

Summary



A Summary of the Article “ Social Mobility and Status Attainment” A Summary of the Article “ Social Mobility and Status Attainment” One of the most famous scholars in sociology, Charles E. Hurst, tried to explain the nature of and characteristics of social mobility and openness in his article “ Social Mobility and Status Attainment: Openness in U. S. Society” (Hurst, 2010, p. 313). In this article, Hurst actually presented different studies concerning the degree of social mobility in American society, in which results of these studies indicated that the overall trend of social mobility in the U. S. was not uniform across time (Hurst, 2010). On the contrary, Hurst argued that these studies actually indicated the fact that social mobility was largely due to specific changes in occupational structures that brought more opportunities, rather than the perceived openness and freedom in a supposed-to-be meritorious American society (Hurst 2010). With regards to the direction of social mobility, Hurst also argued that as shown by researches, the trend has been more of upward mobility rather than downward mobility; however, it is also true that upward mobility has been relatively short, contrary to the popular rag to riches fame of social mobility in American society (Hurst, 2010). Also, the article of Hurst tried to analyze social mobility with regards to race and gender mainly using two models, the Blau-Duncan and Wisconsin models (Hurst, 2010). As shown by these models, both African-Americans and females experience “ non-rational barriers” to upward mobility not experienced by white males (Hurst 2010). With these facts in mind, then, is it possible that there are measures made by the “ elite” in American society to hinder upward social mobility? Is it still possible for minorities, especially African-Americans, Latinos and American Indians, to reverse the trend and attain “ upper class” status? Is inequality

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then an inevitable part of American capitalist society? Reference List: Hurst, C. E. (2010). *Social Inequality: Forms, Causes, and Consequences*. Boston: Pearson.