Chapter 8
Social Inequality
Section 1

DIMENSIONS OF STRATIFICATION
Social Stratification and Social Class

• What is social stratification?
• How is social stratification related to social class?

Social stratification is ranking of people or groups according to their unequal access to scarce resources.

Social Class is the segment of society whose members hold similar amounts of resources and share values, norms, and an identifiable lifestyle.
The Economic Depression

- Karl Marx’s social classes
- Are there extremes of income and poverty in the United States?

Bourgeoisie is the class that owns the means of production.

Proletariat is the class that labors without owning the means of production.

Income is the amount of money received by an individual or group over a specific time period.

Wealth is the total economic resources held by a person or group.
The Power Dimension

- What is power?
- Can you exercise power without being wealthy?

According to Marx, those who own and control capital have the power in society.

According to Weber, while having money helps, economic success and power are not the same. Money and ownership of the means of production are not the only resources that can be used for the basis of power.
The Prestige Dimension

• What is prestige?
• How is prestige distributed?

Prestige is the recognition, respect, and admiration attached to social positions.
Section 3

SOCIAL CLASSES IN AMERICA
Class Consciousness

• What is class consciousness?

Class consciousness is identification with the goals and interests of a social class.
The Upper Class

• Includes only 1% of the population
• Upper-upper class & lower-upper class
• Aristocracy
• ‘blue blood’ versus ‘neuvo riche’
The Middle Class

• Most Americans consider themselves middle class
• 40-50% of Americans
• Upper-middle class is 14% of the population
• Middle-middle class is 30% of the population
The Working Class

- Often referred to as lower-middle class
- 1/3 of the population
- Below-average income & unstable employment
- Generally lack medical insurance and benefits
The Working Poor

- 13% of the population
- Lowest-level clerical workers, manual workers, and service workers.
- Do not earn enough to rise above the poverty line ($17,603 for family of 4 in 2000.)
- Do not participate in political process
The Underclass

• 12% of the population
• Either work part-time menial jobs or are on public assistance.
• Lack education & skills
• Physical & mental disabilities are common
• Often single mothers with no income
• Lack of skills to maintain and get jobs.

Underclass are people typically unemployed who came from families that have been poor for generations.
Tammy’s Story