

Title

Applying Theories of Class

Time

30 minutes for the completion of rough drafts of the Knowledge Matrix. 15 minutes for a class summary. An extra 15 minutes could be allowed for students to refresh their knowledge of theories of stratification.

Preparation

Copies of the “Knowledge Matrix”. Selected materials (such as class notes, textbooks and so forth) should be available to students to use if they cannot remember the basics of different theories.

Materials

Each student should have a personal copy of the “Knowledge Matrix”. Additional copies can be made available for rough / working drafts.

Prior Knowledge

Students need to be familiar with Marxist, Weberian and Functionalist theories of social class.

Objective

The main objective of this lesson plan is to get students to apply their knowledge of theories of social class to an analysis of social classes in their society. For many students (and teachers come to that), theory tends to be divorced from application, such that the student learns “the theory” in one session and then learns about social class differences in another; rarely, if ever, are the two brought together. This exercise, therefore, attempts to do just that, using a simple Knowledge Matrix that also doubles as a useful revision aid.

If necessary, spend a few minutes going-over the (very) basic principles of each theory of stratification. Alternatively, simply make revision materials available for students to use. Next, ask them to complete the Knowledge Matrix (either individually or in small groups – encouraging a division of intellectual labour is always useful).

Once everyone has completed this task (in rough), bring the class together for a final summation of ideas. This may take the form of completing a blank Knowledge Matrix using suggestions from the students.

Classes	Traditional Marxist	Neo-Marxist	Weberian
Upper			
Middle			
Lower			
Underclass			

Classes	Functionalist	New Right	Feminist
Upper			
Middle			
Lower			
Underclass			