

Social Stratification I

<http://ic3jm.es/masters/social-sciences/>

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20180201

****Note minor changes in the syllabus might take place as the course progresses****

Instructor

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Class Time and Location: Tuesday, 10:00-13:00, Room 18.0.A.01

Course description

This course overviews contemporary research on social stratification with particular attention to the study of advanced industrial societies. It presents some of the key findings from the comparative stratification literature and shows how theoretical debates can be tested against empirical data. The course provides a comprehensive overview of the main theories, debates, and methodological developments in the fields of class stratification, the study of inequality of educational opportunity and the intergenerational transmission of social (dis)advantage. Special attention is paid to the study of primary and secondary effects of class background on attainment.

Teaching Arrangements

The course combines lectures (L) followed by class discussion (D) with student-run presentations (P). Both discussions and presentations will be based on the readings listed below. All students must read at least two starred references before each session, including lecturing sessions. This is the minimum compulsory amount of readings required for class discussions to work. (Note in many sessions, readings are organised by themes. Students can choose their readings either within or between themes). Each student will participate in two student-run presentations during the semester. Presenters are responsible for preparing the session, which includes providing an introductory presentation about the readings, preparing discussion questions, and running the discussion.

Students' grades will depend on active participation in class (20%), one class presentations (30%), one take-home exercise (10%) and the quality of the term paper (40%).

The term paper

The term paper should reflect your original work on a topic of your choice from within the range of subjects covered in this course. The typical length of a term paper is around 15 pages. There are two possible formats for the term paper:

- 1. An original research paper on a topic of interest. Research papers can be empirical or theoretical (or preferably both).*
- 2. A detailed proposal for a research project, including an extensive and critical review of the existing literature on the topic.*

Students are expected to present and discuss their proposals for research papers in the last session of the course.

Course Outline and syllabus

Note: all starred readings (within a theme) are compulsory for presenters. Students not presenting must read at least two starred papers in each session. In discussion-only sessions (D) all starred papers are compulsory for all students.

Legend: L=Lecture; D=In-class discussion of compulsory readings; P=Student-run presentations.

Lesson- 1 (L, D)

Course Overview, Organization and Introduction to Contemporary Class Schemas: E.O. Wright

**Scott, John. 2002. "Social Class and Stratification in Late Modernity". *Acta Sociologica*, 45:23-35.*

*Wright, Erik O. 2000a. *Class Counts*, Student Edition, Excerpt of Chapter 1. Cambridge University Press.*

**Wright, Erik O. 2000b. "The Shadow of Exploitation in Weber's Class Analysis." Paper presented at the *International Symposium on Economy and Society: Max Weber in 2000*, September 21- 24, 2000.*

Lesson-2 (L, D)

Introducing Contemporary Class Schemas II: John Goldthorpe

*Breen, R. 2005. "A Weberian Approach to Class Analysis" in Erik Olin Wright (ed.) *Alternative Foundations of Class Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 31-50.*

**Evans, Geoffrey and Mills, Colin. 2000. "In search of the wage-labour/service contract: new evidence on the validity of the Goldthorpe class schema". *British Journal of Sociology* 51: 641–661.*

Goldthorpe, John H. 2007. "Social Class and the Differentiation of Employment Contracts". Pp. 101-124 in John H. Goldthorpe, *On Sociology*. Volume II: Illustration and Retrospect. 2nd edition. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Goldthorpe, John, and McKnight, Abigail. 2004. "The Economic Basis of Social Class." *CASE paper No 80*. Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics.

*Tahlin, M. 2007. "Class Clues". *European Sociological Review*, 23(5): 557-572.

Lesson-3 (2P)

Contemporary debates: Sorensen's employment-rent approach and Weeden & Grusky's microclasses

Employment rents: Concept, debate and applications

*Sørensen, Aage B. 2000. "Toward a Sounder Basis for Class Analysis". *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(6):1523-1558.

*Goldthorpe, John H. 2000. "Rent, Class Conflict, and Class Structure: A Commentary on Sorensen," *American Journal of Sociology* 105(6): 1572-1582.

*Wright, Erik Olin. 2000. "Class, Exploitation, and Economic Rents: Reflections on Sørensen's "Sounder Basis" *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (6): 1559–71.

Polavieja, Javier G. 2003. "Temporary Contracts and Labour Market Segmentation in Spain: An Employment-Rent Approach". *European Sociological Review*, 19(5): 501-517.

Microclasses: Arguments, application and debate

Jonsson, Jan O., David B. Grusky, Matthew Di Carlo, Reinhard Pollak, and Mary C. Brinton. 2009. "Microclass Mobility: Social Reproduction in Four Countries". *American Journal of Sociology* 114 (4). 977-1036.

Erikson, Robert Goldthorpe, John H. and Hällsten, Martin. 2012. "No way back up from ratcheting down? A critique of the 'microclass' approach to the analysis of social mobility". *Acta Sociologica*, 55(3): 211 - 229

*Grusky David B. and Weeden Kim A. 2001. "Decomposition without death: A research agenda for a new class analysis". *Acta Sociologica* 44(3): 203–218.

Weeden, Kim A., and David B. Grusky. 2005. "The Case for a New Class Map." *American Journal of Sociology* 111(1):141-212.

*Birkelund Gunn E. 2002. "A class analysis for the future? Comment on Grusky and Weeden". *Acta Sociologica* 45(3): 217–221.

Weeden, Kim A., and David B. Grusky. 2012. "The Three Worlds of Inequality". *American Journal of Sociology* 117 (6). University of Chicago Press: 1723–85.

*Goldthorpe John H. 2002. "Occupational sociology, yes: class analysis, no: comment on Grusky and Weeden's research agenda". *Acta Sociologica* 45(3): 211–217.

See also: <https://inequalitiesblog.wordpress.com/2013/01/07/classes-or-microclasses-the-nature-of-occupational-inequality/>

<https://inequalitiesblog.wordpress.com/2013/03/14/so-should-we-bother-with-microclasses/>

Lesson-4 (L, D)

Class Mobility: An Introduction to key concepts, methods and major debates

*Breen, Richard and Luijkx, Ruud. 2004. "Social Mobility in Europe between 1970 and 2000" In R. Breen (edit). *Social Mobility in Europe*. Oxford: O.U.P.

*Breen, Richard and Jonsson, Jan 2005. "Inequality of Opportunity in Comparative Perspective: Recent Research on Educational Attainment and Social Mobility". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31:223-43

Lesson -5 (L, 1P, D)

Comparative Research on Social Mobility

Mobility in the UK and Spain

Breen, R. 2010. "Educational Expansion and Social Mobility in the Twentieth Century" *Social Forces*, 89(2): 365-88.

*Bukodi, E., Goldthorpe, J. Waller, L. and, Kuha, J. 2015. "The mobility problem in Britain: new findings from the analysis of birth cohort data". *The British Journal of Sociology*, 66(1): 93-117.

*Gil-Hernández, Carlos J., Marqués-Perales, Ildefonso and Fachelli, Sandra. 2017. "Intergenerational Social Mobility in Spain between 1956 and 2011: The Role of Educational Expansion and Economic Modernisation in a Late Industrialised Country" *Research on Social Stratification and Mobility*, 51:14-27.

Ishida, H., Mueller, W. and Ridge, J. M. 1995. "Class Origin, Class Destination and Education: A Cross-National Study of Ten Industrial Nations". *American Journal of Sociology*, 101:145-193.

Lesson -6 (L, 1P, D)

Educational attainment and the meritocracy debate

Breen, Richard and Jonsson, Jan. 2000. "A Multinomial Transition Model for Analyzing Educational Careers". *American Sociological Review*, 65(5):754-72.

*Breen, R. and Goldthorpe, J.H. 1999. "Class Inequality and Meritocracy: A Critique of Saunders and an Alternative Analysis". *British Journal of Sociology*, 50:1-27.

Cameron, Stephen V., and James J. Heckman. 1998. "Life Cycle Schooling and Dynamic Selection Bias: Models and Evidence for Five Cohorts of American Males." *Journal of Political Economy* 106:262-333.

Cameron, Stephen V., and James J. Heckman. 2001. "The Dynamics of Education Attainment for Black, Hispanic, and White Males." *Journal of Political Economy* 109:455-99.

Mare, Robert D. 1981. "Change and Stability in Educational Stratification." *American Sociological Review* 46:72-87

*Saunders, P. 1996 “Might Britain be a Meritocracy?” *Sociology*, 29(1): 23-41.

Lesson -7 (L, 1P, D)

Investigating Primary Effects I: Ability and Inequality

Cooper, Harris et al. 1996. “The Effects of Summer Vacation on Achievement Test Scores: A Narrative and Meta-Analytic Review”. *Review of Educational Research*, 66(3):227-268.

Cunha, Flavio and James Heckman 2007. “The Technology of Skill Formation.” *American Economic Review*, 97(2): 31-47.

Farah, Martha J et al. 2008. “Environmental Stimulation, Parental Nurture and Cognitive Development in Humans.” *Developmental Science*, 11: 793–801.

*Heckman, James J. Stixrud, Jora, and Urzua, Sergio. 2006. “The Effects of Cognitive and Noncognitive Abilities on Labor Market Outcomes and Social Behavior” *Journal of Labor Economics*, 24(3):411-482.

*Duncan, G., Magnuson, K. and Vortuba-Drzal, E. 2014. “Boosting Family Income to Promote Child Development”. *The Future of Children*, 24(1):99-120.

Take-home exercise

Using (at least) the references listed below, and drawing on your knowledge about the sociological literature on primary effects, answer the first five questions plus one of the latter three (in total you must answer 6 questions):

- 1) *Why/how does the Swedish Adoption/Twin Study of Aging (SATSA) allow researchers to separate out genetic influences from sociological influences on cognitive abilities? (Please answer by explaining what the within-pair and the between-pair effects of social class on adult abilities capture in the STATA study)*
- 2) *Do you think different types of abilities might have different levels of social and genetic inheritance (if so please explain why and provide examples)?*
- 3) *Ericsson et al (2017) measure ability at old age. Do you think their results regarding the effect of genetic inheritance would hold if abilities were measured in early adulthood? Why?*
- 4) *Why do you think adopted children show lower performance in school? Is this effect operating through cognitive abilities?*
- 5) *How can we conciliate the findings of adoption and twin studies regarding the relative weight of nurture versus nature?*

AND

- 6) *Do you think the nurture vs nature distinction is helpful for understanding the combined effect of genetic and sociological influences?*

OR

7) *How can social sciences contribute to the study of genetic heritability?*

OR

8) *What are the most important questions and avenues for future research in the nurture vs nature debate?*

REFERENCES

Ericsson, Malin. 2017. "Childhood Social Class and Cognitive Aging in the Swedish Adoption/Twin Study of Aging." *PNAS*, 114(29):7001-7006

Nelson Charles A. et al. 2007. "Cognitive Recovery in Socially Deprived Young Children: The Bucharest Early Intervention Project". *Science*, 1937-1940.

van IJzendoorn et al. 2005 "Adoption and Cognitive Development: A Meta-Analytic Comparison of Adopted and Nonadopted Children's IQ and School Performance". *Psychological Bulletin* 131(2): 301–316.

Lesson-8 (2P)

Investigating Primary Effects II Parenting styles and health outcomes

Parenting styles

*Ermisch, J. 2008. "Origins of social immobility and inequality: parenting and early child development". *National Institute Economic Review*, 205: 62–71.

*Chan, Tak Win and Koo, Anita. 2011. "Parenting Style and Youth Outcomes in the UK". *European Sociological Review*, 27(3):385–399.

Class, health and children's cognitive development

*Elo, Irma T. 2009. "Social Class Differentials in Health and Mortality: Patterns and Explanations in Comparative Perspective". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35(1):553-572

*Kiernan, K. E. and Huerta, M. C. 2008. "Economic deprivation, maternal depression, parenting and children's cognitive and emotional development in early childhood. *British Journal of Sociology*, 59:783–806.

AND

Whelan, Christopher T. 1994. "Social Class, Unemployment, and Psychological Distress". *European Sociological Review*, 10(1): 49–61.

OR

Rahkonen, Ossi et al. 2006. "Job control, job demands, or social class? The impact of working conditions on the relation between social class and health". *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 60(1):50–54.

Lesson 9 (2P)

Investigating Secondary Effects I

Modelling educational decisions

*Breen, Richard and Goldthorpe, John. 1997. "Explaining Educational Differentials: Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory". *Rationality and Society*, 9(3): 275-305.

OR

*Breen, Richard, van de Werfhorst, Herman G. and Jæger, Mads M. 2014. "Deciding under Doubt: A Theory of Risk Aversion, Time Discounting Preferences and Educational Decision Making". *European Sociological Review*, 30(2): 258-70.

Jaeger, Mads M. and Richard Breen. 2016. "A Dynamic Model of Cultural Reproduction." *American Journal of Sociology*, 121(4):1079-1115.

AND

*Stocké, Voker 2007. "Explaining Educational Decisions and the Effects of Families' Social Class Position: An Empirical Test of the Breen-Goldthorpe Model of Educational Attainment" *European Sociological Review*, 23(4):505-519.

Morgan, Stephen L. 1998. "Adolescent Educational Expectations: Rationalized, Fantasized, or Both?" *Rationality and Society* 10:131-62.

Cultural capital, signalling, personality traits and attainment

*Jackson, Michelle. 2006. "Personality Traits and Occupational Attainment." *European Sociological Review*, 22(2):187-199

*Sullivan, A. 2001. "Cultural Capital and Educational Attainment." *Sociology*, 34(4):893-912.

Sullivan, A. 2002. "Bourdieu and education: How useful is Bourdieu's theory for researchers?" *The Netherlands' Journal of Social Sciences*, 38(2):144-166.

Lesson 10 (2P)

Investigating secondary effects II: Social capital, and attainment

Coleman's social capital theory and applications

*Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital" *American Journal of Sociology*, 94:S95-S120

*Morgan, Stephen L. and Aage B. Sørensen. 1999. "Parental Networks, Social Closure, and Mathematics Learning: A Test of Coleman's Social Capital Explanation of School Effects." *American Sociological Review* 64:661-681.

Fernandez, Roberto M., and Isabel Fernandez-Mateo 2006. "Networks, Race, and Hiring". *American Sociological Review* 71: 42-71.

Granovetter's weak ties model and applications

*Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties". *American Journal of Sociology* 78: 1360-1380.

Mouw, Ted. 2003. "Social Capital and Finding a Job: Do Contacts Matter?" *American Sociological Review* 68: 868-898.

Petersen, Trond, Ishak Saporta, and Marc-David L. Seidel. 2000. "Offering a Job: Meritocracy and Social Networks." *American Journal of Sociology*. 106,3:763-816.

*Yakubovich, Valery 2005. "Weak Ties, Information, and Influence: How Workers Find Jobs in a Local Russian Labor Market". *American Sociological Review* 70: 408-421.

Lesson-11 (2P)

Elite Schools and Class Discrimination

Do employers discriminate by class origins?

*Jackson, M. 2009. "Disadvantaged through discrimination? The role of employers in social stratification". *The British Journal of Sociology*, 60: 669–692

*Friedman, S. and Laurison, D. 2017. "Mind the gap: financial London and the regional class pay gap". *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68: 474–511.

Elite schools & elite labour markets

*Reeves, Aaron et al. "The Decline and persistence of the old Boy: Private Schools and Elite Recruitment 1897 to 2016". *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(6): 1139-1166.

*Rivera, Lauren A. and Tilcsik, András 2016. "Class Advantage, Commitment Penalty: The Gendered Effect of Social Class Signals in an Elite Labor Market". *American Sociological Review*, 81(6) 1097–1131.

Lesson-12 (15P) *Conclusions and paper project presentations*

FURTHER RECOMMENDED MANUALS

GENERAL

- Goldthorpe, J. H. 2000. *On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives and the Integration of Research and Theory*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- Grusky, David B. (ed.) 2008. *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*. 3rd edition. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Marshall, Gordon. 1998. *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford University Press.
- Platt, Lucinda. 2011. *Understanding Inequalities*. Polity Press.

CLASS MOBILITY

- Breen, Richard. 2004. *Social Mobility in*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- Goldthorpe, J. H. and Erikson, R. 1993. *The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

CHILDHOOD AND INEQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Lareau, Annette. 2003. *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Morgan, Stephen L. 2005. *On the Edge of Commitment: Educational Attainment and Race in the United States*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE

- Oesch, Daniel. 2013. *Occupational Change in Europe. How Technology and Education transform the Job Structure*, Oxford: Oxford University Press