

Social Stratification

SOCIOLOGY 403: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Social Stratification

“Social stratification is a system in which groups of people are divided into layers according to their relative power, property and prestige. It is important to emphasize that social stratification does not refer to individuals. It is a way of ranking large groups of people into a hierarchy according to their relative privileges.”

~Henslin

Dominant and Majority Groups

A majority group is an identifiable group with the largest number of members.

A dominant group is an identifiable group with the most power, prestige, and wealth in society. The dominant group is the one that exerts control over the minority group(s).

Minority Groups

***A minority group* is a group of people that is separated out for unequal treatment and who regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.**

Characteristics of Minority Groups

(1) Ascribed Characteristic

- **Distinguishing Physical/Cultural Characteristics, Held in Low Regard**
- **Treated Unequally**
- **Strong Group Solidarity**

(5) Tendency towards Intergroup Marriage

**How are dominant and
minority groups produced
and reproduced?**

Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice refers to a negative *attitude* or *belief* about a minority group.

Discrimination refers to *behavior* that denies rights and/or opportunities to minority groups, due to prejudice or for another arbitrary reason.