I. Stratification

A. Definition

1. system: hierarchical ranking of groups and individuals

a. structural inequality

b. stratification pyramid

2. determines: power relationships

3. distribution of resources and benefits

B. Three types

1. caste

a. system

i. stratified by caste

ii. based on heredity

iii. justified by tradition

b. examples

i. religion: India

ii. race and ethnicity: Rwanda

iii. gender: Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia

c. characteristics

i. rigid hierarchy

ii. ascribed status

iii. no upward mobility

iv. social interactions

complex set of norms: marriage, space, interpersonal relations

deviance =severe punishments

d. power

1. higher caste: institutional control

ii.

2. estate

1. system

i. stratified by “estates” (nobility)

ii. determined by heredity

iii. justified by tradition

b. examples

i. feudal Europe

ii. formerly England

c. characteristics

i. rigid hierarchy

ii. ascribed status

iii. proscribed social interactions

3. social class

a. system

i. stratified by class

ii. based on wealth and income

iii. justified by capitalist ideology

b. example: U.S.

c. characteristics

i. hierarchy

ii. social mobility

iii. achieved status

iv. meritocracy

v. achievement norms

work ethic

education

attitude

vi. few proscribed social interactions

II. American System: Stratification

A. Class system

1. classes: upper, (upper middle), middle, working, and poor

2. self-identification

B. Conventional Wisdom

1. structural inequality, but

a. possibility of upward mobility

b. anyone can be successful

c. American exceptionalism

d. Social Darwinism

2. equality of opportunity

a. achieved status

b. upward mobility

c. meritocracy

i. education

ii. work

3. class: deserved

C. Equal opportunity and education

1. Education as meritocracy

a. goal: knowledge and skills

b. structure

i. K through 12

ii. higher education

c. federal policy

i. No Child Left Behind

ii. Houston Miracle

2. K thru 12: Education and equal opportunity

a. Rodriguez vs San Antonio

b. funding

i. property taxes

ii. school bonds

iii. foundations/bake sales/car wash

c. ability grouping and tracking

d. consequences

e. Houston Miracle

3. higher education and equal opportunity

a. cost/debt

b. structure

c. “quality education”

4. life chances: education

a. higher yearly income

b. higher lifetime income

c. better health

d. longer life expectancy

D. Equal Opportunity and Work

1. Changing nature of work

a. 50s-70s: industrial

i. types of jobs

ii. wages +

b. 70s-present: deindustrialization

2. Service Economy

a. McJobs

b. wages +

E. American systems of stratification?

II. Stratification by Wealth and Income

A. Wealth

1. definition

2. examples: savings, stocks, bonds, retirement

real estate, business assets, life insurance

B. Wealth: distrbution

1. Top 1% : 35%-40% of net worth

2. Top 20%: 80% of net worth

3. Middle classes

a. wealth

i. house, cars, retirement life insurance

ii. stock: 65% less $5000

b. inheritance

4. Bottom 20%: no wealth

5. Pattern/Comparison

a. since 1970s

b. other industrial countries

C. Stratification: Income

1. Definition

a. from work vs from investment

b. real income

2. Top 1%

a. 2000 $863,000 (1979 $286,000)

b. CEOs 400x

3. pattern

a. stagnant or declining for 80% since mid 1970s

b. household median: $46,326

4. comparison

a. historically

b. other countries

D. Inequality: Race

1. Wealth

a. W $120,00

b. Black and Hispanic $20,000

2. Income

a. W $50,000

b. Black $31,000

c. Hispanic $35,000

E.. Gender

1. Income

2. M$41,386 W $31,858

F. Poverty

1. poverty line
2. extent of poverty
3. types of poverty

a. near poor

b. working poor

c. poor poor (extremely poor)

4. poverty and life chances

5. myth of welfare

6. who benefits?

a. pool of low wage laborers

b. “volunteers” for all volunteer military

c. poverty serving occupations

1. poverty surcharge
2. “truth” of conventional wisdom
3. scapegoats

G. Upward mobility

1. parent’s income
2. upward vs downward mobility: chances

3. downward mobility (-$20,000 income)

4. chances of joining upper class

5. race and upward mobility