

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

Gramsci is best known for his theory of cultural hegemony which describes how the state and ruling capitalist class – the bourgeoisie– use cultural institutions to maintain power in capitalist societies. The bourgeoisie, in Gramsci's view, develops a hegemonic culture using ideology rather than violence, economic force, or coercion. Hegemonic culture propagates its own values and norms so that they become the "common-sense" values of all and thus maintain the *status quo*. Hegemonic power is therefore used to maintain consent to the capitalist order, rather than coercive power using force to maintain order. This cultural hegemony is produced and reproduced by the dominant class through the institutions

Where does the word 'class' comes from?

It is derived from the Roman word 'classis' that was a system used to divide groups with respect to taxation purposes.

Hence the core concept lies in the positioning of people in society with respect to their economic wealth.

Ascription Vs Achievement

Position in the society according to one's birth, for example family background, race, place of birth and so on.

Position in society according to an individual's achievement, merit and personal effort.

Big Picture: Historical Forms of Economic Stratification

Estates

politically based system of stratification characterized by limited social mobility (best ex's: feudal Europe & the pre-Civil War American South.)

Caste

system of stratification based on hereditary notions of religious and theological purity; generally offers no prospects for social mobility. (best ex: varna system in India)

Class

economically based system of stratification characterized by somewhat loose social mobility and categories based on roles in the production process (ex: Industrial- Capitalist societies)

Socio-economic status (SES)

SES refers to the combination of income, education, and occupation. It is another measure that allows us to gather data related to social inequality.

Lets see how socioeconomic status changes the dimensions of life as a whole.

Primary areas of life that is affected by one's socio-economic status:

- Accessibility to healthcare for patients from lower socio-economic background.
- Differential educational attainment: Also many times related to the individuals ability to speak in English. This fact can also be related to issue of race that can also result in differential treatment and culminate in the manifestation of social inequality.

Inevitably social class matters

In addition to a direct correlation between health, education and social class, strong relationships can be discovered between social class and political power (plutocracy).

What is PLUTOCRACY?

It can be defined as a form of government or authority that is dominated by wealth or the power that culminates from the same.

Manifestation of social class within organizations

-Looking for cues:

- clothing,
- accessories,
- speech style,
- mode of transportation.

Intersectionality

It refers to the interaction and intersection of categories and primary statuses.