

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – LIFE CHANCES (I)

SOCIAL CLASS

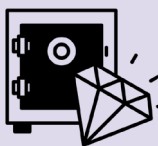
Income: Money received regularly, e.g. wages, benefits, pensions, investment interest or rent from houses – working classes receive less income than middle classes.

Wealth: Things of value that you own, e.g. savings, property, jewellery, antiques, etc – working classes have less wealth (middle classes often inherit theirs).

Less opportunity:

- Working class people are far less likely to obtain highly paid jobs
- Working class people are more likely to be victims of crime and more likely to be convicted of crime
- Working class children are less likely than others to gain five good passes at GCSE or go to university

...Being less successful at school and work also harms other life-chances for the working class, such as diet, housing, weight, mental health and life expectancy.



GENDER

Men have enjoyed superior life chances at home and work, with higher incomes and more power in UK society, but...

- Males are more likely to be the victims of crime
- Males have much higher conviction rates
- Men have a lower life expectancy
- Men show similar rates of mental illness to women, the suicide rate is three times higher than for women
- Girls are now outperforming boys in education

Progress: Men have not had to fight for their position like women, but have been significantly affected by the increase in women's rights.



MASCULINITY

Set of male attributes, behaviours, and roles, e.g. tough, smart, aggressive, a provider and a protector.

Boys see images in the media of men showing an extreme form of masculinity which is difficult to live up to.



CONNELLS' HIERARCHY OF MASCULINITY

Hegemonic masculinity: Dominant form of masculinity, e.g. heterosexuality, whiteness, physical strength, suppression of emotions.

Subordinate masculinity: Exhibit qualities that are the opposite of hegemonic masculinity, e.g. physical weakness or expressive with emotions, can be gay or effeminate men.

Complicit masculinity: Man doesn't fit characteristics of hegemonic masculinity but doesn't challenge it, admires masculinity.

Marginalized masculinity: Cannot fit into hegemonic because of characteristics like race or disability, still subscribe to physical strength and aggression.



SEXUALITY

Heterosexuality presented as the norm, e.g. few openly gay sports men. Have had to fight for equal rights with heterosexuals...

Law: Homosexuality was illegal until 1967 in England and Wales (and 1980 in Scotland).

Age of consent: Lowered to 18 in 1994, and to 16 in 2000.

Section 28: Banned schools from promoting homosexuality (repealed in 2003).

Adoption: Same-sex couples were allowed to adopt from 2005.

Marriage: Same-sex marriage legalised in 2014.



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – LIFE CHANGES (II)

ETHNICITY

Ethnicity: Group a person belongs to (e.g. religion, nationality, way of life)



Race: Implies humans are split into different groups based on biology, and is used by some to claim that one race is superior to others.

Ethnicity pay gap: Ethnic minorities are 2 ½ times more likely to be unemployed, have insecure jobs, and even with a degree still earn



¼ less on average than white colleagues
Health: Ethnic minorities also face worse health (mainly connected to poverty,) and racism leads to poor mental health.

Moral panics: E.g. gang culture, and 'Islamophobia' – linked to media coverage.



Rise in Far Right: Racism divides the working class, e.g. migrants are 'taking all the jobs' (scapegoats for economic problems) – stops the working classes uniting to fight against the ruling classes.



TV representation: Increase in recent years – previously ethnic minorities were under-represented and were shown as stereotypes.



AGE

Ageism: Prejudice and/or discrimination based on a person's age

Loss of importance: Particularly after retirement – seen as too old to work and contribute – so they earn less they have less spending power than other groups; 50-64 year olds often overlooked for jobs (despite having skills and experience).



Sexism: Older women are likely to experience ageism and sexism together, e.g. sacked from TV presenting roles (doesn't happen to older males).

Lack of rights: Young people are not allowed to vote on important issues that affect them (e.g. Brexit).



Stereotypes:

- Old people are seen as forgetful, stubborn, helpless, grumpy, bigoted, etc
- Young people perceived as troublemakers, criminals, etc

DISABILITY

Social exclusion: Some people with disabilities can't participate fully in society.

Disablism: Negative attitudes based on prejudice or stereotype can stop people with disabilities from having equal opportunities, e.g. the assumption that people with disabilities can't work, have children, or have sex, and shouldn't live independently.

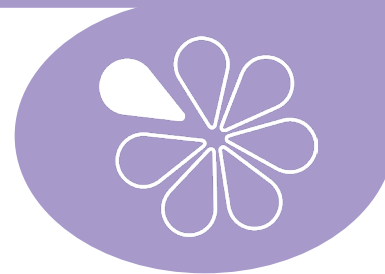
Employment: People with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed or working part-time.

Disability pay gap: 11% for men and 22% for women

Hate crimes: Over 2,500 crimes targeted at disabled people per year.

Medical model of disability: Views disability as a tragedy that the disabled person has to cope with – daily experience is made worse by the attitudes of other people, who often dismiss wheelchair users, e.g. lack of ramps.

Social model of disability: Views people as disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment – and that society that needs to change and make adjustments to support disabled people. **BUT, Marxists** this will never happen as people with disabilities are not seen as valuable to capitalism – a they don't create enough wealth.



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – POWER AND AUTHORITY

KEY TERMS

Power: Ability to achieve what you want/influence decisions about yourself and other people.



Authority: Having the power or the right to give orders to make decisions...

- **From age** – in tribal societies older people are in charge
- **From gender** – in patriarchal societies men make the decisions



MAX WEBER AND POWER

Two basic dimensions of power...

- the possession of power
- the exercising of power



Argued that power can take a variety of forms: economic, social and political....

Class/wealth (economic): property such as buildings, lands, farms, houses, factories and as well as other assets.



Status/prestige (social):

The respect with which a person or status position is regarded by others.



Party/power (political):

The ability of people or groups to achieve their goals despite opposition from others.



MAX WEBER AND AUTHORITY

Argued there were three main ways that people gain authority...

Traditional: Based on long-established customs, e.g. British royal family – born into authority.

Charismatic: Based on the power of personalities, high levels of popularity with loyal followers, e.g. Martin Luther King Jr, Gandhi, Jesus

Rational/legal: Based on a system which has clear/logical rules for choosing the most qualified/capable leader, e.g. elections in the UK and USA,



STRATIFICATION BY STATUS

Social mobility: The ability to work your way up the social ladder (and gain power).

Meritocracy: System in which people are rewarded for their ability and hard work by gaining the best jobs, wealth and/or status.

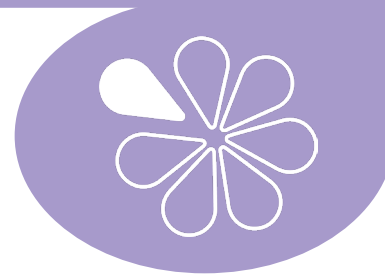
Feudal system: (medieval England): Power and wealth was based on ownership of land

Apartheid (South Africa): Layered society by ethnicity, with white Europeans at the top (1948-1994).

Caste system (India): Based on Hindu beliefs about fate in life. People were born into certain groups that were layered in terms of status...

...Those at the bottom were seen as the **underclass** – known as the **untouchables**, with the very worst life chances, affecting their job prospects, who they could marry and where they could live.

**Apartheid/caste system are both closed systems – no chance of working your way up – you stay in whichever system you were born into forever.*



MARKET POSITION

Meaning how much money you are able to earn - the amount of money a person can demand for wages is their market position



Weber said some people have a stronger market position than others...

- Some jobs are valued more highly than others
- Affects your social class – and could affect your lifestyle, wealth and life-chances



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION

MEASURING POVERTY

Poverty is measured as the proportion of people living in households with an income below 60 % of the median UK household income.



- ¼ of UK children live below poverty line
- 2.1 million children living in poverty are in working households
- 60% of lone-parent families live in poverty
- 40% of over 65s live in poverty

Absolute poverty: When your basic needs are not met, e.g. food, clean water, shelter, clothes, warmth.



Relative poverty: When you are without important things that we expect from UK society, e.g. transport, mobile phone, internet access, etc

DEPRIVATION

To go without things that are expected for people living in that society (changes over time).

Material deprivation: Being without actual goods (phones, consoles, computers, etc) or not having own bedroom – could affect a person's life chances



Cultural deprivation: Absence of the experiences or support needed to become a successful adult, e.g. children not being taken out for trips or to meet new people.



CULTURE OF POVERTY

Underclass: Poorest in society – they accept the way they live as unavoidable (term used by Charles Murray – New Right)...



- Parents may not value education and pass these attitudes onto their children
- Learn to manage on benefits, eat cheap food and find ways to entertain themselves, at worst through alcohol and drugs
- At risk of social exclusion – where they are not able to fully participate in society

GLOBALISATION AND POVERTY

Globalisation: Increasing connections between places and people across the planet, established through trade, politics and cultural exchanges...



- Can raise peoples' expectations – meaning more people might feel they are living in relative poverty
- Fewer full-time jobs and less secure employment, and the rise of zero-hour contracts – which cause poverty as there is no guaranteed wage
- 'Job for life' doesn't really exist anymore – companies want flexible workforces
- Labour force needs to be able to move from one low-paid job to the next, with few employment rights
- MNCs are very powerful and have no commitment to look after the workers in any country



MARXIST THEORY

Argue that low wages paid to the working class show the ruling class exploits the poor. Wages are so low that working class people might find themselves in poverty even when they are at work.



2008 global recession:

Caused by greedy bankers but working class suffered most with reduced government spending, resulting in job losses, wage reductions and welfare cuts.



Welfare State: Introduced in early 20th to improve living conditions – but only to keep workers fit and healthy to maintain level of power and wealth.



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – FUNCTIONALIST VIEW

MERITOCRACY

A system in which people are rewarded for their ability and hard work by gaining the best jobs, wealth and/or status. Functionalists and the New Right believes that the UK is a meritocracy.

THE NEED FOR POVERTY

Functionalists say that society needs poverty as a form of motivation...

...Nobody wants to be poor, and this encourages people to work hard...

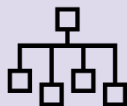
The rewards that come with being at the upper levels of society make people want to work hard



DAVIS AND MOORE – ROLE ALLOCATION

They argued that unequal rewards meant that people will get a job that matches their ability and the effort they are prepared to make...

- Some occupations are so important that society needs to know that the most skilled and committed will do them
- The education system sifts and sorts people into their appropriate roles
- Inequality is essential as it motivates people to work hard to get to the top



CHARLES MURRAY – NEW RIGHT

Traditional values: Dislikes the values of modern society and wants return to the 'golden age'.

Welfare State: He believes that the benefits system has made it too easy to end marriages and become lone-parent families.

Lack of role models: Argues that lone-parent families are bad for society – boys who grow up with no father-figure are likely to fail at school and turn to crime.

Culture of poverty: Where people are dependent on benefits, and have no incentive to work...

...He also says that the poor have their own way of life, where criminal behaviour is seen as normal, and poverty is a choice.



PETER SAUNDERS – NEW RIGHT

- Argues that society would struggle without stratification.
- Believes the best way to organise society was to have unequal rewards
- Argues the UK is fairly meritocratic – the rewards go to those who work hard and have ability
- Claims middle class people have the best occupations because they are naturally cleverer and work harder



A CLASSLESS SOCIETY?

Social class: The New Right think that we live in a classless society and that the old British class system doesn't matter any more.

Marx: Thought the working class would grow bigger and stronger, but the New Right say they are disappearing and becoming middle class fewer people see themselves as working class due to...

- Fewer manual jobs/More office jobs
- Greater access to university
- Better pay generally
- Technological developments

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – MARXIST VIEW

COMMUNISM VS CAPITALISM

Marxists: Want greater equality – i.e. Communism – the Soviet Union/China failed with this, but Cuba was successful with this system.

Functionalists: Argue inequality and the rewards of better life chances are needed to help society run smoothly – not everyone can be rich and enjoy all the best things in life

Some ideas have trickled into capitalist countries – e.g. the Welfare State in the UK – free education for all and the NHS (although richer people can pay for better services for both health and education).



CONFLICT THEORY

Marx believed that the conflict would only end when the workers realised how they were being exploited...

...They would then rise up and take over from the ruling class, creating a more equal society (the basis of communism)...

Some countries tried to create communist societies where they believed inequality would come to an end.



FALSE CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

Workers don't realise they are being exploited – they think their life should be hard as their parents and grandparents went through the same...

...this stops workers uniting to try to improve their situation.



HISTORY

Marx: Said that societies in history have had inequality and a stratification system and were divided into two main groups...

Struggle: All history is about the struggle between these two groups: master and slave or lord and serf...

Ancient societies: Divided into masters and slaves – the slaves were owned by their masters and had no rights, e.g. Romans.

Medieval England: Divided into lords and serfs or peasants. Serfs were not owned by the lords, but had very few rights and had to work very hard for the lord.



CAPITALISM AND EXPLOITATION

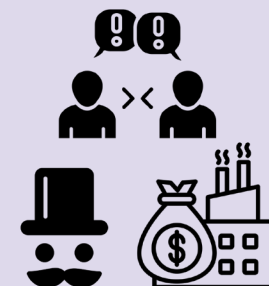
Marxists argue that modern societies are capitalist – and still divided into two groups like they have been throughout history, And that this will never change...

Bourgeoisie: The ruling classes who own all the important businesses (e.g. factories, mills, railways and mines) – a small group, but rich and powerful.

Proletariat: The working classes – everyone who has to work for a wage – much larger, but weaker group (who Marx hoped would rise up and right for better conditions).

Conflict: Marx believed that this system will always end in conflict...

- Marx believed that the owners will always want to take advantage of the workers, paying as little as they can
- Workers will always want to be paid more money and the owners will always want to pay them less

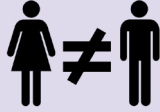


SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – FEMINIST VIEW

HOW ARE WOMEN AND MEN TREATED DIFFERENTLY?

Home: Socialised differently; girls given less freedom than boys.

School: Boys dominate classrooms and playgrounds. Some sports are separate.



Work: Discrimination; gender pay gap; less women in top jobs.

Media: Often ageist and sexist, e.g. older women feature less on TV; media focuses on the looks of women but talents of men, particularly in sport.



Religion: Some religions value men over women, and have strict rules for women, e.g. dress.



SYLVIA WALBY – THEORISING PATRIARCHY

She argued that there are 6 structures of **patriarchal control**...
...paid work, housework, culture, sexuality, violence and the state.

- She argued that violence against women is a consequence and a cause of women's inequality
- She claimed that the extent of domestic abuse against women is hugely underestimated.
- She said we live in a culture that undermines and devalues women.



PATRIARCHY AND DISCRIMINATION

Patriarchy: Male-dominated society.

Feminists argue that women are generally lower down the stratification system than men and have less power, wealth and status and fewer life chances.



Double standards: Social norms and expectations for women are still very different from those for men.

Fight for equality:

- Women were not allowed to vote until 1908 – they had to protest, and in some cases give their lives, to gain the vote
- Women have had to fight to get equal pay in the workplace – the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1970
- Laws stopping discrimination against women in the workplace applying for jobs were not passed until 1975



WOMEN AT WORK

Glass ceiling: Women find it difficult to reach the top jobs in society – women can see these jobs, but discrimination stops from reaching them.



Discrimination: Bosses often assume that women's' main priority is to get married and have children, so pass them over for promotion. Around 54,000 women lose their jobs a year due to pregnancy discrimination!



Dual burden: When women do get the chance to work, they usually still pick up the main burden of care in the family at the same time – so work shorter hours, with lower earnings and less chance of promotion.



GENDER PAY GAP

Women earn 14% less than men for the same jobs (on average).

Traditional female roles:

e.g. childcare, domestic work, caring, beauty, are all low paid.



Motherhood wage penalty:

12 years after giving birth, a woman could earn 33% less per hour than men (lack of quality part-time work, which wastes women's talents).