

Monopoly and Monopoly in a Stratified Society*

Instructions, Assignment Ideas, and Worksheets for Teaching about Social Inequality Using the *Monopoly* Gameboard

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Acknowledgments - The vignette which discusses the game can be found in two books by Leonard Beeghly: *The Structure of Social Stratification in the United States*, 2nd Edition, 1996, (p.57), Boston: Allyn and Bacon; and *Living Poorly in America* 1983, (p.141-2), New York: Praeger. I received the "Rules For Monopoly in a Stratified Society" from a friend of Dr. Randy Gainey's (Old Dominion University) who referenced the following cite although we have not been able to find the paper: Goudy, Phyllis-Marie, John Hawthorne, and Jeanne Nelson. 1983. "Teaching Social Stratification with Monopoly." Presented at the North Central Sociological Association meetings. The instructions, questions, assignment, and worksheets are my own design.

Attached Handouts

- Instructions for the Monopoly Convener
- Monopoly Worksheet
- Rules for Monopoly in a Stratified Society
- Monopoly in a Stratified Society Worksheet
- Monopoly and Stratified Monopoly Discussion Questions
- Monopoly Reaction Paper - or Take-Home Essay Exam

* Downloaded from PaulsJusticePage.com, which has additional links to information about wealth, class and related issues. See <http://www.paulsjusticepage.com/elite-deviance/monopoly.htm>.

Monopoly and Monopoly in a Stratified Society

Instructions for the Monopoly Convener

No more than 8 players at each Monopoly game board.

Play Traditional Monopoly for a set period of time, no more than 1 hour. Call the end of the game, stopping play immediately. For each game board (a single group of players), complete the *Monopoly Worksheet* that assesses each player's Gross Worth, minus their beginning \$1500, to equal their Net Worth. Each member at each board should complete a worksheet for their board; each student should keep one copy for themselves and each group should turn in one copy to the instructor. You may also find it useful to have students write about what they experienced, thought, and felt during the game; question sheets follow.

Then, play Stratified Monopoly for the exact same period of time as Traditional Monopoly. The very same players should play on the same board for both games. The handout "Rules For Monopoly in a Stratified Society" identifies how many players in each class depending on the number of players at the board; before giving the handout, put the table on the chalkboard and allow people at each board to determine who will be in each class. Pass the "Rules" out to each player. Pay close attention to interactions, including how decisions are made about who occupies which class position, how class members appear to be acting and feeling. Call the end of the game, stopping play immediately. For each game board (a single group of players), complete the *Stratified Monopoly Worksheet* that assesses each player's Gross Worth, minus their Inheritance (notice the use of a different term than "beginning \$1500"), to equal their Net Worth. As before, each member at each board should complete and keep a worksheet for their board, and each board should turn in one completed sheet to the instructor. You may also find it useful to have students write about what they experienced, thought, and felt during the game; question sheets are attached.

Discuss what happened, how people felt, what they noticed about themselves and others. Pay attention to how these actions and feelings are related to social class position. Various things have happened in the past. Among the Lower Class: "suicide," depression and alienation, bankruptcy, lifetime incarceration in jail. Among the Upper Class: noblesse oblige ("the obligation of honorable, generous, and responsible behavior associated with high rank or birth"), ruthlessness and greed, laziness and protecting one's position, manipulation of the rules, bank embezzlement. In addition, you may see class alliances form (especially between the Working and Middle Classes), class conflict, and class warfare. Ask people what happened and why, and why feelings were different among people and classes. Invite them to relate this experience to real life and to the readings.

According to the rules printed in Monopoly: "The object of the game is to become the wealthiest player through buying, renting and selling property."

Assessing Social Mobility and Status Attainment: How does Monopoly -- traditional and stratified -- illustrate status attainment and social mobility?

Following this page are worksheets for both Monopoly and Monopoly in a Stratified Society, Rules for Monopoly in a Stratified Society, class questions, and instructions for a Reaction Paper or Take-home Essay.

Old Dominion University
Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice

SOC 320U
Social Inequality

Dr. Mona Danner

RULES FOR MONOPOLY IN A STRATIFIED SOCIETY

Players - Four groups of individuals, representing four classes in US society, play the game. At each board:

	<u>8 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>4 players</u>
Upper class =	1 person	1	1	1	1
Middle class =	2 person	2	2	1	1
Working class =	3 person	2	2	2	1
Lower class =	2 person	2	1	1	1

Order of Play - Turns are taken in descending order, beginning with the upper class.

Inheritance - Each group begins the game with the following amounts of money:

Upper class = \$2,500
Middle class = \$1,500
Working class = \$1,000
Lower class = \$500

Salaries - Salaries are given each time a player passes go. Salaries are as follows:

Upper class = \$250
Middle class = \$200
Working class = \$150
Lower class = \$100

Purchase of Properties - Opportunities for buying properties on the board are distributed as follows:

Upper class = may buy any property on the board

Middle class = may buy purple, light blue, maroon and orange properties plus utilities and railroads

Working class = may buy purple, light blue, maroon and orange properties

Lower class = may buy only purple and light blue properties

Income Tax - Any class landing on the income tax square must pay \$200 each time; there is no option of paying 10%.

Go to Jail - Different rules apply for each class when being instructed to go to jail:

Upper class = Upon receiving instructions to go to jail, the upper class immediately rolls the dice. If they receive an odd roll, they go to jail, but can roll again immediately. If the second roll is greater than 7, then they are released. If less than 7, they must remain in jail taking their regular turn until a number greater than 7 is rolled, or pay \$50 for release.

Middle class = must go directly to jail. On the next or any following turn can pay \$50 to get out or can remain until a number greater than 7 is rolled.

Working class = must go directly to jail. On the next or any following turn can pay \$50 to get out or remain there until doubles are rolled.

Lower class = must go directly to jail. Must remain there until doubles are rolled.

The Bank - The Upper class is the bank.

Additional Rules

It is against the rules to complain about the rules. The sentence is going to jail; to be released, see "go to jail."

Any unclear rules will be clarified by the Upper class, at their discretion.

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Monopoly in a Stratified Society Worksheet

All students must complete one worksheet for their board; you will need it for your paper. Each board must also turn in one completed worksheet to the instructor.

Gross Worth = Cash on hand + Value of properties. According to Monopoly, properties are valued as follows: (1) All lots, utilities, railroads are valued at the price printed on the board. (2) Any mortgaged property is valued at one-half the price printed on the board. (3) Houses are valued at purchase price found on the property's deed card. (4) Hotels are valued at the hotel purchase price found on the deed card plus the purchase price of the 4 houses required in order to purchase a hotel. "Get Out of Jail Free" cards are valued at \$50.

Player's Starting Class (Inheritance)	Player's Name (first and last)	Gross Worth	End Rank (1=highest)
Upper (\$2,500)	_____	\$_____	_____
Middle (\$1,500)	_____	\$_____	_____
Middle (\$1,500)	_____	\$_____	_____
Working (\$1,000)	_____	\$_____	_____
Working (\$1,000)	_____	\$_____	_____
Working (\$1,000)	_____	\$_____	_____
Lower (\$500)	_____	\$_____	_____
Lower (\$500)	_____	\$_____	_____

Monopoly & Stratified Monopoly Discussion Questions

1. What happened in general at your board?
2. What happened to you?
3. What is your reaction to what happened?

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MONOPOLY REACTION PAPER - or Take-Home Essay Exam

Essay

Analyze your experiences, individually and collectively at your board, playing Monopoly and Inequality Monopoly in light of the course readings thus far.

Notes

Discuss / Explain your experiences only to set up the analysis. The analysis of your experiences should be the primary focus of the essay.

You must refer to the readings specifically in order to back up/explain your analysis. Also be certain make logical, sound, and accurate arguments.

Refer to the section on grading and writing in the syllabus to be certain that you understand how I read and grade written material. Also, refer to the section on academic integrity in the syllabus to make certain that you follow the ODU Honor Code.

Rules of Engagement

The essay must be typed/word processed, double-spaced, with appropriate margins and readable font size, page numbers, and no more than three (3) pages in length.

Please staple pages together (no binders or report covers) and put your Social Security Number only in the top right corner (no names, no title page).

Cite author, year, and page numbers of pertinent information in books, articles, and/or all class materials used in the essay (in-text citation style) and prepare a References list as exemplified on the accompanying information sheet. The References list page is not counted in the 3 page limit.

The essay is due at the start of the exam on _____ .