

Richard T. Craig, PhD George Mason University

### Social-Class...

- One of the most fundamental dimensions of social organization...
  - Organization of individuals into groups
  - Arranged hierarchaly
- Marx
  - Based in Marxism...social class determined by individuals relationship to power and production
    - Does individual posses the power to produce?

### Social-Class

- Weber 3 elements of social class
  - Economic position
  - Social status or prestige
  - Power
    - Some scholars also include
      - Education
      - Occupation
      - Income
      - Wealth
- Classes often recognized in contemporary U.S.
  - Lower Class
  - Working Class
  - Middle Class
  - Upper-middle Class
  - Upper Class

# Living the "American Dream" via Media

#### Paulson and O'Guinn

- Nearly half Americans believe they are middle class
  - Mass media has been said to lead to misperceptions about American's self-perception of belonging to the middle class.
    - Media blurs the lines between social classes
- What is the "American Dream"
  - Life should be better and filled with opportunity for everyone, despite social class!
    - 3 Interrelated ideas constructing the American Dream
      - Opportunity
      - Meritocracy
      - Upward mobility
- Most Americans believe that opportunity is "widely available" (Paulson and O'Guinn, 2018)
  - Hard work and talent gets you ahead!

## Value of Capital in Social Class

• Bourdieu's conception (O'Sullivan, 2016)

- Economic capital (money and property)
- Cultural Capital (cultural goods and services including educational credentials)
- Social capital (acquaintances and networks)
- Symbolic capital (legitimation)

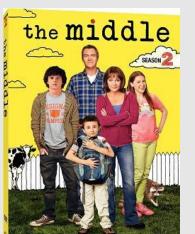
### Low-income/Impoverished Class

#### • Bunds & Newman (2015)

- Media allows audiences to consume the "horrors" of poverty without having to engage in the material realities of poverty.
  - Those who are impoverished (a la the "bum" in Bunds and Newman's study) become the "other"
    - The Impoverished other is
      - Undeserving
      - Pathological
      - Irresponsible

# Working Class

- Working Class Media Traits (stereotypes) (Behm-Marowitz, 2018)
  - Lacking intelligence
  - Lacking in taste
  - Lacking in parenting skills
    - Men
      - Lazy
      - Unintelligent
      - Buffoons
    - Women
      - Depicted by success in domestic sphere
  - Unable to take responsibility for their lives









## **Upper-Class**

- Depicted more favorably than working class
  - Better parenting
  - Better taste
  - Higher intelligence

## Performing Class

- Grindstaff (2002)---from Lee and Moscowitz (Gender Race and Class Reader)
  - Class, especially in the context of television, is also a performance, a social script involving, among other things, language use, mannerisms, and dress

- Wood and Skeggs
  - Perfomatives are unconscious repeated gendered and classed enactments, while performances are full-blown conscious actions. What we often see on reality television is the performative made explicit.





# Authenticity...

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