

Understanding Systems of Stratification that Connect US - All?

Women and Gender Studies Program

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

AND **BMORE PROUD**
The Baltimore Metro LGBTQIA Inter Collegiate Network

PRESENT

**Intersections: Sexuality
Gender, Race &
Ethnicity**

Morgan State University
Student Center

Saturday, March 12, 2011
9:00 am to 4:30 pm

& Ethnicity

BT Student Development,

al, & Fluid"

borah Stearns, Montgomery

nd Religion

Student, Morgan State University

ads: So Far from God"

iversity

ecology"

Wesley Theological Seminary/Three Sisters

support of the symposium:

work

nt, Morgan State University Counseling Center

Liberal Arts

g Center

ie University

udent Affairs, Morgan State University

i State University

in State University

Student Diversity

mittee: Joanna Crosby, Dwayne Dubarry, Maren Greathouse,

ight, Anika Mann, Julie Nerad, Jasmine Norman, Anita Wells

eryl Braxton, Reginald Larkin

Understanding Systems for Stratification that connect US – All?

During this presentation we will explore a triadic relationship, the interaction between stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination against. We will examine how the processes for constructing “the other,” are similar, whether it is about race, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality.

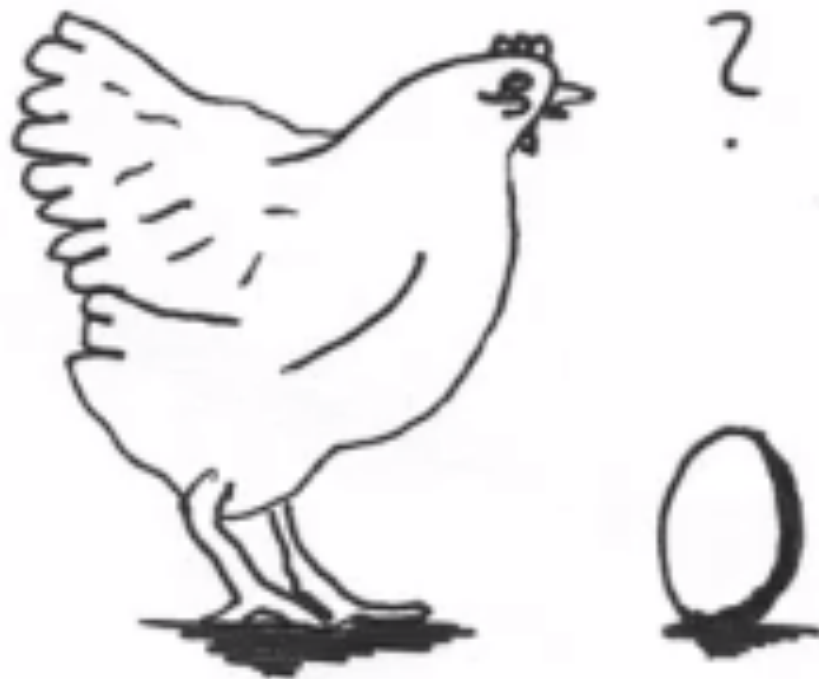


This process for constructing “the other” leads to stratification, the ranking and ordering of people in ways that generate inequality between people. We will focus particularly on how systems of stratification and this triadic relation relates to sexuality.

We will use these concepts to analyze one’s own position in society, how these affect the ways we think and behave toward one another, and how we can each shift our behaviors in ways that increase or decrease inequality between people.

Presentation by Judith Lombardi, LCSW-C, Ph.D.

Triadic Relations



Three Triadic Relations

Observers Language Society

“social” Social social

Stereotypes Prejudices Discrimination-against

observers language society

Anything said is said by an observer.
Anything said is said to an observer.

Observers make descriptions in language.
Two observers in language is the *nucleus* of a society

Society is a dynamic relation between humans - never trivial
We human beings live immersed in language, yet last thing we notice.

“Things are what is said about them in our “social” worlds.” (Herbert Brun)
As such, every human interaction is an opportunity for social transformation!

micro - society: two observers interconnected through their languaging
macro - society: territory + “social” structures of a nation, culture, institutions, etc.

“social,” Social, and social

It is no accident that the term "social" turns out to have - as soon as one examines its applications - an indefinite meaning. For it generally rests on nothing but its ambiguity. It provides no specific point of view from which the significance of given elements can be analyzed." (Max Weber. 1949: 68)



social - all we do in mutual respect

"social" – traditional view, "companionship"

Social - all we do that generates Systems of Stratification

Women Erased from Sociology

History is Social construction emerging out of power relationships that reflect an ongoing conflict between being included or excluded.

Being erased written out (vs. invisible) meant that these women were:

- Well-known public figures of their day

- Identified as sociologists by social scientists

- Active members of the sociological community

- Widely recognized by their contemporaries in sociology

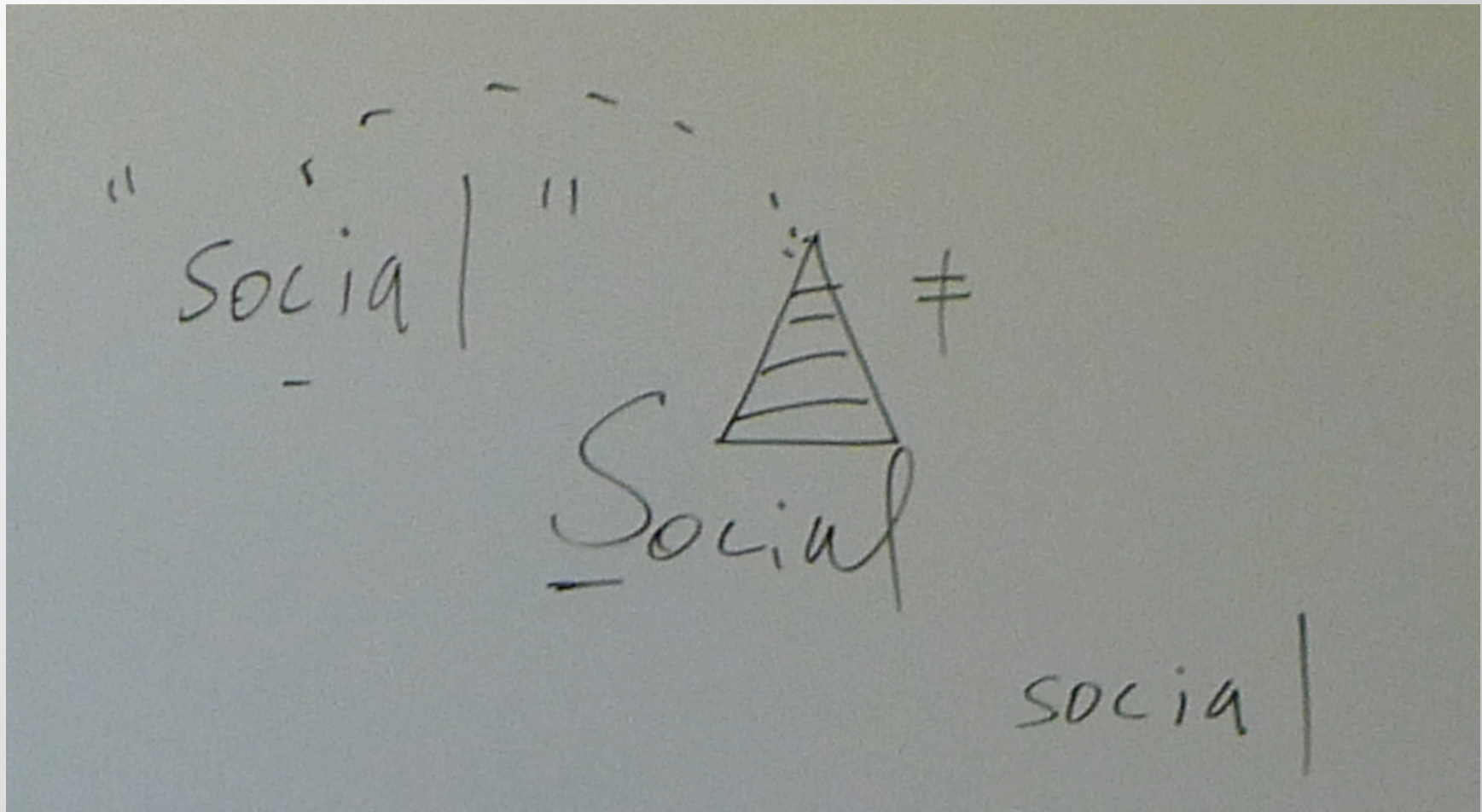
- Generated works of relevance to social theory and practice

It was not until after their death that they were written out of the history of sociology.

Maybe because their work emphasized generating social descriptions, analyzing structures that perpetuated inequalities related to race, ethnicity, gender and age.

Lengermann, P.M. and Niebrugge-Brantley, J. "Women and the Birth of Sociology" in Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporay, and Cross-Cultural Reading in Sociology.

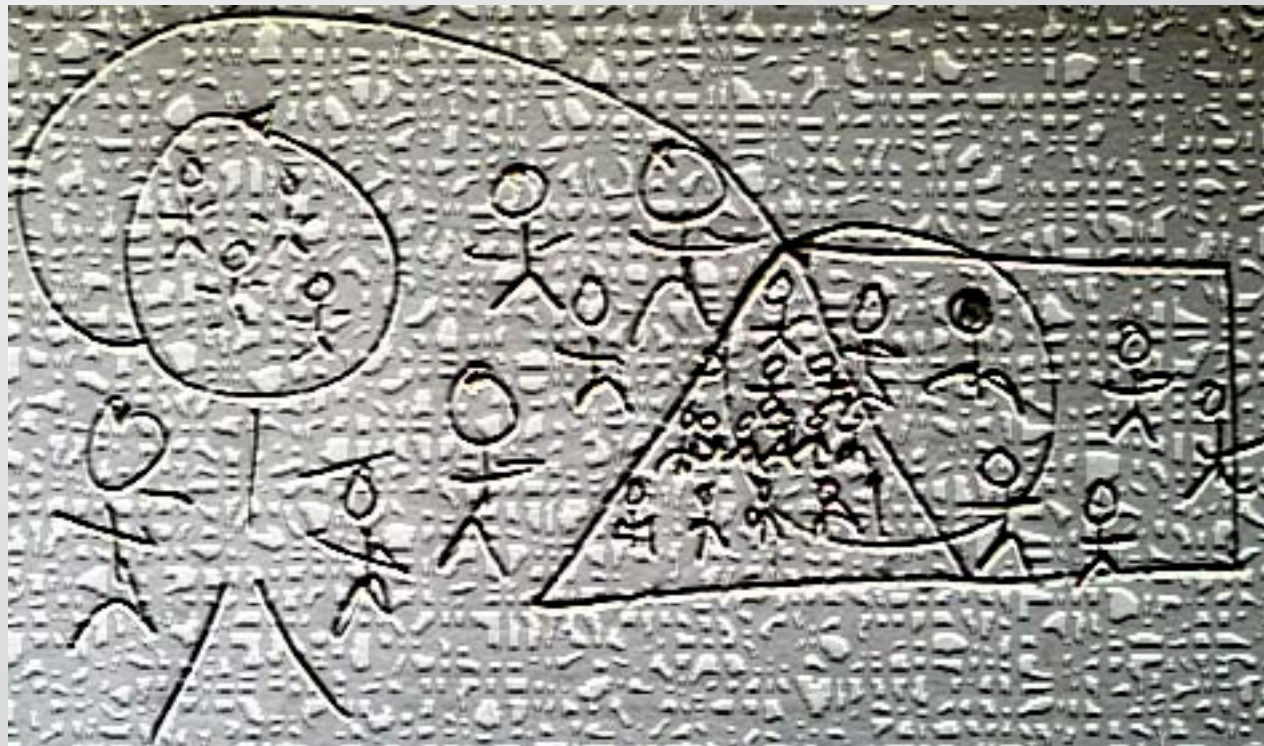
Constructing Social stratification and the “**Social**”



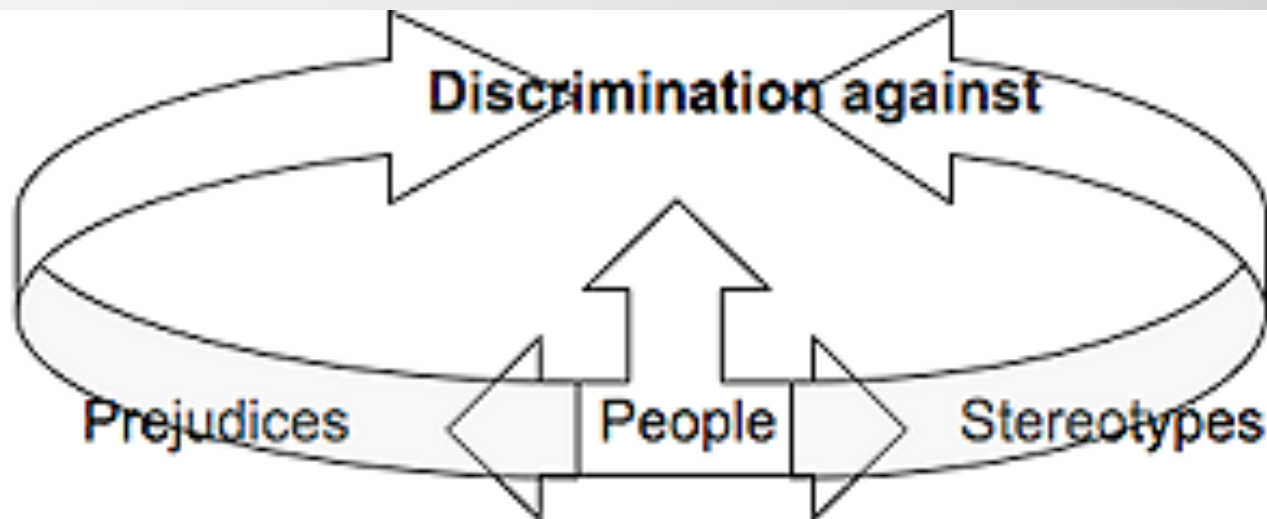
Systems of Stratification (SOS) – the Social

SOS, sets of Social structures and dynamics that entail ranking and ordering groups of people in ways that limit freedom (choices) and power.

Social structures, building blocks that make up a society, a macro views:
culture – language, beliefs, practices || institutions - reinforce constraints.



SOS Triadic Relation



Not which comes first or last – interconnected relations & dynamics generate SOS

Definitions

When I look around, talk with people, listen to the news, read, or go on the Internet, I observe how certain **stereotypes** about certain groups of people are embedded and repeated in our daily conversations and the media. Stereotypes that are linked to certain **prejudices** and connected to **discrimination against** in US societies today.

Stereotypes - process (symbols, images, words) by which a character trait is generalized to all members of a particular group of people. They are rigid, conserved representations and usually negative. (bell hooks on media)

Prejudices - attitudes, beliefs and biases about certain individuals as members of a particular group or category of people.

Discrimination-against – actions, behaviors for treating people differently based on some characteristic associated with them.

Once learned, stereotypes and prejudices are difficult to let go of and require explicit awareness and a desire to shift thinking and thus doing.

stereotypes

gender stereotypes - generalizations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups.

LGBT stereotypes - conventional generalizations and images about people based on their sexuality.

ethnic stereotypes - generalizations perpetuated or based on cultural differences such as beliefs, values, costumes, clothes, food, etc.

racial stereotypes - generalizations that perpetuate biological differences that indicate innate differences regarding human abilities.

Many people automatically assume stereotypes to be true, thus perpetuating stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination against.

Many people recognize the dangers of gender stereotyping, yet continue to make these types of generalizations.

What about YOU me us?

Stereotypes Prejudices Discrimination-against

Generate and maintain Systems of Stratification



Stereotypes – words signs symbols...

Prejudices – thought processes – language

Discrimination-against – actions, behaviors

“Guess there won’t be an Easter Egg Hunt at the White house the year.”

designing social transformations

social design

design processes cognitive, cultural, institutional and societal constraints are articulated, questioned, dissolved, transformed and created.

every moment of interaction as an opportunity for social change

articulate constraints – make them and clear, explicit, then desirable

be willing and ready to abstract your analysis in a variety of domains

micro – examining daily interactions – conversations as a-synchronicities

macro – a bigger view, SOS of a nation, “social” analysis: media structures

maximo - even a wider view, SOS the world, an international/global analysis

Breaking the Cycle

Change your thinking and behavior - behavior can modify thinking and thinking can modify behavior.

Become a **deliberate thinker** and **speak assertively** when experiencing stereotypes, prejudices -- particularly those related to your “others.”

Widen your circles of friends to include people that are very different than you.

Recognize your biases. We all have them, blind spots, can't help it, comes with being human biologically, cognitively and socially.

Articulate constraints and possibilities, then **generate desires**.

Check for resources and support -- they are everywhere!

Stereotype, Prejudice or Discrimination against?

Renowned Harvard Professor William Gates, Jr. is arrested when his neighbor observes him breaking into his own home - police arrest him.

[Intersection Race, Class and Crime in US](#)

[Congress Debates Muslim Radicalism](#)

Juan Williams says on Fox News that he feels uncomfortable whenever he sees people in "Muslim garb" on airplanes.

[Pictures of Muslims Wearing Things](#)

[Asian/Asian Americans](#)

Stereotype, Prejudice or Discrimination against?

[See Jane](#)

Gender



Sexuality

[Born This Way Blog](#)

Class

Possible Resource Links

[Allies](#)

[Dictionary](#)

[Queerthology](#)

[Race is an Illusion](#)

[Jack and Jill Politics](#)

[Representations in the Media](#)

Current Self Description



jlombardi [Edit profile](#)

Brief Self-Description?:

- independent scholar (free radical)
- video ethnographer (20+ years)
- retired sociology teacher (I just couldn't do it anymore.)

What do you intend to use this site for?:

communication and anticomunication I hope

Interests and passions:

art
video
people
pedagogy
linguaging
composing daily life
radical constructivism
structured determined systems
designing and defining the "social"
making distinctions worth making
establishing connections of all sorts
social models for designing humanness

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How often will you be visiting this site, ideally?: Every week, at least

Answer at least one question we didn't ask.:

Baltimore

Feel free to contact me at: cyberjl@comcast.net ||| 443 823 1729

Related Readings

Lengermann, P.M. and Niebrugge-Brantley, J. "Women and the Birth of Sociology" in Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporary, and Cross-Cultural Reading in Sociology.

Lombardi, Judith. "[The "social, SOCIAL, Social and the Social.](#)" (2007)

Richards, Laurence . "[Untangling the Dilemmas of Social Design.](#)" (1987)

Richards. "[Praxis of Thinking: Deliberate vs. Improvised.](#) (2001)

Richards. "[An Anticommunication Imperative, A Tribute to Herbert Brun.](#)" (2009)

Von Foerster, Heinz "[Cybernetics of Cybernetics.](#)" (1979)

* Contact me if you want a copy of any of the above articles.