Title: Differential Outcomes and Socialization

Jerome M. Hendricks, ABD
University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Sociology (MC 312)
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
1007 West Harrison Street
Chicago, IL 60607-7140
224-588-1245
312-996-5104
Jhendr7@uic.edu

Abstract

Merton (1968) identifies manifest functions as the intended and expected functions of an institution while latent functions are unrecognized and therefore unintended outcomes of social processes. For example, while we all agree one manifest function of higher education is obtaining a degree, a latent function can be the interactions of young people that can lead to marriage. Though nothing is explicitly wrong with this latent function of higher education, it brings to question "how things are done" in our social world (Berger and Luckmann 1967). This group work project is designed to encourage discussion of other processes at all levels of our education system that serve manifest and latent functions and critically discuss the potential outcomes of unrecognized processes. Through group work and class discussion, students will gain a better understanding of how the production and reproduction of social institutions can result in different outcomes for individuals from different standpoints. In addition, students will reflect on the extent to which these differential outcomes can produce barriers to social mobility and various resources. Such an approach reinforces student learning of social construction and inequality and their relationship to stratified social systems.