

## Chapter 7:

### What is Social Stratification?



(Power.....Prestige, Property/Wealth)

➤ **Social stratification**—a system in which groups of people are divided into divisions or layers according to their relative power, property (or wealth), and prestige (Max Weber).

➤ Every society stratifies (or divides) its members.

➤ It is a way of ranking large groups of people

### Why study Social Stratification?

Should the U.S. census ask a person what race/ethnicity s/he is?

### Types of Stratification:

What is the difference between Slavery and the Caste System?

If you had to be in one, which would you prefer?

➤ **Slavery**—ownership of some people by others.

➤ Has been based on debt, crime, war, and racism.

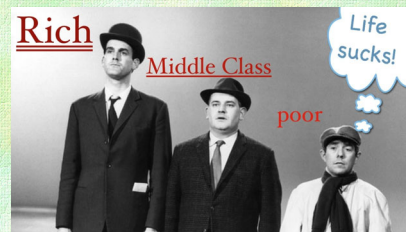
➤ In some cases, slavery was temporary.

➤ **Caste system**—status is determined by birth and is life long.

➤ Boundaries between castes remain strong.

➤ They practice **endogamy** (marriage within their own group).

### How Is the U.S. Stratified Today?



Hint: Power, Prestige, Property

Do We Need to have  
Stratification?

What would a functionalist say?

### How Functionalists View Social Stratification

- Society's positions **must be filled**.
- Some positions are **more important** than others.
- The more important positions need to be filled by **qualified people**.
- To attract the most qualified people **greater rewards** are offered

How do **conflict theorists**  
view social stratification?



- **Human nature** is self-centered so there will be injustices in how the power, property, and prestige is divided and used.
- A conflict theorist may agree that no society can exist unless it is **organized**.
- And **Leadership** requires inequalities of power.
- the functionalist perspective encourages a "**false consciousness**" as described by **Karl Marx**

How do those with  
**power, prestige, and property**  
maintain stratification?

(that is, maintain their power, prestige, and property?)

(How was it maintained 1000 years ago? How does this compare to today?)

### Six Means of Control

1. **By force**—least effective.
2. **Politically**—use laws and regulations
3. **Controlling ideas**

The divine right of kings—the king's authority comes directly from God.

False Consciousness

4. Controlling information

- Control the media
- Selectively releasing or withholding information (e.g. "in the interest of national security")

5. Using new, cutting-edge technologies to their benefit (e.g., "fake news")

6. Encouraging feuds between differing groups of non-elites (that is, feuds among the poor or within racial groups)

How Do Those Not In Power Fight Back?



- **Politically** —if in democratic country
- **Judicial system**
- **Terrorism**
- **Using new, cutting-edge technologies**
  - e.g., social media platforms

Who would you guess was one of the first Black persons to use the media and other means to push for equality?

W. E. B. DuBois (1868-1963)

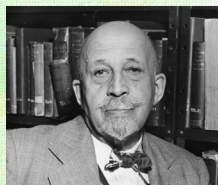
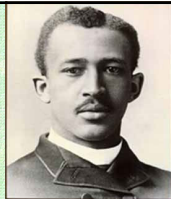
pursuit to overcome discrimination of Black Americans

editor of the "Crisis" a magazine for African Americans. First AA to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard (1895)

organized Blacks to become a political block

pushed for first amendment rights—freedom of speech & press, non-acceptance of social injustice

pushed for education among Blacks including trade schools



Booker T. Washington (1856-1915)

was also a leader pushing for African American rights.

Unlike DuBois, he believed training of African American in crafts, industry and farming is what would reduce the discrimination in the form of unequal treatment.

He pushed for African Americans to show patience, enterprise and thrift. This, he said, would win the respect of whites and lead to African Americans being fully accepted as citizens and integrated into all strata of society.



Who were the leaders of the women's suffrage movement for equality of women?

The first national suffrage organizations were established in 1869 when two competing organizations were formed, one led by **Susan B. Anthony** and **Elizabeth Stanton** and the other by **Lucy Stone**.

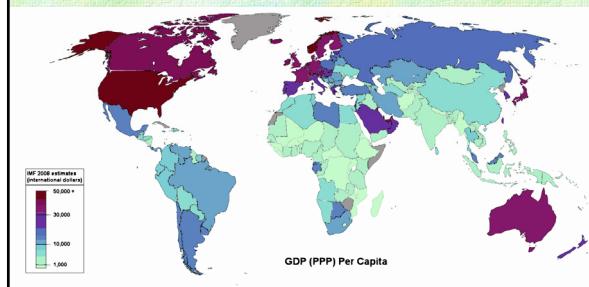


Stanton



Stone

How are nations stratified?



1. Most industrialized nations
2. Industrializing nations
3. Least industrialized

How did nations become stratified?

Three reasons offered include:

- Colonialism
- Industrialization
- Culture of poverty

1. **Colonialism Theory** —the process by which one nation took over another nation.

• Done for the purpose of exploitation.

## 2. World Systems Theory

industrialization led to four groups of nations

**core**—those that industrialized first  
**semiperiphery**—grew dependent on trade with core  
**periphery**—less developed, sold cash crops to core (eastern Europe)  
**external areas**—left out of industrialization (parts of Africa, Asia)

## 3. Culture of Poverty —a nation's culture perpetuates poverty.

This view is criticized for blaming the "victim" nation.

## Why do the same countries remain poor over time?



1. **Neocolonialism**—the economic and political dominance over the Least Industrialized Nations by the Most Industrialized Nations (e.g., debt that nations cannot get out of).

2. **Multinational corporations** —help to maintain global dominance by exploiting nations.

3. **Lack of new technologies** among least industrialized and consequently inability to catch up

## What about the future?

**"Globalization of capitalism"**—interdependence—a single change in the world affects the whole world

The Untouchable Kids of India  
(21:00 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2RXQoSKT6w>

\*\*Our Journey - How we know caste  
(10:00 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC3Cvz21jYk>

Why Am I An Untouchable? | Perspectives  
(4:00)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1J4oKnY1Yk>

The Untouchables in India  
(8:12 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3HrIRPvhw>

Dalit Women  
(7:00 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUaFQeU1c1o>

The End

