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Social Inequality and Work

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Wendy Bottero (University of Manchester, email: wendy.bottero@manchester.ac.uk)

'Someone like me'- Differential association and social identification

The paper explores how the analysis of differential association (patterned social networks) can help theorise the relationship between social location and social identification. Postmodern accounts of 'difference' argue social identities cannot be 'read off' from social location, whilst others argue that increasing reflexivity has divorced the'objective' and 'subjective' dimensions of social life. In rebutting such claims, processes of 'cultural' distinction have been given a central theoretical place in recent class debates. However, processes of social capital, or differential association, have been less well explored. For 'cultural' class theorists, a focus on cultural distinction has helped tackle the paradox that class remains structurally important in shaping lives but does not translate into consciously 'claimed' cultural identities. Such accounts make a distinction between implicit, or background social 'identities' and explicit or foreground symbolic 'identities'. But what is the relationship between hierarchical differentiation (as an ordering of social relations in which cultural values are implicit and normative), and 'class' (as a set of explicit and politicized claims)? The paper argues that such issues can usefully be addressed by examining how differentiated social relations help underpin particular lifestyles, values and claims.

Miriam David (University of Keele, email: m.david@keele.ac.uk)

Social Inequalities, Gender & Lifelong Learning: A sociological critique

The relationship between social and sexual or gender inequalities and how they have been studied, theorized and analyzed over the last 30 years or so is my concern in this paper. I want to consider the broad social and policy question of what we have learned about global social transformations in the UK by comparison and contrast with the USA and Canada. I will discuss first changing social and feminist research methodologies from their origins in sociology and second wave feminism through the 'biographic turn' and moves towards post-structuralism and post-structural feminisms. I will then address 3 international studies (Oakley 2005; Smith & Griffith 2005; Stambach & David 2005) about change in relation to families, work and education since they all reflexively address the question of changing knowledge and methodologies about social inequality. Whilst all 3 studies are from a feminist perspective and include consideration of changing methodologies in the light of the so-called neo-liberal project they come to rather divergent conclusions, illustrating the complexities of knowledge and methodologies about social and gender inequalities.

Jane Elliott, Ginny Morrow (University of London, email: j.elliott@ioe.ac.uk)

Imagining the future: social class background and children's aspirations for and understandings of work

This paper will examine the possible link between children's social class backgrounds and their conceptualization of work, as expressed in essays written by eleven year olds in 1969. It will be based on analysis of data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS) a prospective study of over 17,000 individuals born in one week of 1958. When the children of the NCDS were eleven years old they were given a short questionnaire to complete at school about their interests outside school, the school subjects they enjoyed most, and what they thought they were most likely to do when they left secondary school. In addition, they were asked to write an essay about what they thought their life would be like at age 25. The instructions given were as follows: 'Imagine you are now 25 years old. Write about the life you are leading, your interests, your home life and your work at the age of 25. (You have 30 minutes to do this).' Coding of the children's anticipated occupation at age 25 already demonstrates the diversity of the children's aspirations. For example, 1184 (8.7%) stated that they wanted to be teachers, 1217(8.9%) aspired to some other professional occupation and 750 (5.5%) wanted to be shop assistants. There are also clear gender and social class differences in occupational aspirations. This paper is based on a pilot project funded by the Nuffield foundation that is analyzing a stratified sub-sample of 560 essays using a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. The paper will examine the occupational aspirations of children in the context of their social class backgrounds, and will also look in detail at the ways in which children write about work and what this reveals about their concepts of the experience of work in adult life.

Vernon Gayle, Paul Boyle, Robin Flowerdew and Andrew Cullis
(University of Stirling, email: vernon.gayle@stirling.ac.uk)

Analysing the impact of family migration on women's labour market experiences in Britain

Within social geography the effects of long distance family migration on women's subsequent labour market status have been well documented. In this paper we investigate the effects of long distance family migration on females from a sociological perspective. In particular we explore the effect of moving on subsequent participation in the labour market. We also examine the nature and changes in employment for women in couples who have experienced a long distance move.

Previous studies have largely relied on cross-sectional data and have generally highlighted the negative effects that long distance family migration has on women's employment. In this paper we extend the boundaries of empirical analysis by modelling panel data. The data are drawn from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). The BHPS is a nationally representative large-scale household survey with a complex design. In particular we focus on the application of random effects and population average models using existing software and comment on the suitability of standard estimation procedures.

Our analyses indicate that a range of factors affect women's employment status in Britain. Both long distance migration and family factors have an effect on subsequent employment. We also report that there is a complex relationship between prior and current employment status. We also theorise how family migration could be located within wider thinking related to social inequality and female labour market participation.

Daniel Guinea-Martin (Office for National Statistics, Daniel.Guinea-Martin@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

Segregation Change: Longitudinal Evidence from the NCDS

In this presentation I will show that, at the aggregated level, occupational segregation by sex remained stable over the 1990s among members of the 1958 cohort of the National Child Development Study. However, there was considerable job mobility at the individual level. By showing transitions between

segregated and integrated jobs, my presentation will show work-in-progress that attempts to reconcile the results from these two levels of analysis.

Sarah Irwin (University of Leeds, email: S.Irwin@leeds.ac.uk)

Inequalities Inside Out

Some parallel difficulties of explanation have emerged in studies of diversity and inequality across different domains. This paper considers a range of such domains, including gender, age, ethnicity and class related hierarchy. In all these areas influential approaches have failed to address, and even contributed to, a conceptual gap between the normative and the social structural. A lack of clear connection between social actors' subjective outlooks and extant social arrangements have led some analysts to make 'leaps of faith' across levels of the social (from micro to macro) rather than sufficiently addressing this lack of connection as a problem of explanation. We need to re-connect the normative and social structural (and construe the latter as a dynamic process in which norms play an integral part). Using empirical data from a range of primary and secondary sources, the paper argues that we need to better understand the specificity of subjective orientations and norms, the social positioning of individuals and groups, and the importance of context, in order to develop a more adequate conceptualisation of social diversity. In so doing we can enhance our analysis of the processes shaping, and reshaping, diversity and inequality.

Jenny Jarman (National University of Singapore, email: socjj@nus.edu.sg)

The Information Economy and the Ordinary Graduate

This paper examines Malaysia's efforts to move towards an information economy. It develops a case study of the Malaysian Multimedia Supercorridor. This development was Mahatir Mohammed's multibillion dollar initiative to help Malaysia move towards a standard of living equivalent to that of a developed country by 2006. It is an infrastructure development project designed to attract high-end information technology operations, preferably from well-established Multinational firms . The infrastructure now exists but it has been plagued with vacancy problems. I argue that the original conception for the Supercorridor privileged employment and development opportunities for the upper and middle class employee and neglected needs of the ordinary graduate. Ironically, one of important industries that now inhabits the Supercorridor – the business services industry – employs people with moderate qualification levels. The paper argues that these employees must be a key part of an information economy strategy for a developing country economy as the average levels of income and education are typically lower than a developed country economy.

Nabil Khattab (University of Bristol, email: Nabil.Khattab@bristol.ac.uk)

Segregation and inequality: the case of unemployment amongst ethnic minorities in Britain

In this paper, drawing on data obtained from the 2001 UK census (CAMS), we carry out new investigation to look at the influence of the ethnoreligious background and residential segregation on unemployment amongst ethnic minorities in Britain. We use the information on religion affiliation and ethnic background to derive new variable that we label as ethnoreligious background. This helps us to control for both religion and ethnicity, but also to explore the interaction effect of both backgrounds (religion and ethnicity). Using such variable also helps answering some of the questions that previous studies failed to answer due to lack of information or outdated data sets such as the 1991 UK census or the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities that is now about 11 years old. We also have included neighbourhood based information to include indicator for residential segregation and levels of deprivation. We model the data using a multilevel analysis with neighbourhoods being the second level and individuals the first level. The analysis suggests that segregation seems to have significant impact on the labour market outcomes but this impact is not even for all the ethno-religious minorities.
The results will be presented and discussed in the conference.

Paul Lambert, Larry Tan, Ken Prandy, Vernon Gayle and Ken Turner
(University of Stirling, email: paul.lambert@stirling.ac.uk)

The Importance of Specificity in Occupation-based Social Classifications

Hout and DiPrete (2006) highlight the 'Treiman constant' as the single most important empirical generalization to be confirmed through the long history of social stratification studies associated with RC28 research conferences. The 'constant' is the idea that occupational positions have the same stratification meanings across different countries and time periods. This can be described as a 'universal' approach to occupation-based social classifications. It may be contrasted with a 'specific' approach, in which different occupations may locate individuals to different social classifications, dependent on contexts such as nation, time period, or gender.

In this paper we suggest that, whilst it is sound advice for many purposes, the principle of the Treiman constant does have three limitations which are particularly important to specialist research on stratification and work. One issue involves engaging with the many sociological theories which carry 'specific' implications for occupational analyses. A second involves recognizing evidence of the continued empirical importance of specific approaches in certain circumstances. However the third and most important limitation involves the technologies of occupational analysis. The principle of the Treiman constant emerges primarily from a cost-benefits analysis, in which specific approaches are felt to be complex and time-consuming whilst generating minimal differences from universal strategies. In this paper we illustrate how internet facilities, such as those prepared through the GEODE project, have dramatically reduced the costs of specific approaches. Contrary to popular perceptions, specificity may now be readily incorporated into occupational analyses, and may lead to more empirically and theoretically satisfactory results.

Yaojun Li, Anthony Heath (University of Birmingham, email: y.li.3@bham.ac.uk)

Ethnicity, Education and Earnings: a new analysis using the PSM

There has been a longstanding debate amongst sociologists on whether there is growing or declining 'meritocracy' in capitalist societies like Britain, namely, whether the ascribed status is giving way to the achieved status This issue is usually addressed by looking at the association between class origin and class destination. Two other important markers of ascription are ethnicity and sex. While there has been much discussion on class and gender differences in the labour market, ethnic differences in terms of earnings have been rare. This is because most data sets lack sufficient data for one or the other or both of the variables: ethnicity and earnings. This situation is incompatible with the numerical growths of the Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BMEs) and the increasingly important roles they play in the socio-economic lives of this country. In this paper, we shall use pooled data from the General Household Survey (1972-2004) and the Labour Force Survey (1975-2004), standardise all key variables on ethnicity, education, class, hours of work, marital status, country of birth, year of arrival, employment status and labour market earnings, etc. We shall apply the evaluation technique called propensity score matching (PSM) to multiple treatment and control groups (different educational levels) for non-experimental, observational designs, and assess the effects controlling for possible selection biases for different ethnic groups over thirty consecutive years. Although the PSM as an evaluation technique has been available for around three decades and has been much utilised, especially in the US academic community, in epidemiology, education, econometrics, criminology, etc. it has been little seen in sociological analysis, especially in Britain. The analysis will be focused on economically-active men over the age of 16 in the 32 consecutive years and we hope to establish the patterns and trends of ethnic penalty, and the extent and the direction of the BME social integration by conducting the most rigorous analysis ever conducted in this area. This research is supported by the ESRC grant on '*Socio-economic position and political support of the BMEs in Britain (1971-2004)*, ESRC (RES-163-25-0003).

Lucinda Platt (University of Essex, email: lplatt@essex.ac.uk)

Unemployment Durations and Dynamics: Variation by Ethnicity and Religious Affiliation

The unemployment rates of Britain's ethnic groups vary widely. Minority groups experience higher rates than the majority at all ages; but there is substantial variation between minority groups, with Pakistanis and Bangladeshis experiencing particularly high rates. Differences in unemployment rates result from differences in rates of entry into unemployment and differences in durations or speed with which exit from unemployment occurs. Whether the unemployed are a discrete group of long-term unemployed or represent a large proportion of the population who experience just a brief period in unemployment is relevant for how policy responds. While there is an increasing body of research on the durations and dynamics of unemployment generally, there is little on the ways in which such durations and dynamics vary with ethnicity, and how ethnicity shapes patterns of (re)entry and exit over and above other measured characteristics. Using administrative data on unemployed benefit claimants and applying techniques of survival analysis, this paper offers a significant development of our knowledge and understanding in this area. Given the increasing research attention to variations in experience according to religion, this paper also examines whether unemployment dynamics vary with religious affiliation.

Kerry Plattman (University of Cambridge, email: kp277@cam.ac.uk)

Inequalities & anomalies: assessing the UK's new age discrimination law

Age discrimination has been seen as the most pervasive of inequalities in the workplace yet, to date, has been given the lowest of priorities, both in legislative and workforce management terms. In October 2006, however, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations come into force in the United Kingdom, giving people of all working ages (up to 65 years) the right to protection against age discriminatory employment practices, including in recruitment, retention, vocational training, promotion, dismissal and retirement. The new law represents a historic moment for age campaigners who have long argued that age should be on an equal legislative footing to gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief.

This paper is a timely examination of the likely impact of the age discrimination regulations. Will they herald a new era of age equality in the workplace, and end age's traditional place at the bottom of 'the hierarchy of oppressions'? Will the law encourage or force employers to open up job opportunities to the youngest (15-24 years) and oldest (55-64 years) members of the labour force, and so meet Government targets to increase employment rates among these age groups? Will there be an 'oldrush' of expensive and time-consuming tribunal cases involving age, as has been suggested recently?

This paper examines the research evidence by looking, firstly, to age discrimination cases in countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia and the Republic of Ireland. These suggest that age discrimination in the workplace is hard to prove and rarely lucrative for the case-bringer in terms of the size of compensation awards. Secondly, it seeks to understand the complex factors which lie behind age discriminatory practices in the hiring, training and firing of older workers aged 50 plus. Thirdly, it explores one of the major anomalies of the new law, the default retirement age which protects employers from age discrimination claims from individuals once they reach the age of 65 years.

Michael Rice (University of Cambridge, email: mer21@cam.ac.uk)

What factors predict unemployment prior to arrest in a representative sample of adult male prisoners?

Although it is often assumed that a simple causal relationship exists between unemployment and crime, investigations have shown that any relationship is neither simple nor necessarily causal. The paper explores these issues by presenting exploratory analyses of data collected in the course of a systematic survey of prisoners' reading skills. Of those surveyed (N=203), just under half reported that they had

been unemployed at the time of arrest for their index offence. Using a wide but by no means exhaustive range of situational and personal variables from both childhood and adulthood, the analyses sought to distinguish between those that predict employment status at the time of arrest and those that do not. In a series of bivariate analyses—and in contrast to an historically deeply-rooted (and, at Westminster if not in Whitehall, possibly ineradicable) belief—it was found that differences between the intelligence and reading attainment levels of employed and unemployed prisoners were not statistically significant. Furthermore, relative to parental socioeconomic status not only downward but also upward social mobility predicted a greater likelihood of unemployment at arrest. In a series of multivariate analyses, it proved relatively easy to predict employment. Less easy was the prediction of unemployment at levels above chance; however, it appeared that conventional assumptions about causal relationships are unlikely to be correct. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research and policy development.

Juliet Stone, Gopalakrishnan Netuveli and David Blane (Imperial College London)

Modelling socioeconomic trajectories: an optimal matching approach

Socioeconomic circumstances throughout people's lives can have a significant impact on subsequent health and illness. Identifying patterns of life-course socioeconomic position may help elucidate this relationship by adding a temporal dimension. However, novel methods of analysis may be required in order to carry out such research.

Optimal matching (OM) is an approach to data classification with origins in microbiology that allows the analysis of complex sequence data. The technique involves calculation of the 'distance' between pairs of sequences in a sample, data which can then be used to identify clusters of related sequences that belong to distinct typologies.

This paper describes the use of optimal matching to model temporal patterns of life course socioeconomic position (based on indicators such as social class and household type) in a stratified sub-sample of the Boyd Orr cohort. This cohort, currently in early old age, was originally studied in childhood during the 1930s, and was followed-up in the 1990s to obtain prospective and retrospective data from throughout participants' lives.

Drawing on theory from dynamic poverty research, the present analysis seeks to answer questions such as: does disadvantage tend to persist across people's lives; does disadvantage follow 'cycles' defined by certain life stages; or are we in a period of increasing differentiation of life-course socioeconomic trajectories? Ultimately, the analysis aims to inform the development of optimum measures of life-course socioeconomic position in order to predict health outcomes in later life.

Laura Williams (Colombia University, email: lmwilliams37@yahoo.com)

The Effects of Social Inequality and Economics on Trafficked Women and Children

According to the U. S. Department of Justice's and the U.S. Department of State's research production entitled, "Trafficking in Persons Report June 2005," an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 men, women, and children are trafficked across borders each year. Approximately, eighty percent of these estimates are women and girls and up to fifty percent are minors. It is important to note that this report includes numbers that focus on transnational human trafficking. As a result, the data used here does not include the millions of trafficked victims around the world who are trafficked within their own national borders. Organized traffickers make 3.8 billion in U.S. dollars annually according to the International Labor Office (ILO) in Geneva's Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labor group's article created March 2005 entitled, "Forced Labour and Human Trafficking: Estimating the Profits." When the ILO, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Department of State analyze the ruthless precision with which traffickers provide the human supply to manage the demands of clients who frequent the sex industry on an international scale, it is clear that globalization, poverty, the internet, corruption, ease of travel, and weak law enforcement enable them to expand their international

networks rapidly. By selling the human body over and over again through these various networks, underground black-markets, and channels, traffickers have succeeded in making the human body of the poor and vulnerable—broken by sexual exploitation—into a valuable commodity. Human Trafficking affects every continent and most countries. Concentrated problem areas around the globe are Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and third world countries and regions. In this presentation I will present my analysis of the problems of Human Trafficking through a theory I call Social Politics.

Richard Zijdeman (University of Utrecht, email: r.l.zijdeman@fss.uu.nl)

Intergenerational occupational status attainment during Dutch industrialisation, Zeeland ca. 1811-1920.

How can regional differences and differences over time in the relationship between ascribed and achieved characteristics and status attainment be explained? Modernisation theory (Kerr et al. 1960; Blau and Duncan 1967; Treiman 1970) states that due to industrialisation ascribed characteristics became less important to an individual's position on the labour market, while the importance of achieved characteristics increased. Not only 'new' industrial occupations and the need for educational qualifications, but also other modernisation processes such as greater urbanisation and the rise of mass transport, "decreased regional, ethnic and class differences in attitudes and behavior" (Treiman 1970, p. 219) and made that people were decreasingly valued for their heritage and increasingly for their accomplishments (Parsons & Shils 1951). However, Reproduction theory (Collins 1971) claims that even when the direct effect of father's occupational status on son's occupational status decreased the effect of industrialisation on status attainment was negligible. Elites would have been able to pass on their higher status positions through higher quality or more prestigious education and 'inheritance' of cultural capital.

Hypotheses from both theories are tested by combining individual level data such as ascribed characteristics (e.g. occupational status of the father) and achieved characteristics (e.g. own occupational status) and data on the regional level (number of steam engines, degree of urbanization, rise of mass transport). The individual data are derived from all marriage acts from the province Zeeland between 1811 and 1922 (N=158.471). The regional data are derived from archives and existing datasets.