

University of Oxford

Department of Sociology

HT 2016

Social Stratification

Thursday, weeks 1-8, 10.00-11.30

Manor Road, Seminar Room F

Summative assessment: Three hour examination in TT.

Formative assessment: Three tutorial essays, two short (1500 words) due Thursday Week 4 and Thursday Week 7. One long (3000 words) due Monday week 1 of TT. You may choose your titles from the list of questions under each topic heading, or you may choose relevant questions from past examination papers, or you may make up your own questions. If you choose the latter please consult me about the suitability of what you propose to do.

Seminars

Each week (apart from week 6) the reading is divided up into two sections usually on different (though related) themes or split between more theoretical/conceptual pieces and more empirical pieces. Each week 1 person will take responsibility for introducing in the seminar the reading required for each section (ie two people per week). In the seminar they should be prepared to talk for 10 minutes (no more please!) about the main themes or results. Ten minutes is not very long, so you will have to be very selective. You don't have to summarize the reading. Assume that everyone has read the articles, but try to pull out what is important from what is just detail or irrelevance. Try not to read a script from a piece of paper. Just prepare some bullet points and something to say about each one. No Powerpoint presentations please!

In addition each week everyone, of course, should do as much of the reading as is humanly possible. I understand that there is a lot to get through so I'm realistic about how much you will be able to handle. As a guide anyone who doesn't manage to carefully read at least 4 articles per week is a slacker.

And finally, to help me focus the seminar on the things that will be most helpful to you, everyone is obliged to send me by noon on the Thursday before the seminar at least 3 questions on the readings that they would like to know the answers to.

Seminar Reading

Week 2: Cultural Capital and Educational Achievement

i) *There are different opinions about the analytical value and coherence of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. The following are some contrasting views. Which do you find most convincing?*

Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital.' In Richardson, J. E. (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* This can be difficult to get hold of but a bit of searching can usually turn up a copy of dubious provenance. For example it is currently accessible at:

<https://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Bourdieu-Forms-of-Capital.pdf>

Goldthorpe, J. H. (2007) "'Cultural Capital': Some Critical Observations' *Sociologica*, 2. doi: 10.2383/24755. This article appears in an on-line journal which can be accessed after registration. Registration is free.

Goldthorpe, J. H. (2008) 'Three cheers for unoriginality – but who will be cheering?' *Sociologica*, 1. doi: 10.2383/26581.

Lizardo, O. (2008) 'Comment on John Goldthorpe/5. Three cheers for unoriginality.' *Sociologica*, 1. doi:10.2383/26580.

Lareau, A. and Weininger, E. B. (2003) 'Cultural Capital in Educational Research: A Critical Assessment.' *Theory and Society*, 32, pp. 567-606.

Sullivan, A. (2002) 'Bourdieu and Education: How Useful is Bourdieu's Theory for Researchers?' *Netherlands Journal of Social Science*, 38, 2, 144-166.

Weininger, E. B. (2005) 'Foundations of Pierre Bourdieu's Class Analysis.' In Wright, E. O. (ed.) *Approaches to Class Analysis*. This chapter is downloadable from Erik Wright's website: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Chapter%204%20--%20Weininger%20Jan%202004doc.pdf>

Savage, M., Warde, A. and F. Devine (2005) 'Capitals, assets and resources: some critical issues' *British Journal of Sociology*, 56, 1, pp 31-47.

Lareau, A. (2002) 'Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families', *American Sociological Review*, 67, 5, 747-776.

Weininger, E. B. and Lareau, A. (2003) 'Translating Bourdieu into the American context: the question of social class and family-school relations' *Poetics*, 31, 375-402.

Weininger, E. B. and Lareau, A. (2009) 'Paradoxical Pathways: An Ethnographic Extension of Kohn's Findings on Class and Childrearing' *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 680-695.

ii) *Attempts to estimate the impact of cultural capital or cultural resources on educational outcomes have reached mixed conclusions. What does the balance of the evidence tell us?*

De Graaf, N. D., De Graaf, P. and Kraaykamp, G. (2000) 'Parental Cultural Capital and Educational Attainment in the Netherlands: A Refinement of the Cultural Capital Perspective' *Sociology of Education*, 73, 2, pp. 92-111

DiMaggio, P. and Mohr, J. (1985) 'Cultural capital, educational attainment and marital selection.' *American Journal of Sociology* 90, 6 (May).

DiMaggio, P. (1982) 'Cultural Capital and High School Success: The Impact of Status Culture Participation on the Grades of US High School Students.' *American Sociological Review*, 47, pp. 189-201.

Jæger, M. M. (2011) 'Does Cultural Capital Really Affect Academic Achievement? New Evidence from Combined Sibling and Panel Data.' *Sociology of Education*, 4, pp. 281-298.

Jæger, M. M. (2009) 'Equal Access but Unequal Outcomes: Cultural Capital and Educational Choice in a Meritocratic Society.' *Social Forces*, 4, pp. 1943-1971.

Week 3: Social Inequality & Child Development

i) *The Feinsein debate. Is inequality reinforced as children develop?*

The initial paper is:

Feinstein, L. (2003) 'Inequality in the Early Cognitive Development of British Children in the 1970 Cohort', *Economica*, 70, 73-97.

Feinstein, L (2003) 'Very Early', *CentrePiece*, Summer, 24-30. (This is a popular version of the *Economica* article)

The first serious critique is:

Jerrim, J. and Vignoles, A. (2011) The use (and misuse) of statistics in understanding social mobility: regression to the mean and the cognitive development of high ability children from disadvantaged homes. DoQSS Working Paper No. 11-01. Downloadable at: <http://repec.ioe.ac.uk/REPEc/pdf/qsswp1101.pdf>

Subsequently the debate has been pursued in the pages of *Longitudinal and Lifecourse Studies*, 2015, 6, 3, 331-376

Feinstein has the final word in *Longitudinal and Lifecourse Studies*, 2015, 6, 4, 476-483.

The following give important technical background information at lesser and greater length:

Healy, M. J. R. and Goldstein, H. (1978) 'Regression to the Mean', *Annals of Human Biology*, 5, 3, 277-280.

Nesselroade, J. R., Stigler, S. M. and Baltes, P. B. (1980) 'Regression Toward the Mean and the Study of Change' *Psychological Bulletin*, 88, 3, 622-637.

ii) *Should the evidence lead us to be pessimistic about the possibility of breaking the link between inter-generational inequality?*

Ermisch, J. (2008) 'Origins of Social Immobility and Inequality: Parenting and Early Child Development', *National Institute Economic Review*, 205, 62-71.

Becker, B. (2011) 'Social disparities in children's vocabulary in early childhood. Does pre-school education help to close the gap?' *British Journal of Sociology*, 62, 1, 69-88.

Sullivan, A., Sosthenes, K. and Joshi, H. (2013) 'Social Class and Inequalities in Early Cognitive Scores' *Sociology*, 47, 1187-1206.

Rasbash, J., Leckie, G. and Pillinger, R. (2010) 'Children's educational progress: partitioning family, school and area effects' *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A*, 173, 3, 657-682.

Week 4: Social Class

i) *What is social class? Are some conceptualisations of social class more helpful than others? How could we know?*

Goldthorpe, J. H. (2000) 'Social class and the differentiation of employment contracts' Ch. 10 of *On Sociology*

Goldthorpe, J.H. and McKnight, A. (2006) 'The economic basis of social class' in Morgan, S. L., Grusky, D. B. and Fields, G. S. (eds.) *Mobility and Inequality*

McGovern P. et al. (2007) *Market Class and Employment*, pp. 70-87

*Wright, E. O (2005) 'Foundations of a neo-Marxist Class Analysis' in Wright, E. O. (ed.) *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Available at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Chapter%201%20-%20Wright%20Jan%202004.pdf>

Sørensen, A. (2005) 'Foundations of neo-Ricardian class analysis' in Wright, E. O. (ed.) *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Available at: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/Chapter%205%20-%20Sorensen%20Jan%202004.pdf>

Western, B., Bloome, D., Sosnaud, B. and Tach, L. (2012) 'Economic Insecurity and Social Stratification', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38, 341-59

Rehm, P. (2009) 'Risks and Redistribution: An Individual Level Analysis', *Comparative Political Studies*, 42, 855-

Bengtsson, M., Berglund, T. and Oskarson, M. (2013) 'Class and ideological orientations revisited: an exploration of class-based mechanisms', *British Journal of Sociology*, 64, 4, 691-716.

Pahl, R. (1993) 'Does class analysis without class theory have a promising future? A reply to Goldthorpe and Marshall', *Sociology*, 27, 2, 253-258.

Le Roux, B., Rouanet, H., Savage, M. and Warde, A. (2008) 'Class and Cultural Division in the UK' *Sociology*, 42, pp.1049-1071.

Savage et al. (2013) 'A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment' *Sociology* 47,2, 219-250.

Atkinson, W. and Rosenlund L. (2014) 'Mapping the British Social Space: Towards a Bourdieusian Class Scheme' http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/spais/documents/Working%20paper_02_14_WA.pdf

ii) *Should we replace 'big classes with 'micro-classes?*

Weeden, K. A., and Grusky, D. B. (2005). 'The Case for a New Class Map' *American Journal of Sociology* 111, 1, 141-212.

Grusky, D. B., and Weeden, K. A. (2008) 'Are there Social Classes? A Framework for Testing Sociology's Favorite Concept' pp. 65-89 in *Social Class: How Does it Work?*, Lareau A. and Conley, D. (eds.)

Williams, M. (2012) 'Occupations and British Wage Inequality, 1970s-2000s', *European Sociological Review*, 29, 6.

Weeden, K. A. (2002) 'Why do some occupations pay more than others? Social closure and earnings inequality in the United States.' *American Journal of Sociology*, 108, 55-101.

Kim, C. and Sakamoto, A. (2008). 'The rise of intra-occupational wage inequality in the United States, 1983 to 2002'. *American Sociological Review*, 73, 129-157.

Week 5: Social Mobility.

i) *What is social mobility? Why is it of any interest? Has social mobility in Britain declined?*

Breen, R. (ed.) (2005) *Social Mobility in Europe*.

Blanden, J., A. Goodman, P. Gregg and S. Machin (2004) "Changes in Intergenerational Mobility in Britain" in Corak, M. (ed.) *Generational Income Inequality*

Goldthorpe, J. H. and C. Mills (2008) Class Trends in Intergenerational Class Mobility in Modern Britain: Evidence From National Surveys, 1972—2005, *National Institute Economic Review*

Blanden, J., Gregg, P. and Machin, S. (2005) 'Educational Inequality and Intergenerational Mobility' in S. Machin and A. Vignoles (eds.) *What's the Good of Education? The Economics of Education in the UK*, pp: 99-114.

Blanden, J. A., P. Gregg and L. Macmillan (2007) "Accounting for Intergenerational Persistence", *Economic Journal*, 11,7, (519), C43-C60

Blanden, J. and Machin, S. (2007) Recent Changes in Intergenerational Mobility in Britain", Report for the Sutton Trust, December.

Blanden, J., Gregg, P. and Machin, S. (2005) 'Educational Inequality and Intergenerational Mobility' in S. Machin and A. Vignoles (eds.) *What's the Good of Education? The Economics of Education in the UK*, pp: 99-114.

Blanden J., A. and S. Machin (2008) "Up and Down the Generational Income Ladder in Britain: Past Changes and Future Prospects" *National Institute Economic Review*

Erikson, R. And Goldthorpe, J. H. (2010) "Has social mobility in Britain decreased? Reconciling divergent findings on income and class mobility", *British Journal of Sociology*, 61, 2, 211-230

ii) *What, if anything, have we learned from cross-national comparisons of social mobility?*

Blanden, J. A. (2011) "Cross-country rankings in intergenerational mobility: a comparison of approaches from economics and sociology" *Journal of Economic Surveys* DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-6419.2011.00690.x

Jerrim, J., Choi, A. and Rodriguez, R. S. (2013) Cross-national comparisons of intergenerational mobility: are the earnings measured used robust? Working Paper. Downloadable from: https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/conference/download.cgi?db_name=XXIEEP&paper_id=73

Week 6: Higher education in the UK, who should pay and how?

Debate: *Should an egalitarian be in favour or opposed to higher education students paying tuition fees that reflect the cost of their education?*

Barr, N. (1998) *The Economics of the Welfare State* (3rd edition) Ch. 13.

Barr, N. (2004) "Higher education funding", *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 264-283

Barr, N. Comment on the Browne Review downloadable from: http://econ.lse.ac.uk/staff/nb/Barr_Browne_Review_101016.pdf

Barr, N. Breaking the logjam: Evidence to BIS Select Committee downloadable from: http://econ.lse.ac.uk/staff/nb/Barr_BISSelectComm110522.pdf

Barr, N. Assessing the White Paper on Higher Education: Supplementary evidence to BIS Select Committee, downloadable from: http://econ.lse.ac.uk/staff/nb/Barr_BISSelectComm110708.pdf

Barr, N. (2012) 'The Higher Education White Paper: The Good, the Bad, the Unspeakable – and the Next White Paper' *Social Policy and Administration*, 46,5, 2012.

Johnston, A. and Barr, N. (2013) 'Student loan reform, interest subsidies and costly technicalities: lessons from the UK experience' *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 35, 2, 167-178.

Callender, C. and Jackson, J (2005) "Does Fear of Debt Deter Students from Higher Education?" *Journal of Social Policy*, 34, 4 pp. 509-540.

Callender, C. and Jackson, J (2008) "Does Fear of Debt Constrain Choice of University and subject of study?" *Studies in Higher Education*, 33, 4, pp. 405-429.

Callender, C. (2010) "Bursaries and Institutional Aid in Higher Education in England: Do they safeguard access and promote fair access?" *Oxford Review of Education* , 36, 1, pp.45-62.

Chowdery, H. et al. (2010) Widening participation in higher education: analysis using linked administrative data, IFS Working Paper, doi: [10.1920/wp.ifs.2010.1004](https://doi.org/10.1920/wp.ifs.2010.1004)

Week 7: Location, location, location...

i) How much do neighbourhoods matter?

Read these two first:

Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. T., Klebanov, P. K. and N. Sealand (1993) 'Do Neighborhoods Influence Child and Adolescent Development?' *American Journal of Sociology*, 99, 2, 353-395.

Sharkey, P. and Faber, J. W. (2014) 'Where, When, Why, and For Whom Do Residential Contextx Matter? Moving Away from the Dichotomous Understanding of Neighborhood Effects', *Annual Review of Sociology*,40, 559-79.

Chetty, R. and Hendren, N. (2015) 'The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility: Childhood Exposure Effects and County-Level Estimates' Working Paper downloadable from: <http://www.rajchetty.com/index.php/papers-and-data/papers-and-data-listed-chronologically>

Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Kline, P. and E. Saez (2014) 'Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129, 4, 1553-1623.

Sharkey, P. and Faber, J. W. (2014) 'Where, When, Why, and For Whom Do Residential Contextx Matter? Moving Away from the Dichotomous Understanding of Neighborhood Effects', *Annual Review of Sociology*,40, 559-79.

Sharkey, P.(2008) 'The Intergenerational Transmission of Context' *American Journal of Sociology*, 113, 4, 931-69.

Sharkey, P. (2012) 'Residential Mobility and the Reproduction of Unequal Neighborhoods', *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, 14, 3, 9-32

Sharkey, P. (2012) 'An Alternative Approach to Addressing Selection Into and Out of Social Settings: Neighborhood Change and African American Children's Economic Outcomes', *Sociological Methods & Research*, 41, 2, 251-293.

Sharkey, P. and Elwert, F. (2011) 'The Legacy of Disadvantage: Multigenerational Neighborhood Effects on Cognitive Ability', *American Journal of Sociology*, 116, 6, 1934-81.

For everyone to think about. A recent report by the Social Market Foundation headlined in the press with the claim that regions have increased influence on educational outcomes. At the moment the only evidence we can interrogate are a set of slides, downloadable from: <http://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Publication-Commission-on-Inequality-in-Education-Initial-Findings-Slide-Pack-120116.pdf>

ii) *On the basis of what you have learned on the course so far, how credible are the SFM's claims?*

Week 8: Inequality of Income and Wealth

i) *Are Piketty's stories about the growth of inequality convincing?*

You could read Thomas Piketty (2014) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. In fact you probably should read it. But I'm not expecting anyone will, at least not for the seminar.

Better to start off with two short papers that set out the substance of Piketty's views:

Piketty, T. and Saez (2014) 'Inequality in the Long Run' *Science*, 344, 6186, 838-843

Piketty, T. (2015) 'About Capital in the Twenty-First Century' *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings*, 105, 5, 48-53.

Then Soskice's piece which contains both a summary of Piketty's argument and a critique.

Soskice, D. (2014), 'Capital in the twenty-first century: a critique' *British Journal of Sociology*, 65, 4

Then various other critiques of greater and lesser persuasiveness:

Mankiw N. G. (2015) 'Yes, $r > g$. So What?', *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings*, 105, 5, 43-47.

Cowell, F. A. (2014) 'Piketty in the long run', *British Journal of Sociology*, 65, 4, 708-720.

Piachaud, D. (2014) 'Piketty's capital and social policy', *British Journal of Sociology*, 65, 4, 696-707.

Finally read Piketty's reply to some of his critics:

Piketty, T. (2014) 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century: a multidimensional approach to the history of capital and social classes', *British Journal of Sociology*, 65, 4, 736-747.

ii) *What can be done about inequality? What should be done?*

Anthony B. Atkinson (2015) *Inequality What Can Be Done?*

Atkinson, A. B. (2014) 'After Piketty', *British Journal of Sociology*, 65,4, 619-638

Atkinson, A. B., Piketty, T. and Saez, E. (2011) 'Top Incomes in the Long Run of History', *Journal of Economic Literature*, 49, 1, 3-71.

Atkinson, A. B. and Voitchovsky (2011) 'The Distribution of Top Earnings in the U. K. – Since the Second World War', *Economica*, 78, 440-459.

Factual information, primarily about the British case, of relevance to both topics can be found here:

Crawford, R., Innes, D. and C. O'Dea (2015) 'The Evolution of Wealth in Great Britain: 2006-08 to 2010-12, IFS Report R109.

Belfield, C., Cribb, J., Hood, A. and R. Joyce (2015) 'Living Standards, Poverty and Inequality in the UK: 2015, IFS Report R107.

Alvaredo, F., Atkinson, A. B. and S. Moreli (2015) 'The challenge of measuring UK wealth inequality in the 2000s. Working paper downloadable from: <http://www.tony-atkinson.com/researchpapers/>

Finally Cowell is a good crib on all of the purely technical issues about inequality measurement:

Cowell, F. A. (2011) *Measuring Inequality* (3rd ed.)

Schedule for class presentations (the 10 minute introductions)

Week 2

i) *There are different opinions about the analytical value and coherence of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. The following are some contrasting views. Which do you find most convincing?*

ii) *Attempts to estimate the impact of cultural capital or cultural resources on educational outcomes have reached mixed conclusions. What does the balance of the evidence tell us?*

Week 3

- i) *The Feinstein debate. Is inequality reinforced as children develop?*
- ii) *Should the evidence lead us to be pessimistic about the possibility of breaking the link between inter-generational inequality?*

Week 4

- i) *What is social class? Are some conceptualisations of social class more helpful than others? How could we know?*
- ii) *Should we replace 'big classes with 'micro-classes?*

Week 5

- i) *What is social mobility? Why is it of any interest? Has social mobility in Britain declined?*
- ii) *What, if anything, have we learned from cross-national comparisons of social mobility?*

Week 6

Should an egalitarian be in favour or opposed to higher education students paying tuition fees that reflect the cost of their education?

Debate: Everyone prepare! You'll be randomly allocated in class to two groups one to argue for the proposition, one against, so you need to understand both sides of the argument.

Week 7

- i) *How much do neighbourhoods matter?*
- ii) *On the basis of what you have learned on the course so far, how credible are the SFM's claims?*

Everyone to prepare for this.

Week 8

- i) *Are Piketty's stories about the growth of inequality convincing?*
- ii) *What can be done about inequality? What should be done?*