Class #14: School Equity
Discussion Questions for Class on October 9, 2013

Related Readings: Bowles, Rosenbaum

Because writing assignments are meant to prepare you for class discussions, you must post a draft question on the Moodle Forum for this date if you want your submission to count. After posting a draft, you must revise and resubmit your final response for a grade by the following Sunday night. In the case of questions posted below, the final draft of your question is due by the end of the day on Sunday, October 13. Include your name, the full question number, and the text of the question on both your draft and final submissions.

14-1. How is the theory of the labor market related to educational achievement and how successfully does the theory predict the connection between educational attainment and job status?

You have three jobs here. One is to present the theory about how people think education, and educational improvement, are related to inequality. The second is to talk about how accurate the theory is in terms of statistical data. The third is to talk about the linkage, or lack of linkage, between how people get jobs and how they do in school.

14-2. Is it accurate to say that schools exist to effectively teach children reading, math and analytic skills?

This is an invitation to review Bowles theory of schooling. Is his theory compelling to you and does it account for your experience coming to Bucknell?

14-3. Consider the charter schools as they are presented in Waiting for Superman. What would be the pros and cons of this charter school if you took a radical perspective like that of Bowles?

This question calls for a complicated response. One thing to think about is whether charter schools like those described in the film would be needed in fancy suburbs of Chicago or New York, and what your answer to that question says about inequality in American education. A second point has to do with what you and Bowles think is the relationship between educational success and adult job status success. Will charter schools help? The third has to do with the children shut out of the charter school opportunity as well as those children who are not made candidates for those schools. On this point you ought to look at the argument given by Kozol in terms of the lowest status children in schools.