

Class & Social Mobility

ECED7002

Session 4c

Associate Professor Caroline Lohmann-Hancock

Debating Inequality

- Historically, inequality has been linked to the concept of social stratification
- In these models inequality is seen as a 'natural' part of society
- Therefore if inequalities are 'natural' and inevitable then nothing can or should be done about them
- **Examples include;**
- The feudal system in medieval Europe (King, Lords, Knights & Serfs)
- The Indian caste system (Brahmins - teachers, Kshatriyas - warriors, Vaishyas - traders and the Shudras – manual workers)

Debating Inequality

- Such systems do not support the concept of equality
- However, philosophers and theorists have developed theories of equality, for example;
- John Locke (1632-1704) suggested that man had 'natural rights' to life, liberty and property and that these are best protected by the state
- Jean-Jaques Rousseau(1712-1778) suggested that man is born free but is everywhere in chains – he saw democracy as a way of ensuring equality
- Marx (1818 -1883) considered that inequality was linked to the class struggle – landless versus the landowner or owner of the means of production

Debating Inequality

- Afua Hirsch (1981 - Present) suggests that even today concepts of equality are underpinned by the above theories
- However, Hirsch and other social critics see inequality as ever present in society
- So how can we be equal in an unequal society?
- It has been argued that the 1970s saw an erosion of the 'status order'

Social Differentiation

- Complex societies exhibit inequalities – often called inequalities of outcome
- But there is an argument that if we mobilise affirmative action for supposedly disadvantaged groups society would be actually treating such groups as though they were lesser or special cases
- That is to say that they are not seen as equal but as ‘other’.
- For example, there is a raft of work looking at inequalities (class, gender, ethnicity) in the education system
- This leads to attempts by Governments to address these inequalities

Capitalism and Inequality

- Some theorists, economists and politicians believe that inequality is necessary
- They believe that the process of equalisation will ultimately result in the stifling of innovation and therefore growth
- They argue that capitalism is dynamic precisely because it is unequal
- Neo-liberals such as Peter Berger argue that:
 - 'If one wants to intervene politically to bring about greater material equality, one may eventually disrupt the economic engine of plenty and endanger the material living standards of the society'
 - (Berger, 1987: 48)

Functionalist Theory and Inequality

- Social Inequality is thus an unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons (Davies & Moore, 1964: 415)
- This is seen as a naturally occurring 'division of labour'
- Thus Functionalists see society as being made of 'strat' rather than classes. The most appropriate people find their 'level'
- In industrialised society the 'right' individuals are encouraged to train for positions by inducement and compensated for having to take the risks

Functional Theories of Stratification

- Inequality in complex societies is rendered legitimate via an emerging consensus of values relating to the societal importance of particular functions
 - The best get to the top by
 - Taking greater risks and therefore
 - Gaining greater rewards
- E.g. The function of 'Meritocracy'

Class

- Class as prestige, status, culture or lifestyles
- Class as structured social and economic inequality, related to the possession of economic and power resources
 - 'Ruling Class', 'Middle Class', 'Working Class'
- Social and political actors
 - 'Upper Class', 'Lower Class'
- Classes as actual or potential
 - 'Old school tie', Trade Unions, Class War

Occupational Classification Systems

- Office of National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (ONS-SEC)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatisticssocioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010#classes-and-collapses>
- Registrar General's Classification System
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/celsius/online-training/socio/se040100>

Occupational Classification Systems

- There are also cultural dimensions of class
 - https://www.jstor.org/stable/41035374?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
 - ‘high art’ – e.g. poetry, opera, ballet, painting, classical music
 - ‘popular culture’ – e.g. music hall, TV, pop music
- Occupational classifications have also been devised by market research companies in order to give an indication of lifestyle and consumption
 - <http://www.nrs.co.uk/nrs-print/lifestyle-and-classification-data/social-grade/>

The End of Class

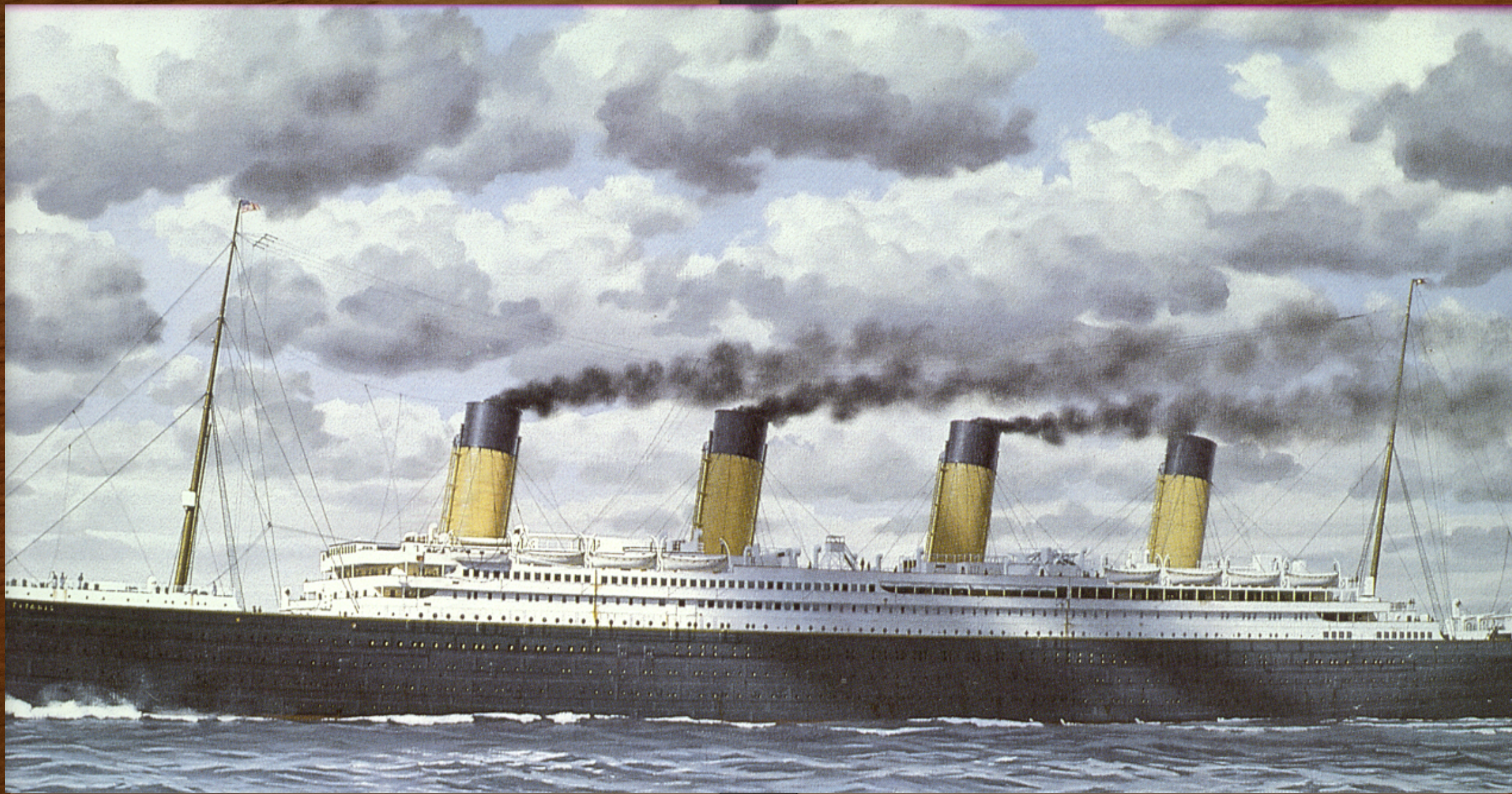
- Pakulski & Waters (1996) in 'The Death of Class' suggest that class and stratification in contemporary societies, in which tastes and interests are constantly shifting, is 'status conventional'
 - Class basis of stratification has more or less disappeared
- He argues that class is no longer relevant but that is still used in the Ulric Beck suggests that class is a 'zombie' category – dead but still alive!
 - press etc.
- <http://sk.sagepub.com/books/individualization/n14.xml>

In Reality

- Work as employment may have declined as a significant source of social identity but work is still the most significant determinate of the material well-being of the majority of the population.
- Crompton (2008)
- Thus even in today's political landscape class is linked with occupation, poverty, exclusion and equality

Class and Class Analysis: Still Useful in the 21st Century?

- Class and Life Chances on the Titanic Story
- Marx's Approach to Class
- Max Weber's Approach to Class
- Gilbert: The Dimensions of Class and a Model



Titanic Survival Rates

	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class	Crew
• Women/Children	93%	81%	47%	87%
• Men	31%	10%	14%	22%
• Total	60%	42%	25%	24%
• Absolute # dead	130	166	536	85

- Male survival rate: 20%
- Female/children survival rate: 71%

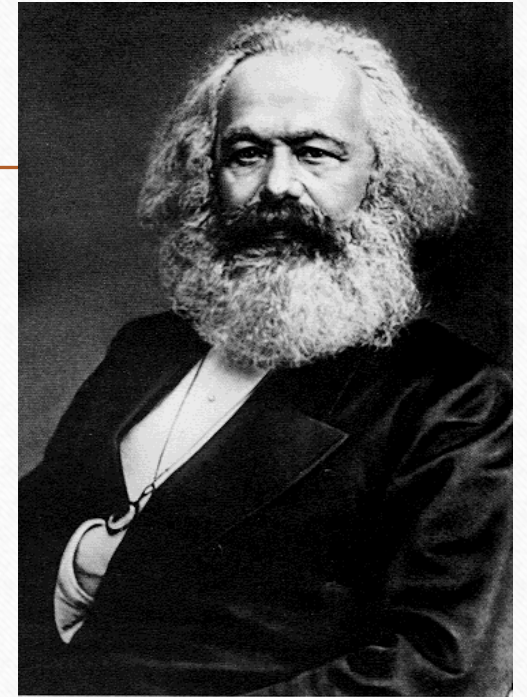
What do These Statistics Tell Us?

- social class mattered for life chances
 - stratification
- but so did 'women and children first'
 - social norms
- solidarity among workers can make a difference
- we see elements of both conflict and consensus

Concepts for Class Analysis: The Two Major Theorists



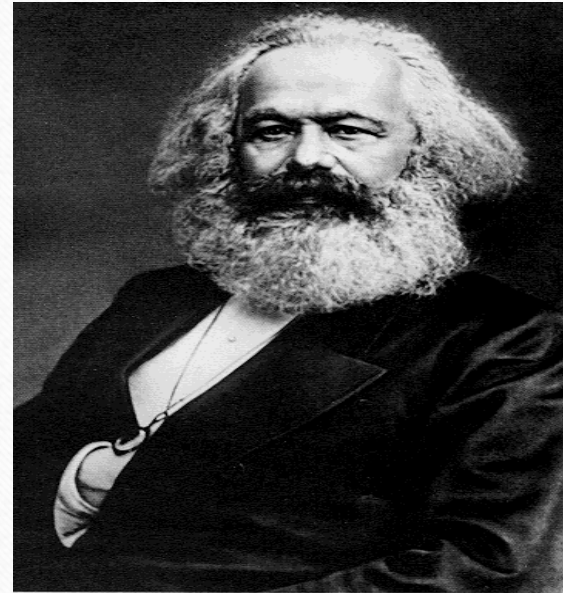
- I. Karl Marx
 - Class, Class Conflict and Mode of Production



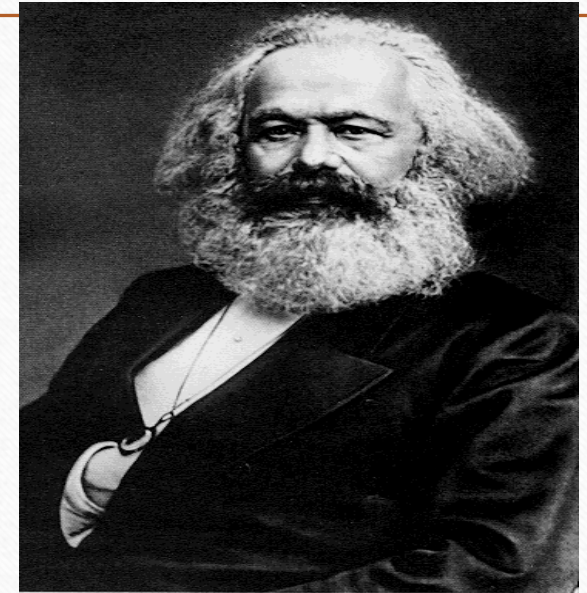
- II. Max Weber
 - - Classes and Competing Principles of Group Formation

Social Class in Marx's Thought

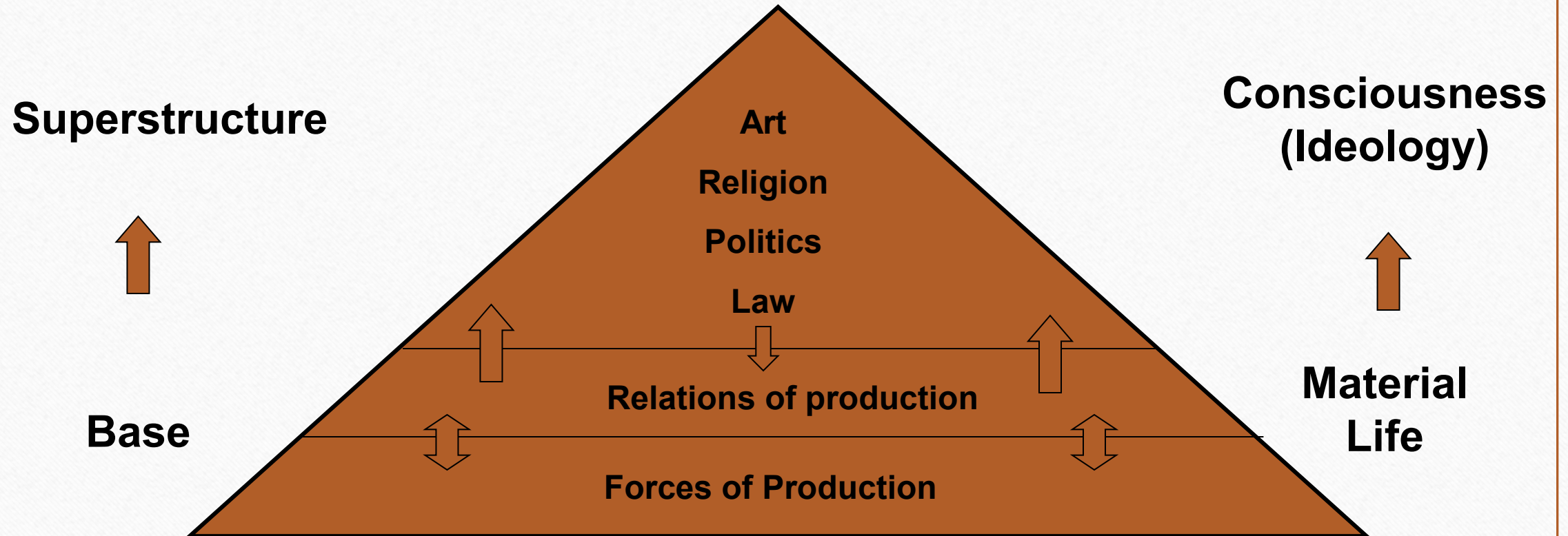
- rooted in society's mode of production
- defined by people's relationship to the means of production
- not income groups per se. A matter of structural position. Class is about power
- may evolve from class-in-itself to class-for-itself
- moving from the dominant ideology to class consciousness
- agents of change



-
- Why do Marxists almost never use the term
 - ‘upper’
 - ‘middle’
 - ‘lower’
 - to analyse the class structure?
 - s



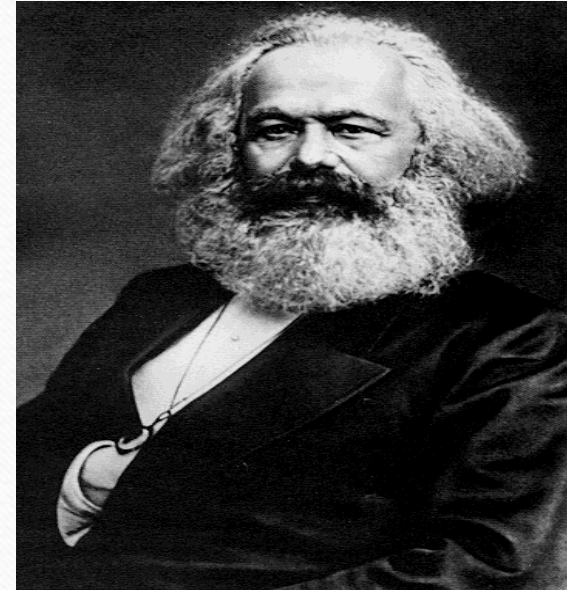
Marx's Base-Superstructure Model



An explanation of how the class structure is reproduced

The History of Existing Societies is the History of Class Struggle

- class struggle
 - as the dominant mode of struggle in society
- class struggle
 - as the major engine of historical change
- class analysis
 - as the key to understanding a society and its tendencies
- do these ideas still apply?



Some of Marx's Predictions

- Tendency towards
 - class polarization
 - concentration and centralization of capital
 - The expansion of the working class (proletarianization)
- Was Marx right or wrong?
- Some Marxists would argue that until every nation in a 'globalised' world is industrialised then Capitalism had not reached its zenith
- Marx's analysis was only based on industrialised countries

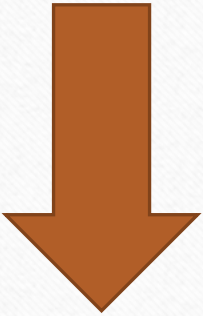
Max Weber: Competing Principles of Stratification and Group Formation

- class is only one of
 - several types of stratification groups
- the importance of class can be
 - reinforced or undermined by 'status groups' and parties



Competing Principles of Group Formation and Stratification

***Social
Classes***



**Economic
Order**

***Status
Groups***



**Cultural
Order**

Parties



**Political
Order**

Class in the USA?

- How has the relationship of status group and class played itself out in U.S. society?
 - ‘Implicit in Weber’s approach to stratification is the idea that status considerations can undermine the development of class consciousness and class struggle....’ (Gilbert, 2007)
 - Thus by being assimilated into the dominant economic, cultural and political orders (e.g. the American dream) the working class gives up the class struggle

Two General Points

- Class structure always exists along other types of stratification
 - How they interact
 - and which one is dominant
 - varies with the society and over time
- Social Classes have many dimensions although the economic ones tend to be most fundamental

Dimensions of Class

- Occupation
- Income
- Wealth
- Prestige
- Association
- Socialisation
- Power
- Class consciousness
- Social Mobility
- Geographic Mobility

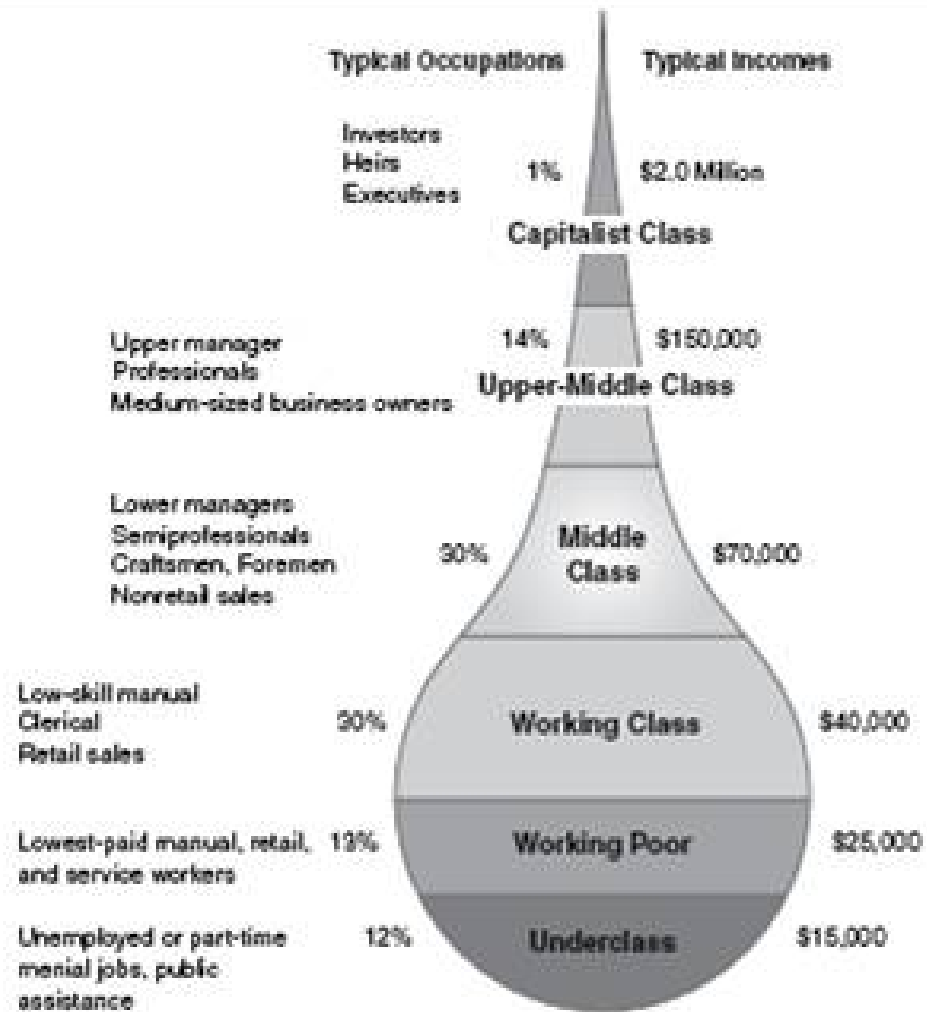
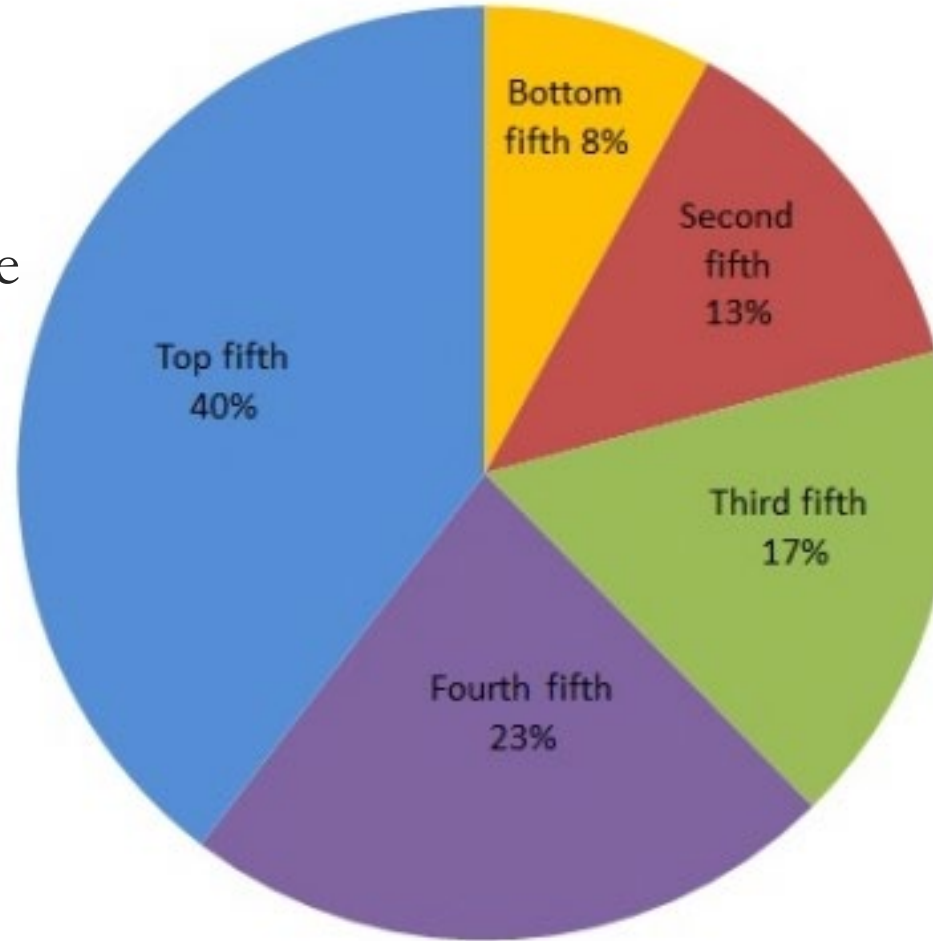


Figure 1.1 Gilbert-Kahl Model of the Class Structure

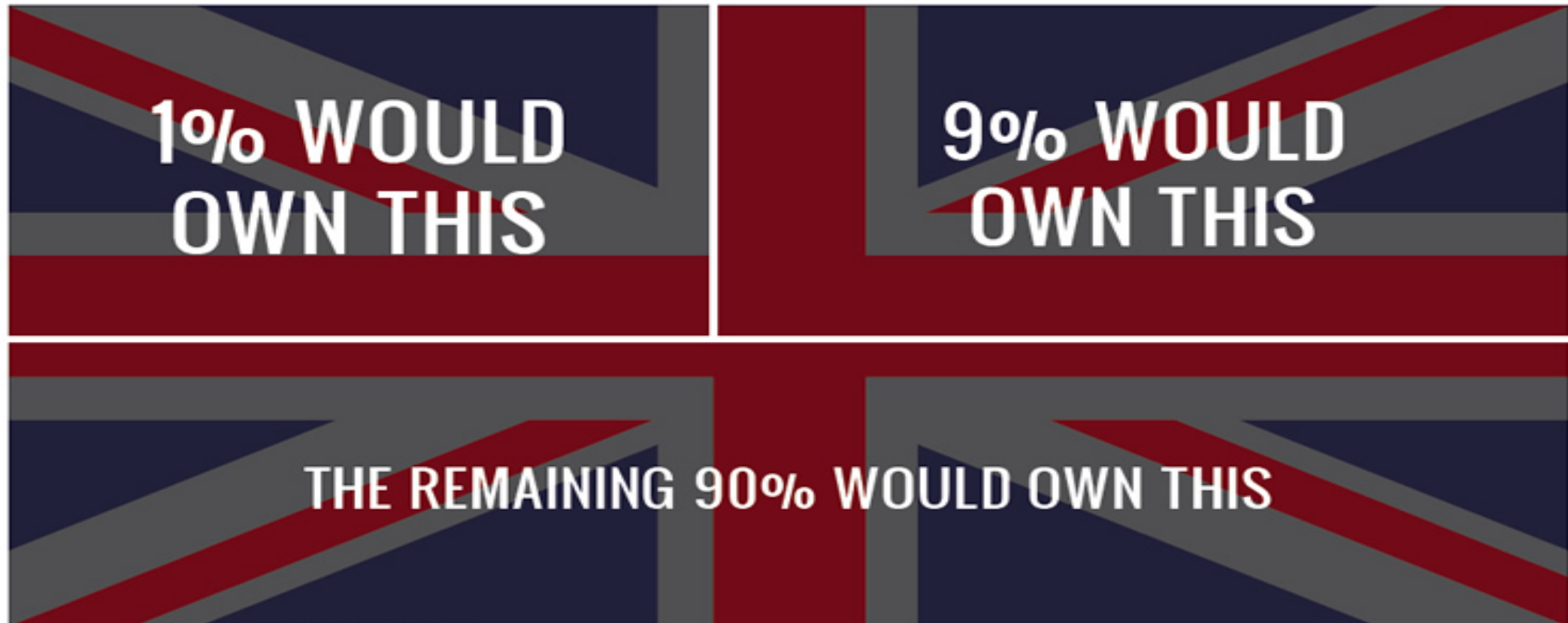
Gilbert- Kahl
Model:
One of many

How is income shared in the UK?

- The poorest fifth of society have only 8% of the total income, whereas the top fifth have 40%.



IF THE UK FLAG WAS DIVIDED LIKE UK WEALTH



Source: hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal_wealth/13-5-table-2005.pdf

WE'RE **NOT** ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

What is Social Mobility?

- Social mobility describes the movement or opportunities for movement between different social groups
- The advantage
 - Income
 - security of employment
 - opportunities for advancement
 - And so on.
 - Advantages and disadvantages that go with this in terms of;

Why is Social Mobility Important?

- Lack of social mobility implies inequality of opportunity
- economic efficiency depends on making the best use of the talents of everyone
- Social mobility promotes social cohesion and inclusion
- Cohesion is achieved where people believe they can improve the quality of life they and their children enjoy through their;
- Also known as Meritocracy
 - Abilities
 - Talents
 - And efforts

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Intra-generational Mobility (within own lifetime)
- income and earnings mobility (upward and downward) in Britain but much of this is short range
- Individuals on low incomes or earnings may move one or two deciles up the income or earnings distribution but not in general much more
- Intergenerational Mobility is limited in the UK

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Earnings Mobility in Britain has declined over the past 20-25 Years
- poverty is more persistent in Britain than in Germany
- upward career mobility from manual occupations to higher status professional and technical occupations has declined
- entry to the latter higher status occupations taking place (increasingly) directly from the education system rather than through mid-career flows from lower status occupations

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Sociologists make a distinction between absolute and relative social mobility in analysing intergenerational mobility
- Absolute social mobility is concerned with the absolute number or proportion of people in a social group who are upwardly or downwardly mobile
- Relative social mobility is concerned with the chances people from different backgrounds have of attaining different social positions

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Analysis of intergenerational mobility (children compared with parents)
- A considerable amount of absolute social mobility in the long term
- Increasing numbers of children have enjoyed upward social mobility compared with their parents because economic and social change has increased employment opportunities in the professional classes
- There has, in other words, been ‘more room at the top’
- But . . .

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- The growth
- especially upward social mobility
- appears to have been halted in recent decades
- in the rate of absolute social mobility
- Longer term expansion in the number of people in higher social classes has not only permitted upward social mobility from the lower social classes
- but allowed an increasing proportion of children whose parents were in the higher social classes to remain there

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Relative social mobility has been fairly stable
- the relative chances of people from different social backgrounds making it to a given social class
- some groups within the ethnic minority population are catching up with the majority white population rapid upward social mobility
- although ethnic minorities are still disadvantaged compared with the majority population

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- International comparisons are difficult because the defining features of social classes may vary from country to country
- But there appears to have been considerable absolute social mobility in all industrialised countries
- But absolute rates of intergenerational social mobility vary widely between countries and over time
- Cross-national variations in absolute rates are explained by specific and historical factors e.g.;
 - economic growth
 - Migration
 - Wars
 - Rather than by sociological factors

What are the Facts about Social Mobility?

- Relative rates of social mobility exhibit a remarkably high degree of similarity between countries and over time
- Modest differences do exist:
 - more fluid societies such as Israel, Australia, Japan, Poland, Sweden and Norway
 - less fluid societies such as Hungary, the United States, Britain, Italy, Germany, France, the Netherlands and Ireland
- Evidence that higher rates of relative social mobility are associated with lower income inequalities
- i.e. the narrower the pay-gap the more mobility there is – how does this relate to the concept of meritocracy discussed earlier?

What are the Barriers to More Social Mobility?

- Determinants of and barriers to relative social mobility are not well understood
- But may include:
 - Educational attainment
 - Childhood poverty with associated psychological and behavioural development
 - The family and the strategies families adopt to support their children
 - access to financial, social and cultural capital
 - i.e. not just money but
 - Values, behaviours and networks of contacts that affect access to opportunities

What are the Barriers to More Social Mobility?

- The role of ability (Meritocracy)
 - whether inherited genetically or through socialisation
- As a determinant of social mobility is hotly contested
 - sociological studies coming to widely differing conclusions about the importance of that ability plays
- Attitudes, expectations and aspirations
- aversion to risk economic and other barriers which some groups use to “hoard opportunities” e.g. anti-competitive practices which limit access to professions such as the law and may discriminate against particular groups.

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Policymakers are likely to have a range of objectives, including;
- The promotion of Prosperity
- Fair and just society of which there may be several dimensions
- Equality of opportunity
 - enabling individuals to improve themselves through their own individual ability and effort rather than class background, gender or ethnicity (a meritocracy)

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Policymakers are likely to have a range of objectives, including;
 - Social justice, cohesion and inclusion
 - Providing safety nets and opportunities for the disadvantaged which reduce inequalities of outcomes and help build communities
- Individual freedom
 - either in the positive sense of enabling individuals to make their own choices (e.g. by ensuring the rule of law) or in the negative sense of minimising coercion by the State or some combination of the two

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- These different objectives may be complementary or in conflict with each other
- For example, policies to promote greater fairness might weaken incentives to:
 - Work
 - Save
 - Invest
 - Innovate
 - thus undermining the goal of maintaining and promoting high levels of prosperity

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- A perception that economic and social outcomes are fair and might;
- build trust
- facilitate the more efficient working of markets
- Increases in income inequality may be associated with increases in inequalities of opportunity
- thus lower rates of relative social mobility

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- On the other hand
- highly meritocratic society characterised by high rates of social mobility might
- have significant income inequalities
- produce social tensions for the reasons described on the next slides

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Meritocracy as a concept describes a society in which
- the most able and committed people can succeed in attaining the most desirable, responsible and well-rewarded positions
- The features of such a society should include;
- Unless one believed ability and commitment were (either in whole or in part) determined by one's social class origins
- high rates of social mobility
- the absence of any association between class origins and destinations i.e. equality of opportunity

But, is this what we see?

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Meritocracy described in these terms has many attractions, but
- We see downward as well as upward mobility
- There are losers as well as winners
- This could create economic instability and social tensions
- Losers are perceived as having no one to blame for their circumstances but their own lack of ability and commitment
- ‘continued concern about those in poverty through personal
- choice put a block on participants supporting increases in financial support for those on benefits.’
(Hall *et al*, 2014, p. 11)
- Creates a lot of unhappiness and resentment

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

Other criticisms include;

- There could be significant income and other inequalities
- The upwardly mobile could “take all” or “pull up the ladder”
- This could be economically inefficient as it leads to stagnation
- The market does not reward ability and commitment but those who provide the goods and services consumers want to buy
- The more able and committed may be more likely to succeed in a market economy
- But the lazy who have a good idea may be highly rewarded

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Social mobility and equality of opportunity
- There is a choice to be made between measures which promote a weak form of meritocracy
 - i.e. which focus on removing barriers to upward mobility and assisting or encouraging upward social mobility
- Or giving primacy to absolute social mobility measures which promote a strong form of meritocracy
 - i.e. which not only seek to facilitate upward social mobility but which seek positively to reduce barriers to downward social mobility for less able middle class children
- This approach would give primacy to relative social mobility

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- Promoting higher rates of social mobility
- in order to allow individuals to succeed on the basis of their individual ability and effort is likely to be challenging
- Absolute social mobility driven by structural changes in the economy and society over which governments may have limited influence
- Relative social mobility stable over time and has shown little variation between industrialised countries
 - notwithstanding widely differing political systems, policies and institutions

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

- The literature suggests a range of specific policy options for promoting social mobility
- Four headings
 - removing barriers to upward mobility
 - positively assisting upward mobility
 - removing causes of downward mobility
 - positively preventing downward mobility

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

The possible measures include

- Removing barriers to upward mobility e.g.
- raising educational standards
- ensuring access to further and higher education for all
- changing attitudes, expectations and aspirations, in particular encouraging bright children from deprived backgrounds to take full advantage of the educational and other opportunities open to them
- improving social mixing and the formation of networks
- reducing/removing barriers to geographical and occupational mobility
- greater disclosure of employers' recruitment practices – gender, race composition of workforce
- removing non-competitive barriers to entry to professions such as the law

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

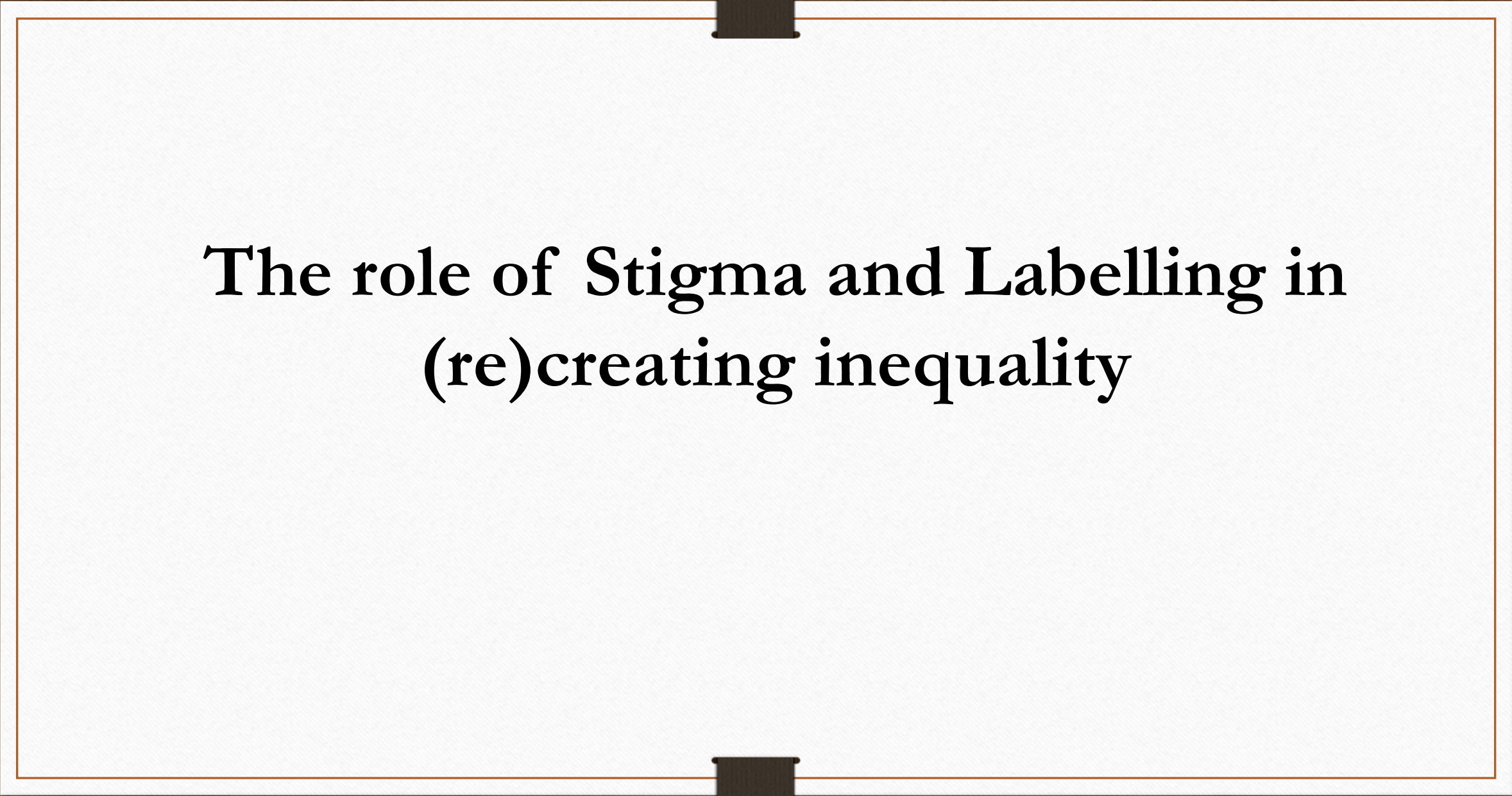
The possible measures include

- Positively assisting upward mobility e.g.
- tackling poverty and social exclusion, particularly childhood poverty
- increased investment in education
- improving access to financial capital (e.g. Credit Unions)
- building better routes for upward mobility within professions and workplaces
- giving people second chances e.g. through access to education in later adult life

What are the Implications for Policymakers?

The possible measures include

- Removing causes of downward mobility e.g.
- reducing the weight given to geographical catchment area as a determinant of access to the best State schools (the post code lottery)
- higher rates of taxation of investment income and wealth
- higher rates of inheritance tax
- Positively preventing downward mobility e.g.
- Minimum wage
- Unconditional monthly income for the unemployed (Finland)
- abolition of inheritance



The role of Stigma and Labelling in (re)creating inequality

Stigma

- Sociologists identify three types of stigma;
- a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person
 - Individual - appearance, character/conduct (mental illness, addiction, poor, homosexual)
 - Tribal stigma/belief
 - Systemic (race, nation, religion)
- The Stigmatized person has a 'virtual' identity assigned by the non-stigmatized is based on stereotypes and may bear little resemblance to the person's actual attributes or characteristics
- Thus, a sense of 'otherness' or being 'not quite human' plays a role

Erving Goffman

- Stigma: Notes on the Management of spoiled identity
- Introduces the concept of the discredited and discreditable
- Stigmatized individuals have a socially prescribed identity
- impression management takes different forms depending on the origins of stigma (i.e. to counter stigma one needs to know if it is individual, tribal or systemic)
- Through degradation ceremonies (stripping self-worth and identity)
- Individuals are transitioned from one identity to another (person to prisoner)
- Consciousness raising needed to reject stigma and counter oppression

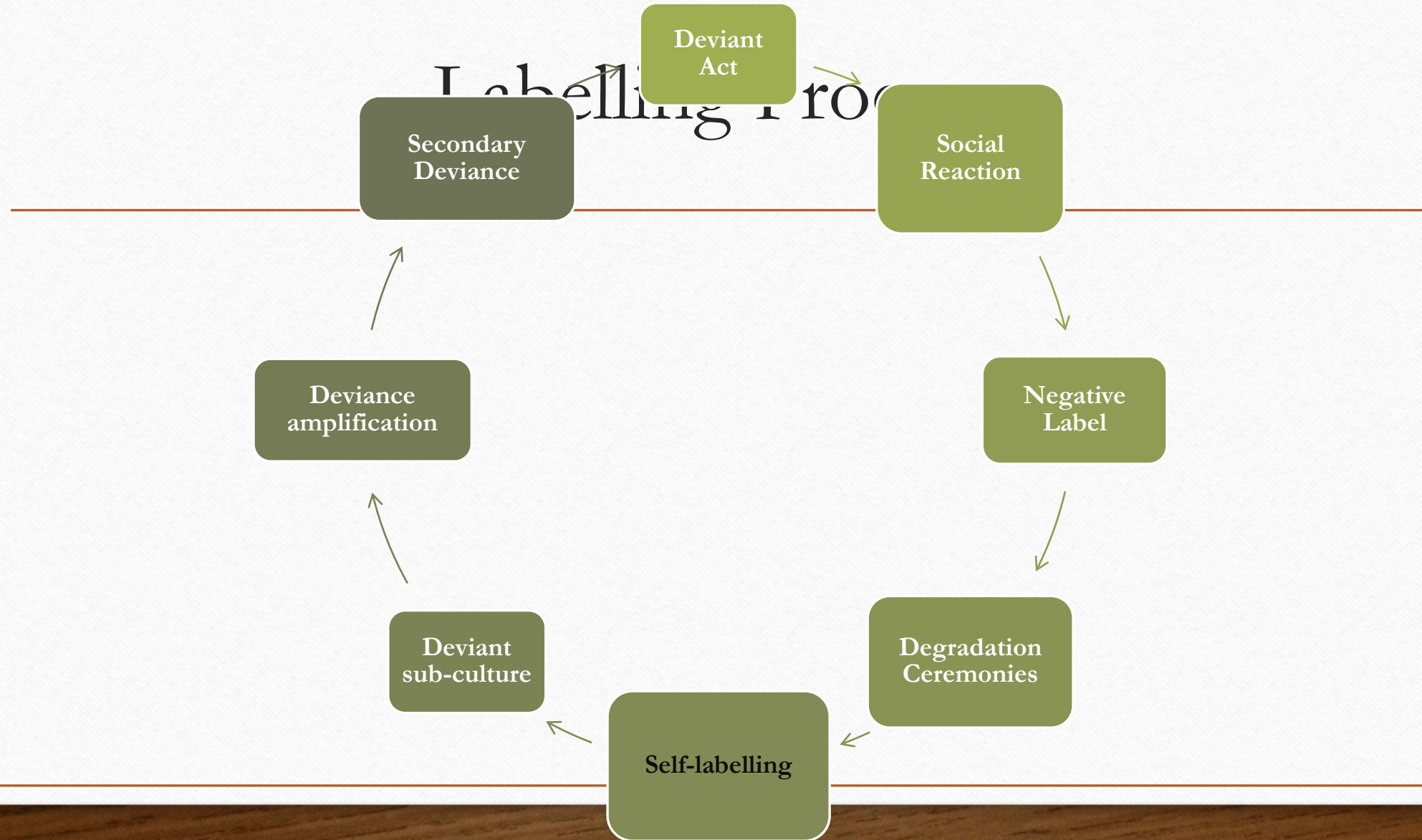
Labelling Theory

- Thus we return to Deviance.
- Deviance is a social phenomenon/definition
- The social audience decides whether a specific behaviour is deviant and labels it as such.
- 'Moral entrepreneurs' create and enforce rules, labelling certain behaviours and persons as deviant

Labelling Theory

- Edwin Lemert (1951) identifies two types of deviance
 - Primary deviance and secondary deviance
 - Primary deviance is the initial act of deviance (e.g. I have broken the law)
- Secondary deviance is the process of self-identifying as a deviant (e.g. I am a criminal)
 - The move from one to the other is influenced by degradation ceremonies (e.g., a trial)
 - It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy

Labelling theory



The Social Mobility Discourse

- Within the UK meritocracy is
 - socially constructed through cultural capital in favour of the wealthy elite
 - and is not based purely upon equal access to education
- In turn Social mobility is considered a result of meritocracy within society which . .
 - far from being a form of egalitarian opportunity to reward the able and willing
 - rather is a loaded dice that again benefits the elite even when they may present as an ‘average pupil’ in a private school
- (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1986; Cosin, 1997: 122)



Meritocracy

the Life Blood of Social Mobility

- Young (1958) The Rise of the Meritocracy
 - satirical novel describes a dystopian society in a future UK in which intelligence and merit have become the central tenet of society, replacing previous divisions of social class and creating a society stratified between a merited power holding elite and a disenfranchised underclass of the less merited.
- He warned against a system in which
 - elites use the concept of 'merit'
 - to reproduce Status
 - and hence to sustain Inequality in Society
- (Young, 1958)



Meritocracy

- Ability + Effort = Merit
- What has Meritocracy got to do with Social Mobility?



What is Social Mobility?

- ‘The transition between income classes’ (Atkinson, 1981).
- ‘Higher social mobility implies that children born to poor families are more likely to be rich regardless of their family background’ (Uchida, 2017)
- UK (DBIS 2013), based on the presumption that increased educational qualifications will result in increased upward social mobility (Bathmaker, Ingram, and Waller 2013).



Social Mobility

- Social mobility describes the movement or opportunities for movement between
 - Different social groups
- The advantages and disadvantages that go with this in terms of
 - income
 - security of employment
 - opportunities for advancement (DBIS, 2011)



Social Mobility

The Reward for Engaging with Meritocracy

- Current UK policy contests that Social Mobility
 - is the reward for those able to engage with
- Meritocracy through
 - Intellectual Ability
 - High Levels of Motivation
- Such individuals are considered as
 - deserving of success
 - (Cosin & Hale, 1997: 122)



The Meritocratic Vision

- Assumes that:
 - society as a whole benefits from a system wherein
 - individuals are matched to employment
 - based on their abilities
 - with the most talented
 - taking the most highly skilled and/or powerful jobs
 - (Francis & Wong, 2013)



The Meritocratic Reality

- A system in which rewards are distributed based on the ‘concept’ of individual merit
 - Where merit is socially constructed
- In this way it serves to legitimise the status hierarchy in modern capitalist democracies
 - This ‘concept’ of ‘merit’ is not value free
 - Statistics indicate that ‘merit’ in this context merely reflects the unequal ‘starting point’ for pupils
 - (Young, 1958; Weber, 1968; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977)



Ability

- Gladwell (2008) argues that rather than natural talent,
 - it is practice (the 10,000 hour rule),
 - social position,
 - available opportunity,
 - being in the right place at the right time,
 - and other features of happenstance, that account for success in various endeavours.
- Terman (1959) after collecting data over a period of time to prove the link between IQ and natural intellectual talent
 - revealed that IQ had little power to predict success beyond what
 - family background alone could predict (Friedman & Martin, 2011).



Motivation

- Distributing children's educational opportunities on the basis of their motivation . . . serves to rationalize a process that coincides with, and reproduces, class-based educational inequality (Brighouse, 2010)
- Statistics indicate that to some degree ability is linked to social economic status, cultural capital and status
- Motivation is also a socially constructed concept
 - Where parents and families 'demonstrate' what, how and why hard work and effort are so important
 - (Anders, 2012)



Social Mobility

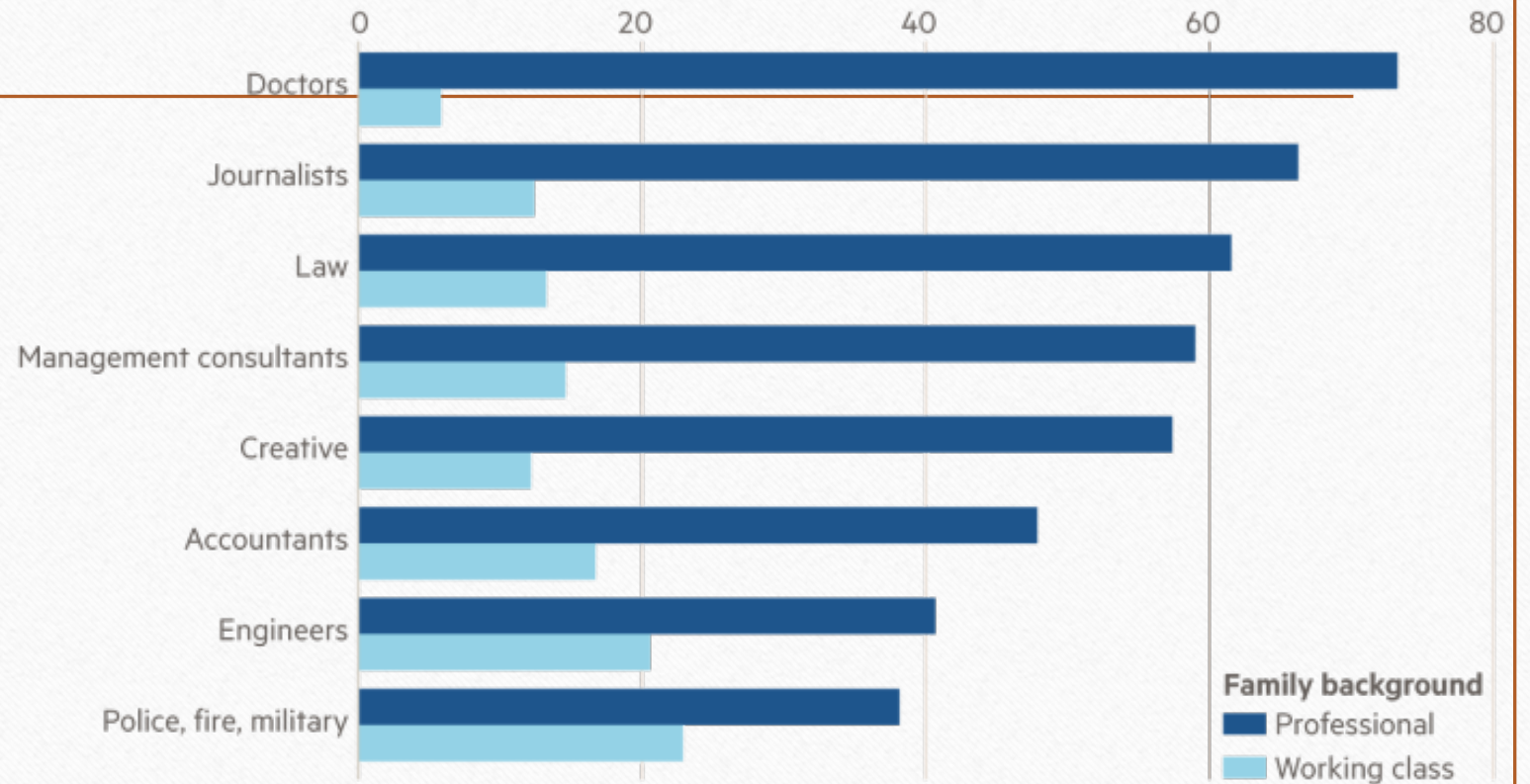
- A hierarchical separation between strata in society is essential for the process of social mobility . . .
- Thus
- ‘social mobility would not matter
- in a society
- in which there was no inequality’
- (Beller & Hout, 2006: 20).



Social Mobility Profession (SMC, 2017)

The affluent dominate top professions

Access to selected professions (%)



Source: Social Mobility Commission
© FT



Social Mobility and University

- Philosophically and Ideological educators may or may not support the concept of social mobility as 'worthy'
- However there is a consensus in fairness and equality of learning opportunities.
 - So if Higher Education accepts
 - that Social Mobility exists
 - what if anything can Universities do?



Experience from South Wales HE

- We can acknowledge Rawls (1971) position that Social inequality has increased in the UK and continued increasing and there is little social mobility
 - Challenge:
 - Low socioeconomic groups are so disadvantaged
 - High socio-economic groups are so advantaged, from the outset
 - In a race if the starting blocks are placed at different points, the race outcomes cannot be fair if they are simply based on merit



Addressing the Issues: Pre-UCAS Application

- Work with schools and FE colleges to explain that they 'are able to go to university'
- People like 'me' do go to University
- Start early – work with primary upwards
- Set the scene that it is obtainable



Addressing the Issues: At Application

- Do not ‘disregard’ all non-traditional applicants
 - Certainly we don’t want to ‘undervalue’ the degree
- But . . .
 - We do need to understand the social context that impacts upon early success



Addressing the Issues: Starting University

- Student Services
 - Key component of success
 - Lecturers need to be 'responsive'
 - But not 'sentimental'
 - about a students struggle to engage with 'fitting in' or 'standing out'
 - Understand that not 'knowing the discourse of education and learning' impacts upon success



Address the Issues at: Starting University

- Lecturers
 - Build intrinsic motivation
 - Talk about what constitutes 'motivation'
 - Talk about what constitutes 'success'
 - Talk about self-esteem
 - Talk about success and failure
 - Understand that success is not about 'IQ'
 - Understand that failure is not about 'IQ'
 - Understand that failure is a 'learning opportunity'
 - (Dweck, 2000; Dweck, 2017)



Seminars/Workshops

- Teaching about issues of Social and Cultural Capital, Social Mobility and Meritocracy
- Be honest about the 'system' being biased
- But put in effective scaffolding to support the potential of non-traditional students



Current Research: 'Personal Lived Experience'

- Perceived barriers:
 - 'Responsibilities: family commitments'.
 - 'Financial: having to drop hours in work to be able to attend'.
 - 'Emotional – always been nervous and anxious'.
 - 'Physical and mental health has sometimes made it hard to attend'.
 - 'Not necessarily barriers put by uni'.
- (Student F6)



Why University?

- ‘Wanted to better myself’ (F3)
- ‘Further qualifications for better job opportunities’ (2)
- ‘To better my chances of employment’ F8)
- ‘Because life was going nowhere’ (F11)



Why UW'TSD

- Mobility Gorard and Rees (2002)
 - 'Close to home' (F3, F4, F5, F6, F8, F9, F10)
 - 'I liked the sound of social justice' (F11)
 - 'I liked the outline of the course' (F1)
 - 'Swansea wouldn't have me back I liked the sound of social justice' (F11)



Initial Data

- Barriers perceived
 - “I was homeless; this degree discusses homelessness”
 - “I don’t deserve to be on this degree”
 - “People like me don’t go to university”.
- We treat the lived experience of the learner as a ‘resource’



Initial Data

- Whilst financial concerns remain high on the list of perceived barriers
- Other concerns emerged
 - 'I didn't think I was very capable to further my education to a higher level' (F1)
 - Worthlessness, quiet, unable to do it, undervalued (F6)
 - I wasn't worthy to attend uni because of that teacher (F10)
 - (F1, F6 & F10)



Initial Data

- At university:
 - ‘Positive aspirations to succeed’ (F1)
 - ‘Showed everyone I can do it who said I couldn’t’ (F6)
 - ‘I feel more sure that I can achieve my aspirations and look forward for the future’ (F10)



Reoccurring Themes from the Data

- The Role of the Lecturers: they ...
 - ‘listened’
 - ‘wanted to understand’
 - ‘didn’t ‘laugh’ at me’
 - ‘Gave me practical skills e.g. referencing, critical engagement and reflection’
 - ‘They linked policy and theory to real life contexts; I could understand this as I’d ‘lived’ this experience’



Recommendations

- Start Young:
 - Work with schools to build confidence and aspirations
- At application stage:
 - Don't disregard non-traditional applicants
- Once at University:
 - Explore what it means to be a student
 - Develop key skills for success
- As lecturers:
 - Be honest
 - Be reflective but not sentimental
 - Build confidence in our students
 - Be an authentic educator



Last Thought

- A Student who was 'homeless' for 17 years before starting university:
 - 'The lecturers were 'real' and I trusted them, even when I did. They always treated me as though I was worth something so it was easier to respond to critical feedback when I had a low mark'
- A 1st Class Honours Student:
 - 'They understood the challenges in my home life and let me 'come back' after my world fell apart'
- A 1st Class Honours Student with Dyslexia:
 - 'I'm not thick I just don't know everything yet!'



Reference List

-
- Atkinson, AB (1981) 'On intergenerational income mobility in Britain. *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics*. Vol.3, pp.194–218.
 - Bathmaker, A.-M., N. Ingram, and R. Waller. 2013. "Higher Education, Social Class and the Mobilisation of Capitals." *British Journal Sociology of Education* 34 (5–6): 723–743.
 - Beller E, Hout M. 'Intergenerational social mobility: the united states in comparative perspective'. *Future Child*. 2006;16(2):19–36.
 - Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Reproduction in Education, Society, Culture*, London: Sage.
 - Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Harvard: Harvard University Press,
 - Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital', pp.241-258 in *The Sociology of Education*. J.G. Richardson (Ed), Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press.
 - Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J. C. (1977) *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
 - Brighouse, H, Howe, KR & Tooley, J (2010) *Educational Equality*, London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
 - Cosin, B. & Hales, M. (1997) *Families, Education, and Social Differences*, Abingdon, Berks: Routledge.
 - DfE (2016) *Widening Participation in Higher Education, England, 2013/14 age cohort*, London: DfE.



Reference List

-
- Dweck C (2000) *Self Theories: Their Role in Motivation, Personality, and Development: Essays in Social Psychology*, Psychology Press.
 - Dweck C (2017) *Mind-set – Updated Edition: Changing the Way you Think to Fulfil Your Potential*, Robinson.
 - Francis, B. & Wong, B. (2013) *What is preventing social mobility? A review of the evidence*, London: King's College.
 - Friedman HS & Martin LR (2011) *The Longevity Project: Surprising Discoveries for Health and Long Life from the Landmark Eight-Decade Study*, New York, NY: Hudson Street Press.
 - Gladwell M (2008) *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.
 - Gorard, S., Adnett, N., May, H., Smith, E. and Thomas, L. (2007) *Overcoming the Barriers to Higher Education*. UK: Trentham Books.
 - Hallqvist, J., Lynch, J., Bartley, M., Lang, T., & Blane, D. (2004). Can we disentangle life course processes of accumulation, critical period and social mobility? An analysis of disadvantaged socio-economic positions and myocardial infarction in the Stockholm Heart Epidemiology Program. *Social Science & Medicine*, 58, 1555-1562.
 - Rawls, J. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
 - Terman, LM (1959) *Genetic studies of Genius, Vol. V The Gifted group at mid-life*, Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
 - Young, M. D. (1958) *The rise of the meritocracy, 1870–2033: An essay on education and equality*, London: Thames and Hudson.



References:

- Aldridge S, SOCIAL MOBILITY A DISCUSSION PAPER, London: PIU, 2001.
- Berger, P. (1987) Capitalist Revolution: Fifty Propositions About Prosperity, Equality, and Liberty p.48
- Chan & Goldthorpe (2004) 'Is there a Status Order in Contemporary British Society?' European Sociological Review Volume 20 Number 5 pp. 383-401
- Crompton, R. (2008) Class & Stratification Cambridge: Polity
- Davies & Moore, 1964: 415
- Gilbert (2007) Social Class in America
- Goffman, E. (1990) Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity Harmondsworth: Penguin

References

- Hall, S. et al (2014) Public Attitudes to Poverty York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Attitudes_towards_poverty_full.pdf [Accessed 12/11/2017]
- Jackson et al (2007) 'Primary and Secondary Effects in Class Differentials in Educational Attainment: The Transition to A-Level Courses in England and Wales' *Acta Sociologica* Volume 50 Issue 3 pp. 211-229
- Lemert, E.M. (1951) *Social Pathology: A Systematic Approach to the Theory of Sociopathic Behavior* New York: McGraw Hill
- (ONS-SEC)
- Pakulski, J. & Waters, M. (1996) *The Death of Class* London: Sage
- Source: *Social Trends 36* (2006) Office of National Statistics
- Source: *Ethnic Differences in the labour market*: (1999) CREST
- Welsh Government (2013) *Free School Meals* Available at: <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/foodanddrink/freeschoolmeals/?lang=en> [Accessed 13/11/2017]