**Week 13: Economic Inequalities; Poverty, Prejudice, and Discrimination**

**STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS**

This lecture continues to focus on the social issues from a conflict theory approach. We will examine current trends in economic inequalities and poverty. The readings and class discussions will also study why prejudice and discrimination continue to exist in the US.

1. What is economic inequality? According to the reading, can there be societies without inequalities?
2. What are the main trends in inequalities in the US? When did the US government begin developing policies aimed at addressing it? What drew the attention of policy makers to this issue?
3. How is poverty measured in the US? What is the name of this measure? What are some issues with this measurement?
4. What is episodic poverty? How prevalent is episodic poverty compared to “regular” poverty?
5. How does poverty levels in the US compare to those in other Western countries? What some of the reasons for differences?
6. Which racial/ethnic, gender, and age groups are most likely be poor in the US? What is the impact of poverty impact people’s lives?
7. Discuss two main explanations of poverty in the US. How do these explanations envision the role of the government and individual in addressing poverty?
8. What is the difference between prejudice and discrimination? Define and provide examples for each.
9. Using the explanations covered in the reading, explain why some people more are prejudiced than others.
10. How do the social learning and economic and political competition theories can explain a rise in white supremacy groups?
11. How does racial prejudice influence public policy preferences in the US?
12. Does prejudice and discrimination always coincide? What is the difference between what Merton defines as “timid bigots” and “fair-weather liberals?”
13. What differentiates *bona fide* job requirements and from discrimination?
14. What is hypersegregation? Why does it continue?

**General discussion questions:**

* + - 1. How has the nature of racism changed over the last century? Who/what is responsible for these changes?
      2. Which of the two types of discrimination—individual or institutional—do you think is more harmful? Explain your answer by providing examples from your experiences or media.
      3. Minorities tend to have higher rates of disease and illness than whites coming from the same class and gender. What are the key reasons for these health inequalities?