

## Social Class Defined

The amount of control over what you do at work  
~ *The Pedagogy of the Poor*

“...a script, map, and guide. It tells us how to talk, how to dress, how to hold ourselves, how to eat, and how to socialize ... in short, class is nearly everything about you”  
~ A. Lubrano, *Limbo: Blue-collar roots, white-collar dreams*

Bourdieu (“bore-dew) defines social class as a combination of economic, social, and cultural capital.

**Economic capital** is simply the cash money a person has available to him or her.

**Social capital** includes the social networks available to a person, which can provide access to economic and/or cultural capital.

**Cultural capital**, on the other hand, is knowledge of and familiarity with the cultural practices of the dominant culture.

Knowledge and familiarity can take the form of owning items (e.g., a large home in a wealthy neighborhood, a sports utility vehicle, etc.) or other symbolic markers (e.g., a diploma from an Ivy League school) considered important to the dominant class.

Overall, social class is partly about money and partly performative in that the person must be able to function in the dominant class.

Examples are Lisa Delpit’s *Language of Power* (Standard English—the Language of Wider Communication) and the *Culture of Power* (e.g. dining protocol) and E. D. Hirsch’s Jr. Cultural Literacy/Core Knowledge concept. Then there’s J.D. Vance’s *Hillbilly Elegy* or Nancy Isenberg’s *White Trash: The 400 year untold history of class in America* or J.D. Vance’s *Hillbilly Elegy*.

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From: “The Poor/Working-Class College Students’ Challenges and Resiliency Factors Scale” by Rebecca Reed, 2017.

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/The-poor-and-working-class-college-students-Challenges-and-Resiliency-Factors-Scale.pdf>