

Definitions of class

- **Marx**
 - Proletariat
 - Workers; those who sell their labor power to survive
 - Bourgeoisie
 - Owners of the means of production; i.e. factory owner
- Conflicts between owners & workers → class struggle
- Exploitation of the capitalist class + the exploited proletariat → **Revolution** → **A classless society**

Definitions of class

- **Durkheim**

- Mechanical solidarity-solidarity by similarities
- Division of labor (this is a good thing)
- Organic solidarity-we need each other to survive; each person has their own function (similar to the body)

Definitions of class

- **Weber**
 - Class: economic sphere
(labor market)
 - Party: sphere of power
(political power)
 - Status: social sphere
(honor)

Definitions of class

- **Bourdieu**
 - Social capital: the actors and organizations you know and who can help you
 - Who you know

Bourdieu

- Cultural capital: your values and habits, valued cultural objects (art, houses), your education and training
 - What you know; objects you own

Bourdieu

- Economic capital: monetary and financial assets
 - How much money/wealth you have

Systems of Stratification

- **Slavery system (close system)** is the most extreme form of legalized social inequality. Enslaved individuals are *owned* by other people.
- **Caste systems (close system)** are hereditary systems of rank, usually religiously dictated, that tend to be immobile.

Stratification by Social Class: Poverty

- Approximately 1/9 people in the United States lives below the poverty line.
- Who are the poor in the United States? *Children, women & the elderly*
- Measuring poverty
 - Absolute poverty* = the minimum level of subsistence that no family should live below.
 - Relative poverty* = a standard by which people are defined as being disadvantaged when compared to the nation as a whole.

Small-group discussion

- What does class mean to you? Which theory do you find useful/interesting?
- What does it mean to be upper-class in America?