Assignment 1: Why Is the Income Inequality in the United States Rising?

Due April 8 (Monday)
SOC 521 Wealth, Power, and Inequality
Spring 2019

Explain why the income inequality in the United States is rising.

1. Describe the historical changes in income inequality in America. Don’t forget using consistent measures that indicate levels of inequality such as the Gini inequality coefficient or p90/p10.

2. Briefly discuss main economic and sociological theories on rising inequality. Discuss which explanations are more compelling in accounting for the rise in inequality and which explanations are less so. Provide evidence that supports your argument.

3. Link these theories with functionalist and conflict perspectives.

4. If you can specify new research topics that can advance our understanding on rising inequality or develop better policies in order to attenuate some deleterious consequences of rising inequality, that is a plus.

5. Your essay should consist of 1) introduction, 2) main arguments, and 3) conclusion.

| Due Date: | April 8 (Monday) 2019. Beginning of class. A late submission will cost 5 points each day. Weekend will be counted as 2 days. |
| Format: | 6-7 pages excluding a list of references. One and half spacing. 12 point font. 1 inch left and right margin. Hard copy only (No email submission). |
| Reference: | Cite at least 4 relevant academic papers(or books). Newspaper articles, blog posts, and other website only materials will not be considered as legitimate citations. Each chapter in the Reader is regarded as a academic paper. Follow ASA’s citation guideline (e.g., https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/american-sociological-review/journal201969#submission-guidelines). |