

Class inequality: theory

Sociology



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INEQUALITY: THEORY Marx- es in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism Pp. 36-47

Summary: For Marx, the examination divisions and struggles is imperative in developing a clear understanding of the nature of capitalism. The bourgeoisie and proletariat are the main classes in capitalism. The bourgeoisie are the owners of capital and are self expansive through massive exploitation of labour. The Proletariats have the ability to work making them the owners of labour power. The pre capitalist classes, according to Karl Marx were farmers and peasants. He considered peasants to be dispersed, disorganized and unable to carry out change. The farmers also suffered the same peril as they were not able to act together as a class in economic and political action in recent years.

Weber -Class, Status, Party. Pp, 56-67

Summary

Weber employed a different approach of the social groups as opposed to that of Marx. Weber classified economic, social and political inform of class, status and party respectively. He regards these three as a phenomenon of the distribution of power within a society. Weber's belief of class, status and party indicates the approach in which the material basis is related to the ideological sense. To grasp the real sense of Weber's perception on stratification, he argues that an individual identity should not be determined by class identity, and the status and party identities often cross among class divisions.

Davis and Moore - Some Principles of Stratification Pp. 16-19

Summary

The main argument that Davis and Moore put forward is that, stratification is aimed at placing and motivating individuals in the social structure. The fact

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of social inequity in the human society is determined by ubiquity and its antiquity. Each society must put individuals in social positions and motivate them to work hard. However, some positions are more functionally important than others therefore, requiring more training than others to induce their talent. Various societies place skilled and trained people in these positions so that they can be motivated to get better rewards. From this principle, the resulting stratification system is functional for the society. However, there are internal factors like the social distance between these positions and external factors like relationship to other societies that will seem to affect a society's stratification system.

Mills - The Power Elite Pp. 100-111

Summary

The power elite theory claims that a single elite can decide important matters like life and death issues for a whole nation while leaving minor issues for the middle level and close to nothing for the common man.

Whereas, pluralists advocate for fair power sharing, the power elite school decries the unjust distribution of power. According to Mills, the government of U. S militarily elite is linked with the political and economical elite. Mills believes that the power elite take up the top command posts of the society.

The power of the elite has been enhance by a close unity of political, industrial and military associations. The elite establish a policy agenda in areas such like economics and national security and the middle level to much in implementing them leaving the public with no important task.

Domhoff - Who Rules America? Pp. 112-117

Domhoff proves of the existence of a discrete social upper class that has unbalanced amount of overt control terming it as a governing class. Drawing

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from the power elite perception, he enlightens on how power operates in America. He argues that top levels managers and owners of large income companies are by far, the dominant figures in the U. S. The class- base power structure shows how power is concentrated in some parts of the society whereas, limited in some.

Gouldner - The Future of Intellectuals. Pp. 116-127

Summary

Gouldner's theory focuses on two major prepositions, the future of the intellectuals and the rise of a new class. The emergence of a new class is affected by technical intelligentsia and humanistic intellectuals. These two groups are in a competition with powerful groups like politicians and businessmen. Gouldner demystifies Marx's scenario of socialism and uses the Hegelian search that acts as a universal class. Under state socialism, Intellectuals cannot be regarded as members of a cultural bourgeoisie. He cites that education is the most important as it becomes a cosmopolitanizing factor and a major framework for new culture of discourse on technology and literacy.

Wright - Class Counts. Pp. 48-55

Summary

Wright offers lively and penetrating exploration of the notion of class with relevance a wide range of issues in contemporary society. Class counts is based on the convictions that class is a pervasive social class cause making it worth its ramifications. His argument combines theoretical perceptions of class structure and transformation, permeability of class boundaries, class and gender and class consciousness. He critically analyses sexual division in labour, gender difference in aspect of managerial authority and friendship

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networks in class structure. Wright's class theory exploits the operationalized into three different dimensions authority, skills and ownership.

References

Grusky (2011) *The Inequality Reader: Contemporary and Foundational Readings in Race, Class, and Gender*. 2nd Ed. CO: Westview Press.