operation” (Lipset 1959, 439). In fact, Lipset and Bendix (1959, 286) emphasize that open stratification systems can lead to high levels of “social and psychic distress,” and not merely because the heightened aspirations that such systems engender are so frequently frustrated (Young 1958). The further difficulty that arises is that open stratification systems will typically generate various types of status inconsistency, as upward mobility projects in plural societies are often “partial and incomplete” (Lipset and Bendix 1959, 286) and therefore trap individuals between collectivities with conflicting expectations. The nouveaux riches, for example, are typically unable to parlay their economic mobility into social esteem and acceptance from their new peers, with the result sometimes being personal resentment and consequent “combative-ness, frustration, and rootlessness” (Lipset and Bendix 1959, 285). Although the empirical evidence for such inconsistency effects is at best weak (e.g., Davis 1982), the continuing effort to uncover them makes it clear that mobility researchers are motivated by a wider range of social interests than commentators and critics have often allowed (see Goldthorpe 1987, 1–36, for a relevant review).

The study of social mobility continues, then, to be undergirded by diverse interests and research questions. This diversity complicates the task of reviewing work in the field, but of course broad classes of inquiry can still be distinguished, as indicated below.

**Mobility Analysis**

The conventional starting point for mobility scholars has been to analyze bivariate “mobility tables” formed by cross-classifying the class origins and destinations of individuals. The tables so constructed can be used to estimate densities of inheritance, to map the social distances between classes and their constituent occupations, and to examine differences across sub-populations in the amount and patterning of fluidity and opportunity (e.g., Sørensen and Grusky 1996; Biblarz and Raftery 1993; Hout 1988; Featherman and Hauser 1978). Moreover, when comparable mobility tables are assembled from several countries, it becomes possible to address classical debates about the underlying contours of cross-national variation in stratification systems (e.g., Ishida, Müller, and Ridge 1995; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Western and Wright 1994; Grusky and Hauser 1984; Lipset and Bendix 1959). This long-standing line of analysis, although still underway, has nonetheless declined of late, perhaps because past research (especially Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992) has been so definitive as to undercut further efforts (cf. Hout and Hauser 1992; Sørensen 1992). In recent years, the focus has thus shifted to studies of income mobility, with the twofold impetus for this development being (1) concerns that poverty may be increasingly difficult to escape and that a permanent underclass may be forming (e.g., Corcoran and Adams 1997), and (2) the obverse hypothesis that growing income inequality may be counterbalanced by increases in the rate of mobility between income groups (e.g., Gottschalk 1997). The bulk of
this work has been completed by economists (e.g., Birdsall and Graham 2000), but the issues at stake are eminently sociological and have generated much sociological research as well (e.g., DiPrete and McManus 1996).

**The Process of Stratification**

It is by now a sociological truism that Blau and Duncan (1967) and their colleagues (e.g., Sewell, Haller, and Portes 1969) revolutionized the field with their formal “path models” of stratification. These models were intended to represent, if only partially, the process by which background advantages could be converted into socioeconomic status through the mediating variables of schooling, aspirations, and parental encouragement. Under formulations of this kind, the main sociological objective was to show that socioeconomic outcomes were structured not only by ability and family origins but also by various intervening variables (e.g., schooling) that were themselves only partly determined by origins and other ascriptive forces. The picture of modern stratification that emerged suggested that market outcomes depend in large part on unmeasured career contingencies (i.e., “individual luck”) rather than influences of a more structural sort (Jencks et al. 1972; Blau and Duncan 1967, 174; cf. Hauser, Tsai, and Sewell 1983; Jencks et al. 1979). This line of research, which fell out of favor by the mid-1980s, has been recently reinvigorated as stratification scholars react to the controversial claim (i.e., Herrnstein and Murray 1994) that inherited intelligence is increasingly determinative of stratification outcomes (e.g., Hauser and Huang 1997; Fischer et al. 1996). In a related development, contemporary scholars have also turned their attention to ongoing changes in family structure, given that new non-traditional family arrangements (e.g., female-headed households) may in some cases reduce the influence of biological parents and otherwise complicate the reproduction of class. This new research literature addresses such topics as the effects of family disruption on mobility (e.g., Biblarz and Raftery 1999), the consequences of childhood poverty for early achievement (e.g., Hauser and Sweeney 1997), and the role of mothers in shaping educational aspirations and outcomes (e.g., Kalmijn 1994).

**Structural Analysis**

The foregoing “attainment models” are frequently criticized for failing to attend to the social structural constraints that operate on the stratification process independently of individual-level traits (e.g., Sørensen and Kalleberg 1981). The structuralist accounts that ultimately emerged from these critiques initially amounted, in most cases, to refurbished versions of dual economy and market segmentation models that were introduced and popularized many decades ago by institutional economists (e.g., Piore 1975; Doeringer and Piore 1971; Averitt 1968; see also Smith 1990). When these models were redeployed by sociologists in the early 1980s, the usual objective was to demonstrate that women and minorities were disadvantaged not merely by virtue of deficient human capital investments (e.g., inadequate schooling and experience) but also by their consignment to secondary labor markets that, on average, paid out lower wages and offered fewer opportunities for promotion or advancement. In recent years, more deeply sociological forms of structuralism have appeared, both in the form of (1) meso-level accounts of the effects of social networks and “social capital” on attainment (e.g., Lin 1999; Burt 1997; Podolny and Baron 1997), and (2) macro-level accounts of the effects of institutional context (e.g., welfare regimes) on mobility processes and outcomes (DiPrete et al. 1997; Fligstein and Byrkjeflot 1996; Kerckhoff 1996; Brinton, Lee, and Parish 1995). Although there is of course a long tradition of comparative mobility research, these new macro-level analyses are distinctive in attempting to theorize more rigor-
ously the institutional sources of cross-national variation.

The history of these research traditions is arguably marked more by statistical and methodological signposts than by substantive ones. Indeed, when reviews of the field are attempted, the tendency is to identify methodological watersheds, such as the emergence of structural equation, log-linear, and event-history models (e.g., Ganzeboom, Treiman, and Ultee 1991). The more recent rise of sequence analysis, which allows researchers to identify the normative ordering of events, may also redefine and reinvigorate the study of careers and attainment (e.g., Han and Moen 1999; Blair-Loy 1999; Stovel, Savage, and Bearman 1996). At the same time, it is often argued that "theory formulation in the field has become excessively narrow" (Ganzeboom, Treiman, and Ultee 1991, 278), and that "little, if any, refinement of major theoretical positions has recently occurred" (Featherman 1981, 364; see also Burton and Grusky 1992, 628). The conventional claim in this regard is that mobility researchers have become entranced by quantitative methods and have accordingly allowed the "methodological tail to [wag] the substantive dog" (Coser 1975, 652). However, the latter argument can no longer be taken exclusively in the (intended) pejorative sense, because new models and methods have often opened up important substantive questions that had previously been overlooked (Burton and Grusky 1992).

It also bears emphasizing that mobility and attainment research has long relied on middle-range theorizing about the forces making for discrimination (e.g., queuing, statistical discrimination); the processes by which educational returns are generated (e.g., credentialing, human capital, signaling); the mechanisms through which class-based advantage is reproduced (e.g., social capital, networks); and the effects of industrialism, capitalism, and socialism on mobility processes (e.g., thesis of industrialism, transition theory). The subfield is thus highly theory driven in the middle range. To be sure, there is no grand theory here that unifies seemingly disparate models and analyses, but this is hardly unusual within the discipline, nor necessarily undesirable. The main contenders, at present, for grand theory status are various forms of rational action analysis that allow middle-range theories to be recast in terms of individual-level incentives and purposive behavior. Indeed, just as the assumption of utility maximization underlies labor economics, so too a theory of purposive behavior might ultimately organize much, albeit not all, of sociological theory on social mobility and attainment. The two "rational action" selections reprinted in this volume (i.e., Breen and Goldthorpe 1997; Logan 1996) reveal the promise (and pitfalls) of this formulation.

The Consequences of Stratification

We have so far taken it for granted that the sociological study of classes and status groupings is more than a purely academic exercise. For Marxist scholars, there is of course a strong macrostructural rationale for class analysis: The defining assumption of Marxism is that human history unfolds through the conflict between classes and the "revolutionary reconstruction of society" (Marx 1948, 9) that such conflict ultimately brings about. In recent years, macrostructural claims of this sort have typically been deemphasized, with many scholars looking outside the locus of production to understand and interpret ongoing social change. Although some macrostructural analyses can still be found (e.g., Portes forthcoming), the motivation for class analysis increasingly rests on the simple empirical observation that class background affects a wide range of individual outcomes (e.g., consumption practices, lifestyles, religious affiliation, voting behavior, mental health and deviance, fertility and mortality, values and attitudes). This analytical approach makes for
a topically diverse subfield; in fact, one would be hard pressed to identify any aspect of human experience that has not been linked to class-based variables in some way, thus prompting DiMaggio (2001) to refer to measures of social class as modern-day "crack troops in the war on unexplained variance."

The resulting analyses of "class effects" continue to account for a substantial proportion of contemporary stratification research (see Burton and Grusky 1992). There has long been interest in studying the effects of class origins on schooling, occupation, and earnings (see prior section); by contrast, other topics of study within the field tend to fluctuate more in popularity, as developments in and out of academia influence the types of class effects that sociologists find salient or important. It is currently fashionable to study such topics as (1) the structure of socioeconomic disparities in health outcomes and the sources, causes, and consequences of the widening of some disparities (Williams and Collins 1995; Pappas et al. 1993); (2) the extent to which social class is a subjectively salient identity and structures perceptions of inter-class conflict (Wright 1997; Kelley and Evans 1995; Marshall et al. 1988); (3) the effects of social class on tastes for popular or high culture and the role of these tastes in establishing or reinforcing inter-class boundaries (Bryson 1996; Halle 1996; Peterson and Kern 1996; Lamont 1992; DiMaggio 1992; Bourdieu 1984); (4) the relationship between class and political behavior and the possible weakening of class-based politics as "postmaterialist values" spread and take hold (Evans 1999; Manza and Brooks 1999; Abramson and Inglehart 1995); and (5) the influence of working conditions on self-esteem, intellectual flexibility, and other facets of individual psychological functioning (Kohn et al. 1997; Kohn and Slomczynski 1990).

The relationship between class and these various class outcomes has been framed and conceptualized in diverse ways. We have sought to organize this literature below by distinguishing between such diverse traditions as market research, postmodern analysis, production approaches, and structuration theory (for detailed reviews, see Crompton 1996; Chaney 1996; Gartner 1991).

Market Research

The natural starting point for our review is standard forms of market research (e.g., Michman 1991; Weiss 1988; Mitchell 1983) that operationalize the Weberian concept of status by constructing detailed typologies of modern lifestyles and consumption practices. It should be kept in mind that Weber joined two analytically separable elements in his definition of status; namely, members of a given status group were not only assumed to be honorific equals in the symbolic (or "subjective") sphere, but were also seen as sharing a certain style of life and having similar tastes or preferences in the sphere of consumption (see Giddens 1973, 80, 109). The former feature of status groups can be partly captured by conventional prestige scales, whereas the latter can only be indexed by classifying the actual consumption practices of individuals as revealed by their "cultural possessions, material possessions, and participation in the group activities of the community" (Chapin 1935, 374). This approach has been operationalized either by (1) analyzing market data to define status groups that are distinguished by different lifestyle "profiles" (e.g., "ascetics," "materialists"), or (2) examining the consumption practices of existing status groups that are defined on dimensions other than consumption (e.g., teenagers, fundamentalists). The status groups of interest are in either case analytically distinct from Weberian classes; that is, the standard Weberian formula is to define classes within the domain of production, whereas status groups are determined by the "consumption of goods as represented by special styles of life" (Weber [1922] 1968, 937; italics in original).

Postmodern Analysis

The postmodern literature on lifestyles and consumption practices provides some of the
conceptual underpinnings for market research of the above sort. This is evident, for example, in the characteristic postmodern argument that consumption practices are increasingly individuated and that the Weberian distinction between class and status thus takes on special significance in the contemporary context (e.g., Pakulski and Waters 1996; Beck 1992; Featherstone 1991; Saunders 1987). The relationship between group membership and consumption cannot for postmodernists be read off in some deterministic fashion; indeed, because individuals are presumed to associate with a complex mosaic of status groups (e.g., religious groups, internet chat groups, social movements), it is difficult to know how these combine and are selectively activated to produce (and reflect) individual tastes and practices. The stratification system may be seen, then, as a "status bizarre" (Pakulski and Waters 1996, 157) in which identities are reflexively constructed as individuals select and are shaped by their multiple statuses. Although postmodernists thus share with market researchers a deep skepticism of class-based analyses, the simple consumption-based typologies favored by some market researchers (e.g., Michman 1991) also fall short by failing to represent the fragmentation, volatility, and reflexiveness of postmodern consumption.

**Reproduction Theory**

The work of Bourdieu (e.g., 1984; 1977) can be read as an explicit effort to rethink the conventional distinction between class and status groupings (for related approaches, see Biernacki 1995; Calhoun, LiPuma, and Postone 1993; Lamont 1992). If one assumes, as does Bourdieu, that classes are highly efficient agents of selection and socialization, then their members will necessarily evince the shared dispositions, tastes, and styles of life that demarcate and define status groupings (see Gartman 1991; Brubaker 1985). Although it is hardly controversial to treat classes as socializing forces (see, e.g., Hyman 1966), Bourdieu takes the more extreme stance that class-based conditioning "structures the whole experience of subjects" (1979, 2) and thus creates a near-perfect correspondence between the objective conditions of existence and internalized dispositions or tastes. This correspondence is further strengthened because Bourdieu defines class so fluidly; namely, class is represented as the realization of exclusionary processes that create boundaries around workers with homogeneous dispositions, thus implying that classes will necessarily overlap with consumption-based status groupings. The key question, then, is whether such boundaries tend to emerge around objective categories (e.g., occupation) that are typically associated with class. For Bourdieu, occupational categories define some of the conditions of existence upon which classes are typically formed, yet other conditions of existence (e.g., race) are also implicated and may generate class formations that are not entirely coterminous with occupation. It follows that class boundaries are not objectively fixed but instead are like a "flame whose edges are in constant movement" (Bourdieu 1987, 13).

** Structuration Theory**

The foregoing approach is increasingly popular, but there is also continuing support for a middle-ground position that neither treats status groupings in isolation from class (e.g., Pakulski and Waters 1996) nor simply conflates them with class (e.g., Bourdieu 1984). The starting point for this position is the proposition that status and class are related in historically specific and contingent ways. For example, Giddens (1973, 109) adopts the usual assumption that classes are founded in the sphere of production, yet he further maintains that the "structuration" of such classes depends on the degree to which incumbents are unified by shared patterns of consumption and behavior (also see Weber [1922] 1968, 932-38). The twofold conclusion reached by Giddens is that (1) classes become distinguishable formations only insofar as they overlap with status groupings, and (2) the degree of
overlap should be regarded as an empirical matter rather than something resolvable by conceptual fiat (cf. Bourdieu 1984). This type of formula appears to inform much of the current research on the consequences of class (e.g., Kingston forthcoming; Wright 1997; see also Goldthorpe and Marshall 1992). If contemporary commentators are so often exercised about the strength of "class effects," this is largely because these effects (purportedly) speak to the degree of class structuration and the consequent viability of class analysis in modern society.

* * *

The empirical results coming out of these various research programs have been interpreted in conflicting ways. Although some researchers have emphasized the strength and persuasiveness of class effects (e.g., Marshall 1997; Bourdieu 1984; Fussell 1983; Kohn 1980), others have argued that consumption practices are becoming uncoupled from class and that new theories are required to account for the attitudes and lifestyles that individuals adopt (e.g., Kingston forthcoming; Pakulski and Waters 1996). The evidence adduced for the latter view has sometimes been impressionistic in nature. For example, Nisbet (1959) concluded from his analysis of popular literature that early industrial workers could be readily distinguished by class-specific markers (e.g., distinctive dress, speech), whereas their postwar counterparts were increasingly participating in a "mass culture" that offered the same commodities to all classes and produced correspondingly standardized tastes, attitudes, and behaviors (see also Hall 1992; Clark and Lipset 1991, 405; Parkin 1979, 69; Goldthorpe et al. 1969, 1–29). The critical issue, of course, is not merely whether a mass culture of this sort is indeed emerging, but also whether the resulting standardization of lifestyles constitutes convincing evidence of a decline in class-based forms of social organization. As we have noted earlier, some commentators would regard the rise of mass culture as an important force for class destructuration (e.g., Giddens 1973), whereas others have suggested that the "thin veneer of mass culture" (Adorno 1976) only obscures and conceals the more fundamental inequalities upon which classes are based (see also Horkheimer and Adorno 1972).

Ascriptive Processes

The forces of race, ethnicity, and gender have historically been relegated to the sociological sidelines by class theorists of both Marxist and non-Marxist persuasion. In early versions of class analytic theory, status groups were treated as secondary forms of affiliation, whereas class-based ties were seen as more fundamental and decisive determinants of social and political action. This is not to suggest that race and ethnicity were ignored altogether in such treatments; however, when competing forms of communal solidarity were incorporated into conventional class models, they were typically represented as vestiges of traditional loyalties that would wither away under the rationalizing influence of socialism (e.g., Kautsky 1903), industrialism (e.g., Levy 1966), or modernization (e.g., Parsons 1975). Likewise, the forces of gender and patriarchy were of course frequently studied, yet the main objective in doing so was to understand their relationship to class formation and reproduction (see, e.g., Barrett 1980).

The first step in the intellectual breakdown of such approaches was the fashioning of a multidimensional model of stratification. Whereas many class theorists gave theoretical or conceptual priority to the economic dimension of stratification, the early multidimensionalists emphasized that social behavior could only be understood by taking into account all status group memberships (e.g., racial, gender) and the complex ways in which these interacted with one another and with class outcomes. The class analytic approach was further undermined by the apparent reemergence of racial, ethnic, and nationalist conflicts in the late postwar period. Far from withering away under the force of in-
industrialism, the bonds of race and ethnicity seemed to be alive and well: The modern world was witnessing a "sudden increase in tendencies by people in many countries and many circumstances to insist on the significance of their group distinctiveness" (Glazer and Moynihan 1975, 3). This resurgence of status politics continues apace today. Indeed, not only have ethnic and regional solidarities intensified with the decline of conventional class politics in Eastern Europe and elsewhere (see Jowitt 1992), but gender-based affiliations and loyalties have likewise strengthened as feminist movements diffuse throughout much of the modern world.

The latter turn of events has led some commentators to proclaim that ascribed solidarities of race, ethnicity, and gender are replacing the class affiliations of the past and becoming the driving force behind future stratificational change. Although this line of argumentation was initially advanced by early theorists of gender and ethnicity (e.g., Firestone 1972; Glazer and Moynihan 1975), the recent diffusion of postmodernism has infused it with new life (especially Beck 1992, 91-101). These accounts typically rest on some form of zero-sum imagery; for example, Bell (1975) suggests quite explicitly that a trade-off exists between class-based and ethnic forms of solidarity, with the latter strengthening whenever the former weakens (see Hannan 1994, 506; Weber 1946, 193-94). As the conflict between labor and capital is institutionalized, Bell (1975) argues that class-based affiliations typically lose their affective content and that workers must turn to racial, ethnic, or religious ties to provide them with a renewed sense of identification and commitment. It could well be argued that gender politics often fill the same "moral vacuum" that the decline in class politics has allegedly generated (Parkin 1979, 34).

It may be misleading, of course, to treat the competition between ascriptive and class-based forces as a sociological horse race in which one, and only one, of these two principles can ultimately win out. In a pluralist society of the American kind, workers can choose an identity appropriate to the situational context; a modern-day worker might behave as "an industrial laborer in the morning, a black in the afternoon, and an American in the evening" (Parkin 1979, 34). Among recent postmodernists, the "essentialism" of conventional theorizing is rejected even more forcefully, so much so that even ethnicity and gender are no longer simply assumed to be privileged replacement statuses for class. This leads to an unusually long list of competing statuses that can become salient in situationally specific ways. As the British sociologist Saunders (1989, 4-5) puts it, "On holiday in Spain we feel British, waiting for a child outside the school gates we are parents, shopping in Marks and Spencer we are consumers, and answering questions, framed by sociologists with class on the brain, we are working class" (see also Calhoun 1994). The results of Emmison and Western (1990) on contemporary identity formation likewise suggest that manifold statuses are held in reserve and activated in situation-specific terms.

Although this situational model has not been widely adopted in contemporary research, there is renewed interest in understanding the diverse affiliations of individuals and the "multiple oppressions" (see Wright forthcoming) that these affiliations engender. It is now fashionable, for example, to assume that the major status groupings in contemporary stratification systems are defined by the intersection of ethnic, gender, or class affiliations (e.g., black working-class women, white middle-class men). The theoretical framework motivating this approach is not well-specified, but the implicit claim seems to be that these subgroupings shape the experiences, lifestyles, and life chances of individuals and thus define the social settings in which interests and subcultures typically emerge (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 1999; Hill Collins 1990; see also Gordon 1978; Baltzell 1964). The obvious effect of this approach is to invert the traditional post-Weberian perspective on status groupings; that is, whereas orthodox multidimensionalists described the stress experienced by individuals in inconsistent sta-
tuses (e.g., poorly educated doctors), these new multidimensionalists emphasize the shared interests and cultures generated within commonly encountered status sets (e.g., black working-class women).

The sociological study of gender, race, and ethnicity has thus burgeoned of late. In organizing this literature, one might usefully distinguish between (1) macro-level research addressing the structure of ascriptive solidarities and their relationship to class formation, and (2) attainment research exploring the effects of race, ethnicity, and gender on individual life chances. At the macro-level, scholars have typically examined such issues as the social processes by which ascriptive categories (e.g., "white," "black") are constructed; the sources and causes of ethnic conflict and solidarity; and the relationship between patriarchy, racism, and class-based forms of organization. The following types of research questions have thus been posed:

- **Awareness and consciousness**: How do conventional racial and ethnic classification schemes come to be accepted and institutionalized (Waters 2000; Cornell 2000)? Under what conditions are racial, ethnic, and gender identities likely to be salient or "activated" (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin 1999; Ferrante and Brown 1996)?

- **Social conflict**: What generates variability across time and space in ethnic conflict and solidarity? Does modernization produce a "cultural division of labor" (Hechter 1975) that strengthens communal ties by making ethnicity a principal arbiter of life chances? Is ethnic conflict further intensified when ethnic groups compete for the same niche in the occupational structure (Waldinger 1996; Hannan 1994; Olzak 1992; Bonacich 1972)?

- **Class and ascriptive solidarities**: Are class-based solidarities weakened or strengthened by the forces of patriarchy and racism? Does housework serve to reproduce capitalist relations of production by socializing children into submissive roles and providing male workers with a "haven in a heartless world" (e.g., Lasch 1977; see Baxter and Western forthcoming; Szelenyi 2001)? Are capitalists or male majority workers the main beneficiaries of ethnic antagonism and patriarchy (e.g., Tilly 1998; Wright 1997; Hartmann 1981; Reich 1977; Bonacich 1972)?

These macro-level issues, although still of interest, have not taken off in popularity to the extent that attainment issues have. The literature on attainment is unusually rich and diverse; at the same time, there is much faddishness in the particular types of research questions that have been addressed, and the resulting body of work has a correspondingly haphazard and scattered feel (Lieberson 2001). The following questions have nonetheless emerged as (relatively) central ones in the field:

- **Modeling supply and demand**: What types of social forces account for ethnic, racial, and gender differentials in income and other valued resources? Are these differentials attributable to supply-side variability in the human capital that workers bring to the market (Marini and Fan 1997; Polachek and Siebert 1993; Marini and Brinton 1984)? Or are they produced by demand-side forces such as market segmentation, statistical or institutional discrimination, and the (seemingly irrational) tastes and preferences of employers (e.g., Reskin 2000; Nelson and Bridges 1999; Piore 1975; Arrow 1973; Becker 1957)?

- **Valuative discrimination**: Are occupations that rely on stereotypically female skills (e.g., nurturing) "culturally devalued" and hence more poorly remunerated than occupations that are otherwise similar? What types of organizational and cultural forces might
produce such valutative discrimination? Will this discrimination disappear as market forces gradually bring pay in accord with marginal productivity (Nelson and Bridges 1999; Kilbourne et al. 1994; Tam 1997)?

- **Segregation:** What are the causes and consequences of racial, ethnic, and gender segregation in housing and in the workplace? Does segregation arise from discrimination, economic forces, or voluntary choices or "tastes" for separation (Reskin, McBrier, and Kmec 1999; Reskin 1993; Bielby and Baron 1986)? Are ghettoization and other forms of segregation the main sources of African American disadvantage (e.g., Wilson 1999a; Massey and Denton 1993)? Under what conditions, if any, can ethnic or gender segregation (e.g., enclaving, same-sex schools) assist in socioeconomic attainment or assimilation (Waters 1999; Portes and Zhou 1993; Sanders and Nee 1987)?

- **The future of ascriptive inequalities:** What is the future of ethnic, racial, and gender stratification (Ridgeway and Correll 2000; Bielby 2000; Johnson, Rush, and Feagin 2000)? Does the "logic" of industrialism (and the spread of egalitarianism) require universalistic personnel practices and consequent declines in overt discrimination (Sakamoto, Wu, and Tzeng 2000; Hirschman and Snipp 1999; Jackson 1998; Wilson 1980)? Can this logic be reconciled with the persistence of massive segregation by sex and race (e.g., Massey 1996), the loss of manufacturing jobs and the associated rise of a modern ghetto underclass (Wilson 1996; Waldinger 1996), and the emergence of new forms of poverty and hardship among single women and recent immigrants (e.g., Waters 1999; Edin and Lein 1997; Portes 1996)?

- **Social policy:** What types of social policy and intervention are likely to reduce ascriptive inequalities (Johnson, Rush, and Feagin 2000; Nelson and Bridges 1999; Leicht 1999; Reskin 1998; Burstein 1998; 1994; England 1992)? Is there much popular support for affirmative action, comparable worth, and other reform strategies (e.g., Schuman et al. 1998)? Does opposition to such reform reflect deeply internalized racism and sexism (e.g., Kluegel and Bobo 1993)? Could this opposition be overcome by combining race-based interventions (e.g., affirmative action) with class-based ones (e.g., Wilson 1999b; Kluegel and Bobo 1993)?

The preceding questions make it clear that ethnic, racial, and gender inequalities are often classed together and treated as analytically equivalent forms of ascription. Although Parsons (1951) and others (e.g., Tilly 1998; Mayhew 1970) have indeed emphasized the shared properties of "communal ties," one should bear in mind that such ties can be maintained (or subverted) in very different ways. It has long been argued, for example, that some forms of inequality can be rendered more palatable by the practice of pooling resources (e.g., income) across all family members. As Lieberson (2001) points out, the family operates to bind males and females together in a single unit of consumption, whereas extrafamilial institutions (e.g., schools, labor markets) must be relied on to provide the same integrative functions for ethnic groups. If these functions are left wholly unfilled, one might expect ethnic separatist and nationalist movements to emerge (e.g., Hechter 1975). The same "nationalist" option is obviously less viable for single-sex groups; indeed, barring any revolutionary changes in family structure or kinship relations, it seems unlikely that separatist solutions will ever garner much support among men or women. The latter considerations may account for the absence of a well-developed literature on overt conflict between single-sex groups (cf. Firestone 1972; Hartmann 1981).\(^3\)
The Future of Stratification

It is instructive to conclude by briefly reviewing current approaches to understanding the changing structure of contemporary stratification. As indicated in Figure 1, some commentators have suggested that future forms of stratification will be defined by structural changes in the productive system (i.e., structural approaches), whereas others have argued that modernity and postmodernity can only be understood by looking beyond the economic system and its putative consequences (i.e., cultural approaches). It will suffice to review these various approaches in cursory fashion because they are based on theories and models that have been covered extensively elsewhere in this essay.

The starting point for our discussion is the now-familiar claim that human and political capital are replacing economic capital as the principal stratifying forces in advanced industrial society. In the most extreme versions of this claim, the old class of moneyed capital is represented as a dying force, and a new class of intellectuals (e.g., Gouldner 1979), managers (e.g., Burnham 1962), or party bureaucrats (e.g., Djilas 1965) is assumed to be on the road to power. There is still much new class theorizing; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated. By some accounts, the rise of a new class was effectively aborted by market reform; however, because such accounts were tailor-made for the socialist case, the fall of socialism complicates the analysis and opens up new futures that are potentially more complex than past theorists had anticipated.

There is also much criticism of standard “new class” interpretations of Western stratification systems. The (orthodox) Marxist stance is that “news of the demise of the capitalist class is . . . somewhat premature” (Zeitlin 1982, 216), whereas the contrasting position taken by Bell (1973) is that neither the old capitalist class nor the so-called new class will have unfettered power in the postindustrial future. Although there is widespread agreement among postindustrial theorists that human capital is becoming a dominant form of property, this need not imply that “the amorphous bloc designated as the knowledge stratum has sufficient community of interest to form a class” (Bell 1987, 464). The members of the knowledge stratum have diverse interests because they are drawn from structurally distinct situses (e.g., military, business, university) and because their attitudes are further influenced (and thus rendered heterogeneous) by noneconomic forces of various sorts. The postindustrial vision of Bell (1973) thus suggests that well-formed classes will be replaced by the more benign divisions of situs.

As is well-known, Bell (1973) also argues that human capital (e.g., educational credentials) will become the main determinant of life chances, if only because job skills are upgraded by the expansion of professional, technical, and service sectors. Although the returns to education are indeed increasing as predicted (e.g., Grusky and DiPrete 1990), the occupational structure is evidently not upgrading quite as straightforwardly as Bell (1973) suggested, and various “pessimistic versions” of postindustrialism have accord-
FIGURE 1
Possible trajectories of change in advanced stratification systems

STRUCTURAL APPROACHES

- Economic Capital Models (Zeitlin 1982)
- Human or Political Capital Models
  - Post-Industrial Models
    - "Optimistic" Version (Bell 1973; Clark and Lipset 1991)
    - "Pessimistic" Version
- New Class Models
  - Knowledge Class (Gouldner 1979)
  - Managerial Class
    - Capitalist Case (Burnham 1962)
    - Post-Socialist Case (Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley 1998)

- Differentiation Models
  - Gradationalism (Parsons 1970; Kerr et al. 1964)
  - Pluralism and Multidimensionalism (Kerr et al. 1964; Parsons 1970)

CULTURAL APPROACHES

- Simple Uncoupling (Davis 1982)
- Postmodernism
- Cultural Emanationism (Meyer 2000)
  - Fragmentation (Pakulski and Waters 1996)
  - New Social Movements (Beck 1999)
ingly emerged. In the American variant of such pessimism, the main concern is that postindustrialism leads to a "declining middle" and consequent polarization, as manufacturing jobs are either rendered technologically obsolete or exported to less-developed countries where labor costs are lower (e.g., Perrucci and Wysong 1999; Levy 1998; Harrison and Bluestone 1988). These losses are of course compensated by the predicted growth in the service sector, yet the types of service jobs that have emerged are quite often low skill, routinized, and accordingly less desirable than Bell (1973) imagined. In Europe, the same low-skill service jobs are less commonly found, with the resulting occupational structure more closely approximating the highly professionalized world that Bell (1973) envisaged. The European pessimists are nonetheless troubled by the rise of mass unemployment and the associated emergence of "outsider classes" that bear disproportionately the burden of unemployment (Esping-Andersen 1999; Brown and Crompton 1994; see also Aronowitz and DiFazio 1994). In both the European and American cases, the less-skilled classes are therefore losing out in the market, either by virtue of unemployment and exclusion (i.e., Europe) or low pay and poor prospects for advancement (i.e., the United States). The new pessimists thus anticipate a "resurgent proletarian underclass and, in its wake, a menacing set of new class correlates" (Esping-Andersen 1999, 95).

The foregoing variants of structuralism frequently draw on the quasi-functionalist premise that classes are configured around control over dominant assets (e.g., human capital) and that class constellations therefore shift as new types of assets assume increasingly prominent roles in production. The just-so histories that new class theorists tend to advance have a correspondingly zero-sum character in which stratificational change occurs as old forms of capital (e.g., economic capital) are superseded by new forms (e.g., human capital). This framework might be contrasted, then, to stratification theories that treat the emergence of multiple bases of solidarity and affiliation as one of the distinctive features of modernity. For example, Parsons (1970) argues that the oft-cited "separation of ownership from control" (e.g., Berle and Means 1932) is not a unique historical event, but instead is merely one example of the broader tendency for ascriptively fused structures to break down into separate substructures and create a "complex composite of differentiated and articulating . . . units of community" (Parsons 1970, 25). This process of differentiation is further revealed in (1) the emergence of a finely graded hierarchy of specialized occupations (Parsons 1970; Kerr et al. 1964); (2) the spread of professional and voluntary associations that provide additional and competing bases of affiliation and solidarity (e.g., Parsons 1970; Kerr et al. 1964); and (3) the breakdown of the "kinship complex" as evidenced by the declining salience of family ties for careers, marriages, and other stratification outcomes (e.g., Parsons 1970; Featherman and Hauser 1978, 222–32; Treiman 1970; Blau and Duncan 1967, 429–31). The latter tendencies imply that the class standing of modern individuals is becoming "divorced from its historic relation to both kinship and property" (Parsons 1970, 24). As Parsons (1970) argues, the family may have once been the underlying unit of stratification, yet increasingly the class standing of individuals is determined by all the collectivities to which they belong, both familial and otherwise (see also Szelenyi 2001). This multidimensionalist approach thus provides the analytic basis for rejecting the conventional family-based model of stratification that Parsons himself earlier espoused (e.g., Parsons 1954).40

The driving force behind these accounts is, of course, structural change of the sort conventionally described by such terms as industrialism (Kerr et al. 1964), post-industrialism (Bell 1973), post-fordism (Piore and Sabel 1984), and differentiation (Parsons 1970). By contrast, cultural accounts of change tend to de-emphasize these forces or to cast them as epiphenomenal, with the focus thus shifting to the independent role of ideologies, social movements, and cultural practices in changing stratification forms. The culturalist tradi-
tion encompasses a host of accounts that have not, as yet, been fashioned into a unitary or cohesive whole. The following positions within this tradition might therefore be distinguished:

1. The weakest form of culturalism rests on the straightforward claim that economic interests are no longer decisive determinants of attitudes or lifestyles (e.g., Davis 1982; see Goldthorpe et al. 1969 on the "embourgeoisement" hypothesis). This "uncoupling" of class and culture is not necessarily inconsistent with structuralist models of change; for example, Adorno (1976) has long argued that mass culture only serves to obscure the more fundamental class divisions that underlie all historical change, and other neo-Marxians (e.g., Althusser 1969) have suggested that some forms of ideological convergence are merely transitory and will ultimately wither away as economic interests re-assert themselves in the "last instance." The uncoupling thesis can therefore be rendered consistent with assorted versions of structuralism, yet it nonetheless lays the groundwork for theories that are fundamentally anti-structuralist in tone or character.

2. In some variants of postmodernism, the cultural sphere is not merely represented as increasingly autonomous from class, but the underlying dynamics of this sphere are also laid out in detail. The characteristic claim in this regard is that lifestyles, consumption practices, and identities are a complex function of the multiple status affiliations of individuals and the correspondingly "permanent and irreducible pluralism of the cultures" in which they participate (Bauman 1992, 102; see also Pakulski and Waters 1996; Hall 1989). This account cannot of course be reduced to structuralist forms of multidimensionalism (Parsons 1970); after all, most postmodernists argue that status affiliations do not mechanically determine con-

sumption practices, as the latter are subjectively constructed in ways that allow for "respecification and invention of preferences . . . and provide for continuous regeneration" (Pakulski and Waters 1996, 155). It follows that lifestyles and identification are "shifting and unstable" (Pakulski and Waters 1996, 155), "indeterminate at the boundaries" (Crook, Pakulski, and Waters 1992), and accordingly "difficult to predict" (Pakulski and Waters 1996, 155).

3. In more ambitious variants of postmodernism, the focus shifts away from simply mapping the sources of individual-level attitudes or lifestyles, and the older class-analytic objective of understanding macro-level stratificational change is resuscitated. This ambition underlies, for example, all forms of postmodernism that seek to represent "new social movements" (e.g., feminism, ethnic and peace movements, environmentalism) as the vanguard force behind future stratificatory change. As argued by Eyerman (1992) and others (e.g., Touraine 1981), the labor movement can be seen as a fading enterprise rooted in the old conflicts of the workplace and industrial capitalism, whereas new social movements provide a more appealing call for collective action by virtue of their emphasis on issues of lifestyle, personal identity, and normative change. With this formulation, the proletariat is stripped of its privileged status as a universal class, and new social movements emerge as an alternative force "shaping the future of modern societies" (Haferkamp and Smelser 1992, 17). Although no self-respecting postmodernist will offer up a fresh "grand narrative" to replace that of discredited Marxism, new social movements are nonetheless represented within this subtradition as a potential source of change, albeit one that plays out in fundamentally unpredictable ways (e.g., Beck 1999).
4. The popularity of modern social movements might be attributed to ongoing structural transformations (e.g., the rise of the new class) rather than to any intrinsic appeal of the egalitarian ideals or values that these movements typically represent. Although structural arguments of this kind continue to be pressed (see, e.g., Eyerman 1992; Brint 1984), the alternative position staked out by Meyer (2001) and others (e.g., Eisenstadt 1992) is that cultural premises such as egalitarianism and functionalism are true generative forces underlying the rise and spread of modern stratification systems (see also Parsons 1970). As Meyer (2001) points out, egalitarian values not only produce a real reduction in some forms of inequality (e.g., civil inequalities), they also generate various societal subterfuges (e.g., differentiation) by which inequality is merely concealed from view rather than eliminated. The recent work of Meyer (2001) provides, then, an extreme example of how classical idealist principles can be deployed to account for modern stratificational change.

The final, and more prosaic, question that might be posed is whether changes of the preceding sort presage a general decline in the field of stratification itself. It could well be argued that Marxian and neo-Marxian models of class will decline in popularity with the rise of postmodern stratification systems and the associated uncoupling of class from lifestyles, consumption patterns, and political behavior (see Clark and Lipset 1991). This line of reasoning is not without merit, but it is worth noting that (1) past predictions of this sort have generated protracted debates that, if anything, have reenergized the field (see, e.g., Nisbet 1959); (2) the massive facts of economic, political, and honorific inequality will still be with us even if narrowly conceived models of class ultimately lose out in such debates; and (3) the continuing diffusion of egalitarian values suggests that all departures from equality, no matter how small, will be the object of considerable interest among sociologists and the lay public alike (see Meyer 2001). In making the latter point, our intent is not merely to note that sociologists may become “ever more ingenious” (Nisbet 1959, 12) in teasing out increasingly small departures from perfect equality, but also to suggest that entirely new forms and sources of inequality will likely be discovered and marketed by sociologists. This orientation has long been in evidence; for example, when the now-famous Scientific American studies (e.g., Taylor, Sheatsley, and Greeley 1978) revealed that overt forms of racial and ethnic prejudice were withering away, the dominant reaction within the discipline was to ask whether such apparent change concealed the emergence of more subtle and insidious forms of symbolic racism (see, e.g., Sears, Hensler, and Speer 1979). In similar fashion, when Beller (1982) reported a modest decline in occupational sex segregation, other sociologists were quick to ask whether the models and methods being deployed misrepresented the structure of change (e.g., Charles and Grusky 1995) or whether the classification system being used disguised counteracting trends at the intra-occupational level (e.g., Bielby and Baron 1986). The rise of personal computing and the Internet has likewise led to much fretting about possible class-based inequalities in access to computers (e.g., Nie and Erbring, 2000; Bosah 1998; Luke 1997). The point here is not to suggest that concerns of this kind are in any way misguided, but only to emphasize that modern sociologists are highly sensitized to inequalities and have a special interest in uncovering those “deep structures” of social differentiation (e.g., Baron 1994, 390) that are presumably concealed from ordinary view. This sensitivity to all things unequal bodes well for the future of the field even in the (unlikely) event of a long-term secular movement toward diminishing inequality.
Notes

1. In some stratification systems, the distribution of rewards can be described with a single matching algorithm, because individuals receive rewards directly rather than by virtue of the social positions that they occupy. The limiting case here would be the tribal economies of Melanesia in which “Big Men” (Oliver 1955) secured prestige and power through personal influence rather than through incumbency of any well-defined roles (see also Granovetter 1981, 12–14).

2. It goes without saying that the assets listed in Table 1 are institutionalized in quite diverse ways. For example, some assets are legally recognized by the state or by professional associations (e.g., civil rights, property ownership, educational credentials), others are reserved for incumbents of specified work roles (e.g., workplace authority), and yet others have no formal legal or institutional standing and are revealed probabilistically through patterns of behavior and action (e.g., high-status consumption practices, deference, derogation).

3. It is sometimes claimed that educational credentials are entirely investment goods and should therefore be excluded from any listing of the primitive dimensions underlying stratification systems (e.g., Runciman 1968, 33). In evaluating this claim, it is worth noting that an investment rhetoric for schooling became fashionable only quite recently (e.g., Becker 1975), whereas intellectuals and humanists have long viewed education as a simple consumption good.

4. This is not to gainsay the equally important point that parents often encourage their children to acquire such goods because of their putative benefits.

5. The term stratification has itself been seen as anti-Marxist by some commentators (e.g., Duncan 1968), because it places emphasis on the vertical ranking of classes rather than the exploitive relations between them. The geological metaphor implied by this term does indeed call attention to issues of hierarchy; nonetheless, whenever it is used in the present essay, the intention is to refer generically to inequality of all forms (including those involving exploitation).

6. Although native ability is by definition established at birth, it is often seen as a legitimate basis for allocating rewards (because it is presumed to be relevant to judgments of merit).

7. The scholars listed in the right-hand column of Table 1 are not necessarily reductionists of this sort.

8. The viability of a synthesizing approach clearly depends on the extent to which the stratification system is crystallized. If the degree of crystallization is low, then one cannot construct a uni-dimensional scale that is strongly correlated with its constituent parts.

9. There is, of course, an ongoing tradition of research in which the class structure is represented in gradational terms (see, e.g., Blau and Duncan 1967). However, no attempt has been made to construct an exhaustive rank-ordering of individuals based on their control over the resources listed in Table 1, nor is there any available rank-ordering of the thousands of detailed occupational titles that can be found in modern industrial societies (cf. Cain and Treiman 1981; Jencks, Perman, and Rainwater 1988). The approach taken by most gradationalists has been (1) to map individuals into a relatively small number (i.e., approximately 500) of broad occupational categories and (2) to subsequently map these categories into an even smaller number of prestige or socioeconomic scores.

10. According to Dahrendorf (1959, 171–73), the classes so formed are always specific to particular organizational settings, and the social standing of any given individual may therefore differ across the various associations in which he or she participates (e.g., workplace, church, polity). This line of reasoning leads Dahrendorf (1959, 171) to conclude that “if individuals in a given society are ranked according to the sum of their authority positions in all associations, the resulting pattern will not be a dichotomy but rather like scales of stratification according to income or prestige.”

11. The class structure can also operate in less obtrusive ways; for example, one might imagine a social system in which classes have demonstrable macro-level consequences (and are therefore “real”), yet their members are not fully aware of these consequences nor of their membership in any particular class.

12. The assumptions embedded in columns 4–6 of Table 2 are clearly far-reaching. Unless a stratification system is perfectly crystallized, its parameters for inequality and rigidity cannot be represented as scalar quantities, nor can the intercorrelations between the multiple stratification dimensions be easily summarized in a single parameter. Moreover, even in stratification systems that are perfectly crystallized, there is no reason to believe that persistence over the life course (i.e., intergenerational persistence) will always vary in tandem with persistence between generations (i.e., intergenerational inheritance). We have nonetheless assumed that each of our ideal-typical stratification systems can be characterized in terms of a single “rigidity parameter” (see column 5).

13. This claim does not hold with respect to gender; that is, men and women were typically assigned to different roles, which led to consequent differences in the distribution of rewards (e.g., see Pfeiffer 1977; Leakey and Lewin 1977).
14. It should again be stressed that our typology by no means exhausts the variability of agrarian stratification forms (see Kerbo 2000 for an extended review).

15. The state elite was charged with constructing and maintaining the massive irrigation systems that made agriculture possible in regions such as China, India, and the Middle East (cf. Anderson 1974, 490–92).

16. This is not to suggest that feudalism could only be found in the West or that the so-called Asiatic mode was limited to the East. Indeed, the social structure of Japan was essentially feudalistic until the mid-nineteenth century (with the rise of the Meiji State), and the Asiatic mode has been discovered in areas as diverse as Africa, pre-Columbian America, and even Mediterranean Europe (see Godelier 1978). The latter “discoveries” were of course predicated on a broad and ahistorical definition of the underlying ideal type. As always, there is a tension between scholars who seek to construct ideal types that are closely tied to historical social systems and those who seek to construct ones that are broader and more encompassing in their coverage.

17. This economic interpretation of feudalism is clearly not favored by all scholars. For example, Bloch (1961, 288–89) argues that the defining feature of feudalism is the monopolization of authority by a small group of nobles, with the economic concomitants of this authority (e.g., land ownership) thus being reduced to a position of secondary importance. The “authority classes” that emerge under his specification might be seen as feudal analogues to the social classes that Dahrendorf (1959) posits for the capitalist case.

18. In the so-called secondary stage of feudalism (Bloch 1961), the obligations of serfs and free men became somewhat more formalized and standardized, yet regional variations of various sorts still persisted.

19. It was not until the early fourteenth century that states of the modern sort appeared in Europe (see Hechter and Brustein 1980).

20. In describing this period of classical feudalism, Bloch (1961, 325) noted that “access to the circle of knights . . . was not absolutely closed, [yet] the door was nevertheless only very slightly ajar.”

21. The Indian caste system flourished during the agrarian period, yet it persists in attenuated form within modern industrialized India (see Jalali 1992).

22. This is by no means an exhaustive listing of the various approaches that have been taken (see pp. 15–22 for a more detailed review).

23. Although educational institutions clearly play a certifying role, it does not follow that they emerge merely to fill a “functional need” for highly trained workers (see Collins 1979).

24. This issue is addressed in greater detail in Part IV (“Generating Inequality”).

25. Although Pakulski and Waters (1996) use the label postmodern in their analyses, other scholars have invented such alternative terms as late modernity, high modernity, or reflexive modernization (Beck 1999; Lash 1999; Giddens 1991), and yet others continue to use modernity on the grounds that the changes at issue are mere extensions of those long underway (e.g., Maryanski and Turner 1992). We use the conventional term postmodern without intending to disadvantage the analyses of those who prefer other labels.

26. The rise of synthetic approaches makes it increasingly difficult to label scholars in meaningful ways. Although we have avoided standard “litmus test” definitions of what constitutes a true neo-Marxist or neo-Weberian, we have nonetheless found it possible (and useful) to classify scholars broadly in terms of the types of intellectual problems, debates, and literatures they address.

27. This position contrasts directly with the conventional wisdom that “social mobility as such is irrelevant to the problem of the existence of classes” (Dahrendorf 1959, 109; see also Poulantzas 1974, 37; Schumpeter 1951).

28. It should be stressed that Giddens departs from usual neo-Weberian formulations on issues such as “the social and political significance of the new middle class, the importance of bureaucracy as a form of domination, and the character of the state as a focus of political and military power” (Giddens 1980, 297). As indicated in the contents, we have nonetheless reluctantly imposed the neo-Weberian label on Giddens, if only because he follows the lead of Weber in treating the foregoing issues as central to understanding modern industrialism and capitalism (see note 26).

29. There is a close affinity between models of closure and those of exploitation. In comparing these approaches, the principal point of distinction is that neo-Marxians focus on the economic returns and interests that exclusionary practices generate, whereas closure theorists emphasize the common culture, sociocultural cohesiveness, and shared market and life experiences that such practices may produce (see Grusky and Sorensen 1998, 1211).

30. However, insofar as “every new class achieves its hegemony on a broader basis than that of the class ruling previously” (Marx and Engels [1947] 1970, 66), the presocialist revolutions can be interpreted as partial steps toward a classless society.

31. It is frequently argued that Americans have an elective affinity for gradational models of class. In accounting for this affinity, Ossowski (1963) and others (e.g., Lipset and Bendix 1959) have cited the absence of a feudal or aristocratic past in American history and the consequent reluctance of
Americans to recognize differences in status or power with overt forms of deference or derogation.

32. Although some of the research completed by Warner was gradational in character (e.g., Warner 1949, ch. 2), his preferred mapping of the American class structure is based on purely discrete categories.

33. This recommendation holds only for studies of attainment processes. In fact, given that other weightings may be optimal in other research contexts, Hauser and Warren (1997, 251) argue that “the global concept of occupational status is scientifically obsolete.”

34. In this context, a “job” is a collection of activities that a worker is expected to perform in exchange for remuneration, whereas an “occupation” refers to an aggregation of jobs that are similar in terms of the activities performed.

35. This is not to suggest that the “subjects” themselves always fully appreciate the class-based sources of their tastes and preferences. As argued by Bourdieu (1977), the conditioning process is typically so seamless and unobtrusive that the sources of individual dispositions are concealed from view, and the “superior” tastes and privileged outcomes of socioeconomic elites are therefore misperceived (and legitimated) as the product of individual merit or worthiness.

36. The defining feature of ethnic groups is that their members “entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration” (Weber [1922] 1968, 389). This definition implies that “races” are particular types of ethnic groups in which putative physical similarities provide the basis for a subjective belief in common descent (see Alba 1992, 575–76 for competing definitions).

37. There is, of course, a large popular literature that represents gender conflict in wholly individualistic terms. This tendency to personalize gender conflicts reflects the simple fact that men and women interact frequently and intimately in family settings.

38. The position that Zeitlin (1982) takes here is directed against the conventional argument that corporate ownership in Western industrialized societies is so diffused across multiple stockholders that effective corporate power has now defaulted to managers.

39. The recent work of Wright (1985) is similarly zero-sum in character. Although Wright emphasizes that multiple forms of capital tend to coexist in any given historical system, he nonetheless defines the march of history in terms of transitions from one dominant form of capital to another.

40. The importance of distinguishing between the early and mature Parsons on matters of stratification should therefore be stressed. This distinction has not been sufficiently appreciated in recent debates about the appropriateness of treating families as the primitive units of modern stratification analysis (see Szelényi 2001).

References


Grusky, David B., and Jesper B. Sørensen. 2001. “Are There Big Social Classes?” Pages 183–194 in Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gen-


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The present discussion has been offered as a possible approach to the more systematic classification of composite types.

**Notes**


2. The writers regret (and beg indulgence) that the present essay, a condensation of a longer study, covers so much in such short space that adequate evidence and qualification cannot be given and that as a result what is actually very tentative is presented in an unfortunately dogmatic manner.

3. Unfortunately, functional importance is difficult to establish. To use the position’s prestige to establish it, as is often unconsciously done, constitutes circular reasoning from our point of view. There are, however, two independent clues: (a) the degree to which a position is functionally unique, there being no other positions that can perform the same function satisfactorily; (b) the degree to which other positions are dependent on the one in question. Both clues are best exemplified in organized systems of positions built around one major function. Thus, in most complex societies the religious, political, economic, and educational functions are handled by distinct structures not easily interchangeable. In addition, each structure possesses many different positions, some clearly dependent on, if not subordinate to, others. In sum, when an institutional nucleus becomes differentiated around one main function, and at the same time organizes a large portion of the population into its relationships, the key positions in it are of the highest functional importance. The absence of such specialization does not prove functional unimportance, for the whole society may be relatively unspecialized; but it is safe to assume that the more important functions receive the first and clearest structural differentiation.

The obviously mixed character of the functions of social inequality should come as no surprise to anyone. If sociology is sophisticated in any sense, it is certainly with regard to its awareness of the mixed nature of any social arrangement, when the observer takes into account long as well as short range consequences and latent as well as manifest dimensions.

Summary

In this paper, an effort has been made to raise questions regarding the inevitability and positive functionality of stratification, or institutionalized social inequality in rewards, allocated in accordance with some notion of the greater and lesser functional importance of various positions. The possible alternative meanings of the concept “functional importance” has been shown to be one difficulty. The question of the scarcity or abundance of available talent has been indicated as a principal source of possible variation. The extent to which the period of training for skilled positions may reasonably be viewed as sacrificial has been called into question. The possibility has been suggested that very different types of motivational schemes might conceivably be made to function. The separability of differentials in power and property considered as resources appropriate to a task from such differentials considered as rewards for the performance of a task has also been suggested. It has also been maintained that differentials in prestige and esteem do not necessarily follow upon differentials in power and property when the latter are considered as appropriate resources rather than rewards. Finally, some negative functions, or dysfunctions, of institutionalized social inequality have been tentatively identified, revealing the mixed character of the outcome of social stratification, and casting doubt on the contention that

Social inequality is thus an unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons.

Notes

The writer has had the benefit of a most helpful criticism of the main portions of this paper by Professor W. J. Goode of Columbia University. In addition, he has had the opportunity to expose this paper to criticism by the Staff Seminar of the Sociology Section at Princeton. In deference to a possible rejoinder by Professors Moore and Davis, the writer has not revised the paper to meet the criticisms which Moore has already offered personally.

1. American Sociological Review, X (April, 1945), pp. 242–249. An earlier article by Kingsley Davis, entitled, “A Conceptual Analysis of Stratification,” American Sociological Review, VII (June, 1942), pp. 309–321, is devoted primarily to setting forth a vocabulary for stratification analysis. A still earlier article by Talcott Parsons, “An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification,” American Journal of Sociology, XLV (November, 1940), pp. 849–862, approaches the problem in terms of why “differential ranking is considered a really fundamental phenomenon of social systems and what are the respects in which such ranking is important.” The principal line of integration asserted by Parsons is with the fact of the normative orientation of any society. Certain crucial lines of connection are left unexplained, however, in this article, and in the Davis and Moore article of 1945 only some of these lines are made explicit.

2. The “scarcity and demand” qualities of goods and services are never explicitly mentioned by Davis and Moore. But it seems to the writer that the argument makes no sense unless the goods and services are so characterized. For if rewards are to function as differential inducements they must not only be differentially distributed but they must be both scarce and demanded as well. Neither the scarcity of an item by itself nor the fact of its being in demand is sufficient to allow it to function as a differential inducement in a system of unequal rewards. Leprosy is scarce and oxygen is highly demanded.

3. The arguments to be advanced here are condensed versions of a much longer analysis entitled, An Essay on Social Stratification. Perforce, all the reasoning necessary to support some of the contentions cannot be offered within the space limits of this article.
Why do some Americans have a lot more than others? Perhaps, inequality follows inevitably from human nature. Some people are born with more talent than others; the first succeed while the others fail in life's competition. Many people accept this explanation, but it will not suffice. Inequality is not fated by nature, nor even by the "invisible hand" of the market; it is a social construction, a result of our historical acts. Americans have created the extent and type of inequality we have, and Americans maintain it.

To answer the question of what explains inequality in America, we must divide it in two. First, who gets ahead and who falls behind in the competition for success? Second, what determines how much people get for being ahead or behind? To see more clearly that the two questions are different, think of a ladder that represents the ranking of affluence in a society. Question one asks why this person rather than that person ended up on a higher or lower rung. Question two asks why some societies have tall and narrowing ladders—ladders that have huge distances between top and bottom rungs and that taper off at the top so that there is room for only a few people—while other societies have short and broad ladders—ladders with little distance between top and bottom and with lots of room for many people all the way to the top.

The answer to the question of who ends up where is that people's social environments largely influence what rung of the ladder they end up on. The advantages and disadvantages that people inherit from their parents, the resources that their friends can share with them, the quantity and quality of their schooling, and even the historical era into which they are born boost some up and hold others down. The children of professors, our own children, have substantial head starts over children of, say, factory workers. Young men who graduated from high school in the booming 1950s had greater opportunities than the
most unequal Western society, has somewhat more fluid intergenerational mobility than do other nations, but so does Sweden, the most equal Western society. There is no case for encouraging inequality in this evidence, either.

In sum, the assumption that considerable inequality is needed for, or even encourages, economic growth appears to be false. We do not need to make a morally wrenching choice between more affluence and more equality; we can have both. But even if such a choice were necessary, both sides of the debate, the "altruists" who favor intervention for equalizing and the supposed "realists" who resist it, agree that inequality can be shaped by policy decisions: wittingly or unwittingly, we choose our level of inequality.

Notes

1. We know that in statistical models of individual status attainment much, if not most, of the variance is unaccounted for. Of the explained variance, however, the bulk is due to social environment broadly construed. Also, we believe that much of the residual, unexplained variance is attributable to unmeasured social rather than personal factors.


6. Persson and Tabellini's explanation ("Is Inequality Harmful?") for their results is that in societies with greater earnings inequality, there is less political pressure for government redistribution; such redistribution impairs growth. However, their evidence for the explanation is thin, and Clarke's results ("More Evidence") are inconsistent with that argument. Chang ("Income Inequality") suggests that with more equality, lower-income families could make longer-term investment decisions. In any event, the statistical results suggest that government intervention on behalf of equality in the market, rather than after the market, would be beneficial.

7. See, for example, Michael Porter, Capital Choices: Changing the Way America Invests in Industry (Washington 1992).


enterprising, and responsive than workers in private industry: Negative associations with the term "bureaucrat" are almost as strong in non-Marxist societies as in Marxist ones. In addition, government agencies in these societies are often noted for their inefficient use of human and other resources. Managers in these bureaucracies often find that they are more likely to maximize their own rewards by expanding the size of the work force and other resources under their supervision (regardless of need) than by using these resources efficiently.

Some observers have argued that the massive failures of the socialist economies of Marxist societies in Eastern Europe and elsewhere demonstrate the obvious superiority of capitalism and indicate that the future lies with capitalism. That conclusion, however, seems unwarranted. As noted earlier, even those societies that are usually referred to as "capitalist" have, in reality, very mixed economies. To paraphrase Marx, they are societies in which rewards are allocated partly on the basis of need, partly on the basis of work, and partly on the basis of property. In short, they combine elements of communism, socialism, and capitalism and are the product of trial-and-error experimentation guided, in large measure, by a spirit of pragmatism. Mixed economies are systems that recognize the need for material incentives and acknowledge the benefits of economic inequality. But they are also systems that recognize the necessity of allocating a part of the economic product on the basis of need and most on the basis of work. In short, the old view of societies as being either capitalist or socialist seems increasingly irrelevant.

Over time, an ever-increasing number of societies and their leaders have accomplished what scholarly theorists have so notably failed to achieve: They have created a workable synthesis out of seemingly contradictory principles of allocation. One of the urgent tasks for students of inequality in the years ahead will be to catch up with this new social reality and create the kind of theoretical synthesis that does justice to the economic synthesis that has been created in most Western democracies in recent decades. Too much of stratification theory still resembles the work of the proverbial blind men struggling to describe an elephant.

No real synthesis is likely to emerge, however, so long as students of stratification ignore the crucial body of evidence that has accumulated concerning the effects on motivation and productivity of the massive experiments in destratification conducted in the twentieth century by Marxist elites. In effect, these experiments have provided us with far better evidence than any we have had before of the limits of what is possible in terms of the reduction of differentials in wealth and income. And although these tests cannot be considered definitive, neither can they be written off and ignored as most analysts have done so far.

Notes

I wish to thank Peter Bearman, David Grusky, Michael Kennedy, and Anthony Oberschall for valuable suggestions concerning a prior draft of this paper. They are, of course, in no way responsible for flaws and errors in this final version.

1. I have qualified the label capitalist because all Western industrial societies now have mixed economies with substantial state controls over and limitations on the rights of ownership.

2. The terms really existing socialism and really existing socialist societies were coined by East European sociologists. Although the Marxist-Leninist societies, to which the terms have been applied, represent but one version of socialism, they are especially important for stratification theory because the former leaders of these societies were able to implement the basic socialist principle of abolishing private property far more successfully than socialists in Western Europe ever were.

3. Unfortunately, imperfect tests are a fact of life in the social sciences. If the tests of Marxist theory that are possible in Marxist societies fall short of the scientific ideal, the same is true of almost every test in the social sciences. To deny the relevance of evidence from imperfect tests would be to deny the relevance of most of what has been learned over the years in the social sciences.

4. Shortly after Brezhnev's death, his son-in-law was arrested and sentenced to prison on charges of corruption.
5. The salaries of Party leaders were also kept quite low, but they were compensated generously in a variety of other ways.

6. Quality controls are far more likely when consumers can choose among competing products. When people must use their own money to purchase goods and services, they are not nearly so willing to accept inferior products as when they are using public funds.

7. For example, only 23 percent of Soviet inventions were put to use within two years of their date of patenting, compared to 66 percent of American inventions and 64 percent of West German inventions (The Economist 1988).

8. Internal Revenue Service data indicate that approximately 10 percent of U.S. GNP is allocated on the basis of need (public health, welfare, and education expenditures), 70 percent on work (wages and salaries), and 20 percent on property (interest, rents, dividends, capital gains) (Lenski 1984, 202).

References


onism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

Notes

1. That is, all written history. In 1847, the pre-history of society, the social organisation existing previous to recorded history, was all but unknown. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888.]

2. Guild-master, that is, a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888.]

3. "Commune" was the name taken, in France, by the nascent towns even before they had conquered from their feudal lords and masters local self-government and political rights as the "Third Estate". Generally speaking, for the economical development of the bourgeoisie, England is here taken as the typical country; for its political development, France. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888.]

This was the name given their urban communities by the townsmen of Italy and France, after they had purchased or wrested their initial rights of self-government from their feudal lords. [Note by Engels to the German edition of 1890.]

The Communist Manifesto, pp. 108–119

The first attempts of workers to associate among themselves always take place in the form of combinations.

Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance—combination. Thus combination always has a double aim, that of stopping competition among the workers, so that they can carry on general competition with the capitalist. If the first aim of resistance was merely the maintenance of wages, combinations, at first isolated, constitute themselves into groups as the capitalists in their turn unite for the purpose of repression, and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them than that of wages. This is so true that English economists are amazed to see the workers sacrifice a good part of their wages in favour of associations, which, in the eyes of these economists, are established solely in favour of wages. In this struggle—a veritable civil war—all the elements necessary for a
coming battle unite and develop. Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character.

Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The combination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

In the bourgeoisie we have two phases to distinguish: that in which it constituted itself as a class under the regime of feudalism and absolute monarchy, and that in which, already constituted as a class, it overthrew feudalism and monarchy to make society into a bourgeois society. The first of these phases was the longer and necessitated the greater efforts. This too began by partial combinations against the feudal lords.

Much research has been carried out to trace the different historical phases that the bourgeoisie has passed through, from the commune up to its constitution as a class.

But when it is a question of making a precise study of strikes, combinations and other forms in which the proletarians carry out before our eyes their organization as a class, some are seized with real fear and others display a transcendental disdain.

An oppressed class is the vital condition for every society founded on the antagonism of classes. The emancipation of the oppressed class thus implies necessarily the creation of a new society. For the oppressed class to be able to emancipate itself it is necessary that the productive powers already acquired and the existing social relations should no longer be capable of existing side by side. Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself. The organization of revolutionary elements as a class supposes the existence of all the productive forces which could be engendered in the bosom of the old society.

Does this mean that after the fall of the old society there will be a new class domination culminating in a new political power? No.

The condition for the emancipation of the working class is the abolition of every class, just as the condition for the liberation of the third estate, of the bourgeois order, was the abolition of all estates and all orders.

The working class, in the course of its development, will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of antagonism in civil society.

Meanwhile the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is a struggle of class against class, a struggle which carried to its highest expression is a total revolution. Indeed, is it at all surprising that a society founded on the opposition of classes should culminate in brutal contradiction, the shock of body against body, as its final dénouement?

Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social. It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that social evolutions will cease to be political revolutions. Till then, on the eve of every general reshuffling of society, the last word of social science will always be:

"Le combat ou la mort; la lutte sanguinaire ou le néant. C'est ainsi que la question est invinciblement posée."2

Notes

1. Estates here in the historical sense of the estates of feudalism, estates with definite and limited privileges. The revolution of the bourgeoisie abolished the estates and their privileges. Bourgeois society knows only classes. It was, therefore, absolutely in contradiction with history to describe the proletariat as the "fourth estate." [Note by F. Engels to the German edition, 1885.]
2. "Combat or death; bloody struggle or extinction. It is thus that the question is inexorably put." George Sand, *Jean Ziska*.

*The Poverty of Philosophy*, pp. 172–175

The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions but without entering into manifold relations with one another. Their mode of production isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse. The isolation is increased by France’s bad means of communication and by the poverty of the peasants. Their field of production, the small holding, admits of no division of labour in its cultivation, no application of science and, therefore, no diversity of development, no variety of talent, no wealth of social relationships. Each individual peasant family is almost self-sufficient; it itself directly produces the major part of its consumption and thus acquires its means of life more through exchange with nature than in intercourse with society. A small holding, a peasant and his family; alongside them another small holding, another peasant and another family. A few score of these make up a village, and a few score of villages make up a Department. In this way, the great mass of the French nation is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes, much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes. In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.

*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, pp. 478–479

The owners merely of labour-power, owners of capital, and landowners, whose respective sources of income are wages, profit and ground-rent, in other words, wage-labourers, capitalists and landowners, constitute then three big classes of modern society based upon the capitalist mode of production.

In England, modern society is indisputably most highly and classically developed in economic structure. Nevertheless, even here the stratification of classes does not appear in its pure form. Middle and intermediate strata even here obliterates lines of demarcation everywhere (although incomparably less in rural districts than in the cities). However, this is immaterial for our analysis. We have seen that the continual tendency and law of development of the capitalist mode of production is more and more to divorce the means of production from labour, and more and more to concentrate the scattered means of production into large groups, thereby transforming labour into wage-labour and the means of production into capital. And to this tendency, on the other hand, corresponds the independent separation of landed property from capital and labour, or the transformation of all landed property into the form of landed property corresponding to the capitalist mode of production.

The first question to be answered is this: What constitutes a class?—and the reply to this follows naturally from the reply to another question, namely: What makes wage-labourers, capitalists and landlords constitute the three great social classes?
about themselves. Within this class this cleavage can even develop into a certain opposition and hostility between the two parts, which, however, in the case of a practical collision, in which the class itself is endangered, automatically comes to nothing, in which case there also vanishes the semblance that the ruling ideas were not the ideas of the ruling class and had a power distinct from the power of this class. The existence of revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class.

If now in considering the course of history we detach the ideas of the ruling class from the ruling class itself and attribute to them an independent existence, if we confine ourselves to saying that these or those ideas were dominant at a given time, without bothering ourselves about the conditions of production and the producers of these ideas, if we thus ignore the individuals and world conditions which are the source of the ideas, we can say, for instance, that during the time that the aristocracy was dominant, the concepts honour, loyalty, etc. were dominant, during the dominance of the bourgeoisie the concepts freedom, equality, etc. The ruling class itself on the whole imagines this to be so. This conception of history, which is common to all historians, particularly since the eighteenth century, will necessarily come up against the phenomenon that increasingly abstract ideas hold sway, i.e. ideas which increasingly take on the form of universality. For each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones. The class making a revolution appears from the very start, if only because it is opposed to a class, not as a class but as the representative of the whole of society; it appears as the whole mass of society confronting the one ruling class. It can do this because, to start with, its interest really is more connected with the common interest of all other non-ruling classes, because under the pressure of hitherto existing conditions its interest has not yet been able to develop as the particular interest of a particular class. Its victory, therefore, benefits also many individuals of the other classes which are not winning a dominant position, but only insofar as it now puts these individuals in a position to raise themselves into the ruling class. When the French bourgeoisie overthrew the power of the aristocracy, it thereby made it possible for many proletarians to raise themselves above the proletariat, but only insofar as they become bourgeois. Every new class, therefore, achieves its hegemony only on a broader basis than that of the class ruling previously, whereas the opposition of the non-ruling class against the new ruling class later develops all the more sharply and profoundly. Both these things determine the fact that the struggle to be waged against this new ruling class, in its turn, aims at a more decided and radical negation of the previous conditions of society than could all previous classes which sought to rule.

This whole semblance, that the rule of a certain class is only the rule of certain ideas, comes to a natural end, of course, as soon as class rule in general ceases to be the form in which society is organised, that is to say, as soon as it is no longer necessary to represent a particular interest as general or the "general interest" as ruling.

Notes

1. Universality corresponds to (1) the class versus the estate, (2) the competition, world-wide intercourse, etc., (3) the great numerical strength of the ruling class, (4) the illusion of the common interests (in the beginning this illusion is true), (5) the delusion of the ideologists and the division of labour. [Marginal note by Marx.]
ation. Within the latter, the distribution of authority always sums up to zero, i.e., there always is a division involving domination and subjection.

I need hardly emphasize that from the point of view of “settling” the concepts of power and authority, the preceding discussion has raised more problems than it has solved. I believe, however, that for the purposes of this study, and of a sociological theory of conflict, little needs to be added to what has been stated here. In order somewhat to substantiate this perhaps rather bold assertion, it seems useful to recapitulate briefly the heuristic purpose and logical status of the considerations of this section.

I have introduced, as a structural determinant of conflict groups, the category of authority as exercised in imperatively coordinated associations. While agreeing with Marx that source and level of income—even socioeconomic status—cannot usefully be conceived as determinants of conflict groups, I have added to this list of erroneous approaches Marx’s own in terms of property in the means of production. Authority is both a more general and a more significant social relation. The former has been shown in our critique of Marx; the latter will have to be demonstrated [elsewhere (see Dahrendorf 1959)]. The concept of authority is used, in this context, in a specific sense. It is differentiated from power by what may roughly be referred to as the element of legitimacy; and it has to be understood throughout in the restricted sense of authority as distributed and exercised in imperatively coordinated associations. While its “disruptive” or conflict-generating consequences are not the only aspect of authority, they are the one relevant in terms of the coercion model of society. Within the frame of reference of this model, (1) the distribution of authority in associations is the ultimate “cause” of the formation of conflict groups, and (2) being dichotomous, it is, in any given association, the cause of the formation of two, and only two, conflict groups.

Notes

1. To facilitate communication, I shall employ in this study a number of abbreviations. These must not however be misunderstood. Thus, “conflict analysis” in this context stands for “analysis of group conflicts of the class type, class being understood in the traditional sense.” At no point do I want to imply a claim for a generalized theory of social conflict.

Bibliography


Notes


2. See *Class, Crisis and the State*, chap. 2; and idem, "Intellectuals and the Working Class," *The Insurgent Sociologist*, Summer 1978.

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**Erik Olin Wright**

**A General Framework for the Analysis of Class Structure**

The Point of Departure: Neo-Marxist Analyses of Class Structure

At the heart of the recent resurgence of Marxist theorizing on the problem of class has been what might be termed the "embarrassment" of the middle class. For all of their disagreements, all Marxists share a basic commitment to a polarized abstract concept of class relations. Yet, at least at first glance, the concrete class structures of contemporary advanced capitalist societies look anything but polarized. This empirical evidence of a large middle class has provided critics of Marxism with one of their principal arguments against Marxist class theory. In response, a variety of solutions to the problem of the middle class have been proposed in the recent Marxist debates.

Without going into any detail, it is possible to identify four broadly different strategies that Marxists have adopted to deal with the conceptual problem of nonpolarized class positions within a logic of polarized class relations. First, the class structure of advanced capitalist societies really is polarized; the "middle class" is strictly an ideological illusion. This position deals with the problem of the middle class by denying the problem itself. Second, the middle class should be viewed as a segment of some other class, typically a "new petty bourgeoisie" or "new working class." In this strategy the basic class map of capitalism remains intact, but significant internal differentiations within classes are added to the analysis of class structure. Third, the middle class is really a new class in its own right, completely distinct from either the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, or the petty bourgeoisie. Sometimes this class is given a specific name, such as the Professional Managerial Class, sometimes it is simply called "the New Class." By adding entirely new classes to the class structure, this approach more radically...
of such positions as contradictory locations within class relations? There is still a sense in which such positions could be characterized as "contradictory locations," for they will typically hold contradictory interests with respect to the primary forms of class struggle in capitalist society, the struggle between labor and capital. On the one hand, they are like workers, in being excluded from ownership of the means of production. On the other hand, they have interests opposed to workers because of their effective control of organization and skill assets. Within the struggles of capitalism, therefore, these new middle classes do constitute contradictory locations, or more precisely, contradictory locations within exploitation relations.

This conceptualization of the middle classes also suggests that historically the principal forms of contradictory locations will vary depending upon the particular combinations of exploitation relations in a given society. These principal contradictory locations are presented in Table 3. In feudalism, the critical contradictory location is constituted by the bourgeoisie, the rising class of the successor mode of production. Within capitalism, the central contradictory location within exploitation relations is constituted by managers and state bureaucrats. They embody a principle of class organization that is quite distinct from capitalism and that potentially poses an alternative to capitalism. This does not imply that there is any inevitability to the sequence feudalism-capitalism-state bureaucratic socialism-socialism-communism; state bureaucrats are not inevitably destined to be the future ruling class of present-day capitalisms. But it does suggest that the process of class formation and class struggle is considerably more complex and indeterminate than the traditional Marxist story has allowed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of production</th>
<th>Basic classes</th>
<th>Principal contradictory location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feudalism</td>
<td>Lords and serfs</td>
<td>Bourgeois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalism</td>
<td>Bourgeois and proletariat</td>
<td>Managers/bureaucrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State bureaucratic socialism</td>
<td>Bureaucrats and workers</td>
<td>Intelligentsia/experts</td>
</tr>
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This is particularly true for state managers who, unlike corporate managers, are less likely to have their careers tightly integrated with the interests of the capitalist class. Finally, in state bureaucratic socialism, the "intelligentsia" broadly defined constitutes the pivotal contradictory location.

One of the upshots of this reconceptualization of the middle class is that it is no longer axiomatic that the proletariat is the unique, or perhaps even the central, rival to the capitalist class for class power in capitalist society. That classical Marxist assumption depended upon the thesis that there were no other classes within capitalism that could be viewed as the "bearers" of an historical alternative to capitalism. Socialism (as the transition to communism) was the only possible future for capitalism. What Table 3 suggests is that there are other class forces within capitalism that potentially pose an alternative to capitalism. This does not imply that there is any inevitability to the sequence feudalism-capitalism-state bureaucratic socialism-socialism-communism; state bureaucrats are not inevitably destined to be the future ruling class of present-day capitalisms. But it does suggest that the process of class formation and class struggle is considerably more complex and indeterminate than the traditional Marxist story has allowed.

Notes

1. For a more detailed review of these alternatives, see E.O. Wright, "Varieties of Marxist Concepts of Class Structure," Politics and Society, vol. 9, no. 3 (1980).


5. E.O. Wright, "Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies," New Left Review, no. 98 (1976); and Class, Crisis and the State (London:


7. A partial exception to this can be found in arguments for the existence of a "new class" of intellectuals and/or bureaucrats in capitalist and postcapitalist society. See: A. Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals; and I. Szelenyi and W. Martin, New Class Theory and Beyond (unpublished book manuscript, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin, 1985).


9. Roemer is a Marxist economist engaged in a long-term project of elaborating what he calls the "microfoundations" of Marxist theory. His most important work is entitled A General Theory of Exploitation and Class (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).


11. But note: workers in capitalism are not feudalistically exploited; they would be worse off, not better off, if they withdrew from the game of capitalism with only their personal assets. As Roemer argues, the claim by neoclassical theorists that wage earners in capitalism are not exploited is generally equivalent to the claim that they are not feudalistically exploited, that is, that they are not subjected to surplus extraction based on relations of personal bondage. See Roemer, A General Theory, p. 206.

12. The asset-exploitation nexus thus depends upon the capacity of asset-holders to deprive others of that asset. The social basis of exploitation, understood in this way, is quite similar to Frank Parkin's characterization of Weber's concept of social closure as "the process by which social collectivities seek to maximize rewards by restricting access to resources and opportunities to a limited circle of eligibles." F. Parkin, Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). While Parkin's central concern is with the kinds of attributes that serve as the basis for closure—race, religion, language—Roemer's is with the nature of the resources (productive assets) over which closure is organized.

13. Roemer's conceptualization of the relationship between class and exploitation is similar in certain aspects to Alvin Gouldner's, although Roemer is unaware of Gouldner's work. Gouldner defines the "New Class" as a cultural bourgeoisie defined by its control over "cultural capital," where "capital" is defined as "any produced object used to make saleable utilities, thus providing its possessor with incomes, or claims to incomes defined as legitimate because of their imputed contribution to economic productivity." (Future of Intellectuals, p. 21). While Gouldner does not characterize this income allocation process in terms of exploitation, Roemer's exploitation concept would fit comfortably within Gouldner's general approach.


17. This "control of the surplus," it must be noted, is not the equivalent of the actual personal consumption income of managers and bureaucrats, any more than capitalist profits or feudal rents are the equivalent of the personally consumed income of capitalists and feudal lords. It is historically variable both within and between types of societies what fraction of the surplus effectively controlled by exploiting classes is used for personal consumption and what portion is used for other purposes (feudal military expenditures, capitalist accumulation, organization growth). The claim that managers-bureaucrats would be "worse off" under conditions of a redistribution of organization assets refers to the amount of income they effectively control, which is therefore potentially available for personal appropriation, not simply the amount they personally consume.

18. It may be utopian to imagine a society without skill-based exploitation, or even a society without organization-asset exploitation, particularly if we reject the claim that a future society will ever exist in a state of absolute abundance. In the absence of absolute abundance, all societies will face dilemmas and trade-offs around the problem of distribution of consumption, and such dilemmas may pose intractable incentive problems in the absence of exploitation. For a careful exposition of the problem of utopian fantasies in Marxist theory, see A. Nove, The Economics of Feasible Socialism (Hemel Hempstead: George Allen and Unwin, 1983).

19. The labor-force data in this table come from the comparative project on class structure and class consciousness, University of Wisconsin. Details of the coding of categories and the operationalization of variables can be found in E.O. Wright, Classes (London: Verso, 1983), appendix 2.
tional congress of agrarian landlords), and has continued among princes (holy alliance, Karlsbad decrees), socialist workers, conserva-
tives (the longing of Prussian conservatives for Russian intervention in 1850). But their aim is not necessarily the establishment of new international political, i.e. territorial, do-
minion. In the main they aim to influence the existing dominion.2

Notes

1. Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, part III, chap. 4, pp. 631–40. The first sentence in paragraph one and the several definitions in this chapter which are in brackets do not appear in the original text. They have been taken from other contexts of Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft.

2. The posthumously published text breaks off here. We omit an incomplete sketch of types of 'warrior estates.'

MAX WEBER

Status Groups and Classes

The Concepts of Class and Class Situation

The term 'class situation'1 will be applied to the typical probability that a given state of (a) provision with goods, (b) external conditions of life, and (c) subjective satisfaction or frustration will be possessed by an individual or a group. These probabilities define class situation in so far as they are dependent on the kind and extent of control or lack of it which the individual has over goods or services and existing possibilities of their exploitation for the attainment of income or receipts within a given economic order.

A 'class' is any group of persons occupying the same class situation. The following types of classes may be distinguished: (a) A class is a 'property class' when class situation for its members is primarily determined by the differentation of property holdings; (b) a class is an 'acquisition class' when the class situation of its members is primarily determined by their opportunity for the exploitation of services on the market; (c) the 'social class' structure is composed of the plurality of class situations between which an interchange of individuals on a personal basis or in the course of generations is readily possible and typically observable. On the basis of any of the three types of class situation, associative relationships between those sharing the same class interests, namely, corporate class organizations may develop. This need not, however, necessarily happen. The concepts of class and class situation as such designate only the fact of identity or similarity in the typical situation in which a given individual and many others find their interests defined. In principle control over different combinations of consumer goods, means of production, investments, capital funds or marketable abilities constitute class situations which are different with each variation and combination. Only persons who are completely unskilled, without property and dependent on employment without regular occupation, are in a strictly identical class situation. Transitions from one class

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corresponding modes of life, or (c) on the prestige of birth, or of an occupation.

The primary practical manifestations of status with respect to social stratification are conubium, commensality, and often monopolistic appropriation of privileged economic opportunities and also prohibition of certain modes of acquisition. Finally, there are conventions or traditions of other types attached to a status.

Status may be based on class situation directly or related to it in complex ways. It is not, however, determined by this alone. Property and managerial positions are not as such sufficient to lend their holder a certain status, though they may well lead to its acquisition. Similarly, poverty is not as such a disqualification for high status though again it may influence it.

Conversely, status may partly or even wholly determine class situation, without, however, being identical with it. The class situation of an officer, a civil servant, and a student as determined by their income may be widely different while their status remains the same, because they adhere to the same mode of life in all relevant respects as a result of their common education.

A ‘status group’ is a plurality of individuals who, within a larger group, enjoy a particular kind and level of prestige by virtue of their position and possibly also claim certain special monopolies.

The following are the most important sources of the development of distinct status groups: (a) The most important is by the development of a peculiar style of life including, particularly, the type of occupation pursued. (b) The second basis is hereditary charisma arising from the successful claim to a position of prestige by virtue of birth. (c) The third is the appropriation of political or hierocratic authority as a monopoly by socially distinct groups.

The development of hereditary status groups is usually a form of the hereditary appropriation of privileges by an organized group or by individual qualified persons. Every well-established case of appropriation of opportunities and abilities, especially of exercising imperative powers, has a tendency to lead to the development of distinct status groups. Conversely, the development of status groups has a tendency in turn to lead to the monopolistic appropriation of governing powers and of the corresponding economic advantages.

Acquisition classes are favoured by an economic system oriented to market situations, whereas status groups develop and subsist most readily where economic organization is of a monopolistic and liturgical character and where the economic needs of corporate groups are met on a feudal or patrimonial basis. The type of class which is most closely related to a status group is the ‘social’ class, while the ‘acquisition’ class is the farthest removed. Property classes often constitute the nucleus of a status group.

Every society where status groups play a prominent part is controlled to a large extent by conventional rules of conduct. It thus creates economically irrational conditions of consumption and hinders the development of free markets by monopolistic appropriation and by restricting free disposal of the individual’s own economic ability. This will have to be discussed further elsewhere.

Notes

1. Although Parsons chooses to translate Klasse as ‘class status’ in this context, to do so is potentially confusing because Weber so carefully distinguishes between the concepts of class and status. I have therefore followed the lead of Roth and Wittich (Economy and Society, 1968) and opted for the term ‘class situation’ throughout this essay.—Ed.

2. I have again followed Roth and Wittich (Economy and Society, 1968) in translating the German term Kleinbürgertum as ‘petty bourgeoisie,’ whereas Parsons opted for the more ambiguous term ‘lower middle’ class.—Ed.

3. For the purposes of consistency with the other selections, I have translated the term ständische Lage as ‘status’ (see Roth and Wittich, Economy and Society, 1968), whereas Parsons opted for the terms ‘social status,’ ‘stratifactory status,’ and the like.—Ed.
the existence or reality of classes. Thus the class awareness of the middle class, in so far as it involves beliefs which place a premium upon individual responsibility and achievement, is of this order.

Within ethnically and culturally homogeneous societies, the degree of class structuration will be determined by the interrelationship between the sources of structuration identified previously. But many, if not the majority, of capitalist societies are not homogeneous in these respects. Traditionally, in class theory, racial or religious divisions have been regarded as just so many 'obstacles' to the formation of classes as coherent unities. This may often be so, where these foster types of structuration which deviate from that established by the 'class principle' (as typically was the case in the battles fought by the rearguard of feudalism against the forces promoting the emergence of capitalism). The idea that ethnic or cultural divisions serve to dilute or hinder the formation of classes is also very explicitly built into Weber's separation of (economic) 'class' and 'status group'. But this, in part at least, gains its cogency from the contrast between estate, as a legally constituted category, and class, as an economic category. While it may be agreed, however, that the bases of the formation of classes and status groups (in the sense in which I have employed these concepts) are different, nonetheless the tendency to class structuration may receive a considerable impetus where class coincides with the criteria of status group membership—in other words, where structuration deriving from economic organisation 'overlaps' with, or, in Dahrendorf's terms, is 'superimposed' upon, that deriving from evaluative categorisations based upon ethnic or cultural differences.

Where this is so, status group membership itself becomes a form of market capacity. Such a situation frequently offers the strongest possible source of class structuration, whereby there develop clear-cut differences in attitudes, beliefs and style of life between the classes. Where ethnic differences serve as a 'disqualifying' market capacity, such that those in the category in question are heavily concentrated among the lowest-paid occupations, or are chronically unemployed or semi-employed, we may speak of the existence of an underclass.

Notes

1. Theodor Geiger, Die Klassengesellschaft im Schmelztiegel (Cologne 1949); Karl Renner, Wandlungen der modernen Gesellschaft (Vienna 1953); Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (Stanford 1959).

2. For a cogent representation of this view, see W. G. Runciman, 'Class, status and power', in J. A. Jackson, Social Stratification (Cambridge 1968).


5. ibid., vol. 2, p. 928.

6. ibid., p. 930.

7. ibid., p. 927.

8. ibid., p. 305.

9. Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict.

10. See, for example, David Lockwood, The Blackcoated Worker (London 1958), pp. 202–4; Frank Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (London 1971).


17. We may, however, agree with Schumpeter that 'The family, not the physical person, is the true unit of class and class theory' (Joseph Schumpeter, Imperialism, Social Classes, Cleveland 1961). This is actually completely consistent with the idea that mobility is fundamental to class formation.

18. Lockwood, The Blackcoated Worker, op. cit.

19. It might be pointed out that it would easily be possible to break down the notion of status group further: according, for example, to whether the status evaluations in question are made primar-
ily by others outside the group, and rejected by those inside it, etc.


21. This is not, of course, the same as Lukács' 'class-conditioned unconsciousness'; but I believe that Lukács is correct in distinguishing qualitatively different 'levels' of class consciousness. Georg Lukács, History and Class Consciousness (London 1971), pp. 52ff.

22. cf. Nicos Poulantzas, Pouvoir politique et classes sociales de l'état capitaliste (Paris 1970). It is misleading, however, to speak of classes sans conscience, as Crozier does. See Michel Crozier, 'Classes sans conscience ou préfiguration de la société sans classes', Archives européennes de sociologie 1, 1960; also 'L'ambiguïté de la conscience de classe chez les employés et les petits fonctionnaires', Cahiers internationaux de sociologie 28, 1955.

23. Or, to use another terminology, where there is 'overdetermination' (Louis Althusser, For Marx, London 1969, pp. 89–128).

24. Marx's Lumpenproletariat, according to this usage, is only an underclass when the individuals in question tend to derive from distinctive ethnic backgrounds. Leggett has referred to the underclass as the 'marginal working class', defining this as 'a sub-community of workers who belong to a subordinate ethnic or racial group which is usually proletarianised and highly segregated' (John C. Leggett, Class, Race, and Labor, New York 1968, p. 14).

FRANK PARKIN

Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique

The 'Boundary Problem' in Sociology

The persistent attractions of Marxist class theory have almost certainly been boosted by the less than inspiring alternative offered by academic sociology. In so far as there is any sort of tacitly agreed upon model of class among western social theorists it takes the form of the familiar distinction between manual and non-manual labour. No other criterion for identifying the class boundary seems to enjoy such widespread acceptance among those who conduct investigations into family structure, political attitudes, social imagery, life-styles, educational attainment, and similar enquiries that keep the wheels of empirical sociology endlessly turning. Paradoxically, however, although the manual/non-manual model is felt to be highly serviceable for research purposes, it is not commonly represented as a model of class cleavage and conflict. That is to say, the two main social categories distinguished by sociology for purposes of class analysis are not invested with antagonistic properties comparable to those accorded to proletariat and bourgeoisie in Marxist theory. This would be less cause for comment if proponents of the manual/non-manual model normally construed the social order as a harmonious and integrated whole; but to construe it instead in terms of conflict, dichotomy, and cleavage, as most of these writers now appear to do, seems to reveal an awkward contrast between the empirical model of class and the general conception of capitalist society.

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incumbency of position in a formally defined structure does not normally correspond to class alignment where it really counts—at the level of organized political sentiment and conduct. This serious lack of fit between all positional or systemic definitions of class and the actual behaviour of classes in the course of distributive struggle, is not due to any lack of the categories employed. It arises from the initial theoretical decision to discount the significance and effect of variations in the cultural and social make-up of the groups assigned to the categories in question. Models constructed upon such formal, systemic definitions require of their advocates much ingenuity in accounting for the continuous and wholesale discrepancies between class position and class behaviour. A good deal of the intellectual energy of western Marxism has been dissipated in wrestling with this very problem which is of its own conceptual making.

Notes

1. The hospital setting provides, perhaps, the most important exception. Industrial conflicts between medical staff and the manual workers' unions over issues such as 'pay beds' are unusual in having clear-cut ideological, rather than bread-and-butter, causes.

2. Carchedi 1975:48. For Braverman, too, managers and executives are 'part of the class that personifies capital . . . ' (1974:405).


11. These arguments were first tentatively sketched out in my 'Strategies of Social Closure in Class Formation' (Parkin 1974). In that publication the two types of closure were referred to as exclusion and solidarism. This latter term does not, however, satisfactorily describe a mode of collective action standing in direct opposition to exclusion, since solidaristic behaviour can itself be used for blatantly exclusionary ends. That is to say, solidarism does not properly refer to the purposes for which power is employed. The term usurpation more adequately captures the notion of collective action designed to improve the lot of a subordinate group at the expense of a dominant group. Solidarism is simply one means among others to this end.


17. Plamenatz 1975:120.


20. Parsons 1951:119. The entry in the index under 'Property' invites the reader to 'see Possessions'.


22. Durkheim 1957:142.


30. It transpires that the idea is not so far-fetched after all. The Council for National Academic Awards has recently approved the syllabus for a BA Degree in Sports Studies. Undergraduates will be instructed in 'the variables influencing performance in sport; a science and its sports application; scientific methods, statistics and computing; and wide practical experience in a number of sports.' Daily Telegraph, Monday, 28 August 1978, p. 3.


Bibliography


emerge from that inchoate and disorganised state in which they have lain for a century, since professions of this kind today absorb the greater part of the energies of society.\(^5\)

Notes

3. We need not discuss the international organisation which, because of the international character of the market, would necessarily develop at a level above that of the national organisation. For at present the latter alone can constitute a legal entity. In the present state of European law the former can only result from arrangements freely concluded between national corporations.
4. This specialisation could not occur without the help of elected assemblies charged with representing the corporation. In the present state of industry, these assemblies, as well as those tribunals entrusted with the task of applying the regulations of an occupation, should clearly include representatives of employees and employers, as is already the case with the industrial arbitration tribunals. The proportion of each should correspond to the respective importance attributed by public opinion to these two factors of production. But if it is necessary for both sides to meet on the governing councils of the corporation it is no less indispensable for them to constitute distinct and independent groups at the lower level of corporate organisation, because too often their interests vie with one another and are opposing. To feel that they exist freely, they must be aware of their separate existence. The two bodies so constituted can then appoint their representatives to the common assemblies.
5. Moreover, we do not mean that territorial constitutencies are destined to disappear completely, but only that they will fade into the background. Old institutions never vanish in the face of new ones to such an extent that they leave no trace of themselves. They persist not only by the mere fact of survival, but also because there persists some trace of the needs to which they corresponded. Material proximity will always constitute a link between men. Consequently the political and social organisation based on territory will certainly subsist. But it will no longer enjoy its present predominance, precisely because that link is losing some of its force. What is more, we have shown above that, even at the base of the corporation it will still be found geographical divisions. Moreover, between the various corporations from a same locality or region there will necessarily be special relationships of solidarity which will, from time to time, demand an appropriate organisation.

DAVID B. GRUSKY AND JESPER B. SØRENSEN

Are There Big Social Classes?

The study of social class has a volatile history in which waves of creative class analytic scholarship are interspersed with periods of cynicism about the class analytic enterprise. In the present cynical phase, criticisms of both Marxist and non-Marxist class analysis continue to escalate, with many commentators now feeling bold enough to argue that the concept of class is “ceasing to do any useful work for sociology” (Pahl 1989, p. 710; also, Pakulski and Waters 1996; Clark and Lipset 1991). By way of response, the most ardent defenders of class models have simply reaffirmed the class analytic status quo, albeit sometimes with the concession that class-based formulations now apply in rather weakened form (e.g., Wright 1996; Hout, Brooks, and Manza 1993; Goldthorpe and Marshall 1992). The debate between these two camps has proceeded along stylized lines. Indeed, although the literature is well stocked
 purely sectional wage demands. At the same time, the “active labor market” programs embodied in the Rehn-Meidner model (Esping-Andersen 1988, pp. 47–53) provide extensive state assistance for worker retraining and relocation, thereby blurring interoccupational boundaries and further undermining local sectionalism and closure. In this context, unit-level occupations are still defined by functional positions in the Swedish division of labor, but the social trappings (e.g., associations, closure) that usually emerge around such technical distinctions have been partly repressed. Although Sweden appears, then, to be properly characterized by the neo-Marxian formula that “technical features do not entail social features” (Abercrombie and Urry 1983, p. 109), it is unclear whether this form of structuration extends much beyond Sweden and Scandinavia more generally. If it is more widespread than we suspect, then our preferred line of argumentation is admittedly weakened.

The larger conclusion to be drawn is that sociologists in all countries have typically been too quick to fall back on purely nominal categories and the descriptive models that they imply. The longstanding Marxian distinction between klasse an sich and klasse für sich only reinforces such nominalist tendencies, as it legitimate the claim that conventional aggregate categories, although presently latent or quiescent, may someday become meaningful and activated. This approach is of course peculiarly modern. In characterizing stratification systems of the past, sociologists have typically relied on categories that were embedded in the fabric of society (e.g., estates, castes), thereby rendering them sensible and meaningful to intellectuals and the lay public alike.

The modern analogues to such realist categories are the unit occupational groups that emerge around functional positions in the division of labor. If analyses are ratcheted down to this level, we can construct models that rely on real institutional forces and assume more nearly structural form. The proof of our approach rests, then, on the additional explanatory power and understanding that accrues from referencing the real institutional processes that create classes, constrain mobility chances, generate earnings, and define lifestyles. The task of mapping disaggregate stratification is hardly trivial, but the intellectual payoff to so proceeding is likely to be greater than that secured by carrying out yet another study at the aggregate level.

References
Are There Big Social Classes?


children and, as generation succeeds generation, are progressively accentuated. The descendants of rulers, therefore, ought to become better and better fitted to rule, and the other classes ought to see their chances of challenging or supplanting them become more and more remote. Now the most commonplace experience suffices to assure one that things do not go in that way at all.

What we see is that as soon as there is a shift in the balance of political forces—when, that is, a need is felt that capacities different from the old should assert themselves in the management of the state, when the old capacities, therefore, lose some of their importance or changes in their distribution occur—then the manner in which the ruling class is constituted changes also. If a new source of wealth develops in a society, if the practical importance of knowledge grows, if an old religion declines or a new one is born, if a new current of ideas spreads, then, simultaneously, far-reaching dislocations occur in the ruling class. One might say, indeed, that the whole history of civilized mankind comes down to a conflict between the tendency of dominant elements to monopolize political power and transmit possession of it by inheritance, and the tendency toward a dislocation of old forces and an insurgence of new forces; and this conflict produces an unending ferment of endosmosis and exosmosis between the upper classes and certain portions of the lower. Ruling classes decline inevitably when they cease to find scope for the capacities through which they rose to power, when they can no longer render the social services which they once rendered, or when their talents and the services they render lose in importance in the social environment in which they live. So the Roman aristocracy declined when it was no longer the exclusive source of higher officers for the army, of administrators for the commonwealth, of governors for the provinces. So the Venetian aristocracy declined when its nobles ceased to command the galleys and no longer passed the greater part of their lives in sailing the seas and in trading and fighting.

In inorganic nature we have the example of our air, in which a tendency to immobility produced by the force of inertia is continuously in conflict with a tendency to shift about as the result of inequalities in the distribution of heat. The two tendencies, prevailing by turn in various regions on our planet, produce now calm, now wind and storm. In much the same way in human societies there prevails now the tendency that produces closed, stationary, crystallized ruling classes, now the tendency that results in a more or less rapid renovation of ruling classes.

Notes

2. Jannet, *Le istituzioni politiche e sociali degli Stati Uniti d'America*, part II, chap. X.
3. This was true up to a few years ago, the examination of a mandarin covering only literary and historical studies—as the Chinese understood such studies, of course.
4. *Der Rassenkampf*. This notion transpires from Gumplovicz's whole volume. It is explicitly formulated in book II, chap. XXXIII.
all limited by the level of technique, by the means of power and violence and organization that prevail in a given society. In this connection we also learn that there is a fairly straight line running upward through the history of the West; that the means of oppression and exploitation, of violence and destruction, as well as the means of production and reconstruction, have been progressively enlarged and increasingly centralized.

As the institutional means of power and the means of communications that tie them together have become steadily more efficient, those now in command of them have come into command of instruments of rule quite unsurpassed in the history of mankind. And we are not yet at the climax of their development. We can no longer lean upon or take soft comfort from the historical ups and downs of ruling groups of previous epochs. In that sense, Hegel is correct: we learn from history that we cannot learn from it.

Notes


3. The statistical idea of choosing some value and calling those who have the most of it an elite derives, in modern times, from the Italian economist, Pareto, who puts the central point in this way: 'Let us assume that in every branch of human activity each individual is given an index which stands as a sign of his capacity, very much the way grades are given in the various subjects in examinations in school. The highest type of lawyer, for instance, will be given 10. The man who does not get a client will be given 1—reserving zero for the man who is an out-and-out idiot. To the man who has made his millions—honestly or dishonestly as the case may be—we will give 10. To the man who has earned his thousands we will give 6; to such as just manage to keep out of the poor-house, 1, keeping zero for those who get in. . . . So let us make a class of people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity, and to that class give the name of elite.' Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1935), par. 2027 and 2031. Those who follow this approach end up not with one elite, but with a number corresponding to the number of values they select. Like many rather abstract ways of reasoning, this one is useful because it forces us to think in a clear-cut way. For a skillful use of this approach, see the work of Harold D. Lasswell, in particular, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936); and for a more systematic use, H. D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

4. The conception of the elite as members of a top social stratum, is, of course, in line with the prevailing common-sense view of stratification. Technically, it is closer to 'status group' than to 'class,' and has been very well stated by Joseph A. Schumpeter, 'Social Classes in an Ethically Homogeneous Environment,' *Imperialism and Social Classes* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, Inc., 1951), pp. 133 ff., especially pp. 137-47. Cf. also his *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper, 1950), Part II. For the distinction between class and status groups, see *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (trans. and ed. by Gerth and Mills; New York: Oxford University Press, 1946). For an analysis of Pareto's conception of the elite compared with Marx's conception of classes, as well as data on France, see Raymond Aron, 'Social Structure and Ruling Class,' *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. I, nos. 1 and 2 (1950).


than others, and is thereby able to exert a degree of control over decisions taken by those within them. Thus it may be that the economic elite, or certain sectors of the economic elite, are able to significantly condition political decisions through the use of ‘influence’, ‘inducement’, or the ‘direct’ control of political positions—i.e., through the fact that members of the economic elite are also incumbents of political positions. We may refer to all of these modes of obtaining, or striving for, control as the media of interchange between elite groups. It is precisely one of the major tasks of the analysis of elite formations to examine the media of interchange which operate between elite groups in any given society in order to determine what kinds of elite hierarchy exist.

Notes

1. Most subsequent Marxist authors have either been content with the most generalised assertions about this issue, or have wanted to have their cake and eat it by insisting that capitalism is dominated by a ruling class who do not actually ‘rule’; cf. Nicos Poulantzas, Pouvoir politique et classes sociales de l’état capitaliste (Paris 1970), pp. 361ff.
3. In this section of this chapter I have drawn upon part of my article ‘Elites in the British class structure’, Sociological Review 20, 1972.
4. cf. Talcott Parsons, ‘On the concept of political power’, Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 107, 1963. The error in Parsons’ analysis, however, is to take insufficient account of the fact that the ‘collective’ aspect of power is asymmetrical in its consequences for the different groupings in society.

EDWARD A. SHILS

The Political Class in the Age of Mass Society: Collectivistic Liberalism and Social Democracy

The very subject of the study of elites is anathema to the anti-elitists. Mosca and Pareto have always been suspect among progressivistic, collectivistic liberals and radicals, partly because they were suspected of having been Fascists, partly because some Fascists invoked them as witnesses to their oligarchical ideals and their admiration—and practice—of brutality. But, in fact, the study of elites is an evaluatively neutral subject. Insofar as it confines itself to the description of what happens between two or more generations, it is silent at the question as to whether inequality in the distribution of opportunities and rewards is inherent in the nature of societies. Indeed, the descriptive accounts contained in elite studies are quite compatible with the beliefs that inequalities are inevitable and with beliefs that they are necessary and useful or at least have advantages which more than compensate for their disadvantages. They are quite compatible with beliefs that the distributions which they disclose are good or evil.

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tary and partial form—it does so through its national legislative bodies. Of these, the Senate is by far the most important in many respects. The United States Senate and the British House of Commons have each claimed or, had claimed for them, the standing of “the best club in the world.” A club has its atmosphere and its rules; it has its own distinctive culture which new members must acquire and through which they acquire “the art of politics.” It is, however, another matter as to whether the “best club in the world” can generate and sustain the skill, knowledge, solidarity, and self-confidence necessary for keeping on top of the problems which the demands of the electorate and of the particular interests within it, and their own ideas about the rightful sphere of government, have presented to modern politicians for solution.

The strain on the political culture of the main centers of Western societies is aggravated by the unceasingly critical and demanding scrutiny which the contemporary apparatus of knowledge, on the one side, and demanding and increasingly aggrieved assertiveness of the mass of population on the other, directs toward the political elite.

When Mosca discussed a closed or a partially closed political class he had in mind primarily the reservoir of recruitment and the extent to which that reservoir was open to persons who came from outside the main political families, institutions, and circles. Modern political life under conditions of popular democracy is too open for the generation and maintenance of a political class. Mosca’s emphasis on the partial closedness of recruitment as a condition of the existence and continuity of a political class might also have been extended, and it should now be extended to include closedness from external scrutiny.

Bentham conceived of the “eye of the public” as “the virtue of the statesman,” but he never conceived of that eye as having such a depth of penetration, such brightness, and such constancy as the present eye of the public represented in the professional staffs of the mass media of communication. Like many of the critics of the closure of the political classes of the 18th and 19th centuries who wanted a pattern of government more open to the public gaze, he did not imagine how imaginative, how powerful, how detailed, and omnipresent that eye would become.

It would be very difficult for a political elite, nurtured by a combination of open and closed recruitment, to withstand that insistent eye, especially under conditions in which the minds and voices behind that eye demand so much and demand it so insistently and censoriously. The invention of sample surveys of the political attitudes of Western societies, the frequency of those surveys, and the specificity of the objects on which they seek to discover the distribution of attitudes mean that political elites have to think unceasingly about whether their measures are popular. Popularity of measures becomes a criterion of the success of a measure, long before it has had a chance to become effective. Effectiveness and popularity are not the same thing, and their divergence renders the formation of a political class in Mosca’s sense impossible. A political class in Mosca’s sense did not have to be continuously on the alert to its popularity, and since it did not try to do as much as contemporary political elites in societies dominated by collectivistic liberal and social democratic beliefs and demands, it was easier for it to be effective. Neither of these conditions is present today.

Note

hands of [a] few individuals,” creating the possibility that “an ‘inner group’ would control the destiny of American commerce.”

Central to these analyses is the potentially critical political role played by top managers holding multi-firm connections. Executives with ties to several, often disparate, companies necessarily become concerned with the joint welfare of the several companies. Their indirect ties to other firms through the interlocking directorate further enlarges the scope of their concern. “Even more than other large corporation executives,” writes one group of analysts, “those who sit at the center of the web of interlocking directorates must have an outlook and executive policies that, while yet serving particular and more narrow interests, conform to the general interests of the corporate community and of the principal owners of capital within it.”

The inner circle, in short, constitutes a distinct, politicized business segment, if a segment is defined as a subset of class members sharing a specific social location with partially distinct interests. Though members of the inner circle share with other corporate managers a common commitment to enhancing company profits, their heightened sensitivity to business interests more general than those that look solely to support individual company profits also sets them apart.

The business pillar of the establishment is indeed a pillar, but as powerful as those who occupy the pillar’s base may be within their own large corporation, they lack the means and incentives for shaping classwide policy. The top of the pillar does not. It has the power to act through its umbrella of intercorporate connections. It has the unity to act by virtue of its shared social cohesion. Its upper-class connections opens doors when it chooses to act. And at its disposal are the business associations when formal representation is needed.

The inner circle is not all powerful, however. Nor is it seamless. The upper-class credentials are partial, the ability to control the associations imperfect. Yet in all these respects it is more prepared to act than are other individuals or groups of corporate managers and directors. The pluralist and structuralist claims of elite disorganization capture a relative truth when applied to the bulk of the corporate community. The claim of disunity is far less applicable, however, to the inner circle.

Even then the inner circle does not act as a committee of the whole. Political action is taken not by the inner circle, but by organized entities within it. Resources are actually mobilized through (1) the intercorporate and informal networks linking members of the inner circle, and (2) the formal associations over which the inner circle exercises substantial influence. The real unit of classwide corporate politics, then, is not the business elite as a whole, nor even this select stratum of the elite. As blocs, neither business nor the inner circle act on behalf of anything. But within the inner circle are a set of horizontally organized networks and vertically structured organizations that do act. These are the real motors of business political motion. The inner circle, then, refers not just to the company executive directors who constitute its membership, but also to the networks that constitute its internal structure. It is the power of these internal networks that propel members of the inner circle into leadership roles on behalf of the entire corporate community.

Notes


18. Other principles are described in Useem (1980).


23. Westhues (1976) provides a description of this approach.


27. Mills 1956, p. 121.


32. A helpful conceptualization of class segments within the business community can be found in Zeitlin et al. (1976).

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Alford, Robert. 1975. “Paradigms of relations between state and society.” In Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism, Leon Lindberg et al., eds., Lexington, Ma.: Heath.


struggles over privatization and the formation of new class actors. These struggles take place among members of the power bloc—managers, technocrats, and intellectuals, in the first instance—and between this power bloc and former bureaucrats, in the second. As we have argued [elsewhere], no single class fraction has emerged as the decisive victor in these struggles, and as a consequence the power of managers and their capacity to control semi-public property comes to them by default.

Thesis 6. Managerial strategies reflect their knowledge that the current balance of class forces is precarious. They understand that they exercise power by default. In order to survive, therefore, managers have developed a diverse range of strategies to navigate the political and economic uncertainties of post-communism. Probably the most prevalent managerial strategy was not managerial 'buy-out' but, rather, an attempt to stand 'on as many legs as possible'. During the process of privatization most managers acquired some property, but this was typically a relatively small stake, and not even necessarily in the firms they managed. Indeed, as early as the late 1980s some members of management teams were busy setting up small subcontracting firms, owned by themselves or by members of their families. They subcontracted the most lucrative activities of the state firms they managed to these companies, they even sold some of the more valuable assets of the parent firms to these subcontracting units at undervalued prices. Still, it is probably the exception to the rule that these managers retired from their main firm altogether, that they 'jumped the boat' to run the subcontracting firms they own. The reason for their reluctance to do so is clear: why should they swap a major managerial job for the position of owner-manager in a minor operation which employs only a handful of people? On the other hand, managers also have an interest in being more than only managers. In post-communist society, the managerial elite is closely intertwined with the politocracy; hence post-communist managers are even more dependent upon politicians than are capitalist managers in the West. State bureaucracies in East Central Europe often have the power, through direct or indirect state ownership of firms, to appoint and dismiss managers. As long as their position can be threatened by the political elite, it seems to be wise for managers to have their own small private firm in the background.

Notes

3. The population of nomenklatura members was defined as those individuals occupying the top 3,000–5,000 positions in these countries in 1988, positions for which appointment usually required the approval of some organ or official of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
4. In both Hungary and Poland during 1988, the regimes launched programs which were referred to as 'spontaneous privatization'. Communist elites acknowledged the necessity of changing property rights, and privatizing publicly held assets, but they initiated this process in a rather unregulated way. Under spontaneous privatization, firms could initiate their own privatization and negotiate their own terms with state organizations (in 1988, this still meant the Communist Party). Indeed, the initial hypotheses about political capitalism put forward by Staniszkis and Hankiss were formulated in reaction to these spontaneous privatization plans.


9. Ibid.
The Generalities of American Class

It is now time to ask what are the basic characteristics of social status common to the communities of all regions in the United States and, once we have answered this question, to inquire what the variations are among the several systems. Economic factors are significant and important in determining the class position of any family or person, influencing the kind of behavior we find in any class, and contributing their share to the present form of our status system. But, while significant and necessary, the economic factors are not sufficient to predict where a particular family or individual will be or to explain completely the phenomena of social class. Something more than a large income is necessary for high social position. Money must be translated into socially approved behavior and possessions, and they in turn must be translated into intimate participation with, and acceptance by, members of a superior class. . . .

The "right" kind of house, the "right" neighborhood, the "right" furniture, the proper behavior—all are symbols that can ultimately be translated into social acceptance by those who have sufficient money to aspire to higher levels than they presently enjoy.

To belong to a particular level in the social-class system of America means that a family or individual has gained acceptance as an equal by those who belong in the class. The behavior in this class and the participation of those in it must be rated by the rest of the community as being at a particular place in the social scale.

Although our democratic heritage makes us disapprove, our class order helps control a number of important functions. It unequally divides the highly and lowly valued things of our society among the several classes according to their rank. Our marriage rules conform to the rules of class, for the majority of marriages are between people of the same class. No class system, however, is so rigid that it completely prohibits marriages above and below one's own class. Furthermore, an open class system such as ours permits a person during his lifetime to move up or down from the level into which he was born. Vertical social mobility for individuals or families is characteristic of all class systems. The principal forms of mobility in this country are through the use of money, education, occupation, talent, skill, philanthropy, sex, and marriage. Although economic mobility is still important, it seems likely now that more people move to higher positions by education than by any other route. We have indicated before this that the mere possession of money is insufficient for gaining and keeping a higher social position. This is equally true of all other forms of mobility. In every case there must be social acceptance.

Class varies from community to community. The new city is less likely than an older one to have a well-organized class order; this is also true for cities whose growth has been rapid as compared with those which have not been disturbed by huge increases in population from other regions or countries or by the rapid displacement of old industries by new ones. The mill town's status hierarchy is more likely to follow the occupational hierarchy of the mill than the levels of evaluated participation found in market towns or those with diversified industries. Suburbs of large metropolises tend to respond to selective factors which reduce the number of classes to one or a very few. They do not represent or express all the cultural factors which make up the social pattern of an ordinary city.

Yet systematic studies from coast to coast, in cities large and small and of many economic types, indicate that, despite the variations and diversity, class levels do exist and that they conform to a particular pattern of organization.

Notes

Deference

Into every action of one human being towards another there enters an element of appreciation or derogation of the 'partner' towards whom the action is directed. It enters in varying degrees; some actions contain very little of it, some consist almost entirely of appreciation or derogation, in most actions the appreciative or derogatory elements are mingled with others, such as commanding, coercing, cooperating, purchasing, loving, etc.

Appreciation and derogation are responses to properties of the 'partner', of the role which he is performing, of the categories into which he is classified or the relationships in which he stands to third persons or categories of persons—against the background of the actor's own image of himself with respect to these properties. This element of appreciation or derogation is different from those responses to the past or anticipated actions of the 'partner' which are commands, acts of obedience, the provision of goods or services, the imposition of injuries such as the withholding or withdrawal of goods and services, and acts of love or hatred.

These acts of appreciation or derogation I shall designate as deference. The term deference shall refer both to positive or high deference and to negative or low deference or derogation. Ordinarily, when I say that one person defers to another, I shall mean that he is acknowledging that person's worth or dig-

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ripherality of the other strata and within this rank ordering one's own stratum is located. The ontological, non-empirical reality which is attributed to position in the distribution of deference makes it different from 'mere' evaluation and sometimes even antithetical to it.

On a much more earthly level, contacts between deference strata occur and in many forms—particularly through the division of labour and its coordination through the market and within corporate bodies and in the struggle for political power. This does not mean that the strata encounter each other in corporately organized forms or that, when there is interstratum contact in the encounter of corporate bodies, these bodies include all or most members of their respective strata. Much of this inter-stratum contact takes place through intermediaries who act as agents and who receive a deference which is a response both to their own deference-entitling properties and those of their principals. Those who act on behalf of these corporate bodies do so in a state of belief that they are 'representing' the deference-stratum to which they belong or feel akin.

A society can then have a deference system of relatively self-distinguishing and self-constituting deference strata, with the strata being in various kinds of relationship with each other. Such a situation is entirely compatible with the absence of the type of objective deference distribution which we rejected in the foregoing section. Each of the deference strata possesses in a vague form an image of a society-wide deference distribution but these images cannot be correct in the sense of corresponding to an objective deference distribution, which might or might not actually exist.

Notes


1. The ‘objective’ conception concerned itself with the relatively substantial entitlements, the ‘subjective’ with the ‘opinion’-like elements.
2. The prevalence of the trichotomous classification and variations on it is probably of Aristotelian origin. There is no obvious reason why reflection on experience and observation alone should have resulted in three classes. This might well be a case where nature has copied art.
3. It is quite possible that this pattern of thought which emerged in the nineteenth century was deeply influenced by the conception of social class of the nineteenth-century critics of the ancien régime and of the bourgeois social order which succeeded it. In the ancien régime the most powerful ranks were designated by legally guaranteed titles which entered into the consciousness of their bearers and those who associated with or considered them. These designations were not ‘material’ or ‘objective’. They did not belong to the ‘substructure’ of society. They were therefore ‘subjective’ but they were also unambiguous. They could be treated in the same way as ‘objective’ characteristics. By extension, the same procedure could be applied to the other strata.
4. Where these three conditions exist, there would also exist a consensus between the judgment which a person makes of his own deference-position and the judgments which others render about his position.
5. It also presupposes equal knowledge by all members of the society about all other members.
6. Corporate organizations, membership in which is determined by a sense of affinity of deference positions and of positions in other distributions, seldom enlist the active membership of all the members of the stratum or even of all the adult male members of the stratum. Those who are not members of the corporate body are not, however, to be regarded as completely devoid of the sense of affinity with other members of their stratum. ‘Class consciousness’ in this sense is very widespread but it is a long step from this type of ‘class consciousness’ to the aggressively alienated class consciousness which Marxist doctrine predicted would spread throughout the class of manual workers in industry and Marxist agitation has sought to cultivate.
kind were advanced [elsewhere]\(^1\) in respect to the dividing line between farm and nonfarm and between white-collar and manual occupations. The evidence did not permit the conclusion that such occupation categories are entirely disjunct. The analysis ... suggests that boundaries may be discerned between the three broad groups, [but] also shows that these are by no means sharp lines without any overlap.

If we choose to think of occupational status as exhibiting continuous variation, the appropriate analytical model is one that treats status as a quantitative variable. This point of view has far-reaching implications for the conceptualization of the process of mobility as well as for the analysis and manipulation of data purporting to describe the process.

**Notes**


2. Ibid., p. 180.


9. Reiss, *op. cit.*, p. 152. (Work in progress by Hodge and Treiman further supports this point.)


respectively, .77 between education and income, .72 between education and prestige, and .69 between income and prestige. The average correlations with the Standard Scale were .79 for education and .70 for income. ⁸

In short, the available data indicate that in the contemporary world occupational hierarchies are substantially invariant from place to place, even among countries varying widely in level of industrialization. This finding lends considerable empirical support to the theoretical argument outlined above.

Notes

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1. This average correlation was computed over all pairs of countries with at least 10 occupational titles rated in common.
3. These are described more fully in Donald J. Treiman, *Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective* (New York, 1976), ch. 8.
4. I have shown that the Standard Scale does a uniformly better job of predicting occupational prestige hierarchies in individual countries than do occupational status scales developed specifically for use in occupational mobility studies in those countries. See Donald J. Treiman, "Problems of Concept and Measurement in the Comparative Study of Occupational Mobility," *Social Science Research*, IV (1975), 183–230.
7. Some readers will recognize the similarity between this theory and that of Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," *American Sociological Review*, X (1945), 242–249. The principal difference between the two lies in the claim by Davis and Moore that prestige is granted by society as an inducement to competent people to fill important jobs. My claim is that occupational income may be seen as such an inducement but that prestige must be viewed as a measure of moral worth, that is, of the extent to which an occupation embodies that which is valued by members of society. Since power and privilege are universally valued and since hierarchies of power and privilege are relatively invariant, prestige will also be relatively invariant.
8. The education data typically derive from the population censuses of each of the countries in question. The income data also typically derive from population censuses, but in some cases they are from enterprise censuses. Ordinarily annual income was utilized but in some instances weekly or monthly wage rates were available rather than annual income. In practice, alternative measures of the relative income of occupational groups tend to be highly correlated, despite differences among occupations in part-time or seasonal employment rates. See Treiman, *Occupational Prestige*, ch. 5, Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Data on both income and education levels were available for only five countries: the U.S., Canada, India, Taiwan, and Yugoslavia.
ies carried out in the recent past. But while it might reasonably be held that such a manoeuvre is unlikely to be very misleading so far as the 'gross' patterns of social mobility are concerned, the difficulty is (apart from the limitation of unidimensionality) that we have no way of knowing at just what point and in what ways it might turn out to be quite deceptive. Yet again, the problem of validity recurs.

The general—and rather pessimistic—conclusion to which one is led is, therefore, the following: that to the extent that the meaning of occupational prestige ratings is correctly construed, the less useful they appear to be as a basis for mobility studies which pursue the 'classical' sociological interests of mobility research.

Notes

1. We use 'derogate' in this context following Shils (1968). Were it not that its usual connotations go beyond its strict meaning, 'disparage'—literally 'to make unequal'—might be a preferable term.

2. On 'stigma symbols' as the obverse of 'prestige symbols', see Goffman (1963).


4. As regards the NORC [National Opinion Research Center] study, it is worth recalling what is usually forgotten: that this enquiry, at least in the view of those who devised it, was in fact specifically aimed at finding out what people thought were the best jobs, in the sense of the most desirable. Where 'prestige' and 'standing' are referred to in the initial report on the study, they are obviously equated with desirability. See NORC (1947).

5. E.g. where respondents are rating occupations within their own status or situs areas, c.f. Gerstl and Cohen (1964).

6. Our interpretation of the meaning of 'occupational prestige' ratings is also consistent with the fact that certain variations in the task set to respondents appear to make little difference to the results achieved: e.g. whether respondents are asked to rate occupations according to their 'social prestige', 'social standing', 'social status', 'general desirability' etc. or whether they are asked for their own opinions or what they believe are generally prevailing opinions. It seems reasonable to suppose that if respondents are required to grade occupations according to any one criterion which, while rather imprecise, implies a 'better-worse' dimension, they will produce results of the kind in question; and further, that the level of consensus in this respect is such that the distinction between personal and general opinion is of little consequence—provided that there is no suggestion of a normative judgment being required; that is, one in terms of which jobs ought to be the best.

7. Cf. for example, Goldthorpe, Lockwood, Bechhofer and Platt (1969), chapters 4 and 5.

8. In fact, one might suggest the hypothesis that societies of the kind in which an integrated and stable prestige order is to be found will tend to be ones in which the factual order of stratification is not commonly appraised in terms of distributive justice, or indeed envisaged as capable of being in any way substantially different from what it is.

The distinction between the recognition of prestige and the attribution of justice is foreshadowed—as are several other points in the above paragraph—by Gusfield and Schwartz (1963) in a paper that has been curiously neglected by subsequent American writers on occupational grading.

9. It is a well-known problem of the structural-functional theory of stratification that other usable criteria of the functional importance of occupational roles are hard to find: employing the two criteria in question does, of course, introduce a serious degree of circularity into the argument.

References


Prestige or Socioeconomic Scales in the Study of Occupational Achievement?

At least in the United States and Australia, the processes of allocation to educational and occupational statuses from social origins (i.e., the process of stratification or of status attainment) seem largely socioeconomic in character (Featherman, Jones, and Hauser, 1975). Put another way, inter- and intragenerational movements of men among categories of their own and their parents' educations and occupations more closely follow the dimensions of social space defined by the "socioeconomic" distances among occupation groups than by the "prestige" distances among occupations. Evidence for this interpretation is drawn from parallel results for the United States and Australia in which estimates for the structural equations of "status attainment" models with occupations scaled in units of Duncan's (1961) socioeconomic index (SEI) yield higher coefficients of multiple determination ($R^2$) than do estimates based on occupations scaled in units of NORC prestige (Siegel, 1971) or of Treiman's (1977) international prestige index. In addition, the canonical structure of generational and career occupational mobility in both societies more nearly approximates a socioeconomic "space," as the canonical weights for occupation categories correlated higher with mean SEI scores for these occupations than with mean Siegel or Treiman scores.

In interpreting these data we suggest that prestige scores for occupations are less valid indicators of the dimensions of occupations pertinent to occupational mobility in industrial societies and of the status attainment processes operating therein than are socioeconomic scores. We reason from evidence for the United States (Reiss, 1961; Siegel, 1971) and Great Britain (Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974) that occupational prestige scores represent a congeries of salient dimensions or occupational characteristics. For example, the British ratings of the "social standing" of occupations are a linear combination (to the extent of 97% of their variance) of four oblique dimensions: standard of living, power and in-
fluence over other people, level of qualifications, and value to society (Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974: 14). Any two pairs of raters produce rankings which are modestly correlated at best ($r = .4$), consistent with the notion that unique variance in prestige gradings is quite high. Conversely, the mean ranks for the same occupations over socially and demographically defined groups correlate in the range of 0.8 and 0.9. This common variance appears to be socioeconomic; that is, over three-quarters of the linear variance in prestige scores is a reflection of the educational and economic properties of the ranked occupations. Thus, while raters in the United States and Britain used many and idiosyncratic features of occupations in assessing their relative social standing, apparently they all were aware of and utilized the socioeconomic "desirability" of titles, to some extent, in reaching their decisions.

The salience of the socioeconomic properties of occupations across persons, groups, and perhaps societies may follow from the rather similar social organization of occupations in functionally similar economic systems (e.g., industrial capitalism). But more to the point of the relative centrality of "prestige" or socioeconomic dimensions to the process of status attainment, we speculate that commonalities in prestige grades and in the responsiveness of these rankings to socioeconomic attributes of occupations may reflect popular awareness of (what further comparative research may show to be) similar processes of status allocation across societies. In at least the cases of Australia and the United States, the socioeconomic model, patterned after the work of Blau and Duncan (1967), yields estimates of effect parameters which are substantially the same. Moreover, log-linear adjustments of mobility matrices for the effects of differential occupation structures (to wit, as provided in the table margins) uncovers largely similar interactions within the tables (to wit, constant patterns of inflow and outflow both between and within generations for both societies).

Our provisional conclusion is that prestige scores are "error-prone" estimates of the socioeconomic attributes of occupations. Whatever it is that prestige scores scale—and this does not appear to be prestige in the classical sense of deference/derogation (see Goldthorpe and Hope, 1972)—it is substantively different from socioeconomic status. Yet one is best advised to use a scale for occupations which most accurately captures the features of occupations having force for the social process one is studying. In instances of occupational mobility and related processes of status allocation, socioeconomic dimensions and socioeconomic scores for occupations are the more central, and therefore are preferable over prestige scores.

Notes
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References
Since the appearance of Blau and Duncan's monumental inquiry into "The American Occupational Structure" (1967), we have learned a great deal about processes of inter- and intrageneration occupational mobility. Indeed, there has been a virtual explosion of research on processes of status attainment. Much of this research rests upon the reduction of information about a person's detailed occupational pursuit to a single continuous variable, a transformation typically accomplished by utilizing Duncan's Socioeconomic Index for All Occupations (Duncan, 1961a) to assign status scores to the occupations held by fathers and sons at various points in their careers (see, for example, Blau and Duncan, 1967; Hauser and Featherman, 1977). Despite the reliance of most inquiries into processes of status attainment on Duncan's SEI scale, there has been little discussion of the properties and characteristics of this index by its users (see, however, Duncan, 1961b, and Featherman and Hauser, 1976). The purpose of this essay is to discuss the characteristics of Duncan's SEI scale, as well as several difficulties encountered in its use in studies of occupational mobility. . . .

On the Interpretation of Duncan's Index

The conceptual meaning of Duncan's SEI scale is by no means clear; at least three alternative interpretations are available and none of these is entirely satisfactory. All of these interpretations rest upon features of the construction of Duncan's index and/or characteristics of the estimated weights of its components.

The most obvious interpretation of Duncan's SEI scale follows from the technique by which the weights of its components were derived. The reader will recall that they were established by regressing the percentage of excellent plus good ratings received by a few titles in the North-Hatt study which matched census lines on census-derived indicators of the age-standardized educational and income levels of these occupations. Scale values for all occupations were then obtained by substituting the education and income measures, available for all occupations from census data, into the resulting equation. Consequently, Duncan's SEI scale may be interpreted as the expected percentage of excellent
ity relations. Prestige, in this view, is not identical with power, but it does represent a significant resource—viz., command over the respect of others—which can be mobilized in the effort to secure desired outcomes in the face of competing alternatives. Whether or not occupational prestige conceived in this way is, in fact, what prestige scales measure is, of course, another question. One advantage of using occupational prestige scales, however, rests precisely on one's ability to raise this question intelligibly. Because one analytically knows what prestige is, one can query whether one has measured it satisfactorily. A parallel question cannot be posed of socioeconomic scales, since as best we can tell the socioeconomic status of an occupation is whatever is measured by a socioeconomic scale of occupations.

But whatever analytical advantage prestige scales of occupational status may have is in large measure undercut by their performance, relative to socioeconomic scales, in empirical research. As we have already noted, whatever it is that socioeconomic scales of occupational status measure more nearly governs the process of intergenerational occupational mobility and the entire process of status attainment than do the occupational differences reflected in prestige scales. This is one very sound reason for preferring the former to the latter, even if one can be less than analytically clear about what it is that socioeconomic scales measure. It is, of course, possible that prestige scales perform poorly because they are inferior measures of the underlying analytical concept. We think a case to that effect could be sketched out, but space does not permit us to do so here.

Notes

1. This is because Duncan's SEI scale is constructed from the regression equation,

$$\hat{P} = 0.55(E) + 0.59(I) - 6.0,$$

where $E$ is the age-standardized percentage of the male experienced civilian labor force with 4 years of high school or more, and $I$ is the age-standardized percentage of males who had incomes in 1949 of $3500 or more.—Ed.

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Socioeconomic Indexes for Occupations


ROBERT M. HAUSER AND JOHN ROBERT WARREN

Socioeconomic Indexes for Occupations: A Review, Update, and Critique

There are several reasons to focus more attention on the collection, scaling, and analysis of occupational data than has recently been the case. First, job-holding is the most important social role held by most adults outside their family or household. When we meet someone new, often our first question is, “What do you do?” and that is a very good question. Job-holding defines how we spend much of our time, and it provides strong clues about the activities and circumstances in which that time is spent. Second, job-holding tells us about the technical and social skills that we bring to the labor market, and for most people job-holding delimits current and future economic prospects. Thus, even for persons who are not attached to the labor market, past jobs or the jobs held by other members of the same family or household provide information about economic and social standing. Third, as market labor has become nearly universal among adult women as well as men, it is increasingly possible to characterize individuals in terms of their own current or past jobs. Fourth, once we have a good job description, it is possible to map jobs into many classifications, scales, and measures. Fifth, measurement of jobs and occupations does not entail the same problems of refusal, recall, reliability, and stability as occur in the measurement of income or wealth. Job descriptions—contemporary or retrospective, from job-holders or from their family members—are imperfect, but the reliability and validity of carefully collected occupational data are high enough to support sustained analysis (Hauser, Sewell, and Warren 1994). Thus, even if we are limited to retrospective questions, we can confidently trace occupational trajectories across the adult years. The same cannot be said of earnings trajectories, let alone other components of personal or household income or wealth.

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FIGURE 1
Illustrative Model of Intergenerational Stratification in Occupational Socioeconomic Status

Discussion

We are thus led to question the value of traditional socioeconomic indexes of occupational standing, including those that we constructed. If the 1994 GSS data are a reliable guide, we would do better—in studies of the stratification process—to index occupations by their educational level alone than by any of the usual, weighted combinations of educational level and earnings. However, given the modest sensitivity of occupational status correlations to differences in model specification, we would not suggest any wholesale effort to reevaluate previous findings about levels, trends, and differentials in occupational stratification. It would be sufficient, we think, to suggest that previously estimated levels of correlation are slightly too low. Finally, we would caution that our findings about the relative importance of occupational education and occupational wage rates are specific to models of the stratification process. Just as the relative weights of occupational education and wage rates differ between prestige and socioeconomic outcomes, so they may also differ across other outcomes (e.g., health, well-being, social participation, or political choice). If there is any general conclusion to be drawn from our analysis, it is that we ought to move toward a more specific and disaggregated appraisal of the effects of occupational characteristics on social, psychological, economic, political, and health outcomes. Although composite measures of occupational status may have heuristic uses, the global concept of occupational status is scientifically obsolete.

References


the population of modern industrialized societies. The stratum concept of class and the concept of socioeconomic status pose the fewest empirical requirements. They are also least informative about the causes and consequences of inequality.

Some analysts see the choice between class and status concepts as a fundamental one. Certain class concepts indeed make stronger theoretical claims than the socioeconomic status concepts (which basically make none). Unless one believes that Marxist theory explains everything, this does not mean class concepts are more useful. It depends on what is being studied. The Marxist class concept and the market concept may be useful for studies of political processes and social movements, since they make claims about the sources of conflict and social change. However, in studies of attainment and in analyses that predict behavior or attitudes from the level of welfare obtained by individuals, the Marxist or market concepts of class are less useful than socioeconomic status. These class categories often are more heterogeneous than socioeconomic status categories. Further, since SEI and related measures form continuous variables, socioeconomic status is very convenient for use in the estimation of individual linear regression models. The stratum concept of class also emphasizes homogeneity, yet the discrete form may make it an awkward variable to use in attainment studies. Nevertheless, this discrete form may make it especially useful when the emphasis is on certain outcomes, as in mobility research, or when it is desired to study the consequences that changes in industrial structure have for the distribution of welfare.

I have tried to show that an economic theory of rent can be used to identify class categories that have the potential to form class actors. The Weberian idea of prestige or status groups also makes the claim that such groups practice exclusion. This suggests that status groups establish strategies to protect an advantage that is threatened because it is obtained at the expense of others. The market concept of class, therefore, may be seen as a latent basis for status groups consistent with Weber’s discussion. There is one difficulty. It has been argued that market-generated class categories form around rents and property, whereas status groups presumably are about honor or prestige. The transition from rents to honor needs analysis.

The controversies in sociology over the last twenty years have surrounded the choice of basic concepts with a minefield of ideological and epistemological connotations. This confusion has not been useful for research and theoretical development. The main message of this essay is to treat the basic concepts as tools useful for some purposes but not for every purpose.

Notes

I am indebted to Patricia Chang, Liah Greenfeld, Annemette Sørensen, and Jesper B. Sørensen for valuable comments and suggestions.

1. There are, of course, some variations, but they are relatively minor. A comprehensive treatment is provided by Treiman (1977).

2. The start of the demise of the Marxist labor theory of value is usually attributed to the German economist Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk a hundred years ago. The history of the debate has been reviewed by many: See, for example, Gordon (1990) for a review that includes the attempt by so-called analytical Marxists (e.g., G. A. Cohen, Jon Elster, and John Roemer) to revise the basis for Marxist theory.

3. It is important to note that cross-sectional inequality, in my opinion, does not necessarily provide evidence for exploitation. When some individuals have higher income because of the returns they receive on earlier investments, they are being compensated for consumption forgone when making the investment. Those who do not receive the return, because they did not make the investment, would obviously gladly share in the returns. However, they should then also “pay back” the added gratification they received when choosing consumption over investment. This hypothetical exchange would only be advantageous to those owning assets when these assets are in fixed supply and rents are extracted. The need to consider lifetime incomes when identifying exploitation becomes important for my criticism later of recent formulations of class concepts within the labor market.
4. Roemer (1982) does not provide a discussion of this implication of human capital theory in his formulation of "skill assets" as a basis for exploitation. In fact, he does not present a precise definition of skills. In one place he seems to refer to any type of endowment that leads to unequal productivity (1982, 111); in another he explicitly states, "Let us treat skills as embodied and innate" (1982, 24). Only the latter should generate rents. Wright (1985) uses the former interpretation and therefore confuses returns with rents. Wright does attempt to make skills a property of positions by defining "skill requirements" of jobs.

5. Wright (1985) violates this principle by operationalizing skill assets as levels of educational attainment. He identifies what he calls skill requirements of positions in an attempt to implement Roemer's notion of exploitation based on skill assets. However, the concept of skill requirements does not distinguish between skills that generate true rents and those for which the income payoff is merely compensation for training costs.

6. The importance attached to authority in Marxist theory seems to contradict the argument presented previously that Marx would have accepted the neoclassical scenario for the labor market in which authority has no role. There is no doubt that Marx thought that the authority exercised by capitalists was important for the creation of classes. However, the importance of authority derives from Marx's belief in the labor theory of value. This theory implies that the wage paid to the worker is independent of his productivity—it represents the cost of reproducing the worker. Therefore, the amount of surplus generated will depend on how much work the employer extracts from the labor purchased. However, if the labor theory of value is abandoned, the need for authority disappears. In the open employment relationships assumed in modern marginal productivity theory, workers are paid according to their productivity, including their effort. As a result, effort is of no concern to the firm. Workers who do not work hard are simply paid less than workers who work hard.

7. Internal labor markets also create other problems for class analysis; see Sorensen (1991) for a discussion.

References


extent all these unions, clubs, societies, and so forth, serve this purpose. But only to some extent. Shifting does not permit one to attach himself to such groups strongly. Hence arise the trends to go further in this direction. This trend is conspicuously manifested in the social schemes of Communists, revolutionary syndicalists, and guild socialists. They contemplate a complete engulfment of an individual within the commune, or syndicate, or a restored guild. They unintentionally try to reestablish "the lost paradise" of an immobile society, and to make an individual again only a "finger of the hand" of a social body. The greater is the loneliness, the more urgent the need. I fear, however, that until social mobility is diminished, such attempts, even being realized, cannot give what is expected of them. In the best case they may create a kind of a compulsory "social box" which will be felt to be a prison by its members. In conditions of social mobility such a cell will be destroyed by its prisoners. In order to realize the program it is necessary to diminish the mobility. If we are entering such a period, then in some form these schemes may be realized. Are we entering one? I cannot confidently say. Some symptoms are in favor of such an hypothesis. But they are not quite clear as yet; the topic is too big to be discussed briefly, and the writer too much likes the mobile type of society to prophesy its funeral; therefore, he prefers to finish the discussion right here. Whatever may happen in the future, our mobile period is far from ended. And if our aristocracy would try to be a real aristocracy, strong in its rights and duties, creative in its achievements, less sensual in its proclivities and free from parasitism; if it would raise its fecundity; if the channels of climbing are open to every talent among the lower strata; if the machinery of social testing and selection is properly reorganized; if the lower strata are raised to levels as high as possible; and if we are not permeated by the ideologies of false sentimentality and "humanitarian impotency," then the chances for a long and brilliant existence of present mobile societies are great and high. Let history do what it has to do; and let us do what we ought to do without wavering and hesitation.

Notes


2. Such is the condition necessary for a man to be included in the American "Social Register."

3. Lurie, Sostav Proletariata, p. 9; see also the series "Auslese und Anpassung der Arbeiterchaft," Schriften des Vereins für Sozialpolitik.

helped to sustain them through great adversity. However, it is our guess that a sharp and lasting decline in the opportunities for occupational advancement would jeopardize these beliefs and lead to a change in the system of values. Such a decline has not yet occurred.

Notes


3. It may be noted, however, that Sombart also emphasized the subjective factor: “Consideration should also be given to the mere awareness of the worker that he could become an independent farmer at any time. This consciousness was bound to give the American worker a feeling of security and peace of mind which the European worker did not know. One can tolerate any coercive situation much more easily if one has at least the illusion that one could escape that situation if worse came to worst.” Ibid., p. 140. Such an awareness was, in Sombart’s opinion, relatively independent of the actual number of workers who availed themselves of opportunities for upward mobility, though he did not develop this point further.


5. An exception is the big cities of Sweden in the earlier part of this century. However, data in the 1935 census indicate that differential fertility was at that time a characteristic of the nation as a whole.


9. See S. M. Lipset and R. Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, chapters iii and iv.


14. See S. M. Lipset and R. Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, chapter iii.

15. See S. M. Lipset and J. Linz, The Social Basis of Political Diversity (Stanford: Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, 1956; mimeographed.) Data from the Swedish Gallup Poll for different Swedish elections, and from a 1953 study of German elections conducted by the UNESCO Institute at Cologne, and the 1957 study conducted by DIVO indicate that the better paid and higher skilled Swedish and German workers are much more likely to vote for the left parties than the lower paid and less skilled.

16. W. Lloyd Warner, et al., Social Class in America (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1949), p. 5. It is perhaps paradoxical that a theory of class which emphasizes reciprocal status evaluations, should, nevertheless, justify itself on these grounds. The very ambiguity of these evaluations is an important part of the evidence, and an approach that deliberately eliminates this ambiguity in the name of scientific accuracy may obscure this part of the evidence.


Effects of Mobility on Personality

Brief note may be made of the importance of the distinction between sponsored and contest mobility with relation to the supposed effects of upward mobility on personality development. Not a great deal is yet known about the "mobile personality" nor about the specific features of importance to the personality in the mobility experience. However, today three aspects of this experience are most frequently stressed: first, the stress or tension involved in striving for status higher than that of others under more difficult conditions than they; second, the complication of interpersonal relations introduced by the necessity to abandon lower-level friends in favor of uncertain acceptance into higher-level circles; third, the problem of working out an adequate personal scheme of values in the face of movement between classes marked by somewhat variant or even contradictory value systems. The impact of each of these three mobility problems, it is suggested, differ depending upon whether the pattern is that of the contest or of sponsorship.

Under the sponsorship system, recruits are selected early, segregated from their class peers, grouped with other recruits and with youth from the class to which they are moving, and trained specifically for membership in this class. Since the selection is made early, the mobility experience should be relatively free from the strain that comes with a series of elimination tests and long-extended uncertainty of success. The segregation and the integrated group life of the "public" school or grammar school should help to clarify the mobile person's social ties. (One investigator failed to discover clique formation along lines of social class in a sociometric study of a number of grammar schools.) The problem of a system of values may be largely met when the elite recruit is taken from his parents and peers to be placed in a boarding school, though it may be less well clarified for the grammar school boy who returns each evening to his working-class family. Undoubtedly this latter limitation has something to do with the observed failure of working-class boys to continue through the last years of grammar school and into the universities. In general, then, the factors stressed as affecting personality formation among the upwardly mobile probably are rather specific to the contest system, or to incompletely functioning sponsorship system.

Notes

This is an expanded version of a paper presented at the Fourth World Congress of Sociology, 1959, and abstracted in the Transactions of the Congress. Special indebtedness should be expressed to Jean Floud and Hilde Himmelweit for helping to acquaint the author with the English school system.


3. Reference is made throughout the paper to "elite" and "masses." The generalizations, however, are intended to apply throughout the stratification continuum to relations between members of a given class and the class or classes above it. Statements about mobility are intended in general to apply to mobility from manual to middle-class levels, lower-middle to upper-middle class, and so on, as well as into the strictly elite groups. The simplified expressions avoid the repeated use of cumbersome and involved statements which might otherwise be required.


6. D. V. Glass, editor, Social Mobility in Britain, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954, pp. 144-145, reports studies showing only small variations in intelligence between occupational levels.


and by farm occupations, respectively. This immobility is far more extreme than has heretofore been supposed by most students of the mobility process; it may even be consistent with the beliefs of the more extreme critics of rigidity in the American class structure.

Second, surrounding the extremes of the occupational hierarchy at both top and bottom are transitional zones, within which there are relatively homogeneous chances of immobility and of exchange with adjacent extreme strata.

Third, taken as aggregates the extreme and transitional zones of the occupational hierarchy are relatively closed both to upward and to downward movements. That is, there are sharp breaks between the density of observations within the extreme and transitional zones and the density of mobility beyond those zones. In this sense (but not in others) we may say that the data suggest the existence of barriers to movement across class boundaries.

Fourth, once the boundaries of the transitional zones have been crossed, no social distance gradient seems to underly variations in long-distance mobility chances. These are surprisingly uniform, and observed variations in them show no consistent pattern.

Fifth, if immobility is very great at the extremes of the occupational hierarchy, it is almost nonexistent in the middle of the hierarchy. Contrary to widespread belief, men of upper blue-collar origin are about as likely to end up anywhere higher or lower in the occupational hierarchy as in their stratum of origin. Obversely, upper blue-collar workers are about as likely to have originated anywhere higher or lower in the occupational hierarchy as in their stratum of destination. Those who would find their beliefs about "class" rigidity confirmed by our estimates of immobility at the extremes of the occupational hierarchy must reconcile these with our finding that between generations immobility in upper manual occupations is no more prevalent than most types of extreme, long-distance mobility. There is no evidence of "class" boundaries limiting the chances of movement to or from the skilled manual occupations.

Sixth, there is a rough equality in the propensities to move in one direction or the other between occupational strata. There are several exceptions to this symmetric mobility pattern, some of which may be quite important, but none suggests a dominant tendency toward upward relative to downward mobility across or within class boundaries.

Last, from a methodological perspective, our description of the mobility regime is extremely simple. In broad outline it might be fitted to a $5 \times 5$ table with the expenditure of as few as $2 \, df$. None of our analyses of American mobility tables required the expenditure of more than 6 of the $16 \, df$ left unused by the model of simple statistical independence.

We reemphasize that the present description of relative mobility chances does not conflict in any way with our earlier description (Featherman and Hauser 1978:Chapter 3) of occupational inflow and outflow patterns. Rather, relative mobility chances are components of inflows and outflows, but the latter are also affected by distributions of occupational origins and destinations. Major features of the inflow and outflow tables, like the pervasiveness of upward mobility between generations and within the occupational career, are absent from the present account because they are functions of changing distributions of occupational origins and destinations.

Notes

1. We assume the familiarity of the reader with loglinear models for frequency data. Fienberg (1970a, 1977) and Goodman (1972a,b) give useful introductions, as does the comprehensive treatise by Bishop et al. (1975). We rely heavily on methods for the analysis of incomplete tables, which have been developed by Goodman (1963, 1965, 1968, 1969a,b, 1971, 1972c), Bishop and Fienberg (1969), Fienberg (1970b, 1972), and Mantel (1970); again, Bishop et al. (1975, especially pp. 206–211, 225–228, 282–309, 320–324) is valuable. Our model is a special case of Goodman’s (1972c) general model.

2. The reported frequencies are based on a complex sampling design and have been weighted to es-
timate population counts while compensating for certain types of survey nonresponse. The estimated population counts have been scaled down to reflect underlying sample frequencies, and an additional downward adjustment was made to compensate for departures of the sampling design from simple random sampling (see Featherman and Hauser [1978:Appendix B]). The frequency estimates in Table 1 have been rounded to the nearest integer, but our computations have been based on unrounded figures. We treat the adjusted frequencies as if they had been obtained under simple random sampling.

Bibliography


A Refined Model of Occupational Mobility


Ramsey, Natalie. 1977. *Social Mobilitet i Norge (Social Mobility in Norway).* Oslo: Tiden Forlag.
This suggests that future research should explore the effects of economic and political variables on the shape of the social hierarchy. Much the same conclusion was advanced by Hauser et al. (1975) in their longitudinal analysis of American mobility classifications. They argued that further research cannot treat marginal differences as a nuisance factor if they are the driving force behind temporal change in observed mobility rates. We might add that economic and political variables may well have a greater effect on the structure of occupational supply and demand than on social fluidity. Although issues of this nature may be addressed within the general analytic framework presented here, we leave this task for future research.

Notes

An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society, Kansas City, 1983. Computations were supported by a grant to the Center for Demography and Ecology of the University of Wisconsin-Madison from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (HD-5876). During the preparation of this paper Grusky was supported by a predoctoral fellowship from the National Science Foundation, and Hauser was supported by the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We thank Lawrence Hazelrigg for furnishing the mobility data, and Peter Smith for providing sample counts for the Philippines table. We have benefited greatly from the comments of Michael Hout, O. D. Duncan, Clifford C. Clogg, Walter Mueller, Michael Sobel, Robert D. Mare, McKee J. McClendon, and from unpublished memoranda and correspondence with Leo A. Goodman that O. D. Duncan shared with us. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors.

1. Of course, there is an element of subjectivity in any evaluation of the FJH revision; it is unclear how much similarity in mobility regimes is necessary to confirm the hypothesis.

2. Following McClendon (1980a, 1980b), Bulgaria was omitted from the data because the sample included both males and females. Some of the cited studies have supplemented these data with mobility classifications from other countries. We have revised the counts for the U.S., France, Hungary, and the Philippines to reflect the sizes and design of those samples. These data are available from the authors by request.

3. Although there is intergenerational transfer of skills in the blue-collar stratum, we think it is far stronger in the farm sector, where the family is more often the unit of production.

4. This argument for uniformity may need qualification in the case of socialist societies to the degree that they accord greater desirability to blue-collar occupations and prohibit formal ownership of economic resources (Parkin, 1971; Giddens, 1973).

5. Goldthorpe (1980) uses the term social fluidity for mobility and immobility net of marginal effects. We use it to refer globally to interaction effects, rather than using "mobility" as an inclusive term.

6. For an explanation of quasi-symmetry, see Bishop et al. (1975: Ch. 8). Featherman and Hauser (1978:184–87) and Hauser (1981) discuss the relevance of quasi-symmetry to the interpretation of social mobility. Featherman and Hauser did find some asymmetries in their analysis of intergenerational mobility to current occupations, but the majority of these pertained to mobility within the broad strata of the present analysis.

7. On request the authors will provide estimates of stratum inheritance under quasi-perfect mobility in each of the sixteen countries. References to statistical significance in the text are based on the $\alpha = .05$ level, two-tailed.

8. Since the data are primarily from Western industrialized nations, this finding is most tentative.

References


### APPENDIX TABLE 3

Scores for Classes of the Schema on Different Occupational Scales as a Basis for a Threefold Hierarchical Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale*</th>
<th>I+II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IVa+b</th>
<th>IVc</th>
<th>V+VI</th>
<th>VIIa</th>
<th>VIIb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treiman</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope-Goldthorpe (England)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wegener (FRG)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Occupational Index (all Ireland)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de Lillo–Schizzerotto (Italy)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naoi (Japan)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan (USA)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Division**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Note:**
- The international Treiman scale and those for the FRG, Ireland, and Japan are intended as scales of occupational prestige, although constructed in different ways; the English scale and also, it would seem, the Italian, are intended as ones of the general desirability of occupations in popular estimation; and the US scale, while originally constructed as a proxy for a prestige scale, is now generally interpreted as one of the socio-economic status of occupations. For further details, see Treiman (1977), Goldthorpe and Hope (1974), Wegener (1988), Boyle (1976), de Lillo and Schizzerotto (1985), Naoi (1979), and Duncan (1961).

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**Notes**

1. This paper is based on chapter 3 of Robert Erikson and John H. Goldthorpe, *The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992. The research on which this book reports was carried out under the auspices of the CASMIN-Projekt, based at the Institut für Sozialwissenschaften of the University of Mannheim and funded by grants from the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk, Hanover. Readers are referred to the above work (chapter 2 esp.) for full details of the comparative methodology followed in research.

2. The influence here of the ‘stages-of-growth’ model of Rostow (1960; see esp. Chart 1) would seem to be of particular importance and also, perhaps—though the evidence is indirect—the interpretation of European industrial development provided by Landes (1957, 1965, 1972), which places major emphasis upon the rate and pattern of diffusion of techniques of production from Britain to the more ‘backward’ economies of the European mainland.

3. Thus, for example, in Kerr et al. (1960) discussion of France and Italy is largely concerned with the impediments to industrial development that result from the persisting importance of ‘family-dominated enterprises’ with ‘patrimonial management’ (see e.g. pp. 80, 141–2; and cf. Landes, 1937); and discussion of Germany, with difficulties of social rigidity and authoritarianism, following from the promotion of industrialisation by a dynastic elite (e.g. pp. 54–5, 150–1).

4. It is of interest that Bell should refer to the situation on which he comments as one ‘that has gone relatively unexamined’. This statement may well be true for American theorists of industrialism, but it can scarcely hold in the case of European economic and social historians. See, for example, the discussion of issues central to the ‘reperiodisation’ of the development of industrial society in Europe that are found in Wrigley (1972) and Mayer (1981).

5. So far as emigration is concerned, a detailed review of the possible and likely effects on mobility rates and propensities is provided in Hout (1989), with special reference to the Irish case.

6. For our present purposes, it is the confounding of period by age effects that is most likely to create problems. To the extent that cohort effects are present in the data, this may be regarded as valid evidence against the occurrence of secular trends.
7. This is in fact the highest maximum age that we could apply across all nine of our national samples.

8. The wording of the questions from which this information was derived varied somewhat from one national inquiry to another but not, we believe, in ways likely to have any significant effects on the comparability of data. In this and all similar instances full details of question wording, construction of variables, etc. are to be found in the documentation to the CASMIN International Social Mobility Superfile (Erikson et al., 1988).

9. We are greatly indebted to Jan Hoem for his most generous help in this aspect of our work.

10. These plots are not shown but in what follows it may be assumed that where no reference is made to rates of mobility from class origins to class of first employment, our findings in this respect would not lead us seriously to qualify those we have obtained for rates from class origins to present class.

11. The results that we report here for Hungary do of course depend on our treating workers on agricultural co-operatives or state farms as having a different class position (VIIb) from that of peasant proprietors (IVc). Some analysts of mobility in Hungary have not made this distinction; but we would argue the desirability of so doing, wherever it is practically feasible. It was, after all, precisely the aim both of the immediate post-war land reform and of the subsequent collectivisation programme to change agrarian class relations. In the Polish case, it should be noted, the attempt to collectivise agriculture that the regime launched at the end of the 1940s met with fierce peasant opposition and was finally abandoned in 1956 (cf. Lewis, 1973).

12. Although, then, we are here forced back to the obviously rather crude three-class basis of much earlier comparative research, we must stress that we still do achieve a much higher standard of data comparability. As a result of our systematic recoding of the original unit-record data (see Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992: ch. 2), we have a reasonable assurance that the categories of 'nonmanual', 'manual' and 'farm' are being applied in a consistent manner from nation to nation, rather than providing comparability of a merely nominal kind.

13. It may be noted that in Figure 4 the left tail of the curve for Sweden has been deleted. This is on account of its unreliability, as determined by a test developed by Hoem (see Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992: ch. 3, Annex). For the same reason, we have also deleted the left tail of the curve for Northern Ireland in Figure 8.

14. These results are of direct relevance to the Lipset-Zetterberg hypothesis of cross-national similarity in absolute rates, since this was in fact formulated in terms of outflow rates from nonmanual to manual positions and vice versa. We do not take up this issue here (but see further Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992: ch. 6).

15. Following the hierarchical levels that we propose, a further upward flow—that our 3 x 7 tables do not enable us to distinguish—would be represented by men entering Class I + II positions from Class III origins.

16. Thus, for example, in the English case the more or less continuous rise in upward mobility into the service class across the cohorts we distinguish can be related to a corresponding steady expansion of this class from a time somewhere between 1931 and 1951 (there was no 1941 Census)—following, however, on several decades in which it grew scarcely at all (see Goldthorpe, 1980, 1987: ch. 2 esp.). As regards socialist societies, it may further be noted that evidence of a 'parabolic' curve for upward mobility, similar to that we record in Hungary and Poland, is also found for post-war Czechoslovakia in data from a survey conducted in 1984 (personal communication from Marek Boguszak and cf. Boguszak, 1990).

17. It would, moreover, be mistaken simply to equate a peasant economy—or society—with a 'traditional' one. Thus, while one may with justification speak of a peasant economy existing in substantial areas of Ireland at least up to the 1940s, many of its key institutional features—most importantly, perhaps, non-partible inheritance—were relatively new (cf. Hannan, 1979). The Irish peasant community, as classically depicted by Arensberg and Kimball (1940, 1968), has in fact to be seen as the historical product of economic and social conditions in Ireland following the Great Famine of 1846–9 and then of the land reform legislation introduced between 1870 and the First World War.

18. It is important that rG², referred to by Goodman (1972) as the 'coefficient of multiple determination', should be interpreted within the particular context of loglinear modelling, rather than being taken as the equivalent of the perhaps more familiar R² of regression analysis. As Schwartz has pointed out (1985), the fact that R²s are typically much lower than rG² reflects the fact that in regression the units of analysis are usually individuals while in loglinear modelling they are the cells of cross-tabulations and the scores are the numbers of individuals in a cell. Such aggregate data must then be expected to reveal stronger regularities than individual-level data. Schwartz's summary (1985: 2–3) is apt: rG² 'measures how adequately a model accounts for the observed associations among a pre-specified set of variables while R² and Eta² measure the amount of variation in one variable that can be accounted for by its (linear) association with specified independent variables'. The point
may be added that the substantive meaning of \( rG^2 \) will of course depend on the model that is chosen as baseline.

19. This suggestion was made to us by Joseph E. Schwartz in a personal communication, for which we are duly grateful.

20. We may add that results from equivalent analyses of data referring to mobility from class of origin to class of first employment are essentially similar. In only one case, that of Ireland, would the CnSF model be rejected on the basis of the \( G^2(S) \) statistic; and again only in the Swedish case does the model not account for at least 90 per cent of the total origin-destination association, while at most only a little over 5 per cent of all cases are misclassified. It should, however, be recalled that we cannot undertake an analysis of the kind in question for the FRG, owing to lack of information on first employment.

21. Moreover, while we would believe that 'demand side' factors are generally of major importance in promoting structural change, 'supply side' ones may also have to be taken into account—for example, the effects of demographic change, including in- and out-migration, and of changes in the workforce participation rates of women and of different age-groups. And in these respects too political intervention may obviously play a crucial role.

22. Most importantly, in the aftermath of World War II the FRG was created out of the division of the Third Reich, and Poland's frontiers were moved some 150–200 miles to the west—both changes being accompanied by large population movements. In addition, one may note the truncation of Hungary in 1920 (with the loss of almost 70 per cent of its area and 60 per cent of its population); and the partition of Ireland in 1920–2, following the War of Independence and the Civil War, so as to create the Irish Free State (which became the Irish Republic in 1949) and the six counties of Northern Ireland, a constituent element of the United Kingdom with, up to 1973, its own parliament and executive.

**Bibliography**


Occupational Mobility Study'. *Economic and Social Review* 8.
and Hunt, 1995). Therefore, taking mobility into account does nothing to reverse the trend toward greater inequality.

Notes

1. Changes in the distribution of family income reflected other changes as well, including demographic shifts and changes in the distribution of other sources of incomes such as transfer income and earnings of spouses.

2. For a review of this literature, see Levy and Murnane (1992) and Gottschalk and Smeeding (1997). For a discussion of patterns of inequality before the 1950s, the interested reader might begin with Goldin and Margo (1992).

3. The sample for the top panel consists of males 20 to 58 in 1974. The sample for the bottom panel is restricted to males 20 to 42, which insures that sample members are 59 or younger in 1991.

4. Reported annual earnings includes measurement error, which tends to overstate the amount of inequality and the amount of mobility. Averaging income over three years to reduce the measurement error reduces mobility out of the lowest quintile by about 10 percent.

5. If the probability of exiting in each period were (1-.687) and no one who exited from the lowest quintile returned, then the probability of remaining in the lowest quintile for 16 years would be .687^{17} instead of the observed .421.

6. Based on author's tabulation of the 90/10 ratio based on 17-year average earnings, PSID.

7. Since people with low permanent earnings are very likely to face borrowing constraints over this long a period, it is in no way obvious that this long an accounting period is more appropriate than a one-year accounting period. In fact, an accounting period shorter than a year might be most appropriate for people with very low earnings.

8. The probability of changing quintiles is similar in the United States and in OECD countries for which we have data. However, since the United States has greater inequality, change between quintiles in the United States does require larger percentage changes in earnings.

References


have overstated the extent to which poverty and welfare are traps in which individuals and families are caught. The large majority of families and individuals who are poor or who use welfare are not trapped, and neither are their children. It is true that individuals who lived in poor families as children are more likely to experience poverty as adults, and it is true that individuals whose families participated in welfare programs when they were children are more likely to receive welfare as adults. But it is also true that as many as two-thirds of the children from these families manage to escape poverty and dependence when they grow up.

Notes

1. Annual income would be the proper measure if people could only save or borrow to smooth income within each year.

2. Note that this argument implicitly assumes that people can smooth their consumption by either saving or borrowing against future income. The argument for extending the accounting period beyond a year becomes much weaker if many poverty spells occur early in life when income smoothing through saving may not be possible.

3. This view is still often reflected in public statements. For example, in his famous “Murphy Brown” speech, Vice President Dan Quayle stated that “the intergenerational poverty that troubles us so much today is predominately a poverty of values.” Boston Globe, May 21, 1992.

4. We find more one-year spells than reported in Bane and Ellwood (1986). This reflects our use of the official poverty line rather than 125 percent of the official thresholds, our inclusion of post-1982 data, our inclusion of persons over sixty-five, and their exclusion of some one-year spells. Using their procedure reduces the frequency of one-year spells by .084.

5. This question differs from the question that asks how long spells currently in progress will last.

6. Our results differ from those of Ellwood (1986) who used fewer years of data and who looked only at spells of both receiving AFDC and being a female head of household.


8. Although AFDC receives by far the most attention, the Food Stamp program provides assistance to a much larger caseload. Burstein and Visher (1989) show that there is even more turnover in the Food Stamp caseload than in the AFDC caseload. At the end of one year, roughly two-thirds of all Food Stamp cases have been closed. If long-term recipiency is defined as a Food Stamp spell that lasts for three years or more, then only 15 percent of all Food Stamp cases could be classified as long term.

9. Because AFDC is available to pregnant women, we include the year prior to birth and the following nine years in the ten-year window.

10. These data are generated by estimating discrete time duration models for spells on and off of welfare and simulating the predicted spell durations over the ten-year period. The data on the first spell differ from the data in Figure 2, which samples all spells.

11. Duncan, Laren, and Yeung (1991) examined families in the PSID that received AFDC at least once during the first eighteen years of their child’s life. Although their conclusions are based on smaller samples that do not allow for disaggregation, they find similar overall patterns.

12. Furthermore, a focus on the association in income across generations may be more informative, as individuals who experience childhood poverty may experience near-poverty as adults. They would not be counted as poor, but analyzing income, rather than poverty status, overcomes the problem of living standards above the poverty line.

13. Becker and Tomes (1986) concluded that the intergenerational correlation in income was somewhere around .17, based on their review of some early studies. This finding suggests a fairly small effect of parental income on the income of children later as adults.

14. If the intergenerational correlation in income were zero, the probability that the child of a poor family would fall into poverty would be the same as the probability for the child of a rich family, namely .20.

15. For a review of this literature, see McLanahan and Booth (1989).

16. These patterns are attenuated but not eliminated after controlling for a large number of factors that may also affect the daughter’s participation.

17. Gottschalk (1992) finds some evidence that the relationship is not just spurious.

References


The Dynamics and Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty and Welfare Participation

than whites. Again, allowing for the handicap of inferior career beginnings, the handicap of lower education, and the residual effect of low socioeconomic origins—even with all these allowances—Negroes do not enjoy comparable occupational success in adulthood. Indeed, even though we have not carried our own analysis this far, there is good evidence that Negroes and whites do not have equal incomes even after making allowance for the occupational status difference and the educational handicap of Negroes.22 Thus there surely are disadvantaged minorities in the United States who suffer from a “vicious circle” that is produced by discrimination. But not all background factors that create occupational handicaps are necessarily indicative of such a vicious circle of cumulative disadvantages; the handicaps of the Southern whites, for example, are not cumulative in the same sense.23 A vicious circle of cumulative impediments is a distinctive phenomenon that should not be confused with any and all forms of differential occupational achievement.

As noted earlier, the issue of egalitarianism is one that has generally been more productive of debate than of cogent reasoning from systematized experience. Without becoming fully involved in such a debate here, we must at least attempt to avoid having our position misunderstood. We have not vouchedsafed a “functional interpretation” that asserts that somehow American society has just the right amount of stratification and just the appropriate degree of intergenerational status transmission. We have indicated that it is easy to exaggerate the latter and, in particular, that it is possible seriously to misconstrue the nature of the causal relationships in the process that characterizes status transmission between generations.

In conclusion, one question of policy may be briefly mentioned, which pertains to the distinction between the plight of the minorities who do suffer disadvantages due to their ascribed status and the influence of ascribed factors on occupational life in general. To help such minorities to break out of the vicious circle resulting from discrimination and poverty is a challenge a democratic society must face, in our opinion. To advocate this policy, however, is not the same as claiming that all ascriptive constraints on opportunities and achievements could or should be eliminated. To eliminate all disadvantages that flow from membership in a family of orientation—with its particular structure of interpersonal relationships, socioeconomic level, community and regional location, and so on—would by the same token entail eliminating any advantages the family can confer or provide. If parents, having achieved a desirable status, can ipso facto do nothing to make comparable achievement easier for their offspring, we may have “equal opportunity.” But we will no longer have a family system—at least not in the present understanding of the term. (This point has not been misunderstood in radical, particularly Marxist, ideologies.)

We do not contemplate an effortless equilibrium at some optimum condition where the claims of egalitarian values and the forces of family attachment are neatly balanced to the satisfaction of all. A continuing tension between these ultimately incompatible tendencies may, indeed, be a requisite for social progress. We do contend that both equity and effectiveness in the policy realm call for a deeper understanding of the process of stratification than social science and politics yet can claim.

Notes

4. Ibid.
Inequality

7. Blau and Duncan, op. cit., Appendix C.
13. Ibid., ch. 3.
14. Ibid., ch. 5.
16. Ibid., p. 190.
18. Blau and Duncan, op. cit., ch. 4.
20. Blau and Duncan, op. cit., ch. 5.
21. Ibid., ch. 6.
23. Blau and Duncan, op. cit., ch. 6.

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Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America

Most Americans say they believe in equality. But when pressed to explain what they mean by this, their definitions are usually full of contradictions. Many will say, like the Founding Fathers, that “all men are created equal.” Many will also say that all men are equal “before God,” and that they are, or at least ought to be, equal in the eyes of the law. But most Americans also believe that some people are more competent than others, and that this will always be so, no matter how much we reform society. Many also believe that competence should be rewarded by success, while incompetence should be punished by failure. They have no commitment to ensuring that everyone’s job is equally desirable, that everyone exercises the same amount of political power, or that everyone receives the same income.

But while most Americans accept inequality in virtually every sphere of day-to-day life, they still believe in what they often call “equal opportunity.” By this they mean that the rules determining who succeeds and who fails should be fair. People are, of course, likely to disagree about precisely what is “fair” and what is “unfair.” Still, the general principle of fair competition is almost universally endorsed.

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equal prestige, except in a society where all workers are equally competent. Since we do not see any likelihood of equalizing competence, we regard the equalization of occupational prestige as a desirable but probably elusive goal.

When we turn from occupational prestige to educational attainment and cognitive skills, the arguments for and against equality are reversed. If schooling and knowledge are thought of strictly as ends in themselves, it is impossible to make a case for distributing them equally. We can see no reason to suppose, for example, that people with relatively little schooling value additional schooling more than people who have already had a lot of schooling. Experience suggests that the reverse is the case. Insofar as schooling is an end in itself, then, Benthamite principles imply that those who want a lot should get a lot, and those who want very little should get very little. The same is true of knowledge and cognitive skills. People who know a lot generally value additional knowledge and skills more than those who know very little. This means that insofar as knowledge or skill is valued for its own sake, an unequal distribution is likely to give more satisfaction to more people than an equal distribution.

The case for equalizing the distribution of schooling and cognitive skill derives not from the idea that we should maximize consumer satisfaction, but from the assumption that equalizing schooling and cognitive skill is necessary to equalize status and income. This puts egalitarians in the awkward position of trying to impose equality on people, even though the natural demand for both cognitive skill and schooling is very unequal. Since we have found rather modest relationships between cognitive skill and schooling on the one hand and status and income on the other, we are much less concerned than most egalitarians with making sure that people end up alike in these areas.

Our commitment to equality is, then, neither all-embracing nor absolute. We do not believe that everyone can or should be made equal to everyone else in every respect. We assume that some differences in cognitive skill and vocational competence are inevitable, and that efforts to eliminate such differences can never be 100 percent successful. But we also believe that the distribution of income can be made far more equal than it is, even if the distribution of cognitive skill and vocational competence remains as unequal as it is now. We also think society should get on with the task of equalizing income rather than waiting for the day when everyone's earning power is equal.

Notes

1. This material has been collected and analyzed by Lee Rainwater at Harvard University, as part of a forthcoming study of the social meaning of low income.

2. Lester C. Thurow and Robert E.B. Lucas, in “The American Distribution of Income” [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 17, 1972], discuss the possibility of such constraints in some detail. The principal virtue of this approach is that it reduces the incomes of the rich before they are defined as “income” rather than afterwards. This means that the recipient is less conscious of what he is giving up and less likely to feel he is being cheated of his due.

3. If everyone had equal earning power we could assume that people “chose” their incomes voluntarily and that those with low incomes were those who were maximizing something else (e.g. leisure, autonomy, etc.). But as we note [elsewhere], people's concern with income as against other objectives has no apparent effect on their actual income, at least while they are young [see Christopher Jencks, Marshall Smith, Henry Acland, Mary Jo Bane, David Cohen, Herbert Gintis, Barbara Heyns, and Stephan Michelson, Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America, New York: Harper and Row, 1972, ch. 7, note 64]. Thus we infer that income differences derive largely from differences in earning power and luck.
begun their careers when the final data were collected. If the distance between them and the less educated widens, the occupational attainment variance accounted for by the model may well increase. The direct relations of some of the antecedents to occupational attainment may also change. In particular, mental ability may show a higher path to occupational attainment.

(7) Finally, although the results reported in this paper indicate that the proposed model has considerable promise for explaining educational and early occupational attainment of farm boys, its adequacy should now be tested on populations with a more differentiated socioeconomic background. It is quite possible that in such populations the effects of socioeconomic status on subsequent variables may be significantly increased. The effects of other variables in the system may also be altered when the model is applied to less homogeneous populations.

The present research appears to have extended knowledge of the causal mechanism influencing occupational attainment. Most of this was accomplished by providing a consistent social psychological model which adds to our ability to explain what is surely one of its key proximal antecedents, educational attainment.

Notes
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1. It is important to note that the timing of the follow-up was such as to allow most individuals to complete their education up to the bachelor’s degree and beyond. It is unlikely that the educational attainment of the sample as a whole will change much in the years to come. On the other hand, while the span of seven years allowed those individuals who did not continue their education to find a stable position in the occupational structure and even improve upon it, there was not enough time for those who continued their education to do the same. A few of the latter were still in school; most had just begun their occupational careers. It is therefore possible that a follow-up taken five or ten years from now would show greater differentiation in attainments as the educated group gathers momentum and moves up in the occupational world.

2. Naturally, father’s occupation is a constant in this subsample of farm-reared males. It is important to note that the SES mean and standard deviations for this subsample are considerably lower than for the total sample. The low and homogeneous SES levels of this subsample may yield atypical relations among the variables.

3. Our previous research (Sewell and Armer, 1966; Haller and Sewell, 1967) has led us to be skeptical of claims that local ecological and school class compositional factors influence aspirations and attainments. Nevertheless the zero-order intercorrelations of five such variables and their correlations with $X_1$-$X_8$ are available (although they are not presented here). Two of these pertain to the county in which the youth attended high school; county level of living and degree of urbanization. Three pertain to his high school senior class: average SES of the class, percentage of the class members whose fathers attended college, and percentage of the class members whose fathers had professional-level occupations. Though substantially correlated with each other, the variables are uncorrelated with the variables in the above model.

4. Some readers will be interested in the path coefficients as calculated only for the lines hypothesized in the diagram. For this reason and because of the diagram’s parsimony, we have calculated the values for each of its eight paths (or ten, including dubious ones). The restricted model explains 47 and 33 percent of the variance in $X$, and $X_1$, respectively. Data not presented here show that the model reproduces the zero-order correlation matrix quite well. For this reason and because the model is an effective predictor of $X$, and $X_1$, it may be considered to be fairly valid. Nonetheless, it seems more prudent to rest our case on the less presumptuous data already presented in Table 3. This is why the coefficients presented in the diagram are not discussed here.
References


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JAY MACLEOD

Ain’t No Makin’ It: Leveled Aspirations in a Low-income Neighborhood

“Any child can grow up to be president.” So maintains the dominant ideology in the United States. This perspective characterizes American society as an open one in which barriers to success are mainly personal rather than social. In this meritocratic view, education ensures equality of opportunity for all individuals, and economic inequalities result from differences in natural qualities and in one’s motivation and will to work. Success is based on achievement rather than ascription. Individuals do not inherit their social status—they attain it on their own. Because schooling mitigates gender, class, and racial barriers to success, the ladder of social mobility is there for all to climb. A favorite Hollywood theme, the rags-to-riches story resonates in the psyche of the American people. We never tire of hearing about Andrew Carnegie, for his experience validates much that we hold dear about America, the land of opportunity. Horatio Alger’s accounts of the spectacular mobility achieved by men of humble origins through their own unremitting efforts occupy a treasured place in our national folklore. The American Dream is held out as a genuine prospect for anyone with the drive to achieve it.

“I ain’t goin’ to college. Who wants to go to college? I’d just end up gettin’ a shitty job anyway.” So says Freddie Piniella, an intelligent eleven-year-old boy from Clarendon Heights, a low-income housing development in a northeastern city. This statement, pro-

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society when the contest is taken on one's own terms. There is no escape: The Hallway Hang- 
ers must still generate income, build relationships, and establish households. Trapped inside the game, the Hallway Hangers now question their youthful resistance to schooling and social norms. Granted the opportunity to do it over again, the Hallway Hangers say they would have tried harder to succeed.

But the Brothers have always tried, which is why their experiences between 1984 and 1991 are as disheartening as the Hallway Hangers'. If the Hangers show that opting out of the contest is not a viable option, the Brothers show that dutifully playing by the rules hardly guarantees success either. Conservative and liberal commentators alike often contend that if the poor would only apply themselves, behave responsibly, and adopt bourgeois values, then they will propel themselves into the middle class. The Brothers followed the recipe quite closely, but the outcomes are disappointing. They illustrate how rigid and durable the class structure is. Aspiration, application, and intelligence often fail to cut through the firm figurations of structural inequality. Though not impenetrable, structural constraints on opportunity, embedded in both schools and job markets, turn out to be much more debilitating than the Brothers anticipated. Their dreams of comfortable suburban bliss currently are dreams deferred, and are likely to end up as dreams denied.

Notes

1. All names of neighborhoods and individuals have been changed to protect the anonymity of the study's subjects.


which works with the poor to withstand the rejection pressures.

What the dual labor market interpretation implies that is not implicit in other dichotomous interpretations is that the poor are separated from the nonpoor not only in the negative sense of exclusion from activities and institutions to which the nonpoor have access, but also in the positive sense that they have economic value where they are; that, in other words, there are groups actively interested in the perpetuation of poverty. It is this interest that makes new institutions created to work with the poor in the labor market subject to threats of capture as well as of rejection.

Notes


AAGE B. SØRENSEN AND ARNE L. KALLEBERG

An Outline of a Theory of the Matching of Persons to Jobs

Much recent research in sociology has focused on labor market processes. These concerns include analysis of the processes that produce variation in individual earnings by characteristics of people and their jobs; the analysis of career patterns and job mobility processes; and the analysis of employment and unemployment patterns of various population groups. Sociologists share many of these concerns with economists, and there is much overlap in research topics among sociologists and economists.

Despite similarities in methodology and research design, the research traditions in sociology and economics have quite different intellectual backgrounds. Most empirical research on labor market processes in economics is guided by the dominant school of labor economics—the neoclassical theory of wage determination and labor supply, with marginal productivity theory accounting for the demand side and human capital theory taking care of the supply side. In contrast, sociological research on labor market phenomena has its origin in research describing socioeconomic attainment and social mobility processes for various population groups. Sociological research on attainment and mobility has not employed an explicitly stated conceptual apparatus that informs the choice of variables and the interpretation of parameters. Although there is a growing body of findings about the magnitude of the influences of various variables on the outcomes of labor market processes, particularly income attainment, there are few efforts by sociologists to identify the mechanisms that create the influences of personal and job characteristics on income and earnings or on the other labor market outcomes.

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markets. This is in contrast to the situation in the neoclassical model of wage competition, where the primary source of variation is the variation in personal characteristics that determine a person’s productive capacity.

Vacancy competition structures are likely to be similar to the job structures identified as primary jobs (e.g., Doeringer & Piore, 1971). However, the dualist literature has a very descriptive character, and there is also some confusion as to whether the labor market segmentation is a segmentation of jobs or of persons (blacks, poor, and women in the secondary sector, white skilled workers in the primary sector). The main conclusion derived from this literature is that there are good jobs and bad jobs.

**Constraints on Growth in Earnings**

The two polar models of the matching process suggest different constraints on a person’s ability to increase his or her earnings. In wage competition, earnings directly reflect performance and hence the skills and abilities of a person. Increases in earnings then are obtained by increasing the skill level of a person, and the major constraint on growth in earnings will be limitations on acquiring additional human capital. In wage competition markets, the amount of training that can be provided in jobs will be low, since on-the-job training is a major cause of the emergence of vacancy competition (Thurow, 1975). Hence, the major source of income inequality among persons lies outside the labor market—that is, in the educational and other training institutions that produce skill differentiation.

In vacancy competition sectors, the major constraint on the attainment of income is access to jobs. If no job is available, a person will not be able to obtain earnings. Growth in earnings is produced by the utilization of opportunities for mobility to better jobs, and this opportunity structure, not changes in skills, governs the earnings variations over time. The major source of variation in earnings is then the restriction of access to jobs and the level of derived demand that determines the availability of jobs.

The different constraints on growth in earnings in wage competition and vacancy competition jobs imply that quite different policies will have to be used in an attempt to increase pretransfer earnings of poverty groups. In wage competition sectors, policies aimed at increasing skill levels either through schooling or—for those already having entered the labor market—through various off-the-job training programs would presumably be effective. In vacancy competition sectors such policies would be quite ineffective since such training would not make jobs available.

The rather limited success of worker training programs suggests that job vacancy competition indeed is predominant in the U.S. economy. More correctly, the fate of such programs suggests that it is indeed difficult to prepare low-skilled workers for jobs that demand high skill levels, since such jobs tend to be vacancy competition jobs.

**Notes**

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1. The definitions are given in paragraph 10 in the section on “Basic Concepts” in Economy and Society, Volume 1. “A social relationship . . . will be known as ‘open’ to those on the outside, if . . . participation . . . is . . . not denied to anyone who is inclined to participate and is actually in a position to do so. The relationship will be known as ‘closed’ [if] participation of certain persons is excluded, limited or subject to conditions [Weber, 1947, p. 139].” Weber argues that market relationships are open and gives as an example of a closed relationship the “establishment of rights to and possession of particular jobs on the part of the worker [Weber, 1947, p. 141].” This identification of open relationships with market relationships (for the exchange of labor for wages) and of closed relationships with control over the job by the worker (and the absence of market relationships) will be relied on heavily in this chapter.
2. A similar arrangement accounts for the apparent contradiction of the argument presented here exemplified by the existence of wage competition among faculty at elite universities despite tenure. Here the individual scholar, and not the employer (i.e., the university), disposes himself of the products (articles and other contributions) to a competitive market and obtains himself the returns from this activity (i.e., prestige in the profession).

References


length resulting between arbitrary pairs of points (with some limitation on length of path considered) can then be computed. The contention here is that removal of the average weak tie would do more "damage" to transmission probabilities than would that of the average strong one.

Intuitively speaking, this means that whatever is to be diffused can reach a larger number of people, and traverse greater social distance (i.e., path length), when passed through weak ties rather than strong. If one tells a rumor to all his close friends, and they do likewise, many will hear the rumor a second and third time, since those linked by strong ties tend to share friends. If the motivation to spread the rumor is dampened a bit on each wave of retelling, then the rumor moving through strong ties is much more likely to be limited to a few cliques than that going via weak ones; bridges will not be crossed.

I will develop this point empirically by citing some results from a labor-market study I have recently completed. Labor economists have long been aware that American blue-collar workers find out about new jobs more through personal contacts than by any other method. (Many studies are reviewed by Parnes 1954, chap. 5.) Recent studies suggest that this is also true for those in professional, technical, and managerial positions (Shapero, Howell, and Tombaugh 1965; Brown 1967; Granovetter 1970). My study of this question laid special emphasis on the nature of the tie between the job changer and the contact person who provided the necessary information.

In a random sample of recent professional, technical, and managerial job changers living in a Boston suburb, I asked those who found a new job through contacts how often they saw the contact around the time that he passed on job information to them. I will use this as a measure of tie strength. A natural a priori idea is that those with whom one has strong ties are more motivated to help with job information. Opposed to this greater motivation are the structural arguments I have been making: those to whom we are weakly tied are more likely to move in circles different from our own and will thus have access to information different from that which we receive.

I have used the following categories for frequency of contact: often = at least twice a week; occasionally = more than once a year but less than twice a week; rarely = once a year or less. Of those finding a job through contacts, 16.7% reported that they saw their contact often at the time, 55.6% said occasionally, and 27.8% rarely (N = 54). The skew is clearly to the weak end of the continuum, suggesting the primacy of structure over motivation.

In many cases, the contact was someone only marginally included in the current network of contacts, such as an old college friend or a former workmate or employer, with whom sporadic contact had been maintained (Granovetter 1970, pp. 76-80). Usually such ties had not even been very strong when first forged. For work-related ties, respondents almost invariably said that they never saw the person in a nonwork context. Chance meetings or mutual friends operated to reactivate such ties. It is remarkable that people receive crucial information from individuals whose very existence they have forgotten.

From the individual's point of view, then, weak ties are an important resource in making possible mobility opportunity. Seen from a more macroscopic vantage, weak ties play a role in effecting social cohesion. When a man changes jobs, he is not only moving from one network of ties to another, but also establishing a link between these. Such a link is often of the same kind which facilitated his own movement. Especially within professional and technical specialties which are well defined and limited in size, this mobility sets up elaborate structures of bridging weak ties between the more coherent clusters that constitute operative networks in particular locations.

References
Status attainment can be understood as a process by which individuals mobilize and invest resources for returns in socioeconomic standings. These resources can be classified into two types: personal resources and social resources. Personal resources are possessed by the individual who can use and dispose of them with freedom and without much concern for compensation. Social resources are resources accessible through one's direct and indirect ties. The access to and use of these resources are temporary and borrowed. For example, a friend's occupational or authority position, or such positions of this friend's friends, may be ego's social resource. The friend may use his or her position or network to help ego to find a job. These resources are "borrowed" and useful to achieve ego's certain goal, but they remain the property of the friend or his or her friends.

The theoretical and empirical work for understanding and assessing the status attainment process can be traced to the seminal study reported by Blau and Duncan (1967). Their major conclusion was that, even accounting for both the direct and indirect effects of ascribed status (parental status), achieved status (education and prior occupational status) remained the most important factor accounting for the ultimate attained status. The study thus set the theoretical baseline for further modifications and expansions. All subsequent theoretical revisions and expansions must be evaluated for their contribution to the explanation of status attainment beyond those accounted for by the Blau-Duncan model.
resources: The higher the position, the fewer the occupants; and the higher the position, the better the view it has of the structure (especially down below). The pyramidal structure suggests advantages for positions nearer to the top, both in terms of number of occupants (fewer) and accessibility to positions (more). Individuals within these structural constraints and opportunities take actions for expressive and instrumental purposes. For instrumental actions (attaining status in the social structure being one prime example), the better strategy would be for ego to reach toward contacts higher up in the hierarchy. These contacts would be better able to exert influence on positions (e.g., recruiter for a firm) whose actions may benefit ego’s interest. This reaching-up process may be facilitated if ego uses weaker ties, because weaker ties are more likely to reach out vertically (presumably upward) rather than horizontally relative to ego’s position in the hierarchy.

References

tact, which is the structural foundation for managerial robust action (Padgett and Ansell, 1993). Simmel and Merton introduced the sociology of people who derive control benefits from structural holes: The ideal type is the tertius gaudens (literally, "the third who benefits"), a person who benefits from brokering the connection between others (see Burt, 1992: 30–32, for review). As the broker between otherwise disconnected contacts, a manager is an entrepreneur in the literal sense of the word—a person who adds value by brokering the connection between others (Burt, 1992: 34–36; see also Martinelli, 1994). There is a tension here, but not the hostility of combatants. It is merely uncertainty. In the swirling mix of preferences characteristic of social networks, where no demands have absolute authority, the tertius negotiates for favorable terms. Structural holes are the setting for tertius strategies, and information is the substance. Accurate, ambiguous, or distorted information is strategically moved between contacts by the tertius. The information and control benefits reinforce one another at any moment in time and cumulate together over time.

Networks rich in structural holes present opportunities for entrepreneurial behavior. The behaviors by which managers develop these opportunities are many and varied, but the opportunity itself is at all times defined by a hole in the social structure around the manager. In terms of the structural hole argument, networks rich in the entrepreneurial opportunities of structural holes are entrepreneurial networks, and entrepreneurs are people skilled in building the interpersonal bridges that span structural holes.

**Predicted Social Capital Effect**

Managers with contact networks rich in structural holes know about, have a hand in, and exercise control over the more rewarding opportunities. They monitor information more effectively than it can be monitored bureaucratically. They move information faster, and to more people, than memos. These entrepreneurial managers know the parameters of organization problems early. They are highly mobile relative to people working through a bureaucracy, easily shifting network time and energy from one solution to another. More in control of their immediate surroundings, entrepreneurial managers tailor solutions to the specific individuals being coordinated, replacing the boiler-plate solutions of formal bureaucracy. There is also the issue of costs: entrepreneurial managers offer inexpensive coordination relative to the bureaucratic alternative. Managers with networks rich in structural holes operate somewhere between the force of corporate authority and the dexterity of markets, building bridges between disconnected parts of the firm where it is valuable to do so. They have more opportunity to add value, are expected to do so, and are accordingly expected to enjoy higher returns to their human capital. The prediction is that in comparisons between otherwise similar people like James and Robert in Figure 1, it is people like Robert who should be more successful.

**References**


Explaining Educational Differentials

counts for stability, or change, in the educational differentials that ensue by reference to a quite limited range of situational features. For example, in the case of persisting class differentials, the explanatory emphasis falls on similarly persisting inequalities in the resources that members of different classes can command in the face of the constraints and opportunities that their class positions typically entail. Class differences in demonstrated academic ability are also recognized, but not—as we have emphasized—class differences of a (sub)cultural character.

To the extent, then, that our model holds good, i.e. that it can provide an adequate account of the regularities we have considered and that its further empirical implications are not rejected—the relatively parsimonious strategy of the rational action approach is supported; and, we might add, in an area in which ‘culturalist’ theories of one kind or another have hitherto enjoyed great popularity—even if not great explanatory success (see Goldthorpe 1996). In turn, the case for attempting to pursue this strategy in other areas of sociological enquiry is strengthened.

Finally, though, we would wish to allude to certain theoretical implications that might be regarded as following from our model but that do not in fact do so. To begin with, we are not required to suppose that, in making educational choices, children and their parents in fact go through the processes of rationalization that the model might appear to attribute to them. We do take it to be the case that the actors in question have some knowledge of how their society works, have some concern for their own, or for family interests, and seek to use the former to promote the latter. But we can at the same time accept that the decisions they make may only rarely result from any entirely explicit procedures, rather than, say, ‘emerging’ over a period of time and, in all probability, reflecting also various non-rational influences. What underlies our approach is the idea that it is rational considerations that are, not the only, but the main common factor at work across individual instances, and that will therefore shape patterns of educational choices in aggregate and, in turn, the regularities that constitute our explananda. Our model then aims to represent these considerations in an ‘idealized’ way, so as to capture the key generative processes involved, rather than to represent decision-making as it actually occurs at the level of particular families.

Further, while we do not in explaining class differentials in education invoke systematic variation in values or derived norms, this does not mean that we have to deny their very existence. Thus, in so far as class-specific norms may be identified—which is an empirical issue—we could recognize them as serving as guides to rational action that have evolved over time out of distinctive class experience and that may substitute for detailed calculation when educational choices arise. Understood in this way, such norms could conceivably be of some explanatory significance as inertial forces in cases where the structure of constraints and opportunities or the distribution of resources is changing. But what we would in fact expect, and the decline in gender differentials would, at least by analogy, lend support, is that norms, in being essentially epiphenomenal, would rather quickly come into line with patterns of action that display a rational adaptation to the new circumstances that have come into being.

In sum, our model implies an explanatory strategy that is undoubtedly ‘reductionist’ so far as the relation of norms to rational action is concerned (see Elster 1991). However, we do not in this regard seek what Popper (1972: Ch. 8) has criticized as reduction by fiat, but only reduction in so far as it is warranted by the empirical support that our theoretical arguments can obtain in the particular area in which they have been applied.\(^5\)

Notes

1. Strictly speaking the mathematics of our model require a slightly weaker condition, namely that \(\alpha \geq \gamma_1 / (\gamma_1 + \gamma_2)\). This imposes a condition on the magnitude of the difference in the chances of
access to the service class as between remaining at school and passing the examination and leaving immediately. The conditional probability of access to the service class for those who leave immediately should not be greater than $\gamma_1 + \gamma_2$ times the conditional probability of access to the service class for those who remain at school and pass the examination. However, because of condition (iii), condition (iv) will always be met if $\alpha > 0.5$.

2. Note that, whereas $p_{1w}$ can take any value between zero and one depending on the value of $\pi$, if $\beta_1 \geq \gamma_1$ then $p_{1s}$ will exceed one-half for all values of $\pi$.

3. Though empirically this will be observed only if the proportion of service-class children who consider it in their best interests to remain in education does not change for other reasons. For example, given an increase over time in the importance of educational qualifications in obtaining jobs we might see changes in the relative values of the $\alpha$, $\beta$ and $\gamma$ parameters causing the proportion for whom $p_i > 0.5$ to increase in both classes. Under these conditions a narrowing of the odds-ratio will not necessarily follow.

4. In our model this will be the case for the service class if (in addition to conditions (i) to (iv)) $\beta_1 \geq \gamma_1$ but it need not be so if this inequality does not hold.

5. Elster (1991) criticizes several different versions of the argument that action taken in conformity with social norms is reducible to rational action. However, his efforts to show that no version entails that such a reduction is always possible are of greater philosophical than sociological interest.

References


arguably instrumental and immanent properties, appear together in the model of Table 1.

Asking what the TSL model would look like if the typical value assumption were imposed may help clarify the issue. Say, then, that it is decided that to a useful approximation all workers prefer jobs according to their instrumental characteristics; this would drop autonomy from the model as irrelevant a priori. Then, if it is further held that the value placed on instrumental characteristics is common to all workers, there is no need to estimate a coefficient for prestige (or other instrumental characteristics). Instead, the occupational categories could be ranked in unambiguous ascending order by their average instrumental utilities. Equation (4) would disappear, replaced conceptually by the proviso that all workers prefer higher utility occupations according to the universally shared ranking. Under this condition, the TSL model can be shown to reduce mathematically to a sequential logit model (Logan 1996b). Only the firms’ preferences in equations (1) and (2) would affect the attainment of workers, and their effects would be as constraints on workers’ choices, which to the workers would appear objective.

No statistical model, TSL included, seems capable of distinguishing the mode of valuation by data analysis alone, that is, whether a particular characteristic has instrumental or immanent value to the actor. The best TSL can do is to detect the relative influences of measured characteristics on matching behavior, leaving it for the analyst to interpret which values are instrumental and which immanent, as earlier.

In summary, TSL is a relatively complete representation of rational choice in the occupational attainment situation, containing the three fundamental elements described by Hechter. TSL’s two-sided approach contains a duality between constraints and preferences, so that one side’s preferences become the other side’s constraints. It is only while looking at the choice situation from the point of view of a particular side that constraints seem purely objective.

Notes

1. Strictly speaking, (2) is only a utility when \( s_i = 0 \), since a non-zero \( s_i \) represents no actual increment to the baseline utility. However, I will refer to (2) as a utility whether or not \( s_i = 0 \), for convenience.

2. The key assumptions are that the disturbances are independent across firms and workers, and that they have type I extreme value (Gumbel) distributions. See Logan (1996b) for details.

3. The coefficients are interpreted more concretely as the log-odds that a unit difference in the value of a job characteristic will produce a concordant difference in a worker’s rankings of two otherwise similar opportunities.

References


Observations on the Study of Social Mobility and Inequality

between the behaviors of individuals and aggregate features of populations. The limitation of these models, however, is that they are narrow in scope and, in their current state of development, ill-suited to the analysis of the effects of market constraints, technology, and work organization. Nonetheless, they illustrate the sort of analysis that will be needed if we are to understand the dynamics of stratification and inequality.

From Social Mobility to Social Inequality

The classical motivation for mobility studies (e.g., Sorokin [this volume]) involved tracing out connections between social mobility and social inequality. I am thus suggesting a return to this concern and correspondingly increased appreciation that social mobility and social inequality are linked by a welter of conceptual and empirical relationships. Consider, for example, the following:

1. When inequality is high, there is much more at stake in the study of mobility than when inequality is low.
2. The pattern of social inequality may influence rates of mobility: For example, when many persons are self-employed and hence have substantial capital investments in their job, intergenerational mobility may be lower than when most persons work for wages (Simkus 1984).
3. The impact of inequality on people's lives and their likely response to inequality depends on whether they regard their positions in the stratification system as more or less permanent (Sombart [1903]1976; Sorokin [this volume]; Sibley 1942).
4. Mobility itself may change inequality through supply and demand in the labor market. When a change in mobility patterns affects the relative numbers of workers trained for various positions, the relative wages of these skill groups may change and, in turn, change employers' demands for workers of varying types and the resulting job and wage distributions (Freeman 1971; 1976).
5. Intragenerational job and wage mobility may affect earnings inequality through the creation of "transitory" variance in earnings (versus the variance in workers' "permanent" earnings). Inequality in earnings at any time is greater in markets where workers make frequent moves than in markets with limited labor mobility (Gottschalk and Moffit 1994).

The articles in this section do not attend adequately to relationships of the foregoing sort. In view of the interdependence of mobility and inequality, not to mention the dramatic and poorly understood growth in inequality in Western industrial societies during the past quarter century (Levy and Murnane 1992; Morris and Western 1999), one hopes that future stratification studies will redress this imbalance.

The scientific understanding of stratification will grow if we take a broad view of the institutional and demographic mechanisms that govern mobility and inequality, welcome new efforts to blend formal behavioral theories with empirical analysis, think flexibly about the ways that spatial relations create and reflect inequalities, and look for ways to study the dynamic relationships between individual behavior and the characteristics of populations and institutions. This is a tall order, but we must face these challenges if we are to move beyond the question of who gets ahead to the broader issue of how systems of social mobility and inequality are generated.

Notes

1. David Grusky, Judith Seltzer, and Donald Treiman made very helpful comments on an earlier draft of this essay. This work was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and by the Council on Research of the UCLA Academic Senate.
2. Space limitations preclude discussion of the various ways in which social stratification also occurs within schools. Academic tracking, for example, can broaden or narrow pre-existing inequalities in academic achievement among students and thus affect variation in ultimate educational attainment (e.g., Gamoran and Mare 1989; Kerckhoff 1993).

References


time-lag does not seem to have affected the responses (except perhaps for the question on singers, an area of culture where fashions change more rapidly).

The following complementary sources (C.S.) were also used:

I. The 1966 survey on 'businessmen and senior executives' was carried out by SOFRES (Société française d'enquêtes par sondages) on behalf of the Centre d'études des supports de publicité (CESP). The sample consisted of 2,257 persons aged 15 and over, each living in a household the head of which was a large industrial or commercial employer, a member of the professions, a senior executive, an engineer or a secondary or higher-education teacher. The questionnaire included a set of questions on reading habits and the previous few days' reading of daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines, use of radio and TV, standard of living, household equipment, life-style (holidays, sport, consumption), professional life (conferences, travel, business meals), cultural practices and the principal basic data (educational level, income, population of place of residence etc.). I had access to the whole set of distributions by the socio-occupational category of the head of household or individual.

II. The regular survey by INSEE (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques) on household living conditions and expenditure was based in 1972 on a representative sample of 13,000 households. It consists of a survey by questionnaire dealing with the characteristics of the household (composition, ages, occupation of the head), accommodation and facilities, major expenditure (clothing, fuel etc.), periodic expenditure (rent, service charges etc.), combined with analysis of account books for current expenditure, left with each household for a week, collected and checked by the interviewer. This survey makes it possible to assess the whole range of expenditure (except certain major and infrequent items such as air travel, removal expenses etc.), as well as items of consumption not preceded by purchase (food in the case of farmers, items drawn from their stocks by craftsmen and shopkeepers), which are evaluated at their retail price to allow comparison with the other categories of households. This explains why consumption is considerably higher than income in the case of farmers and small businessmen (categories which are always particularly prone to under-declare their income). For the overall findings, see G. Bigata and B. Bouvier, 'Les conditions de vie des ménages en 1972', Collections de l'INSEE, ser. M, no. 32 (February 1972). The data presented here come from secondary analysis of tables by narrow categories produced at my request.

The other surveys consulted are simply listed below. These studies, almost always devoted to a particular area of cultural activity, are generally based on relatively limited samples. They mostly use a classification which groups the occupations into five categories: (1) agriculteurs (farmers and farm labourers); (2) ouvriers (industrial manual workers); (3) industrial and commercial employers; (4) clerical workers and junior executives; (5) senior executives and the 'liberal professions'.

III. INSEE, 'La consommation alimentaire des Français', Collections de l'INSEE. (The regular INSEE surveys on eating habits.)


V. SOFRES, Les Français et la gastronomie, July 1977. (Sample of 1,000.)

Notes

1. The gaps are more clear-cut and certainly more visible as regards education than income, because information on incomes (based on tax declarations) is much less reliable than information on qualifications. This is especially true of industrial and commercial employers (who, in the CESP survey—C.S. I—provided, along with doctors, the highest rate of non-response to the questions about income), craftsmen, shopkeepers and farmers.

2. It follows from this that the relationship between conditions of existence and practices or the meaning of practices is not to be understood in terms either of the logic of mechanism or of the logic of consciousness.

3. In contrast to the atomistic approach of social psychology, which breaks the unity of practice to establish partial 'laws' claiming to account for the products of practice, the opus operatam, the aim is to establish general laws reproducing the laws of production, the modus operandi.

4. Economic theory, which treats economic agents as interchangeable actors, paradoxically fails to take account of the economic dispositions, and is thereby prevented from really explaining the systems of preferences which define incommensurable and independent subjective use-values.

5. An ethic, which seeks to impose the principles of an ethos (i.e., the forced choices of a social condition) as a universal norm, is another, more subtle way of succumbing to amor fati, of being content with what one is and has. Such is the basis of the felt contradiction between ethics and revolutionary intent.

6. 'Bourgeois' is used here as shorthand for 'dominant fractions of the dominant class', and 'intellectual' or 'artist' functions in the same way for 'dominated fractions of the dominant class'.

8. Bananas are the only fruit for which manual workers and farm workers have higher annual per capita spending (FF 23.26 and FF 25.20) than all other classes, especially the senior executives, who spend most on apples (FF 31.60 as against FF 21.00 for manual workers), whereas the rich, expensive fruits—grapes, peaches and nuts—are mainly eaten by professionals and industrial and commercial employers (FF 29.04 for grapes, 19.09 for peaches and 17.33 for nuts, as against FF 6.74, 11.78 and 4.90 respectively, for manual workers).

9. This whole paragraph is based on secondary analysis of the tables from the 1972 INSEE survey on household expenditure on 39 items by socio-occupational category (C.S. II).

10. A fuller translation of the original text would include: "les nourritures à la fois les plus nourrissantes et les plus économiques" (the double tautology showing the reduction to pure economic function). (Translator's note.)

11. In the French: 'le gros et le gras, gros rouge, gros sabots, gros travaux, gros rire, grosses blagues, gros bon sens, plaisanteries grasses'—cheap red wine, clogs (i.e., obviousness), heavy work, belly laughs, crude common sense, crude jokes (translator).


13. One fine example, taken from Böhm-Bawerk, will demonstrate this essentialism: 'We must now consider a second phenomenon of human experience—one that is heavily fraught with consequence. That is the fact that we feel less concerned about future sensations of joy and sorrow simply because they do lie in the future, and the lessening of our concern is in proportion to the remoteness of that future. Consequently we accord to goods which are intended to serve future ends a value which falls short of the true intensity of their future marginal utility. We systematically undervalue our future wants and also the means which serve to satisfy them.' E. Böhm-Bawerk, Capital and Interest, II (South Holland, Ill., 1959), 268, quoted by G. L. Stigler and G. S. Becker, 'Degustibus non est disputandum', American Economic Review, 67 (March 1977), 76–90.

14. We may assume that the deep-seated relation to the future (and also to one's own body—which is valued more at higher levels of the social hierarchy) is reflected in the small proportion of manual workers who say that 'there is a new life after death' (15 percent, compared with 18 percent of craftsmen and shopkeepers, office workers and middle managers, and 32 percent of senior executives).

15. It is not superfluous to point out that this art, which has its recognized virtuoso, the 'life and soul of the party', can sink into the caricature of jokes or remarks that are defined as stereotyped, stupid or coarse in terms of the criteria of popular taste.

16. The oppositions are much less clear-cut in the middle classes, although homologous differences are found between primary teachers and office workers on the one hand and shopkeepers on the other.


18. The preference for foreign restaurants—Italian, Chinese, Japanese and, to a lesser extent, Russian—rises with level in the social hierarchy. The only exceptions are Spanish restaurants, which are associated with a more popular form of tourism, and North African restaurants, which are most favoured by junior executives (C.S. IV).

19. Les gros: the rich; grosse bouffe: bulk food (cf. grossiste: wholesaler, and English 'grocer'). See also note 17 above (translator).

20. That is why the body designates not only present position but also trajectory.

21. In 'The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges', Social Science Information, 26 (December 1977), 645–668, Bourdieu develops the opposition between two ways of speaking, rooted in two relations to the body and the world, which have a lexical reflection in the many idioms based on two words for 'mouth': la bouche and la gueule. La bouche is the 'standard' word for the mouth; but in opposition to la gueule—a slang or 'vulgar' word except when applied to animals—it tends to be restricted to the lips, whereas la gueule can include the whole face or the throat. Most of the idioms using la bouche imply fastidiousness, effeminacy or disdain; those with la gueule connote vigour, strength or violence (translator's note).

22. This means that the taxonomies applied to the perceived body (fat/thin, strong/weak, big/small etc.) are, as always, at once arbitrary (e.g., the ideal female body may be fat or thin, in different economic and social contexts) and necessary, i.e., grounded in the specific reason of a given social order.

23. More than ever, the French possessive pronouns—which do not mark the owner's gender—ought to be translated 'his or her'. The 'sexism' of the text results from the male translator's reluctance to defy the dominant use of a sexist symbolic system (translator).

24. One could similarly contrast the bowl, which is generously filled and held two-handed for unpretentious drinking, and the cup, into which a little is poured, and more later ('Would you care for a little more coffee?'), and which is held between two fingers and sipped from.

25. Formality is a way of denying the truth of the social world and of social relations. Just as
popular 'functionalism' is refused as regards food, so too there is a refusal of the realistic vision which leads the working classes to accept social exchanges for what they are (and, for example, to say, without cynicism, of someone who has done a favour or rendered a service, 'She knows I'll pay her back'). Suppressing avowal of the calculation which pervades social relations, there is a striving to see presents, received or given, as 'pure' testimonies of friendship, respect, affection, and equally 'pure' manifestations of generosity and moral worth.

tive and quantitative research on the bases of party appeals, is called for to explore these possibilities (for the few existing efforts to explore the party coalitions, see Stanley et al. 1986 and Carmines and Stanley 1992).

Research on the class effects of changes in public opinion are also appropriate. In our own earlier work (Brooks and Manza 1997), we have found that the increased salience of liberal attitudes on social issues explains much of the shift of professionals towards the Democratic Party. Other studies focusing on attitudes may continue to reveal class-specific differences which can help account for class realignment.

Notes

1. This class is mostly composed of clerical and sales workers. In the United States, this class is sometimes called 'pink collar' because the majority of clerical, sales, and white-collar service workers are women. Workers in this category are also distinct from other white-collar employees because they tend to be paid hourly wages instead of a salary. They are also more unionized than other white-collar classes.

2. The 1948 data are from the retrospective reports of respondents to the 1952 ANES.

3. The likelihood ratio test (the difference between -2 log-likelihood for the full interaction and linear change models) is 45 with 61 degrees of freedom (with a bic value of -501).

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There have been several distinct approaches to the study of work, each of them emphasizing some aspect that bears on a particular theoretical concern of the investigator. Rarely, though, has that concern been the effect of work on personality. Sociologists have learned much about social stratification and mobility, for example, by focusing on the dimension of work most pertinent to the stratificational system, the status of the job (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Duncan, Featherman, and Duncan, 1972; Sewell, Hauser, and Featherman, 1976). But however important status may be for studies of mobility, it would be unwise to assume—as is often done—that the status of a job is equally pertinent for personality. In terms of impact on personality, job status serves mainly as a gross indicator of the job’s location in the hierarchical organization of the economic and social system. The status of the job is closely linked to such structural conditions of work as how complex it is, how closely it is supervised, and what sorts of pressures it entails. It is these structural realities, not status as such, that affect personality (Kohn and Schooler, 1973).

It is also indisputable that economists have learned much about the functioning of the economic system by focusing on the extrinsic rewards the job confers—in particular, income. Just as with occupational status, though, it would be incorrect to assume that because income is important for an understanding of the economic system qua system, income is also the most significant aspect of the job in terms of the meaning of work to the worker or the impact of work on his sense of self and orientation to the rest of the world (Whyte, 1955; Kohn and Schooler, 1973).

Organizational theorists, both the Weberian sociologists and those more applied scholars who call themselves administrative scientists, have, by studying formal organizational structure, undoubtedly contributed much to our understanding of how organizations function (Blau and Schoenherr, 1971). But the
functioning regardless of their needs, values, and personal capacities and regardless of their social class (but, of course, the type of work one does is intimately related to one's social class; so, too, are one's values). What matters most about work, in short, is not any of its attendant rewards or social experiences, but the work itself.

Moreover, the relationship between work and psychological functioning is quintessentially reciprocal. There is an ongoing process, throughout all of adult life, whereby the occupational conditions encountered by the individual both mold his psychological processes and in turn are molded by his personality and behavior. No theory of adult personality development that fails to take account of the ongoing effects of occupational (and, presumably, other social) conditions can be regarded as realistic. By the same token, no social psychology of occupations that fails to take account of the ongoing effects of individual psychological functioning can be regarded as realistic.

Notes

1. Our primary source of data is a sample survey of 3,101 men, representative of all men employed in civilian occupations in the United States. These men were interviewed for us by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in the spring and summer of 1964. For more detailed information on sample and research design, see Kohn, 1969, pp. 235–264. In 1974 NORC reinterviewed a representative subsample of these men for us; this time, the wives (and, where applicable, one of the children) were interviewed, too. For detailed information on the follow-up study, see Kohn and Schooler (1978) and Kohn (1977).

2. Our principal indices of psychological functioning measure subjective reactions to the job itself (that is, job satisfaction and occupational commitment), valuation of self-direction or of conformity to external authority (both for oneself and for one's children), self-conception (self-confidence, self-deprecation, fatalism, anxiety, and idea conformity), social orientation (authoritarian conservatism, criteria of morality, trustfulness, and receptiveness or resistance to change), alienation (powerlessness, self-estrangement, and normlessness), and intellectual functioning (intellectual flexibility, intellectuality of leisure-time activities). For detailed information about our definitions of these concepts and our methods of indexing them, see Kohn, 1969, pp. 47–58, 73–84, 265–269; Kohn and Schooler, 1973, pp. 99–101; Kohn, 1976, pp. 114–118.

3. Specifically, these twelve crucial occupational conditions are: (1) ownership/nonownership; (2) bureaucratization; (3) position in the supervisory hierarchy; (4) closeness of supervision; (5) routinization of the work; (6) substantive complexity of the work; (7) frequency of time-pressure; (8) heaviness of work; (9) dirtiness of work; (10) the likelihood, in this field, of there occurring a sudden and dramatic change in a person's income, reputation, or position; (11) the probability, in this line of work, of being held responsible for things outside one's control; and (12) the risk of loss of one's job or business.

4. The concept "substantive complexity" has been the subject of much research that goes considerably beyond the issues addressed in this essay. Many writers have adopted the concept and used it for such diverse purposes as reinterpreting the status-attainment model (Spaeth, 1976), proposing a new method of classifying the occupational structure of the U.S. economy (Temme, 1975), reassessing the psychological effects of complex role sets (Coser, 1975), interpreting the effects of fathers' occupational experiences on their sons' occupational choices (Mortimer, 1974; 1976), and searching out the sources of powerlessness (Tudor, 1972).

5. To validate this index, which is specifically tailored to each respondent's description of his own job, we have compared it to assessments of the average level of complexity of work with things, with data, and with people for the entire occupation, made by trained occupational analysts for the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (United States Department of Labor, 1965). The multiple correlation between our index of substantive complexity and the independently coded Dictionary ratings is 0.78—sufficiently high to assure us that our appraisals of substantive complexity accurately reflect the reality of people's work.

6. The two-stage least squares technique is described in detail by Kohn and Schooler (1973) and the references cited therein. This method attempts to "purge" each variable of the effects of all others with which it is reciprocally related by estimating from other pertinent data what each individual's score on that variable would have been if the other variables had not had an opportunity to affect it. These estimated scores are then used as independent variables in the (second stage) multiple-regression equations.

7. Concretely, the time-lagged path (that is, from substantive complexity in 1964 to intellectual flexibility in 1974) is 0.05 and the contemporaneous path is 0.18. A path of 0.18 might not under ordinary circumstances be considered striking; but a
continuing effect of this magnitude on so stable a
phenomenon as intellectual flexibility is impressive,
because the cumulative impact will be much
greater than the immediate effect at any one time.
Continuing effects, even small-to-moderate contin-
uing effects, on highly stable phenomena become
magnified in importance. The effect of the substanc-
tive complexity of work on intellectual flexibility is
especially noteworthy when we take into account
that we are dealing with men who are at least ten
years into their occupational careers.

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social inequality in the capacity to extract value from the Internet, even as differences in formal access decline (DiMaggio et al. forthcoming).

Taken together, the findings of research on noneconomic consequences of stratification (and the reciprocal effects of these consequences) demonstrate processes of cumulative advantage and disadvantage that are sometimes referred to as social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). We must distinguish between micro- and macro-reproduction to pursue this point.

A social process is “reproductive” in the micro sense insofar as attitudes, values, tastes, and behaviors linked to social origins are themselves causally related to hierarchical position at some later point, in a manner that reinforces initial advantage or disadvantage. Micro-reproduction occurs both intra- and intergenerationally. It entails both direct reciprocal relationships between pairs of variables (e.g., job complexity and intellectual flexibility) and more complex causal chains (e.g., having middle-class parents gives one a wide-ranging social network that makes it easier to get an attractive and complex job, thus increasing one’s intellectual flexibility).

The strength of micro-reproduction is an open question. Although studies of the relationship between class and particular kinds of lifestyles or attitudes often find significant but relatively small effects, we have been remiss in investigating the ways in which such myriad small effects cumulate and interact. Rarely, if ever, do researchers explore the relationship between position in the stratification order and a wide range of “lifestyle” variables (attitudes, values, cultural capital, linguistic capital, social networks, and health) in a single set of models featuring reciprocal effects and appropriate interaction terms. The extent to which such analyses would reveal stronger micro-reproductive processes than appear in more limited studies is an empirical question. Addressing it, and thus taking micro-reproduction seriously, requires that we relax otherwise productive barriers of specialization between different research subfields, each with its own set of dependent variables, in the interest of theoretical and empirical synthesis.

Whatever the results of such studies in particular national contexts, the effects of class on attitudes and lifestyle is likely to vary over time and cross-nationally as a result of macrostructural factors. By macro-reproduction, I refer to large-scale structural change (e.g., the rise and fall of industries or communities), political decisions (e.g., those that alter the redistributive effects of the tax system), legal factors (e.g., definitions of property rights), or institutional developments (e.g., the emergence of formal organizations devoted to “high culture”) that strengthen individual-level relationships between social origin and individual life chances.

There are many macrostructural processes that merit further study. How might the effect (or character) of pecuniary emulation vary between Western societies, where highly differentiated consumer goods are allocated on the basis of price, and socialist (or post-socialist) societies, where narrower selections of goods are allocated on the basis of queuing and rationing? What are the effects of macrostructural conditions (e.g., level of economic development or degree of religious and racial heterogeneity) on the extent to which individual political attitudes are stratified by occupational and educational attainment? How do economic policies or government regulations shape access to information technologies that may in turn facilitate the acquisition of human and social capital? If we are to answer such questions, historical and international comparative work must assume even more central places in the study of stratification.

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cessment of Their Reciprocal Effects.” *American Journal of Sociology* 87:1257–86.
tions and finds that it relates to numerical proportions without being able to explain the dynamic behind this correlation. Table 2 presents a modified version of his chart. My theory can explain these relationships. Paternalism arises in situations where the cleavage between business and labor corresponds to an ethnic difference. A small business elite rules a large group of workers who entered the labor market at approximately the same price or strength. No split labor market existed, hence no ethnic caste system arises. The higher proportion of the dominant ethnicity under "Domination" means that part of the dominant group must be working class. A labor element that shares ethnicity with people who have sufficient resources to become the business elite is generally likely to come from a fairly wealthy country and have resources of its own. Such systems are likely to develop split labor markets. Finally, competition has under it societies whose cheaper labor groups have not been a major threat because the indigenous population available as cheap labor has been small and/or exclusion has effectively kept business groups from importing cheap labor in large numbers.

This theory helps elucidate other observations. One is the underlying similarity in the situation of blacks and women. Another is the history of political sympathy between California and the South. And, a third is the conservatism of the American white working class, or what Daniels and Kitano (1970:45) consider to be an "essential paradox of American life: [that] movements for economic democracy have usually been violently opposed to a thorough-going ethnic democracy." Without having to resort to psychological constructs like "authoritarianism," this theory is able to explain the apparent paradox.

In sum, in comparing those countries with the most ethnic antagonism with those having the least, it is evident that the difference does not lie in the fact that the former are Protestant and the latter Catholic: Protestants are found in all three of Mason's types, and Hawaii is a Protestant dominated territory. It does not lie in whether the dominant or subordinate group moves: South Africa and the deep south show opposite patterns of movement. It is evident that some of the most antagonistic territories have been British colonies, but not all British colonies have had this attribute. The characteristic that those British colonies and other societies high on ethnic antagonism share is that they all have a powerful white, or more generally higher paid, working class.

### Notes

1. I do not wish to enter the debate over the applicability of the term "caste" to race relations (cf. Cox, 1948; Davis, et al., 1941). It is used here only for convenience and implies no particular theoretical bent.

2. The term "exclusion" has not usually been applied to immigrant quotas imposed on eastern and southern European immigrants; but such restrictions were, in effect, indistinguishable from the restrictions placed on Japanese immigration.

3. This usage contrasts with that of van den Berghe (1967a:9–10) who reserves the term "ethnic" for groups socially defined by cultural differences. In his definition, ethnicity is not necessarily inherited. I would contend that, while persons of

### Table 2

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Domination</th>
<th>Paternalism</th>
<th>Competition</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1–4</td>
<td>1–2000</td>
<td>50–1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4–1</td>
<td>1–570</td>
<td>15–1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhodesia (1960)</td>
<td>Tanganyika</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1–16</td>
<td>1–450</td>
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<td>1–16</td>
<td>1–450</td>
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</tbody>
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*Adapted from Mason (1970:64).
mixed ancestry may be problematic and are often assigned arbitrarily by the societies in which they reside, inheritance is implied in the common application of the word.

4. Sojourners often use their political resources and low price of labor to enter business for themselves (a process which will be fully analyzed in another paper). This does not remove the split in the labor market, though it makes the conflict more complex.

5. It is, of course, no accident that color and resources have been historically related. Poverty among non-white nations has in part resulted from European imperialism. Nevertheless, I would argue that the critical factor in the development of ethnic segmentation in a country is the meeting that occurs in the labor market of that country. The larger economic forces help determine the resources of entering parties, but it is not such forces to which workers respond. Rather they react to the immediate conflicts and threats in their daily lives.

6. Such a split was not found in the early Cape Colony, where business was one ethnicity—white, and labor another—non-white. Actually in neither case was the ethnic composition simple or homogeneous; but the important fact is that, among the laborers, who included so-called Hottentots, and slaves from Madagascar, Moçambique and the East Indies (cf. van den Bergh, 1967b:14), no element was significantly more expensive. The early Cape is thus structurally similar, in terms of the variables I consider important, to countries like Brazil and Mexico. And it is also noted for its “softened” tone of race relations as reflected in such practices as intermarriage.

7. Ethnically based labor aristocracies are much less sensitive about cheap labor in any form than are systems that do not arrive at this resolution because they are protected from it. Thus, Sutherland and Cressey (1970:561-2) report that both the deep south and South Africa continue to use various forms of prison contract labor, in contrast to the northern U.S. where the contract system was attacked by rising labor organizations as early as 1880.

References


ALEJANDRO PORTES AND ROBERT D. MANNING

The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples

I. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review existing theories about the process of immigrant adaptation to a new society and to recapitulate the empirical findings that have led to an emerging perspective on the topic. This emerging view revolves around the concepts of different modes of structural incorporation and of the immigrant enclave as one of them. These concepts are set in explicit opposition to two previous viewpoints on the adaptation process, generally identified as assimilation theory and the segmented labor markets approach.

The study of immigrant groups in the United States has produced a copious historical and sociological literature, written mostly from the assimilation perspective. Although the experiences of particular groups varied, the common theme of these writings is the unrelenting efforts of immigrant minorities to surmount obstacles impeding their entry into...
ries with it elements unique to the surrounding community—its language inflections, particular traditions, and loyalties (Greeley, 1971; Suttles, 1968). On the contrary, acculturation of primary sector immigrants is of a more cosmopolitan sort. Because career requirements often entail physical mobility, the new language and culture are learned more rapidly and more generally, without strong attachments to a particular community. Thus, while minorities entering menial labor, enclave, or middleman enterprise in the United States have eventually become identified with a certain city or region, the same is not true for immigrant professionals, who tend to “disappear,” in a cultural sense, soon after their arrival (Stevens et al., 1978; Cardona and Cruz, 1980).

Awareness of patterned differences among immigrant groups in their forms of entry and labor market incorporation represents a significant advance, in our view, from earlier undifferentiated descriptions of the adaptation process. This typology is, however, a provisional effort. Just as detailed research on the condition of particular minorities modified or replaced earlier broad generalizations, the propositions advanced here will require revision. New groups arriving in the United States at present and a revived interest in immigration should provide the required incentive for empirical studies and theoretical advances in the future.

Note

1. The original article from which this excerpt was drawn includes a further discussion of contemporary Korean and Cuban enclaves.—Ed.

References


Gordon, Milton M. (1964). Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and


cal differences would enter into the situation as a secondary cause because the rhetoric would inflame that difference, but we can be reasonably certain that the conflict would occur in their absence. In the same fashion, differences between blacks and whites—real ones, imaginary ones, and those that are the product of earlier race relations—enter into the rhetoric of race and ethnic relations, but they are ultimately secondary to the conflict for society's goodies.

This certainly is the conclusion that can be generated from the classic experiment by Sherif and Sherif (1953) in which a homogeneous group of children at camp were randomly sorted into two groups and then competition and conflict between the groups was stimulated. The experiment resulted in each of the groups developing all sorts of images about themselves and the other group. Yet, unknown to them, the groups were identical in their initial distribution of characteristics.

In order to avoid a misunderstanding of a position that is radically different from that held by most observers, whether they be black or white, oriented toward one group or the other, let me restate this part of my thesis. There is powerful evidence that blacks were victims of more severe forms of discrimination than were the new Europeans—although the latter also suffered from intense discrimination. Much of the antagonism toward blacks was based on racial features, but one should not interpret this as the ultimate cause. Rather the racial emphasis resulted from the use of the most obvious feature(s) of the group to support the intergroup conflict generated by a fear of blacks based on their threat as economic competitors. If this analysis is correct, it also means that were the present-day conflict between blacks and dominant white groups to be resolved, then the race issue could rapidly disintegrate as a crucial barrier between the groups just as a very profound and deep distaste for Roman Catholics on the part of the dominant Protestants has diminished rather substantially (albeit not disappeared).

The Great Non Sequitur

The data comparing blacks and the new Europeans earlier in this century lead one to a rather clear conclusion about the initial question. The early living conditions of the new Europeans after their migration to the United States were extremely harsh and their point of entry into the socioeconomic system was quite low. However, it is a non sequitur to assume that new Europeans had it as bad as did blacks or that the failure of blacks to move upward as rapidly reflected some ethnic deficiencies. The situation for new Europeans in the United States, bad as it may have been, was not as bad as that experienced by blacks at the same time. Witness, for example, the differences in the disposition to ban openly blacks from unions at the turn of the century (Lieberson, 1980, chapter 11), the greater concentration of blacks in 1900 in service occupations and their smaller numbers in manufacturing and mechanical jobs (Lieberson, 1980, chapter 10), the higher black death rates in the North (Lieberson, 1980, chapter 2), and even the greater segregation of blacks with respect to the avenues of eminence open to them (Lieberson and Carter, 1979). It is a serious mistake to underestimate how far the new Europeans have come in the nation and how hard it all was, but it is equally erroneous to assume that the obstacles were as great as those faced by blacks or that the starting point was the same.

Notes

1. Compare the data on Italian, Polish, and Russian education in younger ages, occupation, and income with that for Americans of British origin in Population Characteristics (United States Bureau of the Census, 1973, tables 6–9). The traditional basis for allocating European sources into the old and new categories is somewhat arbitrary and, in some cases, does not correspond with the period of greatest immigration. For example, several Scandinavian sources were more important between 1880 and 1920 than they were in earlier decades. In
keeping with traditional analysis, Germany is an old source and included with the Northwestern European nations even though it is a central European nation (Lieberson, 1963, p. 551).

2. This is a bit of an unfair comparison because these are national corporations and hence may tend to draw to some degree on the national market for executive recruitment and board members.

3. The distinction between "voluntary" and "involuntary" is sometimes not entirely clear, as in the case of starvation or political pressures in the sending country. Nevertheless, in those cases one can still argue that the motivation to move stems from more attractive conditions in the receiving country or subarea.

4. The original ten registration states used to provide data on black mortality in 1900, 1910, and 1920 were the six New England states and four elsewhere in the North. The reader may wonder if this is an appropriate measure for blacks because it is the living conditions of blacks in the South that are relevant here as an index for determining the jobs that they would accept in the North. Regional life tables, first available for 1930-1939, indicate that the three southern regions all have higher expectation of life at birth for nonwhite males than do either the North Atlantic or North-Central regions; this is also the case for two of the southern regions when compared to the Mountain and Pacific category. The gaps are not as great for nonwhite females (see Dublin, Lotka, and Spiegelman, 1949, tables 81, 83). The same sources also indicate that nonwhites in the rural South in 1939 had higher expectations of life than did nonwhites in either different regions or in different types of communities. A special adjustment that takes into account this difficulty still supports the conclusion that life expectancy at birth for South-Central-Eastern European countries was generally more favorable. Because the West-South-Central states had the highest and the North-Central region the lowest life expectancy at birth, the black data shown in table 1 were multiplied by the ratio of West-South-Central to North-Central regional black life table values in 1930-1939. This gave the most favorable increase to black values. In all periods the majority of SCE European nations still had higher life expectancy at birth even after this adjustment.

5. Another force probably operating in the same direction stems from the fact that the South was, of course, much closer to the North than was South-Central-Eastern Europe. If it is reasonable to assume that the minimum improvement necessary to stimulate migration will vary directly with distance, expressed in time-cost factors, then this force will also work toward generating an initial difference favoring the white groups.

6. Based on data reported in Hutchinson, 1956, table A-2a. See the table for detailed titles of the occupations described in the text.

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——. “Selective Black Migration from the South: A Historical View.” In Demography of Racial and Ethnic Groups, edited by Frank D.
New York's brush with fiscal insolvency in the mid-1970s signaled the end for the old industrial cities of the United States. Its revival in the 1980s heralded the emergence of the nation's largest cities as world service centers. The smokestack cities of the industrial heartland unfortunately have no replacement for their run-of-the-mill production activities, steadily eroding under the twin impact of computerization and foreign competition. But in the largest urban agglomerations—Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and, especially, New York—the advent of a postindustrial economy has triggered a new phase of growth. The key activities of the new economy—information processing, the coordination of large organizations, and the management of volatile financial markets—are overwhelmingly urban-based. And their dynamism has yanked these largest cities out of the economic torpor into which they had sunk.

The new urban vitality notwithstanding, cities remain deeply troubled—perhaps more so than before. The paradox of urban plenty...
with their very different experiences and orientations, will pursue. Unlike the immigrants, African-Americans aspire to the rewards and positions enjoyed by whites. But the niches that African-Americans have carved out require skills that the least-educated members of that community simply don’t have; African-American networks no longer provide connections to these more accessible jobs; and relative to the newcomers, employers find unskilled African-Americans to be much less satisfactory recruits. As for better-skilled African-Americans, they often compete with whites on unequal terrain, since past and present discrimination in housing and schools makes African-American workers less well prepared than whites. In this way, the mismatch between the aspirations of the partly disadvantaged and the requirements of the jobs to which they aspire provides the spark for persistent economic racial conflict between blacks and whites.

By contrast, immigrants have moved into noncompeting positions, taking over jobs that whites have deserted in their move up the occupational pecking order. Once the immigrants gain a lock on low-level jobs, ethnic connections funnel a steady stream of newcomers, excluding black New Yorkers who are not members of the same ethnic club.

Thus, the advent of a majority minority economy marks the emergence of a new division of labor, in which the various groups of new New Yorkers play distinct economic roles. Niche creation by African-Americans and immigrants has evolved into a mutually exclusive carving up of the pie: in carving out a place in the ethnic division of labor, the two groups effectively open or foreclose opportunities for each other. As in the past, control over good jobs and desired resources is subject to contest. Thus, the various components of New York’s polyglot working and middle classes follow the example of their predecessors, continuing in, and reinvigorating, the pattern of interethnic economic competition that long characterized the city’s white ethnic groups.

Notes


5. The two perspectives also contradict each other on the issue of the direction of job change: is the problem the disappearance or the proliferation of low-level jobs? The answer is that neither polarization nor mismatch proponents are sure. Thus William Wilson and his collaborators emphasize the decline of manufacturing but then point out the “explosion of low-pay, part-time work” (L. J. Wacquant and W. J. Wilson, “The Cost of Racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City,” Annals, 501 [January 1989]: 11), the growth of sweatshops, and the “peripheralization and recomposition of the core,” code words for economic polarization (L. J. Wacquant, “The Ghetto, the State, and the New Capitalist Economy,” Dissent, 36, no. 4 [1989]: 512).
ing the Sandinista regime during the 1980s. They were not as welcomed in the United States as were the Cuban exiles, nor were they able to develop a large and diversified community. Yet they shared with Cubans their language and culture, as well as a militant anti-Communist discourse. This common political outlook led the Cuban American community to extend its resources in support of their Nicaraguan brethren, smoothing their process of adaptation.\(^2\) For second-generation Nicaraguans, this means that the preexisting ethnic community that provides a model for their own assimilation is not a downtrodden group but rather one that has managed to establish a firm and positive presence in the city’s economy and politics.

The second group comprises West Indians coming from Jamaica, Trinidad, and other English-speaking Caribbean republics. They generally arrive in Miami as legal immigrants, and many bring along professional and business credentials as well as the advantage of fluency in English. These individual advantages are discounted, however, by a context of reception in which these mostly black immigrants are put in the same category as native-born blacks and discriminated against accordingly. The recency of West Indian migration and its small size have prevented the development of a diversified ethnic community in South Florida. Hence new arrivals experience the full force of white discrimination without the protection of a large coethnic group and with constant exposure to the situation and attitudes of the inner-city population. Despite considerable individual resources, these disadvantages put the West Indian second generation at risk of bypassing white or even native black middle-class models to assimilate into the culture of the underclass. . . .

### Conclusion

Fifty years ago, the dilemma of Italian American youngsters studied by Irving Child consisted of assimilating into the American mainstream, sacrificing in the process their parents’ cultural heritage in contrast to taking refuge in the ethnic community from the challenges of the outside world. In the contemporary context of segmented assimilation, the options have become less clear. Children of nonwhite immigrants may not even have the opportunity of gaining access to middle-class white society, no matter how acculturated they become. Joining those native circles to which they do have access may prove a ticket to permanent subordination and disadvantage. Remaining securely ensconced in their coethnic community, under these circumstances, may be not a symptom of escapism but the best strategy for capitalizing on otherwise unavailable material and moral resources. As the experiences of Punjabi Sikh and Cuban American students suggest, a strategy of paced, selective assimilation may prove the best course for immigrant minorities. But the extent to which this strategy is possible also depends on the history of each group and its specific profile of vulnerabilities and resources. The present analysis represents a preliminary step toward understanding these realities.

### Notes

2. Defined as native-born children with at least one foreign-born parent or children born abroad who came to the United States before age 12.


8. This account is based on fieldwork in Miami conducted in preparation for a survey of immigrant youths in public schools.


Mary C. Waters

**Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities**

A key proposition of the new models of immigrant incorporation studies how the social capital immigrants bring with them, and the racial and ethnic definitions of nonwhite immigrants as minorities, combine to create a situation where becoming American in terms of culture and identity and achieving economic success are decoupled. Some immigrants and their children do better economically by maintaining a strong ethnic identity and culture and by resisting American cultural and identity influences. In fact, many authors now suggest that remaining immigrant- or ethnic-identified eases economic and social incorporation into the United States. These new assumptions turn models of identity change on their head—now those who resist becoming American do well and those who lose their immigrant ethnic distinctiveness become downwardly mobile. West Indians, it turns out, fit this model very well because when West Indians lose their distinctiveness as immigrants or ethnics they become not just Americans, but black Americans. Given the ongoing prejudice and discrimination in American society, this represents downward mobility for the immigrants and their children.

The main argument of this chapter is that black immigrants from the Caribbean come to the United States with a particular identity/culture/worldview that reflects their unique history and experiences. This culture and identity are different from the immigrant identity and culture of previous waves of European immigrants because of the unique history of the origin countries and because of the changed contexts of reception the immigrants face in the United States. This culture and identity are also different from the culture and identity of African Americans.

At first, two main aspects of the culture of West Indians help them to be successful in America. First, because they are immigrants they have a different attitude toward employment, work, and American society than native-born Americans. Employers value this highly. Their background characteristics, including human capital and social network ties, ease their entry into the U.S. labor force. Middle-class immigrants come with qualifications and training that are needed in the U.S. economy (nurses, for example). Because English is their native language, they are able
been substantially reduced. On the contrary, the basis of such conflicts have shifted from the economic sector to the sociopolitical order and therefore do not play as great a role in determining the life chances of individual black Americans as in the previous periods of overt economic racial oppression.

Notes


2. In Marxist terminology, the “superstructure” refers to the arrangements of beliefs, norms, ideologies, and noneconomic institutions.

3. However, not all theorists who emphasize the importance of economic class in explanations of race relations simply relegate problems of race to the superstructure. The Marxist scholars Michael Burawoy and Eugene Genovese recognize the reciprocal influence between the economic class structure and aspects of the superstructure (belief systems, political systems, etc.), a position which I also share and which is developed more fully in subsequent sections of this chapter. See Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made (New York: Pantheon, 1974); idem, In Red and Black: Marxian Explorations in Southern and Afro-American History (New York: Vintage Press, 1971); and Michael Burawoy, “Race, Class, and Colonialism,” Social and Economic Studies 23 (1974): 521-50.


6. For examples of alternative and less orthodox Marxist explanations of race, see Eugene D. Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South (New York: Pantheon, 1966); idem, The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation (New York: Pantheon, 1969); idem, In Red and Black; idem, Roll, Jordan, Roll; and Burawoy, “Race, Class, and Colonialism.”

7. “Exploitation,” in Marxian terminology, refers to the difference between the wages workers receive and the value of the goods they produce. The size of this difference, therefore, determines the degree of exploitation.


9. Ibid., p. 549.

10. Ibid., p. 553.

11. Ibid., p. 549.

12. Ibid., p. 555.

13. Ibid., p. 556.

14. Neil J. Smelser, Karl Marx on Society and Social Change (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. xiv. According to Smelser, Marx used the notions “forces of production” and “social relations of production” as constituting the “mode of production.” However, in Marx’s writings the mode of production is often discussed as equivalent only to the “forces of production.” To avoid confusion, I have chosen the term “system of production” which denotes the interrelation of the forces of production and the mode of production.


16. See, for example, Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll.

17. An exception to this pattern occurred in the cities of the antebellum South, where nonslaveholding whites played a major role in the development of urban segregation. However, since an overwhelming majority of the population resided in rural areas, race relations in the antebellum southern cities were hardly representative of the region.

18. van den Berghe, Race and Racism, p. 27.


20. Ibid., p. 96.

21. van den Berghe, Race and Racism, p. 28.


CHARLES HIRSCHMAN AND C. MATTHEW SNIPP


America is a nation of immigrants, but not all immigrant groups have experienced the same reception and opportunities or have been accorded the same influence. American ideals and cultural values were largely shaped by the Anglo heritage of the founding settlers. For most of the nation’s history, those ideals have continued to define the American experience for subsequent waves of arrivals. The millions of new immigrants were expected—as were native American Indians and African slaves—to assimilate into American society and to conform to Anglo-American ideals and values. They were also expected to discard their ethnic heritage as quickly as possible. Economic incentives, including hope for their own and their children’s upward mobility, motivated the immigrants’ acceptance of cultural change and adaptation.

Despite the massive immigration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the image of American society as an extension of English society persisted throughout the first six decades of the twentieth century. As we near the end of the twentieth century and envision the future of American society, the patterns in the first half of the century—the exchange of cultural conformity for a chance at upward mobility, the American Dream—seem obsolete. There appears to be less societal pressure on new immigrants to surrender their culture, language, and traditions. In fact, group identities, including race, ethnicity, and gender, now frame claims to political power and political participation. Sensing this shift in political roles, other groups, such as American Indians, have made a concerted effort to assert the importance of their ethnic ancestry. Many traditionalists see these trends as divisive forces, while others view the emphasis on cultural diversity as the defining character of contemporary American society.

It is important to assess the state of the American Dream as the twentieth century ends—to chart where we have been and to anticipate where we are going. In this chapter, we analyze patterns and trends in social and economic inequality among the major racial and ethnic groups in American society. We track occupational and earnings attainment among men from seven major racial and ethnic groups between 1970 and 1990. The years from 1970 to 1990 represent an especially im-

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by the Japanese. Japanese have higher incomes than whites in 1979 and 1989. In large part, this is due to their higher educational attainment, but they also experience an "advantage" that is not measured by the variables in the model.

Conclusions

There was much talk in the 1990s about reverse discrimination, the problems of white men who are unable to find jobs or obtain promotions because of preferences given to minorities. These perceptions seem quite at odds with the findings of this chapter, findings which show only modest changes in race and ethnic stratification among male workers over the two decades from 1970 to 1990.

However, we show that the patterns of race and ethnic inequality are complex. Looking first at occupational attainment, black, American Indian, and Hispanic men suffer about a ten-point SEI occupational deficit relative to whites, while Asian American men are equal to or above white men in their occupational positions.

For the groups that are behind whites, the "problem" is primarily educational deficits. If black, American Indian, and Hispanic men had educational attainments equal to whites, the results here suggest that they would only experience modest occupational disadvantages. There would still be a five-point SEI deficit for black men, but this would be half of their current handicap. The reason for the higher occupational attainment of Asian American men is simply their educational level. If the Asian American men had the same education as white men, there would be only modest ethnic occupational differences.

Turning to differences in income, earnings inequality is a much deeper problem for racial and ethnic minorities in America. All minorities, with the exception of Japanese, earn less than whites. For blacks, American Indians, and Hispanics, the financial shortfall relative to whites is huge—about $10,000 per male worker for the period under study—and there has been little sign of progress. Chinese and Filipino men are also behind, but the gap is somewhat less.

These results—the persistence of race and ethnic differentials in late twentieth-century America—challenge conventional theories about the declining role of ascribed factors in the American stratification system. . . However, the economy of the latter half of the 1990s has been characterized by rising opportunity, with a record low unemployment rate. Will this reduce the kinds of persistent racial and ethnic inequalities we have documented for the 1970s and 1980s? Perhaps. Tight labor markets make it more costly for employers to make invidious distinctions among workers. But the slow pace of change during the 1970s and 1980s suggests that racial inequality is woven deeply into the fabric of American society.

Notes

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1. To present descriptive statistics, we selected a representative sample of whites and blacks in the public use files and included all PUMS observations of the smaller populations such as American Indians and Asian Americans.

Bibliography


Each year two highly publicized news reports capture the attention and imagination of Americans. One lists the year’s highest income earners. Predictably, they include glamorous and highly publicized entertainment, sport, and business personalities. For the past decade that list has included many African Americans: musical artists such as Michael Jackson, entertainers such as Bill Cosby and Oprah Winfrey, and sports figures such as Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson. During the recent past as many as half of the “top ten” in this highly exclusive rank have been African Americans.

Another highly publicized list, by contrast, documents the nation’s wealthiest Americans. The famous Forbes magazine profile of the nation’s wealthiest 400 focuses not on income, but on wealth. This list includes those people whose assets—or command over monetary resources—place them at the top of the American economic hierarchy. Even though this group is often ten times larger than the top earners list, it contains few if any African Americans. An examination of these two lists creates two very different perceptions of the well-being of America’s black community on the eve of the twenty-first century. The large number of blacks on the top income list generates an optimistic view of how black Americans have progressed economically in American society. The near absence of blacks in the Forbes listing, by contrast, presents a much more pessimistic outlook on blacks’ economic progress.

This chapter develops a perspective on racial inequality that is based on the analysis of private wealth. Just as a change in focus from income to wealth in the discussion above provides a different perspective on racial inequality, our analysis reveals deep patterns of racial imbalance not visible when

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This chapter's underlying goal is to establish a way to view racial inequality that will serve as a guide in securing racial equality in the twenty-first century. Racial equality is not an absolute or idealized state of affairs, because it cannot be perfectly attained. Yet the fact that it can never be perfectly attained in the real world is a wholly insufficient excuse for dismissing it as utopian or impossible. What is important are the bearings by which a nation chooses to orient its character. We can choose to let racial inequality fester and risk heightened conflict and violence. Americans can also make a different choice, a commitment to equality and to closing the gap as much as possible.

Notes


HERBERT J. GANS

The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the Twenty-first-century United States

Over the last decade, a number of social scientists writing on race and ethnicity have suggested that the country may be moving toward a new racial structure (Alba 1990; Sanjek 1994; Gitlin 1995). If current trends persist, today’s multiracial hierarchy could be replaced by what I think of as a dual or bimodal one consisting of “nonblack” and “black” population categories, with a third, “residual,” category for the groups that do not, or do not yet, fit into the basic dualism.¹

More important, this hierarchy may be based not just on color or other visible bodily features, but also on a distinction between undeserving and deserving, or stigmatized and respectable, races.² The hierarchy is new only insofar as the old white-nonwhite dichotomy may be replaced by a nonblack-black one, but it is hardly new for blacks, who are likely to remain at the bottom once again. I fear this hierarchy could develop even if more blacks achieve educational mobility, obtain professional and managerial jobs, and gain access to middle-class incomes, wealth, and other “perks.” Still, the hierarchy could also end, particularly if the black distribution of income and wealth resembles that of the then-

¹ Originally published in 1999. Please see complete source information beginning on page 891.
In the Southwest, Mexicans and other Hispanics remain at the socioeconomic bottom, although in California, they may be joined by the Hmong, Laotians, and other very poor Asians. And Native Americans still occupy the lowest socioeconomic stratum in the handful of mostly rural parts of the country where they now live, although tribes with gambling casinos may be able to effect some changes in that pattern.

Even though some of the new immigrants can by now be found just about everywhere in America, the Los Angeles and New York City areas not only remain the major immigrant arrival centers but also contain the most diverse populations. As a result, a number of the issues discussed in this paper will be played out there, even as they are barely noticeable in the many smaller American cities that may have attracted only a handful of the newcomers. Since these two cities are also the country’s prime creators of popular culture, however, their distinctive racial and ethnic characteristics will probably be diffused in subtle ways through the country as a whole.

Conclusion

Since no one can even guess much less model the many causal factors that will influence the future, the observations above are not intended to be read as a prediction but as an exercise in speculative analysis. The weakness of such an analysis is its empirical reliance on the extrapolation of too many current trends and the assumed persistence of too many current phenomena. The analysis becomes a justifiable exercise, however, because it aims only to speculate about what future “scenarios” are possible, and what variables might shape these.

Obviously, the observations about such a hierarchy are not meant to suggest that it is desirable. Indeed, I wrote the paper with the hope that if such a future threatens to become real, it can be prevented.

Notes

I am grateful for comments on earlier drafts of this paper from Margaret Chin, Jennifer Lee, an anonymous reviewer—and from my fellow authors in the volume *The Cultural Territories of Race: Black and White Boundaries*, edited by Michèle Lamont (Chicago and New York: University of Chicago Press and Russell Sage Foundation, 1999).

1. These categories are constructions, but they also contain populations experiencing all the pleasures and pains of being located in a hierarchy. And although I am often discussing constructions, I will forgo the practice of putting all racial, national, and related names and labels between quotes, except for unusual racial stereotypes.

2. The two races may not be called that openly, but ambiguous pejoratives have long been part of the American vocabulary, for example *underclass* now, and *pauper* a century earlier (Gans 1995). Since races are social constructions, their names will depend in large part on who does the naming—and whose names become dominant in the public vocabulary.

3. Puerto Ricans are still often described as immigrants, even though they have been American citizens for a long time and their move from the island to the mainland is a form of interstate mobility. Racial, class, and linguistic considerations have undoubtedly influenced this labeling.

The same dominant-race thinking led Irving Kristol and other neoconservatives to argue in the 1960s that blacks were similar enough to the white European immigrants to be able to adopt and act on immigrant values. They also assumed that blacks would then assimilate like immigrants, ignoring such facts as that blacks had originally come as slaves, not immigrants; had been here several centuries; and had not yet been allowed by whites to assimilate. Thirty years later, many whites ignore the same facts to propose the newest immigrants as role models for blacks.

4. Much less is said about black Hispanics, including Puerto Ricans, who suffer virtually all of the discriminatory and other injustices imposed on African-Americans.

5. Some highly placed whites are already worrying, for example in a *Time* cover story by William Henry III (1990), but then similar whites worried a century earlier what the then arriving Catholic and Jewish newcomers would do to their country. The current worries are as meaningless as the old ones, since they are based on extrapolations of current patterns of immigration, not to mention current constructions of (nonwhite) race and (Hispanic) ethnicity.

6. Hacker (1996) notes, for example, that the term “white trash” is no longer in common use. In-
indeed, for reasons worth studying, the more popular term of the moment is "trailer trash," which nonetheless seems to be applied solely to poor whites.

7. In this respect, the United States differs from many other countries in the Western hemisphere, where blacks who have managed to become affluent are treated, within limits, as whites.

8. Not only might they perceive it more angrily than I am here doing, but they might be angrier about it than about the present hierarchy, simply because it is new but no great improvement. One result could be their constructions of new racial identities for themselves that depart drastically from the ones future nonblacks consider reasonable.

9. Being far fewer than Asians in number, South Asians are nationally not very visible now. Moreover, for religious and other reasons, South Asian immigrants have so far often been able to discourage their children from intermarrying.

10. My observations on multiracial constructions and people have benefited from many conversations with Valli Rajah.

11. Between 1970 and 1994, the number of people in interracial marriages grew from 676,000 to more than three million (Fletcher 1997). In 1990, biracial children made up 4 percent of all children, increasing from half a million in 1970 to about two million that year. The largest number were Asian-white children, followed by Native American-white and African American-white ones (Harrison and Bennett 1995).

12. Some observers currently estimate that 70 percent of all Japanese and Japanese-Americans are intermarried, mostly with whites. Since they came to the United States as families long before 1965, this estimate may supply a clue about what will happen to second-, third-, and later-generation descendants of other Asian-American populations.

13. Presumably class position will affect how other descendants of old Southern mulatto and creole populations (Dominguez 1986) will be classified.

14. In the political debates over the racial categories to be used in the Year 2000 Census, vocal multiracials preferred to be counted as and with various people of color. African-Americans and other officially recognized racial groups also indicated their opposition to a multiracial category, being reluctant to reduce the power of their numbers or the federal benefits that now go to racial minorities (e.g., Holmes 1996).

15. Kohne (1996) reports that light-skinned biracial Columbia University students who identify as whites also apply for scholarships as blacks. But then, four decades earlier, I met Italian-Americans in Boston's West End who took Irish names in order to obtain jobs in Irish-dominated city hall.

16. The practice of quantifying racial bloods has a long history in Europe and the United States, thanks to both eugenics and slavery. Perhaps it will disappear when enough people have to start counting three or more races. However, people also still use blood fractions when they marry across religious boundaries, so that the notion of racial, ethnic, or religious "blood" is by no means obsolete.

17. They are also different, for "one and the same person may be considered white in the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico . . . 'colored' in Jamaica, Martinique, or Curacao . . . [and] a 'Negro' in Georgia" (Hoetink 1967, xii).

18. This account is based mainly on the data summarized in Fiola 1990 and Skidmore 1992, the classic analysis of the Brazilian racial system in Skidmore 1993, Adano's 1983 case study of race and class in Rio de Janeiro, and the sociopolitical analyses by Marx (1995, 1996). I am indebted to Anthony Marx for guiding me into the literature on Brazil, although there is still precious little social research, especially with current data, in English.

19. No one has so far paid much attention to who is constructed as exotic and why, except the multiracial people, mostly women, to whom it is applied. Some of them benefit because they are sought by industries that hire workers with exotic facial features; but women without these occupational interests resent such labeling because it turns them into sexual objects.

Industries that employ workers with exotic features, facial and otherwise, such as the fashion and entertainment industries, play an interesting, and probably unduly influential, role in the country's public racial construction.

References


enough that they face the problem of shifts in labor-market demand shared by all low-skilled workers; it is even worse that they confront negative employer perceptions about their work-related skills and attitudes.

For all these reasons, the passage of the 1996 welfare reform bill, which did not include a program of job creation, could have very negative social consequences in the inner city. Unless something is done to enhance the employment opportunities of inner-city welfare recipients who reach the time limit for the receipt of welfare, they will flood a pool already filled with low-skilled, jobless workers.

West Virginia, a state that has been plagued with a severe shortage of work opportunities, has provided community service jobs to recipients of welfare for several years. In Wisconsin, Governor Thompson’s welfare reform plan envisions community service jobs for many parents in the more depressed areas of the state, and the New Hope program in Milwaukee provides community service jobs for those unable to find employment in the private sector (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 1996). It is especially important that this mixed strategy include a plan to make adequate monies available to localities or communities with high jobless and welfare dependency rates.

Obviously, as more people become employed and gain work experience, they will have a better chance of finding jobs in the private sector when jobs become available. The attitudes of employers toward inner-city workers could change, in part because they would be dealing with job applicants who have steady work experience and who could furnish references from their previous supervisors. Children are more likely to be socialized in a work-oriented environment and to develop the job readiness skills that are seen as important even for entry-level jobs.

Thus, given the recent welfare reform legislation, adequate strategies to enhance the employment opportunities of inner-city residents should be contemplated, strategies that would be adequately financed and designed to address the employment problems of low-skilled workers not only in periods of tight labor markets, but, even more important, in periods when the labor market is slack.

Notes

1. The figures on adult employment are based on calculations from data provided by the 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census (1993) and the Local Community Fact Book for Chicago—1950 (1953) and the Local Community Fact Book for Chicago—1960 (1963). The adult employment rates represent the number of employed individuals (aged fourteen and older in 1950 and sixteen and older in 1990) among the total number of adults in a given area. Those who are not employed include both the individuals who are members of the labor force but are not working and those who have dropped out or are not part of the labor force.

2. See, for example, Bourgois (1995) and Venkatesh (1996).

3. The economist David Schwartzman defines “unskilled workers to include operators, fabricators, and laborers, and those in service occupations, including private household workers, those working in protective service occupations, food service, and cleaning and building service.” On the basis of this definition he estimates that 80 percent of all black workers and 38 percent of all white workers were unskilled in 1950. By 1990, 46 percent of black workers and 27 percent of white workers were employed in unskilled occupations (Schwartzman 1997).

Bibliography


American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass

It is quite simple. As soon as there is a group area then all your uncertainties are removed and that is, after all, the primary purpose of this Bill [requiring racial segregation in housing].

—Minister of the Interior, Union of South Africa legislative debate on the Group Areas Act of 1950

During the 1970s and 1980s a word disappeared from the American vocabulary. It was not in the speeches of politicians decrying the multiple ills besetting American cities. It was not spoken by government officials responsible for administering the nation’s social programs. It was not mentioned by journalists reporting on the rising tide of homelessness, drugs, and violence in urban America. It was not discussed by foundation executives and think-tank experts proposing new programs for unemployed parents and unwed mothers. It was not articulated by civil rights leaders speaking out against the persistence of racial inequality; and it was nowhere to be found in the thousands of pages written by social scientists on the urban underclass. The word was segregation.

Most Americans vaguely realize that urban America is still a residentially segregated society, but few appreciate the depth of black segregation or the degree to which it is maintained by ongoing institutional arrangements and contemporary individual
mulated in multiple Congressional hearings, government reports, and scholarly studies, little was done to repair the situation until 1988, when a series of scandals and political errors by the Reagan Administration finally enabled a significant strengthening of federal antidiscrimination law.

Yet even more must be done to prevent the permanent bifurcation of the United States into black and white societies that are separate and unequal. As of 1990, levels of racial segregation were still extraordinarily high in the nation's large urban areas, particularly those of the north. Segregation has remained high because fair housing enforcement relies too heavily on the private efforts of individual victims of discrimination. Whereas the processes that perpetuate segregation are entrenched and institutionalized, fair housing enforcement is individual, sporadic, and confined to a small number of isolated cases.

As long as the Fair Housing Act is enforced individually rather than systemically, it is unlikely to be effective in overcoming the structural arrangements that support segregation and sustain the ghetto. Until the government throws its considerable institutional weight behind efforts to dismantle the ghetto, racial segregation will persist...

Ultimately, however, dismantling the ghetto and ending the long reign of racial segregation will require more than specific bureaucratic reforms; it requires a moral commitment that white America has historically lacked. The segregation of American blacks was no historical accident; it was brought about by actions and practices that had the passive acceptance, if not the active support, of most whites in the United States. Although America's apartheid may not be rooted in the legal structures of its South African relative, it is no less effective in perpetuating racial inequality, and whites are no less culpable for the socioeconomic deprivation that results.

As in South Africa, residential segregation in the United States provides a firm basis for a broader system of racial injustice. The geographic isolation of Africans within a narrowly circumscribed portion of the urban environment—whether African townships or American ghettos—forces blacks to live under extraordinarily harsh conditions and to endure a social world where poverty is endemic, infrastructure is inadequate, education is lacking, families are fragmented, and crime and violence are rampant. Moreover, segregation confines these unpleasant by-products of racial oppression to an isolated portion of the urban geography far removed from the experience of most whites. Resting on a foundation of segregation, apartheid not only denies blacks their rights as citizens but forces them to bear the social costs of their own victimization.

Although Americans have been quick to criticize the apartheid system of South Africa, they have been reluctant to acknowledge the consequences of their own institutionalized system of racial separation. The topic of segregation has virtually disappeared from public policy debates; it has vanished from the list of issues on the civil rights agenda; and it has been ignored by social scientists spinning endless theories of the underclass. Residential segregation has become the forgotten factor of American race relations, a minor footnote in the ongoing debate on the urban underclass. Until policymakers, social scientists, and private citizens recognize the crucial role of America's own apartheid in perpetuating urban poverty and racial injustice, the United States will remain a deeply divided and very troubled society.

Notes


For an informative history of the evolution of the concept of the underclass, see Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York: Pantheon, 1989), pp. 185–235.


Ibid., pp. 49–62.

The subject indices of *Losing Ground* and *Beyond Entitlement* contain no references at all to residential segregation.

The subject index of *The Truly Disadvantaged* contains two references to pre–1960s Jim Crow segregation.

Again with the exception of Thomas Pettigrew and Gary Orfield.


The evidence on the extent of middle-class out-migration from ghetto areas is inconclusive. Because racial segregation does not decline with rising socioeconomic status, out-movement from poor black neighborhoods certainly has not been to white areas. When Kathryn P. Nelson measured rates of black out-migration from local "zones" within forty metropolitan areas, however, she found higher rates of out-movement for middle- and upper-class blacks compared with poor blacks; but her "zones" contained more than 100,000 inhabitants, making them considerably larger than neighborhoods (see "Racial Segregation, Mobility, and Poverty Concentration," paper presented at the annual meetings of the Population Association of America, Washington, D.C., March 19–23, 1991). In contrast, Edward Gramlich and Deborah Laren found that poor and middle-class blacks dis-
played about the same likelihood of out-migration from poor census tracts (see "Geographic Mobility and Persistent Poverty," Department of Economics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1990).

29. See Eggers and Massey, "A Longitudinal Analysis of Urban Poverty."


Notes


5. We might add, “outside the household.” Kautsky, Class Struggle, p. 26, our emphasis.


11. Carol Brown, in “Patriarchal Capitalism,” argues, for example, that we are moving from “family based” to “industrially-based” patriarchy within capitalism.


The third and final point is that the presence and strength of such contextual effects, including those pertaining to the family, are ultimately an empirical matter. It follows that the gender-class debate has neither been resolved (Wright forthcoming) nor superseded (Baxter and Western, forthcoming). If we are to make further progress, we need to rethink the debate as pertaining not so much to the "woman problem" as to the strength of contextual effects, especially those embedded in the family. The model that is presented in Figure 2 is perhaps a useful step in this direction.

**Notes**

1. For older reviews that are still useful, see Acker (1973), Crompton and Mann (1986), and Abbot and Sapsford (1987).

2. Needless to say, the idea that such families function as unitary consumption classes is highly suspect, given the well-established presence of gender inequality within families (e.g., see Hartmann 1981b; Curtis 1986).

3. The irony here is that Goldthorpe (1983) in fact denies that the Britten-Heath approach is a viable class model. This conclusion could only be reached because Goldthorpe appears to abandon his earlier premise that classes should be defined in terms of market and work situations.

4. The complex nature of these contextual effects is perhaps best illustrated by Goldthorpe's (1987) study of the subjective experiences of social mobility in Great Britain. In an illuminating analysis, he shows that individuals evaluate their occupational success or failure via quite various "yardsticks," including not merely the achievements of their fathers but also of coworkers and friends.

**References**


first detailed mapping of sex segregation within industrial and advanced industrial market economies.

The results from our mapping exercise reveal so much variability in patterns of microlevel segregation that we are naturally led to historicist and institutionalist accounts of the more radical variety (e.g., Scott 1986). Although a long tradition of case study scholarship has identified discrepant sex-typing among particular occupations (e.g., Lapidus 1985), it was unclear whether the cited idiosyncrasies were isolated examples or indicative of more pervasive variation. We can now suggest that the distinctive histories and institutions of countries live on in ways that fundamentally shape their segregation profiles. The imagery that emerges, then, is that of loosely coupled segregation systems cobbled together from many occupation-specific “solutions” to the exigencies of modern industrial production and competing segregative and egalitarian cultural mandates.

This is not to suggest that the model of complete variability (line 5, Table 1) is to be preferred. Although observed patterns of segregation are indeed cross-nationally variable and idiosyncratic, a deeper commonality is detectable once the more chaotic features of micro-level segregation are statistically removed. The resulting macro-level segregation curves are fundamentally hybrid in character; that is, the “sectoral principle” accounts for the disproportionate allocation of women into the service-based nonmanual sector, and the “gradational principle” accounts for the simultaneous channeling of women into the least desirable occupations within both the manual and nonmanual sectors (see Charles and Grusky forthcoming). The first principle is consistent with models suggesting a reproduction of domestic gender roles in the formal economy, and the second principle is consistent with queuing models of male advantage. These two principles operate to varying degrees in all societies and hence produce fundamental commonality in the underlying structure of segregation.

Notes

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1. This is not to suggest that segregation regimes evolve in strict isolation from one another. To the contrary, the gender labels that are characteristically attached to occupations may well diffuse across national borders, thus generating cross-national similarities in the discriminatory tastes of employers and the sex-typed aspirations of workers. The foregoing process is likely fueled by the proliferation of transnational business networks as well as the growing normative authority of international political and social organizations (e.g., United Nations, World Bank).

2. The marginal effects for this model are identified by constraining the parameters for the first row and column to equal 1 (in each country), and the sex-by-occupation interaction effects are identified by constraining the parameters in the first row and column to equal 1 (in each country).

3. The scale values for this model are identified by constraining them to sum to 0, and the marginal and shift effects are identified by constraining the parameters for the first row, column, or level to equal 1 (see Charles and Grusky 1995, 938–39).

4. We follow Charles and Grusky (1995, 945) in defining $A$ as $\exp(1/I \times \sum \beta_k^{1/2})$. The closed-form solution for $A$ is $\exp(1/I \times \Sigma \ln(F_i/M_{ik}) - [1/I \times \Sigma \ln(F_i/M_{ik})]^{1/2}$, where $M_{ik}$ and $F_i$ refer to the number of males and females in the $i$th occupation and $k$th country.
### APPENDIX

Recording Rules for Translating ISC0–88 into 64-Category Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>ISC0-88 Codes</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>ISC0-88 Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Manager (MA)</td>
<td>111, 112, 114,</td>
<td>F. Agric. &amp; Fishery (AG)</td>
<td>611–613, 921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>121–123, 131</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>614, 615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Professional (PR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td>211–213</td>
<td>G. Craft (CR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect &amp; Engineer</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>Miner &amp; Cutter</td>
<td>711, 712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Science</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>Building Finisher</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>Painter &amp; Related</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>Metal Moulder &amp; Related</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Teacher</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>Blacksmith &amp; Related</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Teacher</td>
<td>234, 235</td>
<td>Machinery Mechanic</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Professional</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>Electrical Mechanic</td>
<td>724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer &amp; Related</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>Metal Precision</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science &amp; Related</td>
<td>243–245, 247</td>
<td>Handicraft</td>
<td>732, 733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Professional</td>
<td>246, 348</td>
<td>Printing &amp; Related</td>
<td>734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Associate Prof. (AP)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Food Processing</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td>311, 312</td>
<td>Cabinet-Maker</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspector &amp; Related</td>
<td>313–315</td>
<td>Textile &amp; Garment</td>
<td>743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Science &amp; Health</td>
<td>321, 322</td>
<td>Pelt, Leather, &amp; Shoe</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing &amp; Midwife</td>
<td>223, 232</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teacher</td>
<td>233, 331, 332</td>
<td>H. Operative (OP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Teacher</td>
<td>333, 334</td>
<td>Wood Processing</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Sales</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>Other Stationary-Plant</td>
<td>811–813, 815–817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent &amp; Broker</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>Metal &amp; Mineral</td>
<td>821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin. &amp; Social Work</td>
<td>343, 346</td>
<td>Chemical &amp; Related</td>
<td>822, 823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Tax, &amp; Related</td>
<td>344, 345</td>
<td>Wood Product Operative</td>
<td>824, 825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art, Entertaining, &amp; Sport</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>Textile &amp; Related</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Clerical (CL)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Food &amp; Related</td>
<td>827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Clerk</td>
<td>411, 412, 414, 419</td>
<td>Assembler</td>
<td>828, 829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material-recording</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>Locomotive</td>
<td>831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashier &amp; Teller</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>Motor Vehicle</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Information</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>Mobile Plant Operator</td>
<td>833, 834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Service &amp; Sales (SS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Laborer (LA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Attendant</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>Vendor &amp; Domestic</td>
<td>911–914, 916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping &amp; Related</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>Messenger &amp; Related</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care &amp; Related</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>Mining &amp; Construction</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Personal Service</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>Manufacturing &amp; Related</td>
<td>932, 933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Service</td>
<td>516</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesperson &amp; Related</td>
<td>521, 522</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. The micro-level scale values \(v_k\) can be identified by constraining them to sum to 0 within each major occupational category, and the macro-level scale values \(\phi_k\) can be identified by constraining them to sum to 0 within each country.

6. These errors in coding, classification, and aggregation are addressed elsewhere in more detail (Charles and Grusky forthcoming).

7. The \(L^2\) value for this model is 1,517,231 (with 558 df) and the index of dissimilarity (\(\Delta\)) is 5.1.

8. In all of our figures, positive scale values indicate female overrepresentation, and negative scale values indicate male overrepresentation.

9. These graphs do of course reveal some macro-level variability that is consistent with the arguments of Chang (2000), Charles (1998; 1992), Brinton (1988), and others.

References


The Structure and Process of Sex Segregation

My work seeks to understand the persistence of occupational segregation by sex and the sex gap in earnings. Neoclassical economists, of course, have an elegant, coherent theory of the sources of both occupational segregation by sex and earnings differentials: they come from the rational, utility-maximizing behavior of men and women within households and labor markets.

Sociologists view the situation differently. Indeed, depending on whom you ask, a sociologist might offer any of a number of explanations for sex differences in labor-market outcomes. Social psychologists would stress sex-role socialization. Feminist scholars would emphasize the "patriarchal" interests of male employers and workers. Marxists would tell a story about capitalists creating divisions in the work force in order to control labor and boost profits. Organizational theorists might talk about the unintended consequences of bureaucratic rules and procedures. Not surprisingly, sociologists from different camps often talk past one another.

However, sociologists are increasingly taking the work of neoclassical economists seri-
Yet the examples I have cited suggest that culture and ideology might have considerable explanatory power in more fully accounting for both persistence and change in job segregation and other forms of discrimination. At least at a descriptive level, sociocultural factors are impossible to ignore in any close empirical investigation of these phenomena. However, it is quite clear that we have a long way to go before such factors are fully incorporated into our theoretical and analytical models of discrimination.

References


This chapter is an effort to understand why women do "women's work." In 1985, over two-thirds of the women in the U.S. civilian labor force worked in occupations that were 70 percent or more female. The study of women's work has attracted scholars from many disciplines, from psychology (Gutek, 1985) to history (Kessler-Harris, 1982) to anthropology (Sanday, 1981) to economics (Bergmann, 1986) to sociology (Reskin, 1984). A flurry of recent papers has addressed such topics as trends in occupational segregation (Bianchi and Rytina, 1986; Jacobs, 1986), sex segregation among teenagers in the workplace (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1983), and sex segregation within voluntary organizations (McPherson and Smith-Lovin, 1986), between industries (Tienda, Smith, and Ortiz, 1987), across cities (Abrahamson and Sigelman, 1987), and within firms (Bielby and Baron, 1986). (See Reskin and Hartmann, 1985, for discussion of sex segregation in the workplace.)

This interest has undoubtedly been spurred by the growth in women's labor force participation (Goldin, 1983; Smith and Ward, 1984). Over 70 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 44 worked for pay in 1985, including nearly half of those with chil-

Originally published in 1989. Please see complete source information beginning on page 891.
this view as the "revolving door" model of sex segregation. The revolving door perspective can account for extensive sex-type mobility because it recognizes a variety of stages in the career development process, and it recognizes a host of pressures women face. Most women will face one or more barriers to the pursuit of a career at some point; they are likely to overcome some of these and not others. Thus there are reasons to expect substantial flows of women into and out of male-dominated occupations, while overall the system changes only gradually.

This perspective also accounts for the patterns of change in sex segregation we are beginning to see. If social control is exercised throughout life, social change is likely to be experienced by women of different ages. Change should affect those already in the labor force as well as those entering it and those in the educational system. Theories that emphasize labor market entry as the decisive time for segregation cannot account for decreasing segregation among those already in the labor force. As shown elsewhere (Jacobs 1989, chapter 2), the declines in labor market segregation by sex in the 1970's occurred throughout the age structure and were not simply restricted to labor market entrants.

There is a striking similarity in the dynamics of sex segregation in the development of aspirations, in the segregation of college majors, and in the sex segregation of the occupational structure. All three are characterized by change occurring among different age groups, and all three have striking levels of mobility between male-dominated, sex-neutral, and female-dominated fields. The similarities of these patterns in these diverse contexts and across different stages of life convince us of the utility of the social control/revolving door perspective.

Notes


Bibliography


Labor Markets as Queues: A Structural Approach to Changing Occupational Sex Composition

The historic persistence of sex segregation (Gross 1968; Beller 1984) made women's dramatic gains during the 1970s in such diverse male occupations as pharmacy, bank management, bartending, and typesetting noteworthy. Why did women disproportionately enter these and a few other male occupations when they made only modest progress in most and lost ground in a few? To answer this question, Patricia Roos and I conducted a two-part study: multivariate analyses of the changing sex composition in all detailed census occupations and in-depth case studies of 14 occupations in which women's representation increased at least twice as much as it had in the labor force as a whole (see Table 1). This chapter draws on those case studies: bank managers (Bird 1990), bartenders (Detman 1990), systems analysts (Donato 1990a), public relations specialists (Donato 1990b), pharmacists (Phipps 1990a), insurance adjusters/examiners (Phipps 1990b), typesetters/compositors (Roos 1990), insurance salespersons (Thomas 1990), real estate salespersons (Thomas and Reskin 1990), bakers (Steiger and Reskin 1990), book editors (Reskin and Roos 1990), print and broadcast reporters, and accountants. Although the case studies revealed that widely different factors precipitated these occupations' feminization, the process of change can be encompassed in a single perspective—queuing. This chapter begins by outlining the queuing approach. It then shows how the determinants of occupational feminization conformed to queuing processes. Finally, it argues that the queue model as I have developed it offers a structural approach to understanding change in job composition.

Queuing: an Overview

Simply stated, a queuing perspective views labor markets as composed of labor queues and job queues that reflect, respectively, employers' ranking of possible workers and workers'
work process to incorporate female-labeled tasks, employers could disguise the fact that they were filling what had been men's jobs with women (Davies 1975, p. 282; Rotella 1977, pp. 162, 165) and recast them as women's work. For instance, after transforming the work of adjusters, industry trade journals construed the ideal insurance adjuster as a woman.\(^8\)

However, men did effectively resist women's employment in the most desirable specialties within desegregating occupations, such as production baking, commercial real estate, and industrial pharmacy—partly by informal pressures that discouraged women's entry. I suspect, however, that women's continued exclusion depended more on employer discrimination in job assignment and promotion practices than on male workers' actions.

**Conclusions**

In summary, the queuing model proposed here holds that (a) employers rank prospective workers in terms of their potential productivity as well as their personal characteristics, but that they are also influenced by current employees and others who can impose costs for hiring or failing to hire women; (b) shortages—whether from job growth or from a job's inability to attract enough customary workers—prompt employers to hire workers from lower in the labor queue; (c) male workers affect women's access to jobs through their ability to preempt jobs, their power to enforce their monopoly over desirable jobs, and their ability, in abandoning jobs, to bestow them on workers lower in the labor queue; and (d) women's search for better jobs leads them to individually and collectively challenge their exclusion from men's jobs and to move into male lines of work that become open. The case study data support these predictions. I caution readers that our selection of case studies of occupations in which women's gains were exceptionally large limits the generalizability of these findings. However, most occupations included specialties or work settings that had feminized at varying rates, so the case studies provide variation on the dependent variable. Nonetheless, the bases for women's movement into occupations not marked by rapid feminization may have differed. Patricia Roos and I addressed this question in statistical analyses of all 503 detailed occupations (Reskin and Roos 1985).

The case studies support two empirical generalizations both of which are consistent with the operation of queuing processes. First, in most of the occupations we studied, after they had become less attractive to men, employers hired disproportionate numbers of women. Second, within these nominally desegregating occupations, women tended to be relegated to female enclaves, while men retained the most desirable jobs.\(^9\) These findings confirm Bielby and Baron's (1986) contention that greater balance in the sex composition of occupations does not necessarily imply decreased segregation of jobs and also establish the fallacy of inferring declines in sex segregation from occupational-level data. Yet social analysts cannot ignore such data, because policymakers and the media use them to assess change, and, as W. I. Thomas said, situations men define as real are real in their consequences. Exaggerated conclusions about women's progress in male occupations support claims that governmental agencies no longer need to intervene in the workplace to ensure equal treatment. Thus it is incumbent on researchers to determine whether or not the trends that superficial comparisons imply are genuine.

**Notes**

I am grateful to Ross Boylan, Lowell L. Hargens, Heidi Hartmann, and Patricia A. Roos for their comments on earlier drafts of this chapter and to James N. Baron and Ronnie Steinberg for helpful discussions of the issues it addresses. The larger study that gave rise to the ideas in this chapter is a collaborative project with Patricia A. Roos. The case studies on which this chapter is based appears

1. I conducted the last two unpublished studies. Unless otherwise noted, assertions about these occupations are based on the case studies whose full citations are in the references. For a description of the case study method, see Reskin and Roos (1990).

2. This analysis takes for granted the existence of multiple labor markets, each composed of a labor queue of potential workers and a job queue of available jobs.

3. Incumbent workers can affect the ordering of the labor queue, for example, through seniority rules that restrict employers’ hiring prerogatives.

4. Of course, through labor queues, “supply-side” factors influenced which of the almost 45 million women in the labor force in 1980 moved into formerly male jobs that had become more open to women during the 1970s and which ones were consigned to female occupations.

5. This should be especially common among bosses who share a similar background with male workers, previously held the jobs in question, and currently work with or remain friendly with their former coworkers. Two examples are blue-collar supervisors or sales managers.

6. Unless it is backed by threats from regulatory agencies, pressure from women rarely suffices to persuade employers to assign women to male jobs, partly because it elicits opposition from male workers.

7. Employers can rarely forestall resistance by feminizing entire work teams. Seniority rules may prevent their replacing men, they may doubt whether enough qualified women are available, and they may be unable to train women because male unions control training or because training is too long and expensive.

8. Kessler-Harris (1986) and Strober and Arnold (1987) also recounted how banks exploited sex stereotypes to justify hiring women for banking jobs as well as to exclude them from the same jobs.

9. For further evidence on this point, see Chapter 3 in Reskin and Roos (1990).

References


Labor Markets as Queues


The raw wage gap obtains as 100 minus the number in (1). The percentage of the raw wage gap due to occupational segregation alone is given by

$$\% \omega_{o,r} = \frac{\omega_{o,r} - \omega_{r,r}}{100 - \omega_{r,r}} \times 100. \tag{5}$$

The percentage of the raw wage gap due to establishment segregation alone is given by

$$\% \omega_{e,r} = \frac{\omega_{e,r} - \omega_{r,r}}{100 - \omega_{r,r}} \times 100. \tag{6}$$

The percentage of the raw wage gap due to occupation-establishment segregation alone is given by

$$\% \omega_{o,e,r} = \frac{\omega_{o,e,r} - \omega_{r,r}}{100 - \omega_{r,r}} \times 100. \tag{7}$$

Notes

The article is a version of Petersen and Morgan (1995) that was excerpted and partially rewritten for this volume by Petersen and Morgan with the help of David Grusky.

1. Unfortunately, we cannot compare wages across industries, because the industry data come from different years and hence reflect inflation as well as general wage increases.

2. Although Groshen (1991) and Tomaskovic-Devey (1993) report similar results on wage differences, neither author reported the wage gap at the occupation-establishment level.

3. Similar results are shown in Petersen et al. (1997) for Norway in 1984 and 1990.

References


Conclusions

We have proposed a new theoretical approach to the analysis of micro-level processes that produce gender differences in wages. We have argued that because a wage structure has evolved over time that is linked to well-defined systems of jobs and firms, it is important to distinguish between macro-level processes that have produced and continue to produce associations between occupational and industrial sectors and wages and micro-level processes that match individuals to jobs within an existing structure of jobs and associated wages at the time individuals enter the labor market. We identified five explanatory mechanisms operating at the micro level by which women and men can be sorted into different positions in the labor market that offer different levels of reward. We applied this framework to the analysis of gender differences in wages at career entry when women's wages are, on average, 84 percent of men's. Using better measures of job-related skills and credentials than have been used in most previous analyses, and including measures of family structure and detailed measures of work and family aspirations, we found that explanatory mechanisms focusing on the characteristics of workers explained only 30 percent of the gender difference in wages at career entry. Of three categories of worker characteristics studied, gender differences in aspirations were the most important in accounting for the gender wage gap, and gender differences in job-related skills and credentials were almost as important. Gender differences in family structure had no significant direct effect when the effects of worker qualifications and aspirations were considered.

Much of the wage gap between women and men that was not attributable to gender differences in worker characteristics was linked to occupational and industrial placement at career entry. This association suggests that extra-individual influences play an important role in wage determination at career entry. These influences include the allocation of women and men to different jobs by employers, and informal processes of social contact and interaction via networks that provide access to job-related information and influence. Because the labor market is highly segregated by sex and this segregation is linked to wage differences, social influences external to the worker channel the two sexes into different entry-level jobs to which different wage rates are attached: Women are channeled into female-type jobs and men are channeled into male-type jobs. Our analysis indicates that even when the effects of worker qualifications and choices on job placement are effectively controlled by detailed measures, gender differences in job placement bear a strong and significant relationship to gender differences in wages. These findings on the micro-level processes that match individuals to jobs indicate (1) that the association between the sex composition of a job and its wage rate within the organizational structure of the labor market is perpetuated to some degree by micro-level processes that produce gender differences in the aspirations and qualifications with which workers enter the labor market, but (2) that this association is perpetuated even more by micro-level processes that operate at the point of career entry to channel women and men with the same aspirations and qualifications into different, sex-typed jobs.

Notes

An early version of this paper was presented at the World Congress of Sociology, Bielefeld, Germany, July 1994. Our work was supported by Grant R01-HD27598 from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and by funding from the College of Liberal Arts and the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota. We gratefully acknowledge the comments of the former ASR Editor (Paula England) and Robert M. Hauser, and the assistance of Velda Graham and Lisa Nguyen in typing the paper. Opinions expressed in the paper are ours and not necessarily those of the individuals who generously provided us with comments.
1. Our use of the term "human capital" refers broadly to individual characteristics that have a value in the labor market because of their actual or assumed effect on performance. We use the terms "human capital" and "skills and credentials" interchangeably.

2. To obtain a sample representative of the non-institutionalized civilian population of the United States in the sampled age cohorts, we excluded NLSY respondents in the oversamples of Blacks, Hispanics, and poor Whites.

3. Because responses to the Rosenberg Scale were measured on an ordinal scale, we assumed that each ordinal variable represented a latent continuous variable that was distributed normally with a mean of 0 and a variance of 1. We used PRELIS II, a preprocessor for LISREL, to compute the normal scores and estimate a matrix of polychoric correlations and an accompanying matrix of asymptotic variances and covariances. The polychoric correlations are estimates of the correlations between latent variables calculated from the observed pairwise contingency tables of the ordinal variables. The latent variables were assumed to have a bivariate normal distribution. With these matrices as input, we estimated a measurement model using the weighted least-squares fitting function in LISREL 8.

4. The analysis was done using the special tabulation that Charles B. Nam and Mary G. Powers made for the 1970 census, which we obtained from Robert M. Hauser and John Robert Warren. We also performed the analysis by calculating the natural log of the median annual earnings of all workers in the occupation in 1969 using published data from the 1970 census (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973b). The results of this analysis were virtually identical to the results of the analysis based on the earnings of workers ages 18 to 34. To approximate the median hourly wage rate, we also tried dividing the median annual earnings of all workers by the product of the mean number of hours worked per week and the mean number of weeks worked per year. This measure of the median hourly wage rate of workers in the occupation did not perform as well as the measures of median annual earnings. Data on median annual earnings from the 1980 census would have provided a measure taken somewhat closer in time to the period when respondents in the NLSY sample first entered the full-time civilian labor force. However, we did not consider it necessary to use data from the 1980 rather than the 1970 census because differences in earnings across occupations (and industries) have been quite stable over time (Duncan 1968; Sobek 1996).

5. The six statements used to measure gender-role attitudes were: (1) A woman's place is in the home, not in the office or shop; (2) A wife who carries out her full family responsibilities doesn't have time for outside employment; (3) The employment of wives leads to more juvenile delinquency; (4) It is much better for everyone concerned if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family; (5) Men should share the work around the house with women, such as doing dishes, cleaning, and so forth; (6) Women are much happier if they stay at home and take care of their family.

6. Of the gender differences in human capital examined, the gender difference in part-time work experience has the greatest effect, accounting for 8.8 percent of the wage gap. Gender differences in the amount and type of education have the next largest effect, but account for only 2.8 percent of the wage gap. Gender differences in the other measures of human capital have more negligible effects.

References


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Earnings Differences between the Races and Sexes." *Journal of Human Resources* 14:3-20.


Notes

1. This research was supported by grants from the National Science Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation to Paula England and George Farkas. We thank Mark Hayward for providing machine-readable data from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles for 1960 categories. The data were assembled by Thomas Daymont and Ronald D’Amico.

2. Echols (1983) and Alcoff (1988) use the term “cultural feminism” to refer to feminism that revalorizes traditionally female activities that have been devalued because of sexism and sees women’s nurturing as innate or essential to being a woman. We include the former valuation but not the latter essentialism in our definition of cultural feminism.

3. Without correction, $t$ statistics from the model in equation (3) would be inflated because degrees of freedom are not reduced to take account of the implicit variables for persons and time periods. To correct for this, we multiplied standard errors by $\sqrt{NT - K} / \sqrt{NT - N - T - K + 1}$ (where $N$ is the number of individuals, $T = 12$, the number of time periods, and $K$ is the number of independent variables in the model).

4. This is true only for small changes in the independent variable. This is because of an analogue to compound interest and is particularly acute with dummy variables. However, for the coefficients here, making a correction (Halvorsen and Palmquist 1980) changes the results little and thus is not reported.

5. NLS data code respondents’ occupation in 1960 census categories. We merged the percentage female in 1970 categories in each 1960 category onto the file from documentation in the codebook for the National Longitudinal Survey of Mature Women.

6. NLS data provide no measure of employment experience prior to a year before the survey. However, given our fixed-effects model, any additive effects of unmeasured prior experience are controlled. Our model includes experience since one year before the first survey wave. In each wave, respondents were asked how many weeks they were employed in the prior year. We added these entries to compute work experience accumulated by any given year. For the years in which no survey was conducted (1974 and 1979 for women and 1972, 1974, 1977, and 1979 for men), we averaged the experience reported for the preceding year and the following years and used this average as an estimate for the missing year. We have not included the square of years of experience to capture diminishing returns to experience in the later life cycle because of the youth of our sample.

7. This is undoubtedly an overestimate of education’s role in the sex gap in pay. The fixed-effects model captures the returns to education obtained after the first full-time job. They are about double those found in most other studies, which suggests that returns to “adult” schooling are greater than returns to earlier schooling. However, the decomposition takes the mean differences between men and women for education obtained at any time and multiplies them by education coefficients that pertain only to postjob education. This is an unfortunate side effect of fixed-effects modeling, but one we think is outweighed by the other benefits of such modeling.

8. England (1992) finds evidence of compensating differentials, but only on nonphysical (dis)amenities, and they make no contribution to the sex gap in pay.

References


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Why Do Female Occupations Pay Less?

Background

For the past two decades, scholars of gender inequality in the labor market have sought to understand why occupations with more female workers tend to pay less. This question addresses a robust finding about occupational sex composition and wages: studies based on different samples, units of analysis, and statistical techniques almost always find significant wage effects of occupational sex composition even after accounting for a wide range of personal attributes and occupational characteristics. The evidence of lower wages in “female occupations” (i.e., occupations that are disproportionately female) may reflect subtle gender discrimination. Instead of wage discrimination against female workers, gender discrimination may take the form of wage discrimination against female work.

The finding of persistent wage effects of occupational sex composition is socially important because it offers crucial support for comparable worth policies. The comparable...
sis. Occupational sex composition is just a handy proxy for unobserved specialized human capital investment. In a related article (Tam 2000), I have further demonstrated that even seemingly supportive findings for the devaluation hypothesis can be accurately predicted (i.e., numerically reproduced) under the specialized human capital hypothesis by assuming a modest level of measurement errors. In sum, the accumulated evidence to date is remarkably strong for the specialized human capital hypothesis.

**Positional Capital and Allocative Inequality**

Jobs are highly differentiated, interconnected, and form a social structure. Some jobs are more conducive to further opportunities for specialized training, and only certain jobs will generate returns to the specialized skills of a worker. Not surprisingly, jobs are often the focus of career investment, just as human capital is. The capital value of a job is high if it provides the necessary gateway to the accumulation of specialized human capital or the unique promotion path to other jobs that can make the most use of the skills of a worker. The “positional capital” of a worker is made up of the worker’s portfolio of ever-occupied jobs that can provide long-term returns in addition to income (Tam 1998). To the extent that male and female occupations offer different positional capital, any discriminatory job allocation by sex could have profound long-term impacts on women’s labor market outcomes even in the absence of devaluation of female occupations.

**Notes**

This essay draws on analyses and arguments that are presented in more detail elsewhere (Tam 1997, 2000). The research presented here was supported by Academia Sinica through the Organization-Centered Society Project and the Institute of European and American Studies.

1. For instance, it is poorly understood that market prices are not determined by the preferences of the average or majority of buyers and sellers, but set at the margin by the final set of exchanges that align supply and demand. The result is that discriminatory intentions, attitudes, and behavior can be pervasive while market wages remain competitive (nondiscriminatory) under a wide variety of scenarios.

2. As Tam (1997) has further demonstrated, these results are reinforced by the fact that there is a large wage advantage, instead of disadvantage, for female occupations among women working part-time. Also, see Tam (1997) for a discussion of various fallback defenses of the devaluation hypothesis, all of which can be shown to be untenable.

**References**


Understanding Ascriptive Stratification

physical features, or biological origins or in some other fashion such that it is a "fair" outcome. Likewise, all claims about a group's current characteristics are not automatically denied such that the only emphasis is on reform of either the larger social structure and/or on the dispositions of groups enjoying ascriptive advantages at the time.

This means, then, that caution is needed to avoid drawing premature conclusions without sufficient evidence simply because they fit into various polemical positions. The fact is that major macrosocietal questions about gender and ethnic-racial stratification are presently unresolved. This is itself not inherently worrisome; uncertainty and incomplete knowledge are common to any scientific endeavor. What is important, however, is to recognize existing limitations, turning them into research problems rather than claiming more knowledge than is justifiable now.

Consider, by way of illustration, some of the current theorizing on the effects of capitalism on ethnic or gender oppression; these types of macrosocietal effects are often assumed to be present when, in fact, much more rigorous investigation is called for. Although Marxists and others often observe the presence of severe ascriptive stratification in many capitalist societies, this observation, which is unquestionably true, does not itself imply that capitalism is a simple explanation of oppressive ethnic or gender relations. To focus only on stratification in capitalist societies is to execute a logical error. In other words, in order to determine if $X_1$ causes $Y$ more often (or increases the severity of $Y$) than does $X_2$, it is insufficient to look only at $Y$ when $X_1$ is present. Rather, we must compare the levels of $Y$ in the two conditions, $X_1$ and $X_2$. Similarly, to gauge the influence of one type of political economy on gender or ethnic-racial stratification, one must also compare stratification found in other economic settings. The logic of this is, I would hope, fairly obvious. The reader is well-advised, however, to keep it in mind when the influence of capitalism on ascriptive stratification is asserted without presentation of rigorous comparative data. It is one issue to decide if such ascription is present in capitalist countries; it is another to conclude that capitalism per se causes such forms of stratification. If the latter is true, then one should find lower levels in other types of societies. And this is an empirical question.

The cautions discussed in this last section are familiar to those espousing a rigorous social science that attempts to minimize the impact of personal values on the evaluation of theories and research. However, since one's personal feelings are sometimes at odds with one's intellectual perspective, with the latter overpowering the former, it is important that the reader keep in mind the especially strong tension that can exist between the two spheres in the analysis of ascriptive stratification.

Notes

1. Henceforth in this essay the terms ethnic and ethnic-racial are used interchangeably in referring to both racial and ethnic forms.
2. Some of these issues may come and go as fashionable research topics. For example, race riots were a central concern during and immediately after each world war and again in the late 1960s.
3. This premise ignores inequities that can occur for someone who is exceptional and would fare quite favorably at a wide range of ages. Conversely, a highly incompetent person may gain more from the period when age protects him or her than is lost at the disadvantaged age. This is an individual problem—not trivial, to be sure—but not a problem intrinsic to one birth cohort versus another.
4. To be sure, there are some members of the subordinated group who occupy advantageous positions because of their group's situation, but they are inevitably a relatively small number.
5. However, it is now at least possible for women to maintain a society indefinitely through the use of sperm banks and the elimination of male babies.
6. Acts can have unintended consequences, and even social policies developed with a specific group in mind can have unforeseen side effects.
7. This would occur even if members of the organization tend to share other concerns and dispositions regarding events of no consequence to the issue of gun control.
References

Industrialism and Industrial Man

and cultural aspects of life should be quite diverse and quite changing.

The world will be for the first time a totally literate world. It will be an organization society, but it need not be peopled by "organization men" whose total lives are ruled by their occupational roles.

The areas closest to technology will be the most conformist; those farthest from the requirements of its service, the most free. The rule of technology need not, as Marx thought it would, reach into every corner of society. In fact, there may come a new emphasis on diversity, on the preservation of national and group traits that runs quite counter to the predictions of uniform mass consumption. The new slavery to technology may bring a new dedication to diversity and individuality. This is the two-sided face of pluralistic industrialism that makes it forever a split personality looking in two directions at the same time. The new slavery and the new freedom go hand in hand.

Utopia never arrives, but men may well settle for the benefits of a greater scope for freedom in their personal lives at the cost of considerable conformity in their working lives. If pluralistic industrialism can be said to have a split personality, then the individual in this society will lead a split life too; he will be a pluralistic individual with more than one pattern of behavior and one dominant allegiance.

Social systems will be reasonably uniform around the world as compared with today's situation; but there may be substantial diversity within geographical and cultural areas as men and groups seek to establish and maintain their identity. The differences will be between and among individuals and groups and subcultures rather than primarily between and among the major geographical areas of the world. Society at large may become more like the great metropolitan complexes of Paris or London or New York or Tokyo, urbanized and committed to the industrial way of life, but marked by infinite variety in its details.

Pluralistic industrialism will never reach a final equilibrium. The contest between the forces for uniformity and for diversity will give it life and movement and change. This is a contest which will never reach an ultimate solution. Manager and managed also will struggle all up and down the line of hierarchies all around the world; quiet but often desperate little battles will be fought all over the social landscape.

The uniformity that draws on technology, and the diversity that draws on individuality; the authority that stems from the managers, and the rebellion, however muted, that stems from the managed—these are destined to be the everlasting threads of the future. They will continue in force when class war, and the contest over private versus public initiative, and the battle between the monistic and atomistic ideologies all have been left far behind in the sedimentary layers of history.

Notes


3. The 32 labor grades in the basic steel industry and the many thousands of jobs described and rated in the manual in use in the United States are eloquent testimony to the way in which an industrial work force is structured. While the details of the ordering vary among countries, the steel industry of all countries reflects a highly differentiated and ordered work force. See Jack Stieber, The Steel Industry Wage Structure (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1959). Compare American Iron and Steel Institute, Steel in the Soviet Union (New York: 1959), pp. 287-376.


5. If industrializing countries are arrayed in groups according to product per capita, the proportion of the labor force in agriculture and related industries varies from 61.2 per cent in the least developed group to 14.4 per cent in the group with...


9. In the good society which Marx believed to be the final and inevitable result of the dialectical process, there would no longer be a division of society into economic classes. Since he held the state to be merely an instrument of class coercion, with the disappearance of classes, there would follow a concomitant “withering away” of the state. “The society that is to reorganize production on the basis of free and equal association of the producers, will transfer the machinery of state where it will then belong—into the Museum of Antiquities by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze age.” F. Engels, *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, p. 211.

10. Daniel Bell, *Work and Its Discontents* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956). “Although religion declined, the significance of work was that it could still mobilize emotional energies into creative challenges” (p. 56).

covery of the "realists" of American political science—consisted largely of economic bargaining between functional or pressure groups operating outside the formal structure of the party system. What we now find are ethnic and ascriptive groups claiming formal representation both in the formal political structure and in all other institutions of the society as well.

These claims are legitimated, further, by the fact that America has been a pluralist society, or has come to accept a new definition of pluralism rather than the homogeneity of Americanism. Pluralism, in its classic conceptions, made a claim for the continuing cultural identity of ethnic and religious groups and for the institutional autonomy of cultural institutions (e.g., universities) from politics. Pluralism was based on the separation of realms. But what we have today is a thoroughgoing politicizing of society in which not only the market is subordinated to political decision but all institutions have to bend to the demands of a political center and politicize themselves in group representational terms. Here, too, there has been another change. In functional group politics, membership was not fixed, and one could find cross-cutting allegiances or shifting coalitions. Today the groups that claim representation—in the political parties, in the universities, in the hospitals and the community—are formed by primordial or biological ties, and one cannot erase the ascriptive nature of sex or color.

And yet, once one accepts the principle of redress and representation of the disadvantaged in the group terms that were initially formulated, it is difficult for the polity to deny those later claims. That is the logic of democracy which has always been present in the ambiguous legacy of the principle of equality.

2. What is striking is that in the communist world, it is quite clear that situses play the major role in politics. One analyzes the play of power, not in class terms, but on the basis of the rivalries among the party, the military, the planning ministries, the industrial enterprises, the collective farms, the cultural institutions—all of which are situses.


4. The suggestion of four estates is derived, of course, from Don K. Price's fruitful book The Scientific Estate (Cambridge, Mass., 1965). Price defines four functions in government—the scientific, professional, administrative, and political—and converts each function, as an ideal type, into an estate. My differences with Price are twofold: I think the estates can be represented more accurately as social groups, rather than functions; more importantly, I do not consider the political function coeval logically with the others, for I see the political as the control system of the entire societal structure. Terminologically, I have substituted the word "technological" (for the applied skills) where Price uses "professional," since I would reserve "professional" for the larger meaning of the entire class, and I have added a cultural estate, where Price has none. Nonetheless, my indebtedness to Price is great.

5. One might note that the more extreme forms of the "new consciousness" such as Theodore Roszak's The Making of a Counter-Culture and Charles Reich's The Greening of America manifest a distinct hostility not only to science, but to science as well.

6. The limitation of this analysis is that while the post-industrial society, in its societal structure, increasingly becomes a functional society, the political order is not organized in functional terms. Thus the continuing existence of the traditional geographical districts and the dispersal of persons in this fashion means that the political issues at any one time are much more diffuse than the interests of the particular statuses or situses. It would also indicate that the situses would, like the pressure groups, operate primarily through the lobbying of the legislative and executive branches, rather than work directly through the electoral process. Reality complicates immeasurably any ideal-type schemas.

7. Paradoxically, the growth of that society came about only after the self-contained economic life of the commune—its roots—was broken by the rise of larger-scale industry which, in branching out, could buy its raw materials in one town and sell in another, and which made its way, against both the older feudal society and the regulative restrictions
of the commune, in alliance with the monarchical centralization of the newly emerging national state.


10. A theoretician of the Technicians party, Professor Eagle, had argued that marriage partners, in the national interest, should consult the intelligence register, for a high-IQ man who mates with a low-IQ woman is wasting his genes. The activist women, on the other hand, took romance as their banner and beauty as their flag, arguing that marriage should be based on attraction. Their favorite slogan was "Beauty is achievable by all."

11. Gary S. Becker, *Human Capital* (New York, 1964), p. 112. Later writers have suggested this figure may be too high; the point remains that a college degree does provide an investment "yield."


13. See, for example, the work of R. M. MacIver, *The More Perfect Union: A Program for the Control of Inter-group Discrimination* (New York, 1948), and on the religious side, John Courtney Murray, *We Hold These Truths: Reflections on the American Proposition* (New York, 1960).

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**Alvin W. Gouldner**

*The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*

In all countries that have in the twentieth century become part of the emerging world socioeconomic order, a New Class composed of intellectuals and technical intelligentsia—not the same—enter into contention with the groups already in control of the society’s economy, whether these are businessmen or party leaders. A new contest of classes and a new class system is slowly arising in the third world of developing nations, in the second world of the USSR and its client states, and in the first world of late capitalism of North America, Western Europe, and Japan.

The early historical evolution of the New Class in Western Europe, its emergence into the public sphere as a structurally differentiated and (relatively) autonomous social stratum, may be defined in terms of certain critical episodes. What follows is only a synoptic inventory of some episodes decisive in the formation of the New Class.

1. A process of secularization in which most intelligentsia are no longer trained by, living within, and subject to close supervision by a churchly organization, and thus separated from the everyday life of society.¹

Secularization is important because it desacralizes authority-claims and facilitates challenges to definitions of social reality made by traditional authorities linked to the church. Secularization is important also because it is an infrastructure on which there develops the modern grammar of rationality, or culture of critical discourse, with its charac-
3. The culture of the New Class exacts still other costs: since its discourse emphasizes the importance of carefully edited speech, this has the vices of its virtues: in its virtuous aspect, self-editing implies a commendable circumspection, carefulness, self-discipline and "seriousness." In its negative modality, however, self-editing also disposes toward an unhealthy self-consciousness, toward stilted convoluted speech, an inhibition of play, imagination and passion, and continual pressure for expressive discipline. The new rationality thus becomes the source of a new alienation. 

Calling for watchfulness and self-discipline, CCD is productive of intellectual reflexivity and the loss of warmth and spontaneity. Moreover, that very reflexivity stresses the importance of adjusting action to some pattern of propriety. There is, therefore, a structured inflexibility when facing changing situations; there is a certain disregard of the differences in situations, and an insistence on hewing to the required rule.

This inflexibility and insensitivity to the force of differing contexts, this inclination to impose one set of rules on different cases also goes by the ancient name of "dogmatism." Set in the context of human relationships, the vulnerability of the New Class to dogmatism along with its very task-centeredness, imply a certain insensitivity to persons, to their feelings and reactions, and open the door to the disruption of human solidarity. Political brutality, then, finds a grounding in the culture of critical discourse; the new rationality may paradoxically allow a new darkness at noon.

4. The paradox of the New Class is that it is both emancipatory and elitist. It subverts all establishments, social limits, and privileges, including its own. The New Class bears a culture of critical and careful discourse which is an historically emancipatory rationality. The new discourse (CCD) is the grounding for a critique of established forms of domination and provides an escape from tradition, but it also bears the seeds of a new domination. Its discourse is a lumbering machinery of argumentation that can wither imagination, discourage play, and curb expressivity. The culture of discourse of the New Class seeks to control everything, its topic and itself, believing that such domination is the only road to truth. The New Class begins by monopolizing truth and by making itself its guardian. It thereby makes even the claims of the old class dependent on it. The New Class sets itself above others, holding that its speech is better than theirs; that the examined life (their examination) is better than the unexamined life which, it says, is sleep and no better than death. Even as it subverts old inequities, the New Class silently inaugurates a new hierarchy of the knowing, the knowledgeable, the reflexive and insightful. Those who talk well, it is held, excel those who talk poorly or not at all. It is now no longer enough simply to be good. Now, one has to explain it. The New Class is the universal class in embryo, but badly flawed.

Notes

1. It is not my intention to suggest that modern intellectuals are merely the secular counterpart of clericals. Indeed, my own stress (as distinct, say, from Edward Shils who does appear to view intellectuals as priests manqués) is on the discontinuity of the two.

2. For full development of this, see chapter 2, especially p. 42, of my Dialectic of Ideology and Technology (New York, 1976).

3. Doubtless some will insist this is a "false consciousness." But this misses the point. My concern here is with their own definitions of their social role, precisely because these influence the manner in which they perform their roles. As W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki long ago (and correctly) insisted, a thing defined as real is real in its consequences. Moreover, the state who employs most of these teachers is itself interested in having teachers consolidate the tie between students and it itself, rather than with the students' parents.

critique of Bernstein emerges, at least tacitly, in the discussion of [the “Flawed Universal Class”] in the text. It is developed explicitly in my *Dialectic of Ideology and Technology*, pp. 58–66. While Labov has sharply criticized Bernstein, he himself also stresses the general importance of self-monitored speech and of speech reflexivity in general (i.e., not only of careful pronunciation) thus converging with Bernstein’s focus on reflexivity as characterizing the elaborated linguistic variant and distinguishing it from the restricted variant. See William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia, 1972), p. 208.

5. For example: “The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare...” (Communist Manifesto [Chicago, 1888], authorized English edition edited by Engels, p. 58).


7. A secret doctrine is one which, because it is reserved only for the organization elite, can be made known only after persons join organizations and reach a certain membership position in it. A secret doctrine thus is never one which can have been a motive for joining the organization in the first instance.

8. Lenin’s *What Is to Be Done?* was originally published in 1902.

9. I am grounding myself here in the analysis of dimensions of meaning common to social objects in the pioneering work of Charles Osgood and his collaborators. Their researches have recurrently found three dimensions: goodness/badness, weakness/strength, and activity/passivity. In the *Coming Crisis* I proposed an equilibrium condition for the first two dimensions, speaking there of social worlds that were culturally permitted and those unpermitted, defining the latter in terms of a dissonance between imputed goodness/badness and weakness/strength. To “normalize” is to contrive to see an unpermitted world as if it were a permitted one, i.e., to remove the dissonance. See A. W. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York, 1970), especially pp. 484–88. For Osgood’s first researches see Charles E. Osgood, George Suci, and Percy Tannenbaum, *The Measurement of Meaning* (Urbana, 1957).


19. This section is indebted to Basil Bernstein and is based on a critical appropriation of his “elaborated and restricted linguistic codes,” which have gone through various re-workings. That controversial classic was published in J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, *Directions in Sociolinguistics* (New York, 1972). A recent re-working is to be found in Bernstein’s, “Social Class, Language, and Socialization,” in T. A. Sebeok, ed., *Current Trends in Linguistics* (The Hague, 1974). For full bibliographic and other details see note 4 above.


23. For fuller discussion of the differences and contradictions between bureaucrats and technical intelligentsia, see my *Dialectic of Ideology and Technology*, p. 266 ff.

24. As a consequence, when technical intelligentsia are monitored by organizational superiors, “it is results that count” for it is often only these that can be judged.

25. The testimony on this is venerable: in Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates proposes to defer training in the dialectic until students are in their thirties and have passed other tests. And then, he warns, great caution is needed: “Why great caution?” “Do you not remark,” I said, “how great is the evil which dialectic has introduced?” “What evil?” he said. “The students of the art are filled with lawlessness” (Re-
public, 437 DE). For fuller discussion see my Enter Plato (New York, 1965), p. 279. In short, the dialectic, like CCD, has certain inherent costs which Nietzsche was among the first to notice. Thus CCD cannot simply be equated with “good” speech.

26. This is no less true for the Marxist contingent of the New Class than of others. Equality has never been a high priority value for Marxism.

27. While editing this, a recent people’s congress in Peking eliminated the cultural revolution’s “revolutionary committees” in factories and schools, began to refurbish wage differentials, and recharged higher education, the essential reproductive mechanism of the New Class.

28. Louis Althusser’s argument, that Stalinism was a fumbled attack on the New Class, has many difficulties. Not least is the fact that among the delegates to the 18th Congress of the CPSU in 1939, two years after the purges, about 26% had higher education, compared to the 10% with higher education among delegates of the 17th Congress in 1934, who were a central target of Stalin’s terror. For further discussion, see A. W. Gouldner, “Stalinism,” Telos (Winter 1977–78).

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G ÖSTA ESPING-ANDERSEN

Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies

A social trend is basically a projection from the past. Many of the early postindustrial theorists, such as Daniel Bell (1976), predicted a future in which most of what they deemed positive in the era of the ‘democratic class struggle’ would come to full fruition. Bell’s vision was a coming society of professionals and technicians, one where ‘situs’ rather than class conflict would reign. This was a radical reinterpretation in so far as postindustrial society would do away with class altogether. Also Lipset has now embraced this position (Clark and Lipset, 1991; Clark, Lipset, and Rempel, 1993).

Today’s visionaries find much less cause for optimism; their projections are most likely to range from the sombre to the outright gloomy. The sombre view insists that little of substance has changed (Wright, 1989; Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992; and Hout et al., 1993); that the cleavages of the past remain pretty much intact. The gloom comes from those who see a new era of polarization. American or British observers see a world with a ‘declining middle’, job polarization, and a new underclass (Harrison and Bluestone, 1988; Jencks and Peterson, 1991; Levy, 1988; Burtless, 1990). Europeans, in contrast, see a two-thirds society with social exclusion, marginalization, and outsider classes (Van Parijs, 1987; Offe, 1985; Esping-Andersen, 1993; Brown and Crompton, 1994).

What the new pessimists see, in brief, is the possibility of a resurgent proletarian underclass and, in its wake, a menacing set of new ‘class correlates’. The transAtlantic difference of accent is clearly related to job performance: in North America labour market exclusion is less dramatic than is growing pay inequality, declining real wages, and a swelling army of the working poor. Europe’s social safety net manages to stem the tide of inequality but its inferior job performance induces mass exclusion.

How do we understand the postindustrial employment problem? Is there indeed any
labour market induced risks calls for a re-thinking of education, training, and marketable skills.

This is not the place to explore the broad issues of education. But there are a number of basic facts that all can agree upon: the returns to skills are rising, as we would expect in a world increasingly dominated by complex technology; the low-skilled are in rapidly declining demand. To exemplify the importance of skills, Bjorn (1995) shows that the probability of exiting from ‘marginality’ (basically unemployment or low pay) jumps by 30 points with vocational training, and 50 points with some theoretical training. Closing the skill gap is therefore an extremely effective way of catapulting people out of entrapment, of assuring good life chances. And it also pays off to society in the form of a more productive workforce.

There is clearly nothing earth-shatteringly novel about a call for more education. There is virtually no government or international organization today that does not advocate ‘active labour market policy’ or ‘life-long learning’. But there is widespread scepticism about their effectiveness. Active labour market policy with its ‘activation’ and training programmes does not always appear to pay off if by this we mean that the unemployed eventually find a stable, promising career. Too often, activation looks more like a temporary parking-lot, or one interlude in a never-ending roundabout of unemployment, training, occasional jobs, and then unemployment again.

Effective or not, many believe that training is useless since there are no jobs for the newly trained. In a static sense this is undeniably often true. But they miss the basic point of the omnibus analogy: for any given individual, skills are the single best source of escape from underprivilege. What we are trying to resolve is a dynamic, life-course issue and not where to place everybody today. A new welfare optimum is, in fact, compatible with the possibility that many of us will experience a spell of unpleasantness.

What we really need to understand better is what kinds of skills and what kind of education to promote? We are generally aware of the rising demand for multi-skilling, flexible adaptation, and capacity for life-long learning. A worker with a good theoretical base in his vocational training is much easier to upgrade than someone with a high-school diploma unable to understand instructions on an aspirin bottle. This is why German employers use their skilled workers to run computerized production systems while in England they import engineers. We also face a reality where ‘social skills’ are more fundamental than muscle because of the direct face-to-face mode of service production. What these are is not easy to define, but they undoubtedly include more than the routine ‘have a nice day’. A major problem in the contemporary unemployment structure is that laid-off miners and steel workers are unlikely to possess the kinds of social skills that sell a service.

We know from the OECD literacy studies (OECD, 1997) that education—even completed secondary education—may guarantee very little if it ends up producing 15 or 20 per cent Americans incapable of even rudimentary reading, writing, and arithmetic. These do not even possess the minimal level of qualifications needed to be trainable. They are a de facto human capital waste, a stratum only too obviously condemned to lifelong low-wage employment or, possibly, crime.

It is this kind of result that must be eliminated from any kind of society if we seriously desire an optimal welfare regime. I therefore close this chapter inviting education experts to design a workable system of skilling entitlements, one that would befit an ideal postindustrial welfare regime. And I invite our political leaders to forge a new coalition of our assorted homines, one capable of breaking the deadlock of median-voter support for anachronistic modes of welfare production.

Notes

1. The ratio of jobs lost to competition from the ‘South’ to jobs lost due to structural change is, for
the period 1970–85: .07 in Denmark; .04 in France; .06 in Germany; .01 in Japan and the Netherlands; .05 in the UK; and .08 in the USA (calculated from OECD, 1994, i, Table 3.10).

2. In the more 'distribution-dominated' economies of Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States, manufacturing decline has been much more modest. Japan (and Denmark) actually experienced net manufacturing job growth. (Source: recalculations from OECD, Historical Statistics, 1995, Table 1.10).

3. The 'classes' in the industrial order are relatively unproblematic, but those in the servicing hierarchy need some clarification. Professionals are straightforward; semi-professionals refer to occupations such as social workers, nurses, technicians, and teachers. Skilled service workers embrace occupations for which a skill certification is required (hairdressers or nursing assistants, for example). Unskilled service workers are defined as those occupying jobs for which there are no particular skill requirements, tasks that, in principle, anyone could perform (cleaning, waiting, bell-hopping, car-parking, and so forth). For a detailed exposition, see Esping-Andersen (1993).

4. There is none the less evidence that this classification scheme has validity. Salido (1996, ch. 3) has tested it both in terms of construct and criterion validity against the Treiman prestige scale, and also against a battery of hierarchy criteria such as autonomy, decision-making, and supervision, and the results are quite comforting.

5. The job-growth calculations are based on data from ILO, Yearbook of Labour Statistics (various years).


7. The following argumentation lies close to the work of Gershuny (1978).

8. The ideas for this section of the chapter came from a week-end seminar with Jose Maria Maravall and Adam Przeworski (whom I thank for the idea and to whom I apologize for the result).

Bibliography


Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies


lower chances of promotion for party members even in state-owned enterprises oriented to market action (Cao 1999).

Table 1 provides a meta-analysis of results reported in empirical studies testing market transition theory. The findings confirm the theory's predictions of increasing relative returns to human capital, and its claim that emergent market economies open alternative pathways for upward mobility through entrepreneurship and labor markets in the private/hybrid sectors of the transition economy. However, empirical tests of the prediction of declining relative significance of political capital show mixed results, suggesting that elites in some postsocialist stratification orders have circulated more successfully than in others. Overall, the cumulative evidence from empirical studies points to path-dependent changes in the mechanisms of stratification largely in line with predictions proffered by market transition theory (Nee and Cao 1999).

The institutional changes that accompany the shift from a redistributive to a market economy comprise the causal mechanisms that cumulatively transform the stratification order. Although the transition entails hybrid stratification orders in which elements of the old elite retain and even augment their advantages, the secular trends of increasing returns to human capital and declining relative returns to political capital signal the decline of the redistributive elite. The more developed the market economy, the greater the breadth and diversity of opportunities that develop outside the boundaries of the old redistributive economy. Groups and individuals who were formerly barred from advancement in the state socialist bureaucracy and economy gain chances for social mobility through emergent labor markets and private entrepreneurship. To the extent that new bases of opportunity expand, resources become embedded in alternative networks and institutions, dependence on the established elite declines, and excluded groups gain in power relative to the established elite. Importantly, such shifts in power need not entail a direct transfer of power as in a regime change but occur as an unintended by-product of institutional change. As in the rise of capitalism in the West, such change in the stratification order occurs gradually over time.

Note

1. This argument is consistent with power dependence theories (Emerson 1962; Hechter 1987) and social resource theory (Lin 1982). As China shifts to market coordination, family firms and social networks will grow in importance in economic transactions (Hamilton 1991).

References


There have been a number of schools of thought about which social groups would be best placed to take advantage of market reform after the fall of communism. Market transition theory and research on socialist entrepreneurs suggested that those who had been successful in the second economy during the late communist period would benefit most from the transition to capitalism. In contrast, theorists of political capitalism argued that former cadres were best placed to convert state-socialist privilege into economic capital. Against both these theories we contend that cultural capital became the dominant form of capital in post-communism. The coalition that governs post-communist societies is comprised of technocrats and managers—many of whom held senior positions in communist institutions—and former dissident intellectuals who contributed to the fall of communist regimes at the end of the 1980s. This [chapter] offers a new theory of the transition to capitalism, by telling the story of how capitalism is being built without capitalists in post-communist Central Europe. We theorize capitalism without capitalists as a distinctive new strategy of transition adopted by technocratic-intellectual elites in societies where no class of private owners existed prior to the introduction of market mechanisms. Note, however, that capitalism without capitalists is not necessarily capitalism without a bourgeoisie. If one thinks of the bourgeoisie as plural—thus, if one conceives bourgeoisies as a social group composed of both possessors of material property (the economic bourgeoisie) and possessors of culture or knowledge (the cultural bourgeoisie)—then one can claim—and we do so in this [chapter]—that post-communist capitalism is being promoted by a broadly defined intelligentsia which is committed to the cause of bourgeois society and capitalist economic institutions.

This approach to analyzing the transition to capitalism in Central Europe necessarily differs both from the classical social and economic theories of Adam Smith and Karl Marx and from twentieth-century visions of corporate, managerial, or other kinds of post-capitalist societies, such as those proposed by Ralf Dahrendorf, Berle and Means, or Daniel Bell. On one hand, classical theorists assumed that there must have been capitalists before capitalism. For this reason, these theorists expended much scholarly effort in-
helps us to ask these intriguing questions. Moreover, thinking in this way means that we do not simply assume that managerial power is a transitional phenomenon; it allows us to ask: what will society be like if managerialism reproduces itself?

To push our luck even further, we may even wonder whether or not Central European post-communist developments have any relevance for the rest of the world. To put it differently: is Central Europe the future of the West? After all, Central European managerialism may not be all that different from the way Western capitalism operates today: property rights are diffuse, managers exercise a lot of power, and monetarist ideologies are powerful and widespread. As we have already noted, however, these questions about the future are tricky ones, and social scientists are notoriously bad at answering them. Perhaps it would be best to pose the question in a different way and ask: 'If managerialism was a project during the interwar years, as Berle and Means suggested, and if it failed, why did it fail'? Approaching the issue in this way is likely to make us skeptical about the spread of managerialism around the world. Since we argued that managerialism was successful in Central Europe because it did not face powerful enemies like a large propertied bourgeoisie, we would predict that the chances for managerialism in the rest of the world, and especially in the countries of advanced Western capitalism, are slim indeed.

Notes


The Meaning of New Times

world) in their everyday working, social, familial and sexual lives. Such opportunities need to be more, not less, widely available across the globe, and in ways not limited by private appropriation.

This shift of time and activity towards 'civil society' has implications for our thinking about the individual’s rights and responsibilities, about new forms of citizenship and about ways of ordering and regulating society other than through the all-encompassing state. They imply a ‘socialism’ committed to, rather than scared of, diversity and difference.

Of course, ‘civil society’ is no ideal realm of pure freedom. Its micro-worlds include the multiplication of points of power and conflict—and thus exploitation, oppression and marginalisation. More and more of our everyday lives are caught up in these forms of power, and their lines of intersection. Far from there being no resistance to the system, there has been a proliferation of new points of antagonism, new social movements of resistance organised around them—and, consequently, a generalisation of ‘politics’ to spheres which hitherto the Left assumed to be apolitical: a politics of the family, of health, of food, of sexuality, of the body. What we lack is any overall map of how these power relations connect and of their resistances. Perhaps there isn’t, in that sense, one ‘power game’ at all, more a network of strategies and powers and their articulations—and thus a politics which is always positional.

By ‘ethnicity’ we mean the astonishing return to the political agenda of all those points of attachment which give the individual some sense of ‘place’ and position in the world, whether these be in relation to particular communities, localities, territories, languages, religions or cultures. These days, black writers and film-makers refuse to be restricted to only addressing black subjects. But they insist that others recognise that what they have to say comes out of particular histories and cultures and that everyone speaks from positions within the global distribution of power. Because these positions change and alter, there is always an engagement with politics as a ‘war of position’.

This insistence on ‘positioning’ provides people with co-ordinates, which are specially important in face of the enormous globalization and transnational character of many of the processes which now shape their lives. The new times seem to have gone ‘global’ and ‘local’ at the same moment. And the question of ethnicity reminds us that everybody comes from some place—even if it is only an ‘imagined community’—and needs some sense of identification and belonging. A politics which neglects that moment of identity and identification—without, of course, thinking of it as something permanent, fixed or essential—is not likely to be able to command the new times.

Could there be new times without new subjects? Could the world be transformed while its subjects stay exactly the same? Have the forces remaking the modern world left the subjects of that process untouched? Is change possible while we remain untransformed? It was always unlikely and is certainly an untenable proposition now. This is another one of those many ‘fixed and fast-frozen relationships, venerable ideas and opinions’ which, as Marx accurately predicted, new times are quietly melting into thin air.

References

André Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, Pluto 1982.
of any others. Their identities are reflexively self-composed as they move between status adherences. However, the fact of a status market does not imply an absolute voluntarism, and indeed the freedoms in most cases are relevant to exit from status groups rather than entry. Closure processes remain effective in status-conventional society.

The proposition of autonomization nevertheless allows individuals to be profligate in their behaviour. They will tend to spend their resources of time, energy, money, influence, and power in the pursuit of symbolic attachments that tend to advance the interests, identities, values and commitments to which they subscribe and aspire. The very act of doing this will, by the proposition of resignification, tend to redefine and reorder the symbolic dimensions that reference the system. Indeed, a particular effect is the redefinition of some traditional status-membership dimensions, especially education, religion, and ethnicity, into a more ephemeral and conventional regime. So education becomes a marketplace for credentials, religion becomes a vehicle for handling this week’s anxieties as one is born again and again and again, and ethnicity is something one rediscovers through community action and involvement.

We must stress that we are not arguing for a decline in inequality and conflict but for a decline in class inequality and conflict. One last illustration can confirm the point. The available research shows that, even allowing for recent reversals, during the twentieth century household wealth has become more widely distributed. This is an indicator of the decomposition of class, as normally defined in relation to property. However, at the present time there is also an increasing inequality of income (The Economist 5 November 1994). This is not evidence of increasing class inequality but it is evidence of increasing inequality of sumptuary capacity and this links directly with the kind of status-conventional stratification that is theorized here. The income-poor so-called ‘underclass’ is not class defined but is rather status defined by the symbolizations attached to postcolonial migration, race, ethnicity, gender, age and pattern of family support. Exclusionary closure based on these status attributes consigns people to an ‘underclass’. The stigmatization that attaches to the ‘underclass’ is a function not of its members’ exploitation but of their incapacity to consume. An earlier generation of social scientists wrote of poverty as a culture (Lewis 1961; 1966; Valentine 1968). Perhaps it is time to do so once again.

All of this means that complexity is likely to increase. This calls for a theoretical stance that rejects any notion that there is a single conceptual or theoretical crowbar or even a magic word that can open the treasure cave of stratification, inequality and conflict. Contemporary sociology needs to be sensitive to and appreciative of diversity. It must be humble in the face of complexity and ready to accept contingency in relation to social attitudes and behaviours. It must not force a lively, engaging and ethically fraught reality into an inherited and stultifying conceptual strait-jacket. If it continues on its procrustean path it will lose its audience.

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Valentine, C (1968) Culture and Poverty. Chicago: Chicago UP.
Another is the explosion of consumer credit, which makes it possible for many to buy what they can no longer afford. Finally, political apathy may be one of the by-products of a high level of inequality. As those at the bottom of the income distribution feel increasingly remote from the mainstream, alienation from politics grows, election turnout declines, and the public sphere shrinks to include just the affluent. The consistency for redistribution vanishes. In this scenario, graphically detailed by Massey in his provocative 1996 presidential address to the Population Association of America, the persistence of high inequality seems especially likely. The analysis may seem bleak, but it is supported by research that shows that political participation, political information, membership in voluntary associations, and a host of other indicators of political efficacy depend closely on income. The rise in inequality could thus become self-sustaining.

Sociology clearly has an important role to play in understanding the recent trends in economic inequality. It is not just a question of earnings, but of fundamental changes in politics, markets, and life chances. The current earnings trends challenge us to rethink our disciplinary perspective and reintegrate our theoretical and empirical agenda, or else lose the heart of our field to other disciplines.

Notes

1. Here and throughout, detailed keys to the literature are provided by Morris and Western (1999). Other summaries of the literature include Levy and Murnane (1992) and Danziger and Gottschalk (1993; 1995). Comparative trends in earnings inequality are described in OECD (1996, ch. 6).

2. The precise figure depends on the measure used to adjust for inflation, and this is a hotly contested issue.

3. There are at least four different measures of economic well-being that can be examined here: hourly wages, annual earnings, household total earnings, and wealth. All show the same basic pattern, with pronounced rises in inequality. We show hourly wages here because they do not confound labor supply components, such as hours worked and income pooling, with labor pricing. Wages thus better represent the job structure.

4. Inequality does appear to be on the rise in post-socialist economies, although the quantitative evidence here is less reliable. The forces making for such change are, at least on the surface, very different than those at work in the United States, except insofar as one understands them as proceeding from “marketization” in its various forms (e.g., de-unionization, deregulation of wages).

5. About 25 percent of the 25-34-year-old population had a four-year college degree in 1995.

References


developed nation-states at the cost of enhanced international inequality.

Note

This paper benefited from useful comments on earlier drafts by David Grusky, Ron Jepperson, David Strang, Marc Ventresca, and members of the Stanford Stratification Seminar.

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