

Lecture Notes:

- ① **Functional** (and often simultaneously dysfunctional) aspects of **status**:
 - types of status include **ascribed** (born into) and **achieved** (earned or granted by society through performance)
 - statuses are associated with **systems of social stratification** and may occur on a number of grounds
 - **major**: race, ethnicity, or panethnic group; gender; wealth; economic class; social status; and political power
 - **hidden**: age; weight; able-bodiedness; sexual orientation; religion; work/profession; education, intelligence, skill
 - examples of systems of stratification include:
 - **caste, estate, and class**

- Systems of inequality also regulate the access of different social groups or categories to a society's resources:
 - social **class** and capitalist societies (see *lesson 10b: economy*): distinctions between individuals or groups are hierarchical and based on their relation to the means of production or access to economic resources
 - overview of the American Class Structure:

class	% families	income range	major sources	typical occupations	level of education
power elite:	<.0001	?	assets	government, corporate, and military leaders	
upper class:	<.01	>\$1M	assets	investors; corp. execs.	≥ BA/BS
upper-middle:	.18 – .20	\$75K – \$1M	salaries	upper-level management; professionals; business owners	≥ BA/BS; many w/graduate degs.
lower-middle:	.25 – .30	\$35K – \$75K	salaries & wages	lower-level management; semi-professionals; small business owners; craftpersons	≥ HS; often some college or tech.
working:	.25 – .30	\$25K – \$40K	wages	operatives; clerical & retail wkrs.	HS
working poor:	.12 – .15	\$12K – \$25K	wages	lower-level service workers; unskilled operatives	some HS
underclass:	.08 – .10	<\$12K	public assistance & underground	unemployed/underemployed	some HS

- in many other westernized nations, this class structure is relative more flattened
- in developing nations, this class structure is more heavily skewed with more people on the lower rungs and a generally more modest upper bound
- Some problems arising from inter-group relations: prejudice, discrimination, and aggression
 - **prejudice**: negative attitudes toward members of specific social out-groups
 - **discrimination**: negative behaviors toward social out-group members who are the object of prejudice
 - theories of prejudice and discrimination
 - **frustration-aggression**: response to blocking goal directed behaviors
 - **catharsis**: release of other negative affect in negative behaviors directed toward out-group
 - **scapegoating**: blaming identifiable group when true sources are diffuse or unidentifiable
 - **relative deprivation**: if in-group is perceived as worse off than some out-group it expects to surpass
 - **social comparison**: attempts to achieve positive distinctions for in-group relating to out-groups
 - **nominal/minimal group**: association with an arbitrary out-group is enough to generate discrimination
 - **social cognition/stereotyping**: biased perceptions stem from inaccurate information processing heuristics
 - **realistic conflict theory**: groups in actual competition for scarce resources (remember Robber's Cave)
 - **social learning**: early experiences form our categories and associated attitudes
 - in-group differentiation vs. out-group homogeneity
 - **instrumentality**: goal directed behaviors to gain in-group advantage or remove out-group one; may be related to jealousy, punishment, or simply to capital attainment
 - (perceived) **provocation**: group responds to pre-existing negative behaviors from other group members
 - **aggregate personality type** and/or **group norm**: many "type A" personalities and/or aggressive norms

- **aggression** is the violent or destructive extension of discriminatory behaviors
 - possible causes include all of those for discrimination, and:
 - **environmental stressors** raise baseline interference level and provoke information overload
 - uncontrollable moderate levels of heat, noise, crowding (we can take higher levels if we are in control)
 - higher levels provoke need for flight to overtake aggression impulse
 - **observation** of aggression, which **primes** own aggression, increases **arousal** level (which often becomes misattributed), and the individual or group **learns** new or facilitates existing aggressive behaviors
- inciting and curing inter-group conflict: the **Robber's Cave** experiment (Sherif 1954)
 - main remedy is that direct contact, under certain circumstances, may lead to **recategorization**:
 - 1 must be of roughly equal status
 - 2 situation must involve cooperation and interdependence
 - 3 informal so as to allow individual characteristics to show
 - 4 setting must favor group equality
 - 5 must interact in ways permitting disconfirmation of negative stereotypes
 - 6 persons must view others as typical of their respective groups
 - early training and exposure best remedy

Key Ideas:

Inequality, absolute deprivation, relative deprivation, class, caste, estate, in-group, out-group, prejudice, discrimination, aggression, status, social stratification.

