Assessing Class: Education

Stratification & Class in the U.S. > Assessing Class: Education

Abstract

Education plays a significant role in one's social position, that is, to a person's place in the social hierarchy (Lindemann, 2007, p. 54) and ultimately in stratification. Indeed, a notion prevails that the United States is the "ultimate classless society" (Stephen, 2007, p. 28). In part, this view stems from a widespread belief that access to education provides equality of opportunity and contributes directly to social mobility (that is, to one's ability to move upwardly from one's social class of origin), by increasing access to occupations with high prestige and concomitantly higher levels of income. Education therefore plays a crucial role in the likelihood of people being able to improve their social class location. Moreover, some researchers suggest that education can help to reduce racial and gender inequities and expand citizenship (Cremin, 1988; Gutmann, 1987; Kluger, 1975; Spring, 2000; Tyack, 1974). However, empirical research suggests that the contemporary US "is more stratified politically, economically and socially than ever before" (Stephen, 2007, p. 28), which suggests that education is not providing the opportunities for social mobility that perhaps it once did and/or that there is increasing stratification within the education system that contribute to and reinforce stratification more widely.

Overview

Industrial societies are divided into social classes that affect people's economic and social preferences. Members of social classes have different consumption patterns, political preferences, moral attitudes, social behavior, lifestyle and education experiences and outcomes (Güvali, Need & Graff, 2007). The study of social class—structurally produced economic hierarchies—and how to best measure it is a central theme in sociology and the foundation for scholarship on poverty, inequality and stratification. Stratification—a structured hierarchy characterized by inequalities between social groups—in the United States and around the world is a consequence of the unequal distribution of rewards.

Education plays a significant role in one's social position, that is, to a person's place in the social hierarchy (Lindemann, 2007, p. 54) and ultimately in stratification. On the one hand, education is seen not only as enabling people to develop their individual potential, but is also viewed as a mechanism for creating equality. Indeed, a notion prevails that the United States is the "ultimate classless society" (Stephen, 2007, p. 28). In part, this view stems from a widespread belief that access to education provides equality of opportunity and contributes directly to social mobility (that is, to one's ability to move upwardly from one's social class of origin). Since the mid-twentieth century, social mobility has been a feature of Europe and North American societies (Ianelli and Paterson, 2005), as more people enter professional occupations. Social and economic indicators such as income and

Keywords

Achievement Gap

Digital Divide

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Social Hierarchy

Social Position

Social Mobility

Stratification

Tracking

occupation are typically used to measure social class, and education plays a significant role in determining one's employability, employment, and income (Danziger & Reed, 1999). Education therefore plays a crucial role in the likelihood of people being able to improve their social class location by moving into higher occupational classes. Moreover, some researchers suggest that education can help to reduce racial and gender inequities and expand citizenship (Cremin, 1988; Gutmann, 1987; Kluger, 1975; Spring, 2000; Tyack, 1974).

However, empirical research suggests that the contemporary US "is more stratified politically, economically and socially than ever before" (Stephen, 2007, p. 28), which suggests that education is not providing the opportunities for social mobility that perhaps it once did. Indeed, there is evidence that education—the relationships, material resources, environments and processes associated with delivering and experiencing education—may perpetuate social inequalities.

Perspectives on Education: Consensus & Conflict

Education is seen as having different functions. Within a consensus or functionalist perspective, associated with the work of Talcott Parsons, education is seen to have a role in socialization; it contributes to ensuring that children are 'trained' to comply with the demands of the social system. Indeed, for many people, education exists to ensure that individuals learn how to be good citizens and thereby maintain an efficient, stable social order. Consequently this view of education emphasizes merit, ability and effort and the needs of society or the economy. Such a view also expresses in the idea that education is about individual opportunity (Raines & McAdams, 2006).

In contrast, conflict approaches to education argue that the education system perpetuates existing social divisions. For instance, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1976) argued that education was an instrument of the state and as such helped to perpetuate capitalism by initiating children into the expectations of the capitalist system, such as the demand for time-discipline.

Contemporary Issues

Nonetheless, politicians, journalists and many sectors of the public view education as both the most important solution to inequality and the most important problem for public policy. Education plays a critical role in many aspects of social opportunity: it shapes attitudes, forms political preferences, and plays a key role in determining one's lifestyle (Baer & Lambert, 1982). It also plays a vital role in forming one's political values, impacts one's participation in politics, and ultimately shapes one's political influence (Verba, 2001). And it is seen as a social leveler that can "turn immigrants into Americans, transform children into responsible citizens, and create and maintain democracy" (Hochschild, 2003, p. 822).

To be sure, as Hochschild (2003) notes, there have been advances in public education in the last three decades (e.g. dropout rates are down, achievement is up and resources are more equitably distributed). However, there are stark differences between socioeconomic and racial groups in levels of achievement and dropout rates; urban schools are particularly vulnerable to these differences; and within higher education, which is increasingly important in order for adults to find stable employment and gain momentum within the labor market, there are clear class differences in terms of access, retention and attainment.

While there is some consensus that education plays a role in providing equality of opportunity, there is considerable debate about whether education contributes to equality of outcomes.

Further Insights

Building on the work of James Coleman (e.g. 1987), research suggests that not only do social class and family background have a major impact on education experience and academic performance, but also, education has a major role in perpetuating social inequalities. Schools demonstrate higher patterns of inequality than other social institutions (Gibbons & Telhaj, 2007) and there is growing evidence that what happens inside the education environment is significant, such as the quality and degree of parent-teacher interaction; the quality of the curriculum; and the location of the school (urban or non-urban). Moreover, social disparities linked to social class continue into higher education, where those who graduate with a four-year degree are more likely to be in higher income groups and come from families with at least some personal wealth (Raines & McAdam, 2006).

Socioeconomic Status, School Readiness & Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in their children's education is increasingly a focus of the national conversation about education in the US. For instance, the National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Education (NCPIE) cites research that indicates children attain higher grades and are more likely to enter and graduate from higher education if their parents are involved in their education (www.ncpie.org). However, there are differences in levels and kinds of parental involvement. White, middle class parents tend to be more involved and better informed about how to support

their children (Lareau, 1987). The higher levels of involvement that are associated with parents of middle class may be a consequence of more flexible work schedules that are enjoyed by the middle and upper classes, allowing more time for contact and teacher interactions. Additionally, middle class parents may be more likely to be informed about what's going on in school because they occupy deeply entrenched social networks through which such information is circulated and exchanged.

Researchers have found that socioeconomic status has a bearing on how ready children are for school. For instance, Crnic and Lamberty (1994) argue that families with high socioeconomic status may have more success in preparing their children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development, such as books and toys to encourage learning activities at home. Also, such families may have easier access to information about their children's health, as well as social, emotional, and cognitive development. In addition, families with high socioeconomic status often seek out information to help them better prepare their young children for school. In contrast, the challenge of preparing children for school can be formidable for families in poverty (Ramey & Ramey, 1994). Consequently, they argue, children from families with low socioeconomic status are at greater risk of entering kindergarten unprepared than their peers from families with median or high socioeconomic status.

Concomitantly, in education settings that service impoverished students, teachers may play a significant role in mediating the effects of poverty in classrooms, by creating classrooms and interactions where students are valued and treated with respect, within a framework of positive relationships that can support academic achievement, performance, and motivation (San Antonio, 2008, p. 74).

Urban Schools

Inner city schools are faced with significant problems that perpetuate class inequalities in educational attainment (Olson, 1998) by increasing dropout rates and achievement levels. Urban schools tend to have much higher rates of failure than non-urban schools (Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1998) for a number of reasons. First, urban schools tend to have a higher number of students than non-urban schools and class sizes are also larger (Education Week, 1998). This creates a significant teaching challenge. Second, in urban schools, teachers are less likely to possess appropriate certification or to be "highly qualified" in their subject area. Third, technical problems persist—such as insufficient buildings and classrooms—and technology deficits (Education Week, 1998, p. 21; General Accounting Office, 1995) create teaching environments that are inadequate (Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Mayshark, 1996). As a result of these multiple issues, schools in urban environments experience higher rates of turmoil, violence, and anxiety regarding safety (Education Week, 1998, pp. 18–19); urban student populations underachieve in literacy (Levine, Cooper, & Hilliard, 2000); and urban districts are faced with high dropout rates (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003).

Urban schools are also more likely to experience a high turnover rate of new teachers, which is disruptive and contributes to poor education outcomes. In these environments, teachers are more likely to quit, citing difficult state certification and licensure requirements as a reason (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Darling-Hammond, Berry, & Thoreson, 2001). Ultimately, teacher turnover disrupts the ability to develop a culture of community and learning (Recruiting New Teachers, 2000). Moreover, "teachers in high-poverty or urban schools are also more likely to report inadequate teaching resources" (Education Week, 1998, p. 21). Therefore, children from socially and economically impoverished backgrounds, who need the most support from the most qualified and dedicated personnel, are shortchanged. For instance, in Raleigh, in North Carolina, a busing policy has been instituted whereby children from disadvantaged neighborhoods are bused to middle class schools. Results show that the test scores of the children who are bused have risen sharply, while those of the resident children have remained static (Raines & McAdam, 2006). Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed that educating children with diverse needs alongside more privileged peers, or using the same methodologies as those that are used for the more privileged ultimately improves children's performance and long-term success (Kahlenberg, 2000; Rubinowitz & Rosenbaum, 2000).

Viewpoints

Ethnic Background

While social class contributes to education outcomes and experiences, race and ethnicity also contribute to education inequality. For instance, in many schools that utilize ability grouping to make educational programming decisions, "students from low-income backgrounds and students of color are disproportionately left out of advanced classes" (San Antonio, 2008, p. 76). In addition, poor students, who are most often children of color, tend to be taught by ineffective teachers (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2000) and schools facing the highest levels of poverty and diversity tend to have twice the number of new teachers in comparison with the "best off and Whitest schools" (Hochschild, 2003, p. 829).

Tracking

Tracking, or streaming, may also perpetuate social inequalities within education; that is, "the separation of students into hierarchical learning groups based on perceived or measured ability" (Biafora & Ansalone, 2008, p. 588). Although many educators argue that learning should be tailored to a child's needs (Ellis, 2007), tracking separates students into hierarchical groups based on their perceived or tested ability on the assumption that "it can offer a curriculum commensurate with students' current abilities thereby allowing each student to reach his/her potential at his/her own pace" (Biafora & Ansalone, 2008, p. 588).

Proponents of tracking view it as a tool used to facilitate teaching and learning in accordance with perceived student ability and argue that students learn more quickly and efficiently in groups

with similar others. Moreover, some would argue that tracking allows teachers to meet the needs of a differentiated student population by challenging highly capable students, and at the same time offering remedial instruction to lower achieving students.

However, opponents of tracking argue that the selection process "may have less to do with [academic] ability than with other issues such as neatness and dress, politeness, obedience to authority, punctuality, and following directions (Biafora & Ansalone, 2008, p. 591)—arguably markers of social class. Such data suggests the importance of social labels in creating social distinctions that have implications for perpetuating social inequalities. For instance, studies in the 1980s suggested that even where tracking existed in schools in informal ways, labels developed to describe students in 'low-achieving' groups. These students subsequently received poorer quality teaching and had fewer learning resources, such as books, available to them (Oakes, 1985). Finally, there is some evidence that tracking may exacerbate stratification in racial terms, by separating groups into racially diverse groups that include African-Americans and Latino students.

The Digital Divide

In order to compete in a global economy, it has become abundantly clear that technology, the ability to negotiate the Internet, and the distribution of information are all instrumental. Internet access remains one of the main considerations in separating the middle class from the impoverished. Access to technology provides another indicator of social inequality within education and is becoming increasingly important in debates about virtual learning, access to which is associated with economic affluence. Those who experience disadvantage (especially women and people of color) are less likely to have access to the Internet or computers, and indeed may be "socialized away from recognizing computer-related interests, fields of study, and professions as attainable or desirable" (Clark & Gorski, 2002, p. 32).

As a 1997 government report on computer access at school notes, a ratio of 4 or 5 students to one computer is the optimal ratio; yet in the poorest schools, the ratio is about 9 students to one computer. A similar disparity exists in relation to Internet access within schools and the same report found that in schools with large amounts of students participating in free or reduced price lunch programs, fewer classrooms had Internet access (Clark & Gorski, 2002).

Therefore, in order to reduce inequalities in digital capital, and enable students from the poorest backgrounds to develop digital and information technology skills, there needs to be extensive investment in the technology infrastructure of education environments. Clark and Gorski (2002) suggest that effective use of and opportunities to develop skills to use the Internet should be supported through the integration and availability of "high-capacity hardware, high-speed access lines, and high-capability wiring, whether in a home, a school, or an entire community" (Clark & Gorski, 2002, p. 29). Current technological infrastructure in terms of digital equity demonstrates that a social class system is being promoted that favors the middle class and diminishes access by lower class students to equal opportunities to interact with technology. Appropriate mandated policies that ensure legislation and funding for continued technology access are highly recommended (Clark & Gorski, 2002).

Conclusion

Problems in the education system ultimately manifest as societal problems. Jenkins (1994) reported that 80% of the individuals living in the United States will remain in the same socioeconomic class income bracket into which they were born, while 2% will move up, and 18% will fall below. Moreover, academic scores between the highest and lowest achieving students have either remained static or continued to increase; disparities between highest and lowest achieving students are especially evident students of color and Caucasian students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). These differences in educational and academic outcomes may be attributed both to deeply embedded inequalities in the education system and to the effects of social on learning experiences. Caucasian and middle class students are offered educational advantages and opportunities that are not distributed equally (Hochschild, 2003) and that vary between schools and within districts. Moreover, poorly trained teachers, curricula that may lack relevance, and compromised accountability (Heubert & Hauser, 1999; Ingersoll, 2002) are all manifestations of segregation and stratification. Schools impacted by low socio-economic challenges face a myriad of problems that place students at risk, which ultimately affects the general society.

White (1999), quoted the president of the Los Angeles teacher's union as saying that, in impoverished schools, "We have kids without teachers, teachers without classrooms, and a district without a clue. The system is broken. Students and teachers are a forgotten priority here" (cited in Hochschild, 2003, p. 825). Therefore, in order to ameliorate the shortcomings faced by individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds, society needs to construct policy and structural changes to overcome social and educational inequities (Garbarino, 1995).

Terms & Concepts

Achievement Gap: The achievement gap can be described as the class, racial, socioeconomic, and academic disparities that exist between the rich and the poor.

Digital Divide: Disparities across social classes, racial groups and gender in the distribution of information technology skills and resources.

Social Hierarchy: Social hierarchy can be described as the interplay of education and class which play a significant role in one's social position.

Social Mobility: One's ability to move upwardly from one's social class of origin usually by moving into occupations with higher prestige.

Social Position: Social position describes a person's place in the social hierarchy and plays a significant role in determining one's employability, employment, and income.

Socioeconomic Status (SES): Social position measured by income, education level, and occupation.

Stratification: Stratification can be described as the structural hierarchy on which education, class, and other class and social hierarchies are constructed.

Tracking: Tracking can be described as "the separation of students into hierarchical learning groups based on perceived or measured ability" (Biafora & Ansalone, 2008, p. 588).

Bibliography

Argys, L., Rees, D., & Brewer, D. (1996). Detracking America's schools: Equity at zero cost? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 15*(4), 623–645.

Baer, D.E. & Lambert, R.D. (1982). Education and support for dominant ideology. Canadian Review of London. *Sociology, 19*, 173–195.

Biafora, F. & Ansalone, G. (2008). Perceptions and attitudes of school principals towards school tracking: Structural considerations of personal beliefs. *Education, 128*(4), 588 – 602. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=32708992&site=ehost-live

Clark, C. & Gorski, P. (2002). Multicultural education and the digital divide: Focus on socioeconomic class background. *Multicultural Perspectives, 4*(3), 25 – 36. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=6895028&site=ehost-live

Coleman, J. S. (1987). Families and schools. *Educational Researcher, 16*, 6.

Cremin, L. (1988). *American education: The metropolitan experience, 1876–1980*. New York: Harper-Collins.

Crnic, K., & Lamberty G. (1994). Reconsidering school readiness: Conceptual and applied perspectives. *Early Education and Development, 5*(2), 99-105.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 8*(1). Retrieved February 21, 2008, from http://www.epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n1

Darling-Hammond, L., Berry, B., & Thoreson, A. (2001). Does teacher certification matter? Evaluating the evidence. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 23*(1), 57–77.

Department of Housing and Urban Development. (1998). *The State DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.*

Education Week. (1998). *Quality counts '98: The urban challenge, 17*(17). Washington, DC: Education Week and Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/archives/QC98full.pdf

Ellis, C. R. (2007). No child left behind – A critical analysis. *Curriculum & Teaching Dialogue, 9*(1/2), 221 – 233. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=33309228&site=ehost-live

Garbarino, J. (1995). *Raising children in a socially toxic environment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

General Accounting Office. (1995). *School facilities:America's schools not designed or equipped for 21st century* (GAO/HEHS-95-95). Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office.

Gibbons, S. & Telhaj, S. (2007). Are school drifting apart? Intake stratification in English secondary schools. *Urban Studies, 44*(7), 1281 – 1305. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=25508651&site=ehost-live

Gutmann, A. (1987). *Democratic education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Güveli, A., Need, A., & Graff, N. (2007). Socio-political, cultural and economic preferences and behaviour of the social and cultural specialists and the technocrats. Social class or education? *Social Indicators Research, 81*(3), 597 – 631. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=24411017&site=ehost-live

Hochschild, J. L. (2003). Social class in public schools. *Journal of Social Issues, 59*(4), 821 – 840. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=11351297&site=ehost-live

Hochschild, J., & Scovronick, N. (2003). *The American dream and the public schools.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Iannelli, C. and Paterson, L. (2004). *Social Mobility in Scotland since the Middle of the Twentieth Century.* Working Paper 1, Edinburgh: Centre for Education and Sociology, University of Edinburgh. Available at: www.ces.ed.ac.uk/PDF%20Files/Brief033.pdf. Accessed 27th January, 2009.

Ingersoll, R. (2002). *Out-of-field teaching, educational inequality, and the organization of schools: An exploratory analysis.* Seattle, WA: University of Washington, Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

Jenkins, M. (1994). Fear of the "gangsta": Policy responses to gang activity in the city of Boston. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

Kahlenberg, R. (2000). *All together now: The case for the economic integration of the public schools.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Lareau, A. (1987). Social class differences in family-school relationships: The importance of cultural capital. *Sociology of Education, 60*(2). Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=13008171&site=ehost-live

Levine, D.U., Cooper, E.J., & Hilliard, A., III. (2000). National Urban Alliance professional development model for improving achievement in the context of effective schools research. *Journal of Negro Education, 69,* 305–322.

Lucas, S. (1999). *Tracking inequality: Stratification and mobility in American high schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Mayshark, J. F. (1996). Study: Bad teachers put kids at disadvantage. At all ability levels, students suffer when they get a relatively ineffective teacher and make big gains with a more effective on. *The Atlanta Journal/Atlanta Constitution, The South.*

Mickelson, R., & Heath, D. (1999). The effects of segregation on African American high school seniors' academic achievement. *Journal of Negro Education, 68*(4), 566–586.

National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Education. (n.d.). *Building family-school partnerships that work.* Available at: http://www.ncpie.org. Accessed 27th

January, 2009.

Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Olson, L. (1998). Failing schools challenge accountability goals. *Education Week, 1*, 14. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=416707&site=ehost-live

Raines, J. & McAdams, C.B. (2006). College and social class: The broken promise of America. *Cross Currents.* Spring, 46-57. Available at; http://www.crosscurrents.org/Rainesspring2006.htm. Accessed 27thJanuary, 2009.

Ramey, S.L., & Ramey, C. T. (1994). The transition to school: Why the first few years matter for a lifetime. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(3), 194-198. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Education Research Complete. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=9411162178&site=ehost-live

Rubinowitz, L., & Rosenbaum, J. (2000). *Crossing the class and color lines: From public housing to white suburbia.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

San Antonio, D. M. (2008). Understanding students' strengths and struggles. *Educational Leadership, 65*(7), 74 – 79. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=32042603&site=ehost-live

Spring, J. (2000). *The American school 1642–2000.* New York: WCB/McGraw-Hill.

Stephen, A. (2007). Born equal? *New Statesman, 137(*4857), 28 – 31. Retrieved September 13, 2008 from EBSCO online database, Academic Search Premier. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=26150864&site=ehost-live

The urban teacher challenge: Teacher demand and supply in the Great City Schools. (2000). Belmont, MA: Recruiting New Teachers.

Tyack, D. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Verba, S. (2001). *Political equality: What is it? Why do we want it?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Department of Government.

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. (1995). *Voice*

and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

White, K. (1999). L.A. Board names CEO with broad powers.
Education Week, 3.

Suggested Reading

Freire, P. (1990). *Education for critical consciousness.* South
Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey.

Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's
schools.* New York: Crown.

Rank, M. R. (2004). *One nation, underprivileged. Why
American poverty affects us all.* New York, NY: Oxford
University Press.

Reed, D. (2001). *On equal terms: The constitutional politics
of educational opportunity.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton
University Press.

Sleeter, C. E. (1996). *Multicultural education as social activ-
ism.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Essay by Sharon Link, Ph.D.

Dr. Sharon Link is an educator, presenter, and mother of a child with autism. She has worked extensively in public education and has researched education and its relationship to autism disorders and other disabilities for the last ten years. Dr. Link currently is the Executive Director for Autism Disorders Leadership Center, a non-profit research center and is co-founder of Asperger Interventions & Support, Inc. a professional development center. Both organizations are education and research centers seeking to improve education by creating a system of diversity and inclusion in America's schools. To learn more, visit: Asperger Help at http://aspergerhelp.net.

Reviewed and Edited by Alexandra Howson, Ph.D.

Alexandra Howson, Ph.D. taught Sociology for over a decade at several universities in the UK. She has published books and peer reviewed articles on the sociology of the body, gender and health and is now an independent researcher, writer and editor based in the Seattle area.