SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND SOCIAL CLASS

What is social stratification?
How is social stratification related to social class?

Ranking people or groups according to their unequal access to scarce resources.

The segment of society whose members hold similar amounts of resources and share values, norms & an identifiable lifestyle.

THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Karl Marx’s social classes

Proletariat
The class that labors without owning the means of production.
The rulers
Those who work for wages/The ruled

Bourgeoisie
The class that owns the means of production.

THE POWER DIMENSION

What is power?
Can you exercise power without being wealthy?

The ability to control the behavior of others, even against their will.

According to Marx...
Those who own and control capital have the power in society.

According to Weber...
While having money helps, economic success and power are not the same. Money and ownership are not the only resources that can be used for the basis of power.

Income
The amount of money received by and individual or group over a specific time period.

Wealth
The total economic resources held by a person or group.
THE PRESTIGE DIMENSION
- What is prestige?
- How is prestige distributed?

The recognition, respect and admiration attached to social positions.

SOCIAL CLASSES IN AMERICA
- Section 3

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS
- What is class consciousness?

Identification with the goals and interests of a social class

THE UPPER CLASS
- Includes only 1% of the population
- Upper-upper class and lower-upper class
- Aristocracy
- 'blue blood' versus 'neuvo riche'

THE MIDDLE CLASS
- Most Americans consider themselves middle class
- 40-50% of Americans
- Upper-middle class is 14% of the population
- Middle-middle class is 30% of the population

THE WORKING CLASS
- Often referred to as lower-middle class
- 1/3 of the population
- Below-average income and unstable employment
- Generally lack medical insurance and benefits
THE WORKING POOR
- 13% of the population
- Lowest-level clerical workers, manual workers, and service workers
- Don’t earn enough to rise above the poverty line
  - Single person = $11,490
  - Family of 4 = $23,550
- Do not participate in political process

THE UNDERCLASS
- 12% of the population
- Either work part-time menial jobs or are on public assistance
- Lack education and skills
- Physical and mental disabilities are common
- Often single mothers with no income
- Lack of skills to maintain and get jobs