**Class Analysis and Social Inequality**

**Graduate Level**

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**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to major theoretical and substantive debates concerning the study of social class. We will examine contributions from various schools of thought, but focus on Marxist, Weberian, neoclassical economic, and feminist perspectives. The debates we review forefront the following questions concerning research on social class:

(1) How are resources distributed in capitalist economies?

(2) How does this distribution affect political power?

(3) How does this distribution affect social change and social stability?

The course is divided into three sections. In the first we examine competing approaches to class analysis. Next, we discuss the complex ways in which social factors such as race, gender, and power interact logically and historically with class inequalities.

In the third part of the course, special attention is paid to particular substantive problems that emerge out of the analysis of classes. Here, we examine how classes form as collective actors, the dynamics of their struggles, the conditions that help explain how they succeed or fail, how “free-rider” problems are overcome, how class compromises are forged, how the active consent of workers plays out in the context of the labour process, and how to understand the role of the state in competing accounts of class relations.

We end the course with a discussion around claims about the declining significance of class as both a social force and as a useful analytical category.

**Requirements**

Reading: All readings (except for the recommended ones) mentioned in the syllabus are mandatory, and they should be completed *before* class. Students will also need to read core substantive material in their chosen research area.

Your final grade for this course, on a scale from A to F, will be based on the following:

* Weekly written commentaries on readings (40%)
* Attendance and participation (20%)
* Final term paper (40%)

I will explain each of these and provide further detail as we go along.

Academic Honesty: If you are unclear how to cite properly, please consult me or a tutor at the writing center. Plagiarism carries severe consequences including, but not limited to, failure from the course.

**Readings and Course Schedule (subject to adjustment)**

**Week 1 – Introduction**

**Week 2 – Why Study Classes?**

* Wright, E.O. “Class Analysis.” In *Class Counts*, pp. 1–35
* Grusky, D. “Class.” In *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, pp. 804–808.
* Clement, W. and J. Myles. “Class Relations in Industrial Capitalism.” In

*The Relations of Ruling: Class and Gender in Postindustrial Societies*, pp. 3–21.

Recommended:

* Goldthorpe, J.H. 2000. “Class analysis and the reorientation of class theory.” In *On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives, and the Integration of Research and Theory*. Oxford University Press.
* Giddens, A. 1973. *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*. London: Hutchinson.
* Przeworski, A. 1985. “Proletariat into a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Kautsky’s The Class Struggle to Recent Contributions.” Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2, “Capitalism and Social Democracy.”
* Schumpeter, J. 1991. “Social Classes in an Ethnically Homogenous Environment.” In *The Economics and Sociology of Capitalism*, ed. Swedberg, pp. 230–283.
* Sayer, A. 2005. *The Moral Significance of Class*. Cambridge University Press. Selections.
* Lenski, G.E. 1966. *Power and Privilege*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

**Week 3 – Neo-Marxist class analysis – Class as exploitation and domination**

* Chibber V. 2007. “Developments in Marxist Class Analysis.” In *Critical Companion to Contemporary Marxism*, pp. 353–367.
* Wright, E.O. 2005. “A Framework for Class Analysis in the Marxist Tradition.” In *Alternative Foundations for Class Analysis*, pp. 4–30.
* Roemer, J.E., 2009. *Free to Lose: An Introduction to Marxist Economic Philosophy*. Harvard University Press. Selections.

Recommended:

* Marx, K. “Wage Labour and Capital.”
* Burawoy, M. 1989. “The Limits of Wright’s Analytical Marxism and an Alternative” in *The Debate on Classes*. London: Verso, pp.67-77.
* Wright, E.O. 1985. *Classes.* London: Verso.
* Wright, E.O. 2000. *Class counts: Comparative Studies in Class Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
* Cottrell, A. 1984. “Modern Marxists on Social Classes.” In *Marxist Theory and Social Class*.
* Elster, J. 1985. “Classes.” In *Making Sense of Marx*, pp. 318–344 and 371–397.
* Wood, E.M. “History or Teleology? Marx versus Weber.” In *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing historical materialism*, pp. 353–367.
* Sweezy, P.M. 1964. *Theory of Capital Development*. New York: NYU Press.
* Roemer, J. 1982. “New Directions in The Marxian Theory of Class and Exploitation.” *Politics and Society* 11(3).

**Week 4 – Neo-Weberian class analysis – Class as opportunity hoarding**

* Parkin, F. *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique*. Selections.
* Breen, R. 2005. *Foundations of Class Analysis*. Ch. 3, “A Weberian Framework for Class Analysis.”
* Goldthorpe, J.H. 2000. “Social Class and the Differentiation of Employment Contracts.” In *On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives, and the Integration of Research and Theory*. Oxford University Press.

Recommended:

* Weber, M. “Status Groups and Classes,” in Economy and Society I, pp. 302-307
* Allen, K. 2008. “Class Status and Party.” In *Max Weber: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 81–96.
* Goldthorpe, J. 1987. *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Great Britain*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
* Marshall, G. 1990. “John Goldthorpe and Class Analysis.” In *Goldthorpe: Consensus and Controversy. Falmer Press, Basingstoke*.
* Scott, J. 2014. *Stratification and Power: Structures of Class, Status and Command*. John Wiley & Sons.
* Giddens, A. 1973. “The Weberian Critique.” In *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*. London: Hutchinson.

**Week 5 – The view from economics: The absence of class**

* Fine, B. 1998. “Human Capital Theory: Labour as Asset.” In *Labour Market Theory: A Constructive Reassessment*, pp. 57–71.
* Becker, G. 1976. “Introduction.” In *The Economic Approach to Human Behaviour*, pp. 3–12.
* Wolff, R. and S. Resnick. 2012. “Neoclassical Theory: The determination of wages.” In *Contending Economic Theories*, Cambridge: MIT Press. pp. 51-55 & 81–90.
* Sørensen, A.B. 2000. “Toward a Sounder Basis for Class Analysis.” *American Journal of Sociology* 105(6): 1523–1558.

Recommended

* Sørensen, A.B. 2005 “The Foundations of a Rent-based Concept of Class”, pp. 119-151 in Wright (ed.) *Approaches to Class Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
* Rueschemeyer, D. and J. Mahoney. 2000. “A Neo‐Utilitarian Theory of Class?” *American Journal of Sociology* 105(6): 1583–1591
* Alchian, A.A. and H. Demsetz. 1972. “Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization.” *American Economic Review* 62(5): 777–795.
* Blaug, M. 1987. *The Economics of Education and the Education of an Economist*. Selections.
* Botwinick, H., 1993. *Persistent Inequalities. Wage Disparity under Capitalist Competition*. Selections.
* Becker. G. 1990. “Interview with Gary Becker.” In *Economics and Sociology*, ed. R. Swedberg.
* Samuelson, P.A. 1957. “Wages and Interest: A Modern Dissection of Marxian Economic Models.” *American Economic Review* 47(6): 884–912.

**Week 6 – Class and Gender – (1) Single and Dual systems**

* Brenner, J. and M. Ramas. 1984. “Rethinking Women’s Oppression.” *New Left Review* 146: 33–71.
* Sen, G. 1980. “The Sexual Division of Labor and the Working Class Family: Towards a Conceptual Synthesis of Class Relations and the Subordination of Women.” *Radical Review of Political Economy* 12(2): 76–86.
* Clement, W. and J. Myles. “Household Relations Power Divisions and Domestic Labour,” & “Bringing In Gender: Postindustrialism and Patriarchy.” In *The Relations of Ruling: Class and Gender in Postindustrial Societies*, pp. 123–141 and 142–175.

Recommended:

* Davis, A. 1981. *Women, Race, & Class*. Selections.
* Hartmann, H. 1981. “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union.” In *Women and Revolution*, ed. L Sargent. Boston: South End. Pp. 1–42
* Hartmann, H. 1976. “Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex.” *Signs* 1: 137–169.
* Secombe, W. 1974. “The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism.” *New Left Review* 83.
* Barrett, M. 1984. “Rethinking Women's Oppression: A Reply to Brenner and Ramas.” *New Left Review* 146.
* Humphries, J. 1977. “Class Struggle and the Persistence of the Working Class Family.” *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 1(3): 241–258.
* Folbre, N., 1983. Of patriarchy born: The political economy of fertility decisions. *Feminist Studies*, *9*(2), pp.261-284.

**Week 7 – Class and Gender – (2) Domestic Labour and Beyond**

* Molyneux, M. “Beyond the Domestic Labour Debate.” *New Left Review* 116.
* Stevi Jackson, 1999. “Marxism and Feminism.” In *Marxism and Social Science* ed. Gamble, Marsh, and Tant. University of Illinois Press.
* England, P., Budig, M. and Folbre, N., 2002. Wages of virtue: The relative pay of care work. *Social Problems*, *49*(4), pp.455-473.

Recommended:

* Stanworth, M. 1984. “Women and Class Analysis: A reply to John Goldthorpe.” *Sociology* 18(2): 161–169.
* Goldthorpe, J. 1984. “Women and Class Analysis: A reply to the Replies.” *Sociology* 18(4): 491–499.
* Goldthorpe, J. 1983. “Women and Class Analysis: In Defense of the Conventional View.” *Sociology* 17: 465–488.
* Wright, E.O. 1997. *Class Counts*. Ch. 6–8.
* MacKinnon, C.A. 1982. “Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory.” *Signs* 7(3): 515–544.
* Folbre, N., 1991. The unproductive housewife: Her evolution in nineteenth-century economic thought. *Signs*, *16*(3), pp.463-484.
* Bittman, M., England, P., Sayer, L., Folbre, N. and Matheson, G., 2003. When Does Gender Trump Money? Bargaining and Time in Household Work. *American Journal of sociology*, *109*(1), pp.186-214.
* McCall, K. 2005. “The Complexity of Intersectionality.” *Signs* 30(31): 1771–1802.

**Week 8 – Class and Race (1) –Theorizing the Race-Class Interaction**

* Bonacich, E. 1976. “Advanced Capitalism and Black/White Relations in the United States: A Split Labor Market Interpretation.” *American Sociological Review* 41: 34-51.
* Bonacich, E. 1980. “Class Approaches to Ethnicity and Race.” *Insurgent Sociologis* 10(2): 9–24.
* Reich, M. 1981. *Racial Inequality: A Political-Economic Analysis*. Selections.

Recommended:

* Mason, P. 1995. “Race, Competition and Differential Wages.” *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 19(4): 545–567.
* Banton, M. 1998. “Race as Class.” In *Racial Theories.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
* Meiksens Woods, E. 1995. “Capitalism and Human Emancipation: Race, Gender, and Democracy.” In *Democracy against Capitalism.*
* Hall, S. 1996. “Gramsci’s Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.” In *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*.
* Bobo, Larry. 1988. “Group Conflict, Prejudice and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes.” In *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*, ed. P.A. Katz.

**Week 9 – Class and Race (2) – Historicizing the Race-Class Interaction**

* Virdee, S. 2009. “Racism, Class and the Dialectics of Social Transformation.” In *The SAGE handbook of Race and Ethnic Studies*, ed. Collins and Solomos, pp.135–165.
* Goldfield, M. 1997. “Critical Turning Points in Early U.S. History,” in *The Color of Politics*.
* Quadagno, J.S., 1994. *The color of welfare: How racism undermined the war on poverty*. Oxford University Press. Selections.

Recommended:

* James, D. 1988. “The Transformation of the Southern Racial State: Class and Race Determinants of Local-state Structures.” *American Sociological Review* 53: 191–208.
* Fields, B.J. 1990. “Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America.” *New Left Review* 181.
* Carter, R. 2009. “Marxism and Theories of Racism.” In *The* *Critical Companion to Contemporary Marxism*.
* Reed Jr., A. and M. Chowkwanyun. 2012. “Race, Class, Crisis: The Discourse of Racial Disparity and its Analytical Discontents.” *Socialist Register* 48: 149–175.
* Chibber, V. 2012 “Capital’s Universalizing Tendency.” In *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital*.
* Omi, M. and Winant, H., 2014. *Racial formation in the United States*. Routledge.

**Week 10 – Problems in Class Analysis (1) – Class Formation**

* Offe, C. and H. Wiesenthal. 1980. “Two Logics of Collective Action: Theoretical Notes on Social Class and Organizational Form.” In *Political Power and Social Theory*, M. Zeitlin (ed).
* Przeworski, A. and J.D. Sprague. 1988. *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. Selections.

Recommended**:**

* Olson, M. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action*. Selections.
* Brenner, R. 1985. “The Paradox of American Social Democracy.” In *The Year Left*, pp. 32–87.
* Przeworski, A. 1985. *Capitalism and Social Democracy*. Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2, “Proletariat into a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Kautsky’s The Class Struggle to Recent Contributions.”
* Oliver, P., M. Gerald and R. Teixeira. 1984. “The Theory of the Critical Mass.” *American Journal of Sociology*.
* Wright, E.O. 1997. *Class Counts*. Ch. 10, “A General Framework for Studying Class Consciousness and Class Formation.”

**Week 11 – Problems in Class Analysis (2) – Class Compromise**

* Przeworski, A. 1985. “Material Interests, Class Compromise and the State.” In *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, pp. 171–203.
* Wright, E.O. 2000. “Working-Class Power, Capitalist-Class Interests and Class Compromise.” *American Journal of Sociology*: 957–1002.

Recommended:

* Hicks, A. and L. Kenworthy, 1998. “Cooperation and Political Economic Performance in Affluent Democratic Capitalism.” *American Journal of Sociology* 103(6): 1631–72.
* Shaikh, A. 2003. “Who Pays for the “Welfare” in the Welfare State?” *Social Research* 70(2).
* Rogers, J. 1990. “Divide and Conquer: Further 'Reflections on the Distinctive Character of American Labor Laws.” *Wisconsin Law Review* 1(1): 1–147.
* Korpi, W. 1981. *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism*. Selections.
* Korpi, W., J.S. O’Connor, and G.M. Olsen. 1998. *Power Resources Theory and the Welfare State: A Critical Approach*. University of Toronto Press.

**Week 12 – Problems in Class Analysis (3) – Class Interests and the Labour Process**

* Braverman, H. 1979. *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. Selections.

Recommended:

* Bowles, S. and H. Gintis, (1990). “Contested Exchange: New Microfoundations for the Political Economy of Capitalism.” *Politics & Society*: 165–222.
* Womack, J, J. Jones, D. and Roos. 1990. *The Machine that Changed the World*. Selections.
* Burawoy, M., 1979. *Manufacturing consent: Changes in the labor process under monopoly capitalism*. University of Chicago Press.
* Burawoy, M. 1985. *The Politics of Production*. Selections.
* Kalleberg, A.L., 1989. Linking macro and micro levels: Bringing the workers back into the sociology of work. *Social forces*, *67*(3), pp.582-592.
* Smith, V., 1994. Braverman's Legacy The Labor Process Tradition at 20. *Work and Occupations*, *21*(4), pp.403-421.
* Noble, D. 1985. *The Forces of Production.* Selections.
* Milkman, R. 1997. *Farewell to the Factory: Auto Workers in the Late Twentieth Century.* Selections.

**Week 13 – Problems in Class Analysis (4) – Classes and the State Debate**

* Offe, C. 1974, “Structural Problems of the Capitalist State: Class rule and the Political System. On the Selectiveness of Political Institutions.” In German Political Studies, ed. Von Beyme, pp. 31–54.
* Block, F. “The Ruling Class Does Not Rule.” In *Revising State Theory*, pp. 57–68.
* Gilens, M. 2012. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton University Press. Selections.

Recommended:

* Rogers, J. and J. Cohen. 1983. “Structure.” In *On Democracy*, pp. 47–87.
* Pontusson, J, 1992. *The Limits of Social Democracy: Investment Politics in Sweden*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
* Przeworski, A. 1985, “Social Democracy as Historical Phenomenon.” In *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, pp.7–43.
* Huber E. and J. D. Stephens. 2002. *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State: Parties and Politics in Global Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
* Gough, I. 1979. *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*. Ch. 6, “The Welfare State and the Capitalist Economy.”
* Barrow, C.W., 1993. *Critical Theories of the State*. University of Wisconsin Press.
* Alford, R.R. and R. Friedland. 1985. *Powers of Theory: Capitalism, the State, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
* Gilens, M. and B.I. Page. 2014. Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens. *Perspectives on Politics* 12(03): 564–581.
* Bartels, L.M. 2009. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton University Press.

**Week 14 – The Declining Significance of Class?**

* Pakulski, J. and M. Waters. 1996. “The Reshaping and Dissolution of Social Class in Advanced Society.” *Theory and Society* 25(5): 667–691.
* Manza, J. and C. Brooks. 1996. “Does Class Analysis Still Have Anything to Contribute to the Study of Politics? Comments.” *Theory and Society* 25(5): 717–724.
* Wright, E.O. “The Continuing Relevance of Class Analysis: Comments.” *Theory and Society* 25(5): 693–716.

Recommended:

* Weeden, K.A., and D.B. Grusky. (2005). The Case for a New Class Map. *American Journal of Sociology*, *111*(1), 141-212.
* Pakulski, J. and Waters, M. 1996. *The Death of Class*. Sage.
* Kingston, P. 2000. *The Classless Society*. Selections.
* Grusky, D.B. and J.B. Sørensen. 1998. “Can Class Analysis Be Salvaged?” *American Journal of Sociology* 103(5): 1187–1234.
* Grusky, D.B. and K.A. Weeden. 2001. “Decomposition without Death: A Research Agenda for a New Class Analysis.” *Acta Sociologica 44*(3): 203–218.
* Goldthorpe, J.H. 2002. “Occupational Sociology, Yes: Class Analysis, No: Comment on Grusky and Weeden’s Research Agenda.” *Acta Sociologica* 45(3): 211–217.
* Wright, E.O. 2009. Understanding Class: Towards an Integrated Analytical Approach. *New Left Review* *60*: 101–16.
* Moody, K. 1988. *An Injury to All: The Decline of American Unionism*. Selections.
* Pakulski, J. 2005. *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Ch. 7, “Foundations of Post-class Analysis.”

**Week 15 – Review and Wrap Up**