

Jan 73 ✓

Class

Rust Meyer

Problem: utility "social class" as concept diminishing because of complexity

Way out: Discern 2 concepts [status ~~Barber~~ Meyer's]

460)

Social differentiation - hierarchical ordering of ^{social} positions, i.e., of functions, common to all societies, "essential for their survival" inherent in functional differentiation is a process of evaluation & ranking

Social stratification - many (not all) societies - collectivities of people have same positions thru several generations - on an hereditary permanent basis

Don't confuse the two, as B. Barber Social Stratification (NY 1957), p 7 when he ~~says~~ defines social stratification as "a structure of ~~things~~ regularized inequality in which men are ranked higher or lower according to the value accorded to their [p 461] various roles of activities (Status Meyer's) - where stratification = social positions instead of by way as "collectivities of people who occupy hierarchical positions hereditarily."

461)

We can find socially differentiated societies, by labor, function & role, ~~with~~ etc, "but where the inheritance of such roles and positions is not hereditary. These are classless societies." - small, non-literate societies, usually growing close to level of subsistence & a few agr. communities such as the Israeli kibbutzim. "This poses the fascinating question whether a classless society would be possible in a complex, highly industrial society." We shall answer yes & that indeed America is currently traveling along this way.

462)

He goes on in rest of article to say that pre-industrial societies in West all had clear-cut social position & social strata. Feudal the clearest. But in industrial society, where legal restrictions removed, dynamic economic & technological & demographic forces operating, great social mobility. So, in short, American "economic rank order" of American Society has changed its shape from the traditional pyramid to a diamond bulging at the middle

uses Max Weber's different rank orders

464)

465)

and somewhat flat at the bottom" in "power rank order". still pyramidal. [464-465] prestige rank order demoralized.

How are collectivities affected? middle class fluid, upper & lower stable - implies they are hereditary but doesn't say so. For most part, in e-represents a classless society, we concludes! [not classless if they never move to top or to bottom - they are locked a widening middle which player seems to open (will grow & grow & about top & bottom)]