

**GRADUATE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION**

**STRATIFICATION, MOBILITY, AND LABOR FORCE BEHAVIOR**

**August 25-26, 2003**

Answer each of the three questions below. Your answers should be as complete as possible. Your examination should not exceed a total of sixteen (16) double-spaced, typed pages, excluding the references. You should follow a journal format (e.g. American Sociological Review) for references and citations. You have 24 hours from the time you pick up your examination to return it to Claudette Parker.

Please sign below at the time you pick up this examination and again when you return it. No discussion of any Qualifying Examination with any other person is permitted while the exam is in your possession.

DATE AND TIME OF PICK UP: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE AND TIME OF RETURN: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Graduate Preliminary Examination**  
**Stratification, Mobility, and Labor Force Behavior**  
**August 25-26, 2003**

Answer each of the following three questions. In each question the term specific area refers to the 10 sections on the reading list that are in boldface type (e.g. Intergenerational Social Mobility, Education and Stratification, Poverty, etc.) The committee will judge your answer to each question on the demonstration of your breadth and depth of understanding of the appropriate literature, your ability to include specific details and your ability to analyze, integrate, and make theoretical and empirical connections in the literature and issues discussed.

1. One of the salient dialectics in social stratification research has been that between institutional/structural approaches and individual/agency approaches. Drawing on specific examples from three or more specific areas, describe the institutional and individual approaches and discuss their strengths and weaknesses. Then, discuss a few recent studies that provide successful theoretical innovations in synthesizing the two approaches; be sure to explain why you think they are innovative in their approach.

Note: Your answer to question two should emphasize the theoretical arguments. Your discussion of competing arguments in response to question three should be clear and concise but your answer should mainly focus on the proposed study.

2. Select a specific area in social stratification. Identify one unsolved problem that involves competing theoretical arguments in the literature. Explain these arguments in detail with appropriate citation and discussion of the major studies/publications that have contributed to each.

3. Select a specific area in social stratification that is different from the one you used to answer question two. Identify one unsolved problem that involves competing theoretical arguments in the literature. Briefly explain the main competing arguments. Then, propose a study that can empirically adjudicate between the competing arguments. For your proposal, please be sure to focus your discussion on:

- a. formulating hypotheses that can be empirically verified;
- b. operationalizing the key concepts;
- c. describing the evidence/data to be collected;
- d. explaining the methods used to conduct the research.

The research design can utilize qualitative and/or quantitative methods and you should justify your choice of methods.