Almost every known nation has established a system of **stratification**, which is the structured ranking of entire groups of people that perpetuate unequal economic rewards and power in society by giving each group different levels of access to wealth and other resources. These differing levels may be as simple as leaders/warriors/workers/children as is the case for most hunter/gatherer societies or can be more complex where each of these categories is comprised of separate entities. For instance, in the United States, the government represents our leaders, but this group is broken down into national-level, state-level and city-level. Our warriors are the four branches of the military, i.e. Navy, Army, Air Force and National Guard, but also include police officers and firefighters. Although these layers seem to be necessary to the operation of societies, there is much sociological debate regarding how people are selected for each layer and the number of resources each group has access to.

However, stratification does not stop at the borders of a particular country. Observation and study also demonstrate that **global stratification**, the division of the nations of the world into richer and poorer categories, also exists and that nations can generally be broken down into three basic categories: third world, second world, and first world countries.

- **Third World** – is a developing country that is actively participating in **modernization**, which is the process by which nations pass from traditional forms of social organization toward those characteristics of post–Industrial Revolution societies. These nations are commonly associated with having the lowest **Gross National Income (GNI)**, which is based on purchasing-power-parity per capita in international dollars, e.g. Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Eritrea, and Haiti.

- **Second World** – is a developed country with a strong industrial infrastructure, a well-developed economy, and a non-democratic government. These countries are often associated with the former Soviet Union, e.g. Russia, but also include China, Cuba, North Korea, and Viet Nam.

- **First World** – have all of the elements of a Second World country, but has a democratic government, e.g. the United States, France, Spain, Japan and the United Kingdom.
Many sociologists argue that the process of stratifying the global community started when First World countries practiced 
**colonialism**, which occurs when a foreign power maintains political, social, economic, and cultural domination over a group of people for an extended period. The oppression of these countries often centered on using the colony for its primary resources and therefore stifled the development of these nations. Although many colonized countries have since won their independence, many sociologists continue to suggest that **neocolonialism**, which is the continuing dependence and foreign domination of developing countries, even now suppresses the growth of these new nations. Empires may also use **internal colonialism**, which describes the distinct separation of the dominant core from the periphery in an empire, as they go through the modernization process because it allows for these nations to exploit their marginalized citizens. (View Movie 1.1) While, other social scientists would argue that these systems evolved into **globalization**, which is the worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements, and financial markets through trade and the exchange of ideas; where countries will come together and shape their governments and economies to fit into a worldwide community.

**Systems of Stratification**

Throughout history there have been four basic types of stratification systems:

1) **Estate** is a system of stratification where peasants are required to work land leased to them by royal families in exchange for military protection and other services. Also known as feudalism, this system is rigid in structure, but people have been able to move into different statuses through marriage.

**Movie 1.1 Internal colonialism in the US**

1) [https://youtu.be/wXg7pBF0sYw](https://youtu.be/wXg7pBF0sYw) - Video
2) What is the main point of this video?
3) What example(s) do the authors use to illustrate their point(s)? Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
4) Can you think of any other groups that are internally colonized within the US? Explain
2) **Castes** are a hereditary social status that is usually religiously dictated. Known for its rigid and immobile social categories, cultures that practice caste systems cannot improve their caste status through any socially acceptable means. India is the country referred to the most regarding their caste system, but many sociologists would argue that the Eta are a lower caste in Japan and that Black people are a lower caste in the United States.

3) **Slavery** is enforced servitude and is broken down into two basic types: Freehold slavery and Chattel slavery. **Freehold slaves** (indentured servants in US history which normally were poor people of European heritage) were considered servants and still had many fundamental human rights, while **chattel slaves** (black Africans usually occupied this role in the United States) were considered property and could be forced to work impossible hours, beaten, raped and even murdered with relative impunity. Freehold slaves usually served for 5-7 years and were then freed, while chattel slaves often stayed slaves their entire lives and their children were considered slaves also. The vast majority of chattel slaves did not receive any wages for their labor and so could not earn their freedom. Therefore, many descendants of African captives chose to risk their lives to try and run away to Canada, and later to the northern states, so that they could experience freedom. (View Movie 1.2)

4) **Class** is a system where social status is based primarily on economic position and where achieved characteristics can influence social mobility, which is the movement of individuals or groups from one position of a society’s stratification system to another. There are two types of mobility: **intergenerational mobility** involves changes in the social position of children relative to their parents, while **intragenerational mobility** involves social changes within a
person’s adult life. An example of intergenerational mobility would be a person’s parents working hard at low-level manual labor jobs, e.g. janitor and housekeeper, while their children go to school earn their degree and become a high school teacher, social worker or manages a large business. An example of intragenerational mobility is where a person starts working at a fast food restaurant as a cashier and then works their way up to store manager. (View Movie 1.3)

**Movie 1.3 Becoming Middle Class by Strange Fruit**

Sociology

1) [https://youtu.be/YVY4ZVvXA-E](https://youtu.be/YVY4ZVvXA-E) - Video

2) **What is the main point of this video**

3) **What did the professors use as examples? Explain.**

4) **Has social mobility affected your life? Explain.**
The United States operates primarily under a class system and uses capitalism; the economic system in which the means of production are held largely in private hands, and the main incentive for economic activity is the accumulation of profits; to facilitate the creation of its layers of stratification. Your socioeconomic status is a broad social category of people who share a common economic position, have similar cultural beliefs and comparable access to scarce and valued resources. Our class structure in the United States is organized in the following manner:

- **Economic Elite** is the top 0.1%; entry-level household income approximately $1,700,000. This group is comprised mostly of high-level executives of leading companies and high grossing entertainers and athletes. However, there is a distinct difference between these two groups of people that can be categorized as Old Money versus New Money. Many of the people that we know about in this group are in the **New Money** category such as Lady Gaga, Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt, and Michael Jordan because they are high profile public figures. (View Movie 1.4) These people frequently come from humble beginnings and had to jump multiple classes to get to where they are today. **Old Money** is just the opposite. They are nonpublic figures that make

**Movie 1.4 Most Expensivest Shit - 100k dog**

1) [https://youtu.be/NDxQ6qSRKgU](https://youtu.be/NDxQ6qSRKgU) - Video
2) What is the main point of this video?
3) What example(s) are used to illustrate their point(s)? Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
4) Can you think of any other things that rich people spend their money on that does not make sense to everyone else? Explain
their millions in quiet obscurity and have usually inherited a significant portion of their wealth. Although there are some exceptions (e.g. Bill Gates and Ted Turner), most people would not be able to identify the wealthiest people visually in our society.

• **Upper class** is the top 0.2% - 1%; entry-level household income approximately $360,000. The key identifying element of this group is that they are the managers of our society and are composed mostly of upper-level executives of major companies, college presidents, chief medical officers, partners in major law firms and national-level politicians. With some exceptions, this class is usually the highest achieved status that one could hope to earn.

• **Upper-middle class** – top 1.1% - 10%; entry-level household income approximately $110,000. This group is composed of the people with jobs that have the highest occupational prestige. Physicians, lawyers, university professors, engineers, accountants, architects, owners of relatively large companies and state-level legislators. These are the positions that people with low cultural capital can aspire to because they are visible in the media and there are relatively clear steps that you could take to obtain these types of jobs. Although this group receives a decent income, this class usually does not own much wealth outside of their primary residence and retirement savings. (View Movie 1.5)

• **Lower-middle class** – 30% of the middle 65%; entry-level household income approximately $35,000. The major distinction between this group and the working class is usually a college degree, which directly affects their occupational prestige. Parents in this class normally have a job that requires a college education, i.e. K-12 teacher, librarians, computer programmers, registered nurses, supervisors, etc., and therefore expect their children to complete their bachelor’s degree, if not
higher, hoping that their children will move up in class status. The lower middle class and the working class can have a household income comparable to that of the upper-middle class. However, it typically takes two adults working to achieve this income-level, while in the upper-middle class it normally takes just one person.

- **Working class** – 35% of the middle 65% of population; entry-level household income approximately $25,000. This group makes comparable earnings to the lower middle class; however, their jobs tend to have lower occupational prestige because many of these jobs do not need anything higher than a two-year certificate and/or an apprenticeship to be qualified. According to the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) Plumbers (44.75), electricians (51.25), police officers (59.99), heavy truck drivers (30.23), auto mechanics (34.05) and firefighters (52.87) can make as much money as an elementary school teacher. However, an elementary school teacher has an occupational prestige score of 64.08.

- **Working poor** – bottom 5-25%; maximum household income less than $25,000. This group is composed of people who work in retail, fast food, or other service-based jobs that only require a high school diploma/GED. However, individuals in this group may also have good career jobs, but can only find part-time work or are just beginning in their careers as an apprentice.

Regardless, this group is hard pressed to try and make ends meet at the end of the month.

- **Underclass** – bottom 5%; maximum household income less than $11,000. This group is usually receiving public assistance of some sort, i.e. welfare, food stamps, and can normally only find part-time work. This group often lacks employable skills such as writing and reading at an 8th-grade level, and oral communication skills. (View Movie 1.6)

**Movie 1.6 Poetry in Praxis**

*Hunger Games* by Imani Cezanne

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1) [https://youtu.be/v3VJOxnsIfM](https://youtu.be/v3VJOxnsIfM) - Video

2) What is the poem about?

3) What larger social factors is the poet concerned about?

4) What do you think the poet believes is the problem?

5) Is the poet suggesting a solution? If so, do you agree or disagree? If not, what do you think might help?
Although people are most familiar with class, sociologists refer to these differing levels as socioeconomic status (SES), which is a measure of social position that is based on income, wealth, occupational prestige and related variables. Income refers to wages and salaries measured over some period, such as per hour or year, while wealth is the total of all a person’s material assets, including savings, land, stocks, and other types of property, minus his or her debt at a single point in time. What we find consistently is that that the upper quintile (top 20%) continue to hold onto a large portion of the available income and wealth in our society:

**Income** (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements)
- Top 5% = 21.9%
- Top 6-20% = 29.3%
- Top 21-40% = 23.2%
- Bottom 60% = 25.6%
- Lowest 20% = 3.1%

**Wealth** (Saez and Zucman 2014)
- Top .01% = 11.2%
- Top .02-.1% = 10.8%
- Top .2-1% = 19.8%
- Top 2%-10% = 35.4%
- Lowest 90% = 22.8%

(However, this does not tell us the entire story of how concentrated income and wealth are. Recent research has uncovered that even saying that income and wealth are

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**Movie 1.7 The Difference Between Income and Wealth**

1) [https://youtu.be/4bvyU57fA40](https://youtu.be/4bvyU57fA40) - Video

2) What is the main point of this video?

3) What example(s) do the authors use to illustrate their point(s)? Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

4) What is the difference between income and wealth? Explain.
concentrated in the top 1% is incredibly misleading and that who we should be focused on is the top 0.01%. 2014 US Census data states that it takes a yearly income of about $390,000 to barely make it into the top 1% of wage earners in the United States, approximately $1.7 million to make it into the top 0.1%, and about $9 million to make it into the top 0.01%. Although making over $300,000 a year would be greatly desirable and the people who are earning these salaries are most likely elite doctors, lawyers and college presidents; this does not mean that they have anything in common with people in the top 0.01% such as Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, the Walton family and even Donald Trump.

**What is a Prestigious Job?**

**Occupational prestige** is the respect and admiration that an occupation holds in society and is a function of income, education, autonomy, authority and other related variables. We ask people about their jobs because it is a reliable indicator of their SES.

**Movie 1.8 How Does Occupational Prestige Work?**

Even if a person is currently unemployed, either by choice (retired, quit, etc.) or by force (laid off, fired, etc.), asking them about their past job is still a good indicator of their social status. (View Movie 1.8)

**What is Poverty?**

**Absolute poverty** refers to a minimum level of subsistence that allows families to provide for all of their basic needs, i.e. food, shelter, and clothes. In other words, if you are in absolute poverty then you are going without the necessities that a given society determines is vital. In 2015 the US Census set the absolute poverty thresholds was as follows:

- One person = $12,331
- Two persons = $15,871
- Three people (1 child) = $19,078
- Four people (2 children) = $24,036

If you are looking at these numbers with a critical eye, then you will notice that two people only need about $3000 more than the income of one person in absolute poverty. This figure is because...
of shared resources. If two people live with each other, then they will only pay one rent rather than two, and they can both use one car rather than buy two.

Relative Poverty refers to a floating standard of deprivation where an individual’s economic position is compared to the living standards of the majority in society. In other words, this encompasses the idea that you feel poor when you compare yourself to others. In absolute poverty you are going without a meal. Relative poverty means you feel inferior when you are eating hamburgers, while your next-door neighbor is barbecuing prime porterhouse steaks. Absolute poverty means that you cannot afford to buy a car. Relative poverty is feeling poor when your parents give you a used car for your 18th birthday when your friend received a brand new car. (View Movie 1.9)

Movie 1.9 From My Window by Rudy Francisco

1) https://youtu.be/7azDbnJ5u2g - Video
2) What is the poem about?
3) What larger social factors is the poet concerned about?
4) What do you think the poet believes is the problem?
5) Is the poet suggesting a solution? If so, do you agree or disagree? If not, what do you think might help?
The functionalist perspective regarding poverty in the United States can be summarized by the Davis–Moore thesis, which maintains that inequality serves two vital functions: It motivates people to work hard, and it ensures that key occupations are occupied by highly capable people. For example, when poor people watch TV and see the type of lifestyle that wealthy people live compared to their own, this motivates poor people to try to raise their SES by pursuing their education and getting a career-oriented job. The second part of this definition allows us to believe that individuals who run the banking system, are the Chief Executive Officers (CEO’s) of major corporations and college presidents are the most capable people for the job.

Also since the United States uses a class system, functionalist would also suggest that differences in property, power, and prestige are the direct result of individual variations in ability, otherwise known as deficiency theory. In other words, if a person has not advanced through the classes either through inter- or intra-generational mobility then they simply do not have what it takes to improve their class status. Because of their belief in the Davis-Moore thesis and deficiency theory, poverty is not a social condition that functionalist would either challenge or seek to change.

Symbolic interactionists are interested in how a person’s cultural capital, which is our tastes, knowledge, language, and ways of thinking that we exchange in interaction with others, is learned through interaction with the closest people in our lives, i.e. parents, family, and friends, but also through education and the media. This idea represents our ability to access particular groups of people so that we may achieve our goals. In other words, you need to know how to present yourself to a group of people to get what you want from them. For example, if you wanted to become friends with the “hip-hop” crowd then you will need to know at least a little bit about break dancing and DJ’s. You will need to know that you are supposed to call graffiti “art” and not “vandalism.” You will need to have an informed opinion of who is the best rapper of all time, Tupac or Notorious B.I.G. You will need to know that you are supposed to wear Nike and not Birkenstocks. You will need to know that “ratchet” means a slutty and/or low-class woman, and not a type of wrench. You will need to know how to shake hands. If you know these
cultural elements, then you will find it easier to access hip-hop groups than someone who does not. (View Movie 1.10)

Although you are taught your cultural capital from people that are close to you, what if you wanted to become a lawyer but you do not have any family or friends that were in that group? What do you do then? Typically your desire to go outside of the group where you have the most cultural capital begins with the media. You want to be a lawyer because you love TV shows like *Law and Order: SVU* and could watch a *Few Good Men* a thousand times and never get tired of it. Since you are interested, you will most likely use your social networks to try and find some lawyers to talk to. This situation is where you will probably learn what the typical day of a lawyer looks like, that there are many different types of lawyers and that the one’s that you see on TV are usually trial lawyers. If you continue to ask questions, they will probably tell you which law schools are the best, how you should prepare for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and how you can get an internship with a law firm. If you feel passionate about being a lawyer, one of the next steps you would take would be to go to college and major in pre-law or a related major like sociology or political science.

In spite of all of this, being accepted as a lawyer is more than just knowing the law. You may want to take an etiquette class because you will have to learn how to interact with high-status people at dinner parties. You may want to go to a fashion consultant to get pointers on the appropriate attire for a “black tie event” so that people will not discount what you have to say based solely on the clothes you are wearing. You might even go to a diction coach to remove your northeastern accent or your southern draw from your courtroom dialect so that people can understand you more clearly.

**Movie 1.10 Going Camping** by Strange Fruit Sociology

1) [https://youtu.be/1kGvC4OxLC8](https://youtu.be/1kGvC4OxLC8) - Video
2) What is the main point of this video?
3) What are some types of activities that you see that are largely based on class status? Explain.
With this understanding, *symbolic interactionist* would suggest that the cause of poverty is that the poor are socialized in their childhood to their lower social status, otherwise known as the *culture of poverty*. In other words, the lower-middle class and higher are taught to value a higher education, to work smarter not harder, to spend their money wisely and to plan for the future, while the poor are socialized not to expect much from life. The two most important components of the culture of poverty are that the poor are not taught to delay gratification, i.e. earn a college degree rather than enter the workforce immediately after high school, and therefore they spend their money in manners that the other classes would consider foolish, e.g. rather than spend $600 on books for college they spend $600 putting a stereo system in a car that breaks down frequently. (View Movie 1.11)

Therefore, campaigns to end poverty by symbolic interactionist usually focus on educational efforts to teach the poor sound money management skills and/or how to further their education.

Conflict theorists understand poverty very differently than a functionalist and would suggest that a person’s class status is mostly affected by access to structured opportunities rather than individual attributes, also known as the *structuralist approach*. In other words, these theorists would suggest that the poor are actively and purposefully blocked from the opportunities, i.e. education, healthcare, jobs, etc., that could dramatically affect their life chances. These theorists would state that an *ideology*, which is a belief system that legitimates existing patterns of structured social inequality, was created around class and manifests itself in *classism*, which is the ideology that legitimates economic inequality. This ideology allows us to believe that people who are poor are lazy, stupid, immoral, or lack ambition; leaving the least educated group of people with access to the least amount of resources to fix their problems. In other words, we do not correct the inequalities in the system because people have...

**Movie 1.11 Poetry in Praxis**

*Imagine* by Black Ice

1) [https://youtu.be/8kVT89O6cLo - Video](https://youtu.be/8kVT89O6cLo)

2) *What is the poem about?*

3) *What larger social factors is the poet concerned about?*

4) *What do you think the poet believes is the problem?*

5) *Is the poet suggesting a solution? If so, do you agree or disagree? If not, what do you think might help?*
been socialized to believe that this population is unworthy of such an expenditure of resources.

One way that class-based inequality is structured is through public schools being funded primarily through property taxes. This allows people in affluent communities to have the best funded schools, which normally translates into the highest ranked schools, while schools in poor communities often have to do fundraisers just to buy necessary materials, i.e. textbooks, for their students. Another way that opportunities are structured is through small business loans. It will be far easier to receive a loan for a business in a well-off community than a poor neighborhood, which leaves these areas very few jobs to try and improve their life chances. (View Movie 1.12)

Movie 1.12 The Structure of Inequality - public schools and small businesses

1) https://youtu.be/lfDDpQHvKZc - Video

2) What is the main point of this video?

3) What example(s) do the authors use to illustrate their point(s)? Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

4) Can you think of any other examples of how inequality is structured in our society? Explain.
## Chapter Summary

### Chapter Vocabulary

- Stratification (2)
- Global Stratification (2)
- Third World (2)
- Modernization (2)
- Second World (3)
- First World (3)
- Colonialism (3)
- Neocolonialism (3)
- Globalization (3)
- Estates (3)
- Castes (3)
- Slavery (4)
- Freehold Slaves (4)
- Chattel Slaves (4)
- Class (4)
- Social Mobility (4)
- Intergenerational Mobility (4)
- Intrigenerational Mobility (4)

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Key Terms ***need to illustrate concept with an example***

Stratification
Colonialism
Globalization
Class
Intergenerational Mobility
Intragenerational Mobility
Capitalism
Socioeconomic Status (SES)
Occupational Prestige
Absolute Poverty
Relative Poverty
Davis – Moore Thesis
Deficiency Theory
Cultural Capital
Culture of Poverty
Structuralist Approach

Bullet-point answer questions:

1) What are the four basic types of stratification systems?
2) Give an example of a Third, Second and First World country.
3) What are the two types of social mobility?
4) What are the seven different class statuses?

Short answer questions:

5) What is the difference between freehold and chattel slavery?
6) What is the difference between intergenerational and intragenerational mobility and give an example of both?
7) What is the difference between Old Money and New Money and give an example of both?
8) What is the difference between the lower-middle and working class and give an example job of each category?
9) What is the difference between absolute poverty and relative poverty and give an example of both?

Critical thinking questions:

10) Could racial categories in the United States be considered a caste system? Examine the definition of a caste system and give an example of how this could be true.
11) What would you do to live off of the salary declared as absolute poverty? Explain.

12) What does each sociological perspective believe regarding the causes of poverty? Which perspective do you believe in the most? Explain.

13) Using your sociological imagination, explain how your cultural capital is a result of larger social factors in your life.
Movie 1.1 Internal colonialism in the US

Before I give an example of how the targeting of police officers in Dallas in Baton Rouge are an example of the elements necessary needed in internal colonialism I want to say that my thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of those officers that were shot and those that were killed in the line of duty and so as I was reading about the the Baton Rouge sniper incident I couldn’t help but think of the concept of internal colonialism that Robert Blauner wrote about in 1969 of which it had its intellectual roots laid out by Martin Delaney in 1852 when he stated that African Americans are a nation within a nation and then later by W.E.B Du Bois when he stated that we are semi colonial in nature or that we are domestically colonized and so in his writing Robert Blauner in internal colonialism and Ghetto Revolt he states that there’s three social symptoms that point to internal colonialism being the cause okay so number one it’s urban riots now I would actually disagree with the word riots here I would use the word rebellion specifically because that the sniper killings were targeted and coordinated efforts which suggests rebellion while riots are when violence erupts with no real target and so that’s my argument on that but anyway continuing that second would be cultural nationalism or the idea that African-Americans represent a nation within a nation right and this is easily demonstrable from from the back to Africa movement of Marcus Garvey to the more current Black nationalist movements centered around the nation of Islam and later with the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and then lastly would be ghetto control politics where people in the ghetto want to take control of their lives and the sources in their communities one of the main arguments against this theory is that it’s hard to identify what colonizers are extracting from the black community right however internal colonialists would argue that there’s two basic things are being stripped mind within the Black community and that’s athletes and criminals okay so let’s think about this is that athletes make the National Football League and the National Basketball Association billions of dollars a year while arguably billions of dollars a year while arguably destroying the motivation of young Black youth to pursue education as a goal so that they can pursue and put all of their energy effort into trying to be an athlete which is by far least likely to happen in their lives while Michelle Alexander on the other hand in her book The New Jim Crow would argue that the
creation of the Black criminal with emphasis on the word creation almost supports the entire prison industrial complex and so these are the thoughts and ideas and examples that I would use in order to talk about this idea of internal colonialism.

**Movie 1.2 Where the Irish Slaves?**

So in the middle of argument for racial equality in the United States I’m hearing more and more often that people are arguing that the Irish came over as slaves and that they were treated worse than any other race but you don’t hear them bitching and complaining about how the world owes them a living or something along those lines now normally this attack is being used towards people of color but specifically towards Black people because what they’re arguing is that other groups have been successful under worse circumstances therefore if Black people are not successful then there must be something wrong with Black people now please don’t misunderstand me here folks it is true that people were that Irish people were treated poorly and that is due largely to a centuries-old beef that they had with the English however the vast majority of the Irish along with other European ethnicities were actually indentured servants or debt slaves rather than chattel slaves like the indigenous people of North America and African captives now there’s three main differences between indentured servants and chattel slavery okay one is that indentured servants had basic human rights while if you were up in chattel slavery you had no more social standing than a cow or table because you were literally a piece of property okay so second is that chattel slavery was for life while indentured servants served a limited time anywhere between four to seven years and were often given land and possessions like a cow or clothes food or firearms after their service right and then three and this is the most debilitating difference between chattel slavery and indentured service was that chattel slavery was hereditary and so therefore generations literally generations of African captors were not allowed to work for themselves and work towards building their own wealth and so did the Irish get mistreated certainly and when it came to working conditions they hired for some of the most dangerous jobs the United States the blood of Irish people are spilled all over the you know the New York skyscrapers and bridges on the East Coast however were the Irish or other European ethnicities systematically oppressed in the United States over centuries in order to stop their upward mobility I’m sorry but the answer is no.

**Movie 1.3 Becoming Middle Class by Strange Fruit Sociology**

BRUCE: It's actually a trip going from poor to middle-class and there's a lot of little things that if you don't know about it that they're going to trip you up so oh you know so with me i was always telling Ant like look my middle-class story when I really figured out that i needed to switch my mentality, is when i, tried to buy- after buying a house i tried to buy a dog. With my working poor background the dog that i wanted to buy was a pit bull.
ANT: That's hood.

BRUCE: That is hood, right? When I went to the Humane Society which is also hood, don't be mad- don't be.

ANT: Wait you just said you went to the Humane Society to buy a pit bull.

BRUCE: To buy a pit bull- absolutely.

ANT: Keeps the story going, yeah?

BRUCE: So there was beautiful female black pit bull with tan markings on it i was like she's going to be mine and I actually even went to the process of actually buying her and then- and then I go and I start telling my professor friends right, now my new friends, my colleagues we were in a department meeting and I'm like oh we just got finished by the dog and here's this. I mean can you imagine this right. So it's a room full of white folks right. Older white people and here i am young you know professor coming in- a young black Professor coming and I'm like "I'm about to buy a dog" and they're like "Oh my goodness what kind of dog?" and I say "A pit bull"... Silence. And I'm like "Okay what's wrong with a pit bull?" There like "Oh that's interesting does your homeowner...

ANT: you just bought a house right?

BRUCE: Oh, so you found a homeowner's insurance that covers your dog?" and I'm like "Why would my homeowner's insurance cover my dog? It's a dog- not a house." And they were like no - Well if your dog bites someone then

ANT: oh then you know

BRUCE: then that your homeowners insurance will cover that. And I'm like "So they don't cover pit bulls?" and like Oh their reputation that so I was just like okay so i can't even buy the dog that I want because now I'm middle class and now there's all these restrictions on me or just new terrain if you would for me to have to listen and do and pay attention to that I didn't know was a working poor person.

ANT: Yeah I think i had my first middle-class moment was the lawn and the grass.

BRUCE: That's why I have rocks in front of my stuff. Yeah. It was just that moment.

ANT: Where I come from you know on Saturday mornings before you go out and play you go mow the lawn. And I was mowing the lawn once a month that turned into once every other month. I was watching the grass grow and I kept seeing folks cut other people's lawns and it bugged me out. I had this moment. I was like "No I'm not going to do it nah I'm from I'm from working-class background, you know, I got my pride I'm gonna do it." And the day I'll never forget the day I got that little card on my door
and it said LANDSCAPING. I called this man, I said "Excuse me may I speak with Mario his name was on the card right?" and he showed up and I just looked like here I am this black man about to hire this brown man to do my lawn. Yeah. Bummed me out I didn’t know what to do with it. But- I’ll tell you what, every Friday when he comes by I just be like "hey, you want some water?" That comes to more middle-class monitors. Like I that guy now. You are that guy.

BRUCE: You notice that like I said this transition in the middle class is no joke. You get sideswiped by just these little things because of that you know that socialization that we have being poor of now certain restaurants that I go to now that they’ve all of a sudden become suspect. I’m like when did this happen when. ANT: The moment I found out that olive garden was not fancy dinner.

BRUCE: It broke my heart, that’s where I’m coming from. That was a special event you saved for this and all of that. So, you know we are wrapping up on time give us a closing thought on being a middle-class.

ANT: You are going to hire somebody to do your lawn. It will break your heart, but your lawn will look nice. Your lawn will look nice.

BRUCE: For my closing thought for real you are going to you’re going to change the dog to buy. You’re going to change a lot of these things I’m not saying it’s bad to change. I’m just saying expect the change so it will not surprise you when it happens. So that is my closing thought.

Movie 1.4 Most Expensivest Shit - 100k dog

2: Did you inflate the price when they became popular? Tell the truth
M: Well... a little bit
2: Mother fucker
Narrator: What’s up world? This is your puppy partner checkin in
2 Chainz
2: Hey, hey, hey how are you doing?
Brad: hey, how is it going?
2: Two Chainz
Melissa: Melissa, nice to meet you
2: nice to meet you
Brad: Brad
2: What up Brad? How you doing?
Brad: Good to meet you
2: What you got going on here?
Brad: I got some of the best bulldogs on the planet right here
2: No bullshit
Brad: No bullshit. They are perfect for the house. They are very popular in the last five or ten years. Bulldogs cause are smaller. You can keep them in apartments and houses. Very popular, very popular with celebrities and people with a lot of money.
2: I was about to say, how much are these dogs going for?
Brad: He is about 10 grand. This one is going to Thailand. He sold for 10 thousand and this one we are keeping right here. He is one of the highest quality bulldogs we produced in the last 15 years.
2: What you got right here? Who is this little fella right here?
Brad: This guy right here is micro machine
2: I like him
Brad: He is known right now as one of the best blue french bulldogs on the planet. He’s got some orange eyes which is really exotic on the dog. His structure is really the best you could get. He is small, compact he weighs 20 pounds
2: 20 pounds? how old is he?
Brad: he is three years right now
2: Really?! He is grown?
Melissa: Yeah, full grown
2: I love him! Now do you breed him?
Brad: He sired about 35 litters last year. Over a half million dollars in puppies. His puppies sell for five to ten thousand a piece and we got him worldwide right now.
2: I want one! This is the biggest fucking hustle in the world. How could I have not known about this? And you made half a million last year you doing better than most of these rappers.
Brad: Each sample of semen we get off of him is worth five thousand.
2: A drop of semen is five thousand
Brad: Five thousand
Melissa: for a sample
2: I need to step my game up. I like you though man. Me and you we can travel you 20 pounds three years and he grown. So he is potty trained and everything?
Brad: Yep, he is good to go
2: Yeah I like you. I ain’t got to worry about cleaning up your shit. Can you send me him?
Brad: He’s actually my mom’s dog. You would have to ask her.
2: But he likes me
Brad: I don’t know man. I have to talk to my mom (laughing)
2: Your mom might like me too (smile). So how much is this guy?
Brad: He would be about 75 to 100 thousand just because of how much he could make. He is number one in the world you know? His puppy is 10 grand, because we don’t know if the puppy is going to turn out like him or not
2: This little fucker growled when I tried to move him. They want a 100 thousand for you. I can’t. For 100 thousand mother fucker you got to be driving me somewhere. Are they protective? Do they...
Brad: No, they’re real nice dogs, a family dog
2: Well, I didn’t want to hear that. Are they family dogs?
Brad: You need one to protect you?
2: I still want him to bark if a car pulls in the drive way
W: Oh yeah he will for sure
2: So listen, you have a dog that costs more than this dog. Damn that thing looks like a damn panda bear
Brad: His name is Yeti. This is an English bulldog. He is the
number one blue English bulldog in the world. He is about 70 pounds.

2: He pays like he weighs his fat ass
Brad: Yeah, he is a big boy.

2: Why is he so big? Is that healthy for him?
Brad: It is part of the breed. It is part of the things people go for is more rolls, more girth, more size on him

2: Micro, put it down somewhere. Sit it down somewhere.
Brad: We have one more to show you guys and that would be this puppy right here. Dough boy’s father is Pudge. (Micro nips at Pudge)
All: Whoa!

2: I thought you said Micro wasn’t protective? Micro is the shit! I like you! Come back! That dog look kind of funny in the face. Look at this dog. He looks like someone’s JV basketball coach.
Melissa: He is cute!

Brad: Probably one of the top one’s in the nation as far as over done(?) bulldogs
2: He looks very ugly.

Brad: He is a cute ugly is what people tell us
2: He is worth the money ain’t you big dog? Aw, that was so cute. That was Brad and his puppies for 10 thousand dollars. 10 thousand dollars for dogs. I do own three dogs. I own two pit bulls and I own a chihuahua. Now I know you are laughing but my chihuahua will bust your ass. so I like dogs and I like the whole culture around dogs. I was raised around dogs. But when they start costing 10 thousand dollars they better be able to bathe themselves, feed themselves. These dogs better not ever die. That’s what better happen.

**Movie 1.5 The Shrinking Middle Class**

Politicians talk about how we need to protect the middle class all the time the buying power of the middle class has been stagnant for about 40 years depending on who you ask but the question is what’s the big concern especially as we’re starting to see that new jobs are either coming in at the minimum wage level or they’re coming in in a relatively high level so there seems to be a bigger discrepancy between the haves and have-nots also what we know is that people have to work longer and harder just to do as well as their parents have in the past and so not only is this generation going to work more hours to do just as well as their parents but they’re also going to have to have both parents working in order to enjoy that same lifestyle as their parents and so again why is this so important Karl Marx along with other conflict theorists would argue that creating or in some cases re-creating a two-tiered system is a precursor to a social revolution and so in other words if the middle class realized that it is actually in the same economic predicament as the rest of the working class that may cause people to rebel against capitalism and so from a capitalist perspective this is why we should be concerned.
**Movie 1.6 Poetry in Praxis**

*Hunger Games* by Imani Cezanne

The Hunger Games a made-up story about an annual event in which two people from each of 12 starving districts are randomly selected by the wealthy to compete in a televised battle to the death now don’t get me wrong Hunger Games is my shit but I can’t help but notice how painting poverty in white face makes it fantasy makes it fiction makes a number one selling novel a hit at the box office guess being brown and hungry ain’t all that entertaining our stomachs have been wailing since parched tongues licked cornmeal mush off fingertips dry and cotton plant cracked since chitterlings fashioned pig intestine into a delicacy since 10 for a dollar ramen boiled hot dogs and pinto beans this game is only one sport in this Olympics we call surviving this story is not foreign to those of us who know about fighting to the death while governing bodies watch you neatly placing obstacles in your path we call it crack rock welfare the Prison Pipeline you call it entertainment but the hunger games is my shit its hood shit black people are dying by the mouthful at the hands of a government who recruit the famished train them then call them athletes meanwhile Hollywood spends millions of dollars to tell this story without less they call it Panem we call it east Oakland where the only white people in the school’s are the teachers and the students have children before they have boyfriends call it south central where domestic violence runs wild and you’ll hear the voice of God before you hit the ambulance that was supposed to save you Call it Detroit where a black woman asking for help is means to put a bullet in the back of a head call it Florida where letting the bass drop will get a car full of black boy shot and the murderer will only do time for the people who survived killin’ niggas ain’t been this fun since thirteen year old black boys stopped whistling since brown babies hung from umbilical cords the blacker the berry the tighter the noose you see being hungry ain’t all that bad when it means you’re still alive.

**Movie 1.7 The Difference Between Income and Wealth**

So to talk about the difference between income and wealth I’m going to focus on professional athletes and that we like to focus on how much they make in a year and look don’t get me wrong the 25 highest-paid players in the National Football League 20 of them are quarterbacks and all of them are making about 20 million dollars a year right now mind you that there’s normally only about two or three players that are making that amount of money because the NFL has a salary-cap that’s approximately a hundred sixty million dollars a year so look if your paying 40 million dollars out 2 players then that leaves about a hundred twenty million dollars to distribute over the other 50 players in the team so about two million each if we split up evenly but of course we know that’s not the case but anyway I think about however the highest income in the NFL doesn’t even belong to a player it actually belongs to the NFL commissioner who made about 40
million dollars in 2014 so these incomes would make a person rich but what makes a person wealthy okay so staying on the topic of the NFL the NFL makes about 11 billion dollars a year if you add up all the salary cap money that would be about five billion for all those teams and so now that leaves about six billion dollars left over for all the owners to split up now if we assume equality that would mean there’s about a hundred eighty million dollars per team now I know that the owners have a lot of expenses wrapped up in that money but I think it’s safe to assume that they’re bringing in a boat load of money not only that but the average football team is valued at a billion dollars now here’s the difference between income and wealth if you were to save every dime of the commission’s salary minus lets say twenty percent for taxes it would take them about 33 years to save up enough money to buy a football team that he manages on a daily basis you know this actually reminds me of construction workers who build mansions that they’re never that they could never even hope to afford right another thing is that players and commissioners their income is based on an actual set of highly sought-after skills while wealth is something that you can pass down to your children and if they don’t have the skills to manage a football team they can just hire other people to do it and lastly and I think most importantly is that the average career of an NFL player is 3 years and the other sports like the NBA the baseball and hockey it’s about five years and so no matter how big these these athletes salaries are they’re only gonna do it for about 3-5 years give or take while an owner they can own their team for generations and so therefore continuing to produce that wealth.

Movie 1.8 How Does Occupational Prestige Work?

So using prestige variables we can make some sense of the social fact that although there are jobs that are completely vital to the day-to-day operations of a society that they may not have the highest prestige score and so case in point garbage collectors are absolutely vital to the operation of our society but their prestige score is 27.72 and they can make a moderate to good salary especially if you include overtime however they suffer on the scale because of the relatively low education requirements and the low levels of autonomy and authority right police officers score a little bit better with the 59.99 however they fall short of the higher elite jobs like physicians which are 86.05 lawyers as 74.77 college professors come in at a 73.51 and then engineers come in at 70.65 and so after reading that list you might be thinking to yourself how did college professors get so high on that list but look I understand that we don’t do the best in income but our education education is comparable to physicians and engineers and that also we score really well in autonomy and authority now look our autonomy is protected by this thing called academic freedom I literally could do a whole class on Pokemon Go we can play Pokemon Go I could have them download the Pokemon Go app and we can just play in class for the whole time and I could justify it by saying hey this is something that’s
happening in our society and we wanted to examine it and that would be completely legitimate to do in my classroom in a sociology class I kid you not the other part is that as long as I'm not demonstrated to be negligent in any way no one can change a grade that I've issued I mean no one and now talk about that in regards to authority and let’s look and maybe most important about where professors rank on the prestige scale college professors made the prestige scale and so therefore I was pretty sure that since college professors made it that we were scored pretty high on it.

**Movie 1.9 From My Window** by Rudy Francisco

I once saw a man with railroads tracks that slow danced across the inside of his arm he had sandpaper hands salt-and-pepper hair and a voice that sounded like barbed wire he lived somewhere in between white powder and syringes that still dripped fragments of his DNA I saw him he was injecting unfulfilled potential into veins that stuck out so far it looked like they were sprinting full speed towards the gates of heaven I saw him suspended in the atmosphere hanging on the pieces of a man that no longer looks back at him in the mirror he doesn’t even realize that he’s become his own ghost a specter an apparition haunting the man that he would be if he could just shake the cold grip of the chemicals that have transposed their hands around his neck he’s become a man with no shadow no reflection just a leaf in the wind whispering his story to the breeze because God is the only one listening and I watched him from my window like a walking motion picture like a Technicolor metaphor like a shotgun house with aborted dreams born nine months after Ronald Reagan sucker punched the Black community I saw him slowly wilting right before my eyes like a raisin in the sun like a dream deferred and I wondered if there would be anything left of him in the morning when God pulls the Sun across the sky I wondered if the blueprint to this man’s life is in somewhere on the creator’s desk and if so exactly how does this part of the story fit into the grand scheme of things I believe all things happen for a reason and usually I’m not one to question what’s been written by divine hands but I got a pair of eyes plagued with curiosity and a mouth overflowing with questions and so this morning I looked for a piece of paper I wrote why him? folded it in half I walked through my front door threw the note in the air and watched the sky swallow it whole and now I guess I’m just waiting on God to write back.

**Movie 1.10 Going Camping** by Strange Fruit Sociology

ANT: Well, something we always talk about is class and clasping of culture and it is interesting you know you are in the middle class, safe to say you are in the middle class, 

BRUCE: I'm definitely in the middle class, 

ANT: I'm working my way there, pretty close, we’re getting there, indeed, moving on up, but as we go through the, you know, each
class, working class, urban underclass, elite, upper to middle-class right there’s values and there’s culture and there’s experiences that happen at each class and if you’ve never been a part, it might be an experiences you never get to experience I don’t want to say enjoy because some of them aren’t enjoyable. Indeed, yeah. But I think one of the quintessential middle-class American things to do is camping. I’ve never been really camping I mean if it’s not a hotel and a shower and some bathrooms and some breakfast on the table at a restaurant. I mean I’m not really camping right.

BRUCE: Right.

ANT: But you’ve taken on some of those experiences.

BRUCE: Yes.

ANT: Have you had any camping adventures?

BRUCE: You know what, for real, so here I am coming from a working poor background, I didn’t understand what camping even was, but my wife who, she’s solidly working class, but she has, lets say she has middle-class aspirations because when she’s hanging out at the Y with all of her friends, they start talking, and one of the things they talk about is going camping. And I’m like "camping, why would you want to do that?" and everything, every fiber of my being is like why would you want to go camping? What? It’s like because to me personally, roughing it is a motel six now, like for real, like if it goes to that level I’m like

"Damn boy, it was rough" I was at motel 6 and you and other people will be like "Yo, I completely understand that", but my wife, she took, she forced me to go camping, like for real, because like I said she has these middle-class aspirations and this is something that she solidly remembers as a good experience, and all of this, and I’m like "I don’t know how to camp", and she looked at me with disgust, like I mean for real, disgust. Like she looked at me like "What kind of man don’t know how to camp?" and I’m like "This one".

ANT: Looks like a gender roles.

BRUCE: Right? She put it in a gender role and I’m like, she like, no joke, she nagged me for like three weeks straight the first time we did this and finally I buckled, finally I was like okay let’s go camping. We take all my in-laws camping stuff, which I don’t even know how to setup, but I tried, I figured out how to put up the tent and all of that and then we go and we start playing around at the playground and we come back and one of the tents are gone. And I’m like damn, one of the tents are gone.

ANT: Yeah, you got jacked.

BRUCE: Like I thought we got jacked, but then I see this little white girl come around the corner with the tent in her hand, she’s like "yo, did you lose this?" and for real, she had the tent in her hand and I’m "like oh snap, that’s what the spiky things are for?"
To hold the tent? That’s what their for?” I was so embarrassed the whole time, the thing that zipper on the tent broke.

ANT: That’s how you know you can’t camp when you call it the *moves hand in a zipper motion* the thing.

BRUCE: Dude, that thing! The zipper on the tent broke, so we were sleeping, the air mattress goes flat, the zippers broke and so we’re getting bit all by bugs. I wake up at like 2 o’clock in the morning being bit by bugs, my air mattress is flat I get up and I was like “I’m going home”, and she looked at me she didn’t even argue, we walked out and camping though is so ingrained in her that we went camping just this weekend.

ANT: After all that you went back?

BRUCE: I love my wife. I mean this is what I think people are supposed to do and yet every time I talk to like people like you, or like some of my other friends, and they’re like “yo man, I don’t go camping, they go camping”. I’m like “what the hell am I doing wrong here?” because my wife forced me to go camping again. I even looked at her, this was at the YMCA and she looked at me, like “we’re going camping” and I’m like “why are we going?” you know I hate camping, why the hell you gonna make me camp you know I don’t like camping, and she’s just like “Bruce the kids like camping, I like camping, you’re going camping”, and I’m like ain’t this a blip. I went, and so, well here’s what happened. So, here I am, taking the bikes up to the camping trip and she bought a bike rack at a garage sale and the bike rack broke. So, I almost lost the bikes the first time. Now here’s the deal, that’s funny enough, all by itself, here’s the real funny part, it’s that I didn’t give up because I know my wife wanted me to go camping and she wanted the damn bikes at the campsite. And so, I went over to my in-laws house to borrow their bike rack. No joke! I borrowed their bike rack, it was worn and tattered, but I was like “Yo, it’s a bike rack”. It’s like, you know its gonna work, it’s strapped in and everything with the bikes on. No joke, I’m going down gopher canyon road, and right around a blind turn the freaking bike rack broke. This time the bikes go flying off into the other lane and cracks the woman’s rear view mirror and tears off her driver’s side mirror and I’m just like so embarrassed, she’s completely shaken up, like, she’s like nervous, because I mean think about what you see. She’s seeing bikes flying across the lane, what the hell is she thinking?

ANT: She’s thinking damn I just got finished hitting somebody and killing somebody.

BRUCE: No! It was because my bike rack broke off of my damn car! And so, here I am waiting for the freaking police report and all that crap! I traumatized this young woman all because of freaking camping camping! CAMPING! And I don’t even understand why I do this! But dammit I love my wife! And she wants to go camping, and so dammit that’s why I did it. And, but I still feel embarrassed to this day because I don’t get why you have to go camping, and
all basically, all you’re doing is just taking all the stuff that you got from your house and taking it someplace else, and putting it in a damn tent! That’s work! That’s not a vacation! I come back more tired from camping than I do from work! So ugh... camping. I don’t like that, but my wife makes me do it, and I love her, and so I do it.

ANT: Saying. I think I might not want to be middle class after all, and just skip to the elite.

BRUCE: Please do. I’m sure they call camping something different.

Movie 1.11 Poetry in Praxis

Imagine by Black Ice

What happens in neighborhoods where the self-esteem has been over-shadowed by the decay? And the children no longer play the way they used to Where young boys choose to follow figures that had no father figures A place where lives have been reduced to mere names on a nigga wall A lot of dead shames on a nigga wall cause most of my childhood friends died over some dumb shit It’s like we’re all on some slum shit Whatever happened to that ‘we shall overcome’ shit? Where I’m from shit They done tore down the projects and took away neighborhood sports It’s a place where little black boys put on jerseys and shorts Dream big about stardom on fine, hardwood courts But awake to the harsh reality of the stripped, unfinished, inner city floors where life splinters Cold winters are sheltered by crack houses instead of recreational centers that they claim not to have the paper to keep open for operation The deconstruction of the black family has been in perpetuation ever since Willy Lynch set his theory in motion De-characterization was his soul promotion Therefore if you take the basketball out of his face and put the coke in its place he’ll still score What’s a young boy to do when he doesn’t want to do wrong but there’s a lock on the right door When he has the heart of a soldier the aggression of a prizefighter but no ones taught him what to fight for See most of our families are fatherless and quite poor So we miss out on meals as well as kisses and hugs You’ve got the audacity to cut the funding for the facilities that keep us off the streets Then ask us why we sell drugs But imagine if niggas put down their dice and guns picked up their daughters and sons and put a little love right there where the hate is Imagine if niggas got the chance to become accountants before being taught what the difference between wet and dry weight is Imagine if these little inner city kids had the same type of schools that these rich kids have way out there in the sticks Imagine if niggas had the chance to learn chemistry for real before we learn how to whip seven and a half out of six Imagine if these little black girls got to go to that dance school for free and learn to love to dream of that Broadway show Imagine if she wasn’t forced into a game where you assume a filthy name and put your soul and your ass up for show Imagine if she was taught to love herself, imitate no one, demand and demonstrate respect when she walks through the door Imagine if she turned
on the tele and watched herself doing the primetime hour instead of the four o’clock video whore Imagine

**Movie 1.12 The Structure of Inequality - public schools and small businesses**

The vast majority of people in the United States believe that a good education is the key to success I believe that I know you believe that because you’re reading an introduction to sociology textbook and research even supports this and it tells us that earning of four-year degree is like the silver bullet to end the cycle of poverty that many families find themselves in right now if you’re a conflict theorists what you would be thinking that if education is so important then why would tie school funding to property taxes now think about it affluent neighborhoods collect a significant amount of property taxes the best funded schools normally translates into higher academic performance index scores while schools and poor communities have to do fundraisers to buy necessary materials like textbooks for their students another way that inequality is built into our society is by getting a small business loan now this is very difficult for people in poor neighborhoods to do because there’s literally places that banks refuse to give loans into this is a well-documented practice and it’s called redlining therefore even if you are a poor person and you wanted to try to open a business it would be very difficult for you to start because most banks would refuse to give you a loan based just on where you lived and so this is what it means as a sociologist to say that inequality is structured into our systems.